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100 Years of History (1810-1910)

*Alfredo Ávila, María del Carmen Vázquez M.,
Silvestre Villegas R., Érika Pani, Evelia Trejo,
Álvaro Matute*

Arizona's SB 1070: Cascading Effects

*Erik Lee, Jaime R. Aguila, Mónica Vereá,
Ariadna Estevez L., Doris Marie Provine,
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Silvia Núñez G., D. Rick van Schoik*

Tribute to Writer Carlos Monsiváis

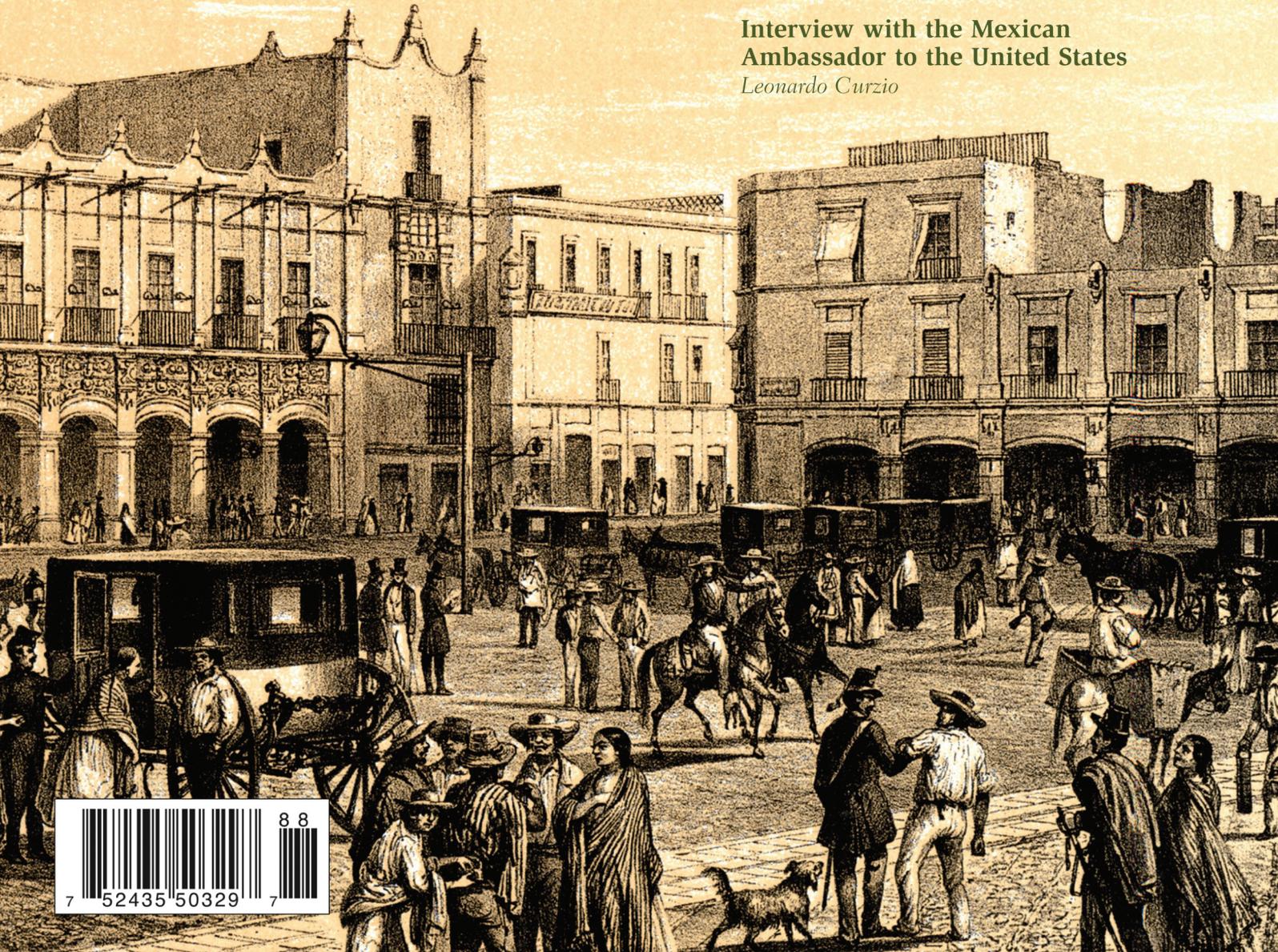
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Film and the Mexican Revolution

