

Introduction stand out
clearly in historical
events of



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Introduction

Los Angeles has come a long way to be where it is today.

It has undergone numerous changes, some positive, some detrimental.

Nevertheless, regardless of the nature of the change, each event contributed largely to the growth of Los Angeles. After the transfer of California to the United States in 1948, Los Angeles underwent a legion of changes including organizational, administrative, physical, and cultural changes among others. Of all these events, four events stand out clearly as the most important historical events in the history of Los Angeles. These are the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad, which was completed in 1876, the struggle at Los Angeles River in 1938, appropriation, and consolidations of Los Angeles in early twentieth century and the Proposition 14.

Events

As aforementioned, the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in 1876 is one of the most important events in the history of Los Angeles. However, there were other railroads whose construction heralded the completion of this Railroad. San Pedro Railroad, stretching for 21 miles, was the first railroad to exist in Los Angeles.

In 1885, the California Southern Railroad was established due to the rapid population growth and this contributed to the establishment of Central Pacific Railroad, which was directed to Los Angeles instead of San Francisco. Several railroad conflicts ensued; actually, this would have cost Los Angeles the Southern Pacific Railroad had John Downey not intervened to persuade Collins Huntington, the then president of the Southern Pacific Railroad
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Company to let this railroad go through Los Angeles. Eventually, construction of the Transcontinental Railroad in Los Angeles reached its climax in 1876 and this heralded massive economical development in the region. This event was important because it opened Los Angeles to the world and other states.

The 1, 000 miles of the railroad linked Los Angeles to Pomona, Huntington Beach, San Bernardino, Long Beach, Santa Ana, Santa Monica, and Hollywood, among other places and this makes this event the most important in the history of Los Angeles. The other important event is the struggle at Los Angeles River. This permanent river, rich in fresh water, sustained 45 Gabrielino settlements in Los Angeles. According to Gumprecht, floods were the major problem of this river (15).

The floods were unpredictable and would catch residents unaware and result into massive destruction. For instance, “ The location of the Los Angeles Plaza had to be moved twice because of previously having been built too close to the riverbed” (Estrada 95). Ironically, during the dry season, people would construct houses near the banks of this river only to be washed away by floods. Nevertheless, the worst event in this series of struggles occurred in 1938 when a fierce storm destroyed infrastructure across Los Angeles and the neighboring Orange Counties. After these massive floods, the federal government came in to save the situation. The Army Corps, “ transferred floodwater to the sea, paved the beds of the river and its tributaries, and built several dams in the canyons along the San Gabriel Mountains to reduce the debris flows” (McPhee 26). This was the turning point in flood history of Los Angeles.

To date, Los Angeles River functions to control floods in the area. The Army Corps also drilled numerous wells in the region. This event is important for through it, Los Angeles has been in position to contain floods effectively. The annexations and appropriations of Los Angeles stand out clearly in historical events of this state. Until, 1890s, Los Angeles stood on 73 km² area.

However, the twentieth century ushered in a new beginning. Garvanza and Highland Park were the first two districts to be added to Los Angeles from the northern side. In 1906, Port of Los Angeles was sanctioned, something that linked Los Angeles to other places just like the railroads.

In 1909, Wilmington and San Pedro became part of Los Angeles. Hollywood, Colegrove, and Cahuenga followed suit in 1910 making Los Angeles to have an area of 233 km². According to Municipal Secession Fiscal Analysis Scoping Study, by 2004, Los Angeles had a total area of 469 square miles (2). This annexations and appropriations ensured that Los Angeles became a giant in water provision services escalating its economical growth. More districts meant more economical growth and these annexations have uplifted Los Angeles to the status it enjoys today.

If these districts remained divided, there would be no pooling of resources and they would be still minute districts of little or no economic, cultural, or physical importance. Therefore, these annexations allowed economic expansion in the area. Finally, Proposition 14 ranks among the most important historical events in the history of Los Angeles. Since colonial times, land allocation in Los Angeles had been an ethnicity issue.

By 1945, only a minute number of blacks and Asians owned land or houses in this place. Actually, after World War II, blacks who were involved in the war returned home only to miss land and houses. This trend had severe effects in other areas of blacks' lives like education and economical well-being.

However, 1959, Augustus Hawkins from Los Angeles pushed for implementation of California Fair Employment Practices Acts, which would root out restrictive land covenants across America. In 1963, California Legislature authorized Rumford Fair Housing Act, which would take from where the previous act had left.

However, there was opposition and whites did not want to offer minorities equal opportunities on matters of land ownership. To attain this, they formed alliance that would campaign against this act in a referendum in what turned out to be Proposition 14. In Los Angeles, Martin Luther King was campaigning for equality and freedom; however, Proposition 14 passed in California and the minorities were doomed to inequality.

This led to Watts Riots in 1965. After these riots, California Supreme Court “ruled that Proposition 14 violated the State Constitution’s provisions for equal protection and due process” (Jeffries & Ransford 314). This ruling allowed minorities equal rights to land, housing, and property ownership.

This event was a landmark, and that is why it is important in the history Los Angeles, as minorities could own houses.

Comments on Some of the Events

Commending on completion of the Transcontinental Railroad in Los Angeles,

Blake Gumprecht said, “ The completion of a transcontinental railroad to Los
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Angeles in 1876 changed Southern California forever” (59). This is true. As expositied in the text above, this completion opened and connected Los Angeles to the rest of America and world in general expanding its economical growth and other structural developments. Surely, Los Angeles changed forever and it cannot go back to its state given the massive developments that resulted from completion of this railroad. On the other side, speaking on Proposition 14, Radkowski said, “ The debate over Proposition 14 cultivated a whirlwind of information and misunderstanding... On any given day, the effort to overturn the Rumford Act might involve highbrow jurisprudence, righteous indignation, or racial epithet” (6). This is true given the nature of events that surrounded this event. There was simply a lot of misunderstanding as the whites tried to keep the minorities from accessing land and houses.

Conclusion

Los Angeles has undergone several changes in its way to where it is today. Some of the outstanding events include the construction of the Transcontinental Railroad; completed in 1876, the struggle at Los Angeles River in 1938, appropriation, and consolidations of Los Angeles in early twentieth century and Proposition 14. Completion of the Transcontinental Railroad was the most significant for it opened and linked Los Angeles to the rest of America and the world. Proposition 14 allowed minorities to own houses amidst protests from whites who saw no sense in the same.

Appropriations and annexations allowed Los Angeles to grow economically while struggles at Los Angeles River led to control of floods in the area.

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