



Student Name:

Class Period:

Date:

Meet the Originals

Texas Originals is a radio series about people who made an impact on Texas. You can hear it online and on radio stations around the state. Read or listen to the episode on Rosa María Hinojosa de Ballí. Then, answer questions about it.

Rosa María Hinojosa de Ballí 1752–1803

In 1790, the woman now known as the first "cattle queen" of Texas—Rosa María Hinojosa de Ballí—inherited fifty-five thousand acres in what is now South Texas. Her father and husband had applied to the Spanish crown for the land, but both died before their request was approved.

It soon became clear that in addition to the land, Doña Rosa possessed a strong will, exceptional foresight, and shrewd business skills.

From her ranch headquarters in what is now Cameron County, Doña Rosa set about to improve her land, expand her holdings, and rid the estate of the debt that came with her inheritance. She acquired herds of cattle, sheep, and other livestock. She applied for and received land grants on behalf of her three sons, including a portion of Padre Island, which was named for her son Nicolás, a priest who helped develop the island. Her goal was to establish a ranching empire for her family.

Deeply religious, Doña Rosa was also a generous benefactor of Catholic churches throughout the region, earning her the nickname "La Patrona." Her name appears in local church records as the godmother at scores of baptisms.

When she died, in 1803, just thirteen years after her original inheritance, Doña Rosa owned more than a million acres of ranch land in the lower Rio Grande Valley.

Check for Understanding: Answer the questions below based on evidence from the episode on Rosa María Hinojosa de Ballí. Refer to the text included above if needed.

1. How did Rosa María Hinojosa de Ballí acquire her land?
2. What was Ballí's ultimate goal for the land she acquired?

Going Further: Write or discuss your answer to the question below, supporting your answer with evidence from the episode or additional information you have learned in class.

3. **Making Inferences.** Based on the episode, what do you think Doña Rosa's nickname "La Patrona" means?