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Interview with the Mexican Ambassador to the United States

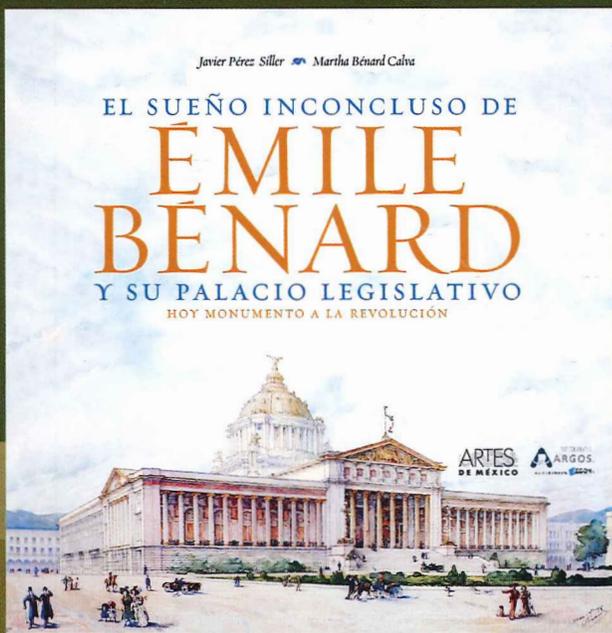
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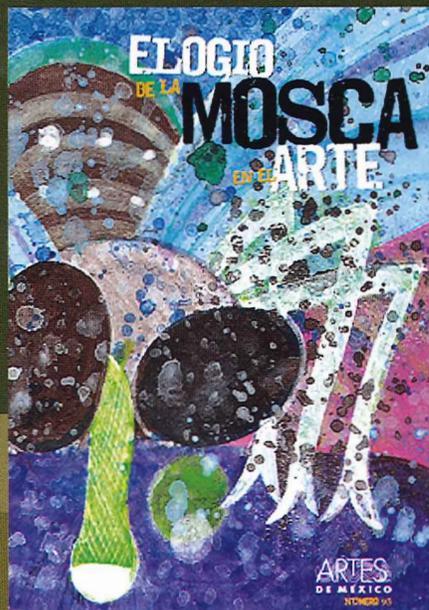
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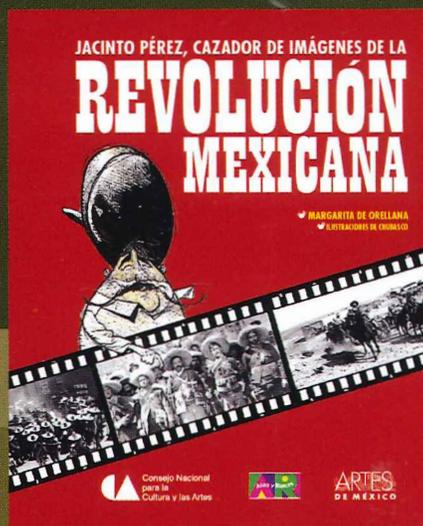
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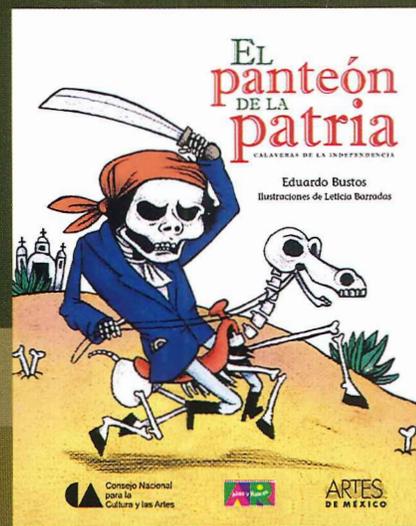
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ISSN 0186 • 9418

Voices of Mexico is published by the
Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, CISAN (Center for Research on North America) of the
Coordinación de Humanidades (Office of the Coordinator of Humanities), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México,
UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico).

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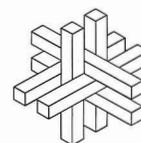
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VOICESTM of Mexico

Issue 88 Autumn 2010



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Municipal House, or Deputation. Decaen, ed., *México y sus alrededores* (Mexico City: Establecimiento Litográfico de Decaen, 1855 and 1856).

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OUR VOICE

September seems to have arrived in Mexico more quickly in 2010 than in previous years. Although most of us in Mexico traditionally celebrate el grito or the “cry of independence,” whether by participating in popular verbenas (street festivities), with friends or with family, there were immense expectations throughout the country for this year’s celebrations of two centuries of the country’s independence.

It is clear that despite the increasing violence in our country, Mexicans demonstrated their patriotism, and were able to put aside their apathy and even their fears. However, the festivities were accompanied by severe criticism of the excessive spending these activities signified. The federal government alone spent 2.9 billion pesos (about 223 million USD dollars), and together with the disorganization and particularly the failure to complete a number of monumental public works designed precisely to enhance the memory of this bicentennial, these elements remain as the evidence of the culmination of another cycle of independence.

The context in which this commemoration took place revealed a number of circumstances that are important to mention. First of all, for a million Mexicans living in 14 of the country’s municipalities, official festivities were cancelled due to the climate of insecurity. In addition it was reaffirmed that the country continues to be incapable of breaking with its characteristic macrocephaly, favoring Mexico City above the rest of the nation’s territory, since the quality and spectacular nature of the fiestas were confined to the great metropolis. There was a failure to share these festivities more equitably —if not with each and every state— at least with the major geographical regions.

These comments are aimed particularly at bringing the attention of our readers to the section in this issue entitled “One Hundred Years of History,” in which an outstanding group of specialists offer us a panoramic view of Mexico’s historic transformation from 1810 to 1917. Identifying its decisive stages from the fight for Independence to the final moments of the Mexican Revolution, the authors speak of the struggle waged by a nation that never loses sight of its past, while looking ahead to its future.

Also, in our “Special Section” we invite you to review the sequence of articles representing an unprecedented collaboration by a well-established group of distinguished scholars from Mexico and the United States. Those of us participating assumed the task of analyzing the serious implications from the implementation of one of the most severe and controversial state laws for halting undocumented immigration: Law SB 1070, known as the “Arizona Law.”

Recognizing the complexity of the migration phenomenon between the two countries, our reflection is multidisciplinary and focuses on its origins, its many facets, and its consequences on both sides of the border. It has been especially important to acknowledge that the observations made by each of us participating as authors were the result of a genuine transnational exercise. This experience has led to the conviction that in order to bring the migration debate out of its stalemate, the formula used cannot be unilateral in nature. This type of collaboration among scholars must consequently take place not only on an ongoing basis, but must be aimed at seeking shared solutions.

On another topic, we believe that if we failed to acknowledge the loss of one of Mexico's great voices, we would not be true to our magazine's mission. The voice of writer Carlos Monsiváis ceased to be heard as of this past June.

Recognized as a chronicler, journalist and political activist since the years of his youth, he belonged to the generation of Mexico's 1968 student movement. Characterized by his firm convictions, he became an obligatory point of reference as a critic with a profound knowledge of Mexican politics, but also due to his passion for the manifestations of our popular urban culture. His exceptional characteristic was his sense of humor, accompanied by a unique sense of irony in his use of the language. In one of his texts, now-absent Carlos Monsiváis wrote: "And I saw an open door, and I went in, and I heard archangelical sounds...and I saw Mexico City." Today we acknowledge that even though the door has been closed, all of Mexico will continue to experience and observe through his eyes for many years to come.

I will conclude by recapitulating the two sections of this issue addressed at the beginning of this editorial, on the celebration of our country's history, and on the dilemma represented by migration between Mexico and the United States. It is enough to concur with something written by Polish journalist Ryszard Kapuściński in the sense that if we live in a world of exacerbated nationalisms, we limit ourselves to perpetually remain strangers, since we are left without a name, an age or a profession.

Rejecting such nationalisms is thus a lesson that can lead us to a mature civic attitude in which all of us can demonstrate our capacity to re-route our destiny toward a constructive horizon.

Silvia Núñez García

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Interview with Arturo Sarukhán, Mexican Ambassador To the United States

Leonardo Curzio*

Leonardo Curzio (LC): Mr. Ambassador, May 20 must have been a very special day for you, when President Felipe Calderón was applauded 27 times in the United States Congress.

Arturo Sarukhán (AS): Certainly, and I think that the applause was particularly welcomed by the president as he entered the hall and was introduced by Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. For the first time in many years, the U.S. Congress recognizes what is being done in Mexico, the efforts of a first executive who has decided to confront organized crime. The recognition of how important bilateral relationships are for anti-narcotics cooperation against organized crime began during a Republican administration, under George W. Bush, but it has been under this Democratic administration that the legislators themselves have become the big champions of cooperation with Mexico against organized crime, and I think that was clear last May 20.

LC: You could count 13 minutes of applause, and another noteworthy thing was the way the president was treated. Mr. Am-



Mexico's ambassador in the United States.

bassador—I don't know if you talk in these terms in international relations—but the reception of Mexico's president seemed affectionate.

AS: Well, in this area one runs the risk of falling into using hackneyed phrases, but, as you say, the way the Obamas welcomed the president was really remarkable. It was clear at the state dinner and the reception later, in that pavilion decorated with monarch butterflies in honor of President Calderón's Michoacán roots, that there was a touch that not all heads of state do for a visiting first executive.

LC: Apart from this great recognition of President Calderón, could we say that greater sensitivity was fostered among po-

*Journalist and researcher at CISAN.

litical circles and, more broadly, among the public, about the need to assume joint responsibility not only for security issues, but also for migration?

AS: Yes. As a matter of fact, on Friday, May 21, a *Washington Post* editorial commented on Felipe Calderón’s speech, firmly supporting his proposal of stopping the flow of weapons to Mexico. And, it’s true: the other issues are starting to permeate the thinking of both political circles and the public in the United States. That doesn’t mean that everything has been resolved or that there won’t be any more problems and tensions to deal with—even Gordian knots that will have to be cut—but I think that the joint communiqué by both presidents after the meeting in the Oval Office, a seven-page document, is very substantive.¹ It’s divided into four or five issues fundamental to bilateral relations, and it shows that while security is at the core, bilateral relations go far beyond that and involve issues as important as economic development; competitiveness; the social welfare of our two countries; prob-

Calderon’s visit to Arlington
sent two very powerful messages:
first, that we are a country looking forward,
not back, and second, the outstanding role
that Mexican Americans and Hispanics
in general are playing
in the United States armed forces.

lems of global scope, like how to deal with the challenges of climate change; and, obviously other commitments like security and the need for immigration reform.

LC: What can you tell us about competitiveness in the region?

AS: We could say that it has advanced, not only within North America, but also in how we continue to strengthen North America’s ability to compete with Asia and the European Union, in the standardization of procedures, the elimination of customs forms in each of our three countries. It seems to me that the communiqué I mentioned shows the wide array of issues and an unprecedented determination to continue moving ahead and resolving questions of mutual interest.

For several years, Mexican administrations had been trying to put the need for a comprehensive approach to border issues on the table; not just security and migration, but

also facilitating border and customs operations, the construction of new infrastructure, the mitigation of environmental impacts, and the need to have non-intrusive technology to facilitate imports and exports.

This concept of a “twenty-first century border” implies a comprehensive focus that previous U.S. administrations simply had not accepted. For the first time, we are seeing this kind of focus in handling border issues, which seems very important to me.

LC: At home, President Calderón’s speech was very well received. The president of Mexico’s Senate, Carlos Navarrete, of the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), dubbed it a speech that reflected a large part of our national aspirations. Now, I have read criticisms saying that Felipe Calderón had crossed certain lines and meddled in U.S. politics, like in the case of Arizona, for example. What is your point of view about this?

AS: A speech like this one has to walk a very fine line, and I think that objective was achieved, even though perhaps we did wade into “American waters,” so to speak, to a certain extent. But I don’t think there’s any other way of establishing a firm, clear, forceful position about the potential impacts that that law could have.

I think that it was important for President Calderón to set out his position and, in effect, the reaction in the House of Representatives was partisan, as I suppose that anyone watching on television would have noticed: the entire Democratic caucus and guests in the gallery were on their feet applauding Felipe Calderón.

LC: What significance did his visit to Arlington have?

AS: I think it sent two very powerful messages: first, that we are a country looking forward, not back, interested in all aspects of relations with the United States. Prime ministers and heads of state or government of countries defeated militarily by the United States, like, for example, Japan and Germany, have put wreaths on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. I think it was important for Mexico to make this kind of gesture in recognition of the fallen, because, also, we mustn’t forget that that tomb also includes soldiers from World Wars I and II.

LC: We were their allies in World War II...

AS: That's right. The second reason is —and I think this is what really motivated the president to make the decision—the outstanding role that Mexican Americans and Hispanics in general are playing in the United States armed forces. Many of them serve in the U.S. military as a means to get their U.S. citizenship. A lot of relatives of Mexican-American and Hispanic veterans and fallen accompanied the president and they were truly moved; some had tears in their eyes when they thanked him for making that gesture to recognize the community's contributions to that nation's security.

LC: It was interesting that the president opened his speech evoking the words of Octavio Paz, saying that the United States is a country that looks to the future and that in many ways, ours is one that looks to the past. The president began by saying that Mexico is also a country that looks to the future and has to work out a new way of looking at relations with its neighbor.

AS: At one point, Octavio Paz also wrote that the relationship between Mexico and the United States was complicated, to say the least, because we Mexicans didn't know how to talk and the Americans didn't know how to listen.

For the first time, Mexico is talking —and loudly— and for the first time, the Americans are listening. I think this has created once again the possibility of changing the direction the relationship takes, of giving it a strategic horizon. That doesn't mean that we should set off fireworks in the belief that everything has been solved in bilateral relations. The problems will continue. There will be issues that we'll have to resolve; we'll continue to have different perspectives on a series of bilateral, regional, and global questions.

It seems to me that this relationship, despite how complicated the context is because of the events in Arizona, the lack of immigration reform, and the violence we are witnessing along the border, has a promising future if we know how to capitalize on it. **MM**

NOTES

¹ <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/declaracion-conjunta-de-los-presidentes-barack-obama-y-felipe-calderon> and <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/declaraciones-del-presidente-obama-y-el-presidente-calderon-de-mexico-en-declaracion>.

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Mexico and the International Environmental Agenda

María Cristina Rosas*



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Flooding is one of the most visible consequences of climate change.

Few in the world today would deny the importance of the environmental agenda and the need for international cooperation to deal with the challenges of climate change and other ills endangering the life of the planet. Fortunately, the community of nation's interest in environmental problems is increasing, among other reasons because of

1. the end of the Cold War, which makes it possible to pay attention to issues other than militarism and the arms race;
2. the growing amount of information available about the challenges to our ecosystems;

3. recurring natural phenomena like hurricanes, volcanic eruptions, and/or earthquakes, that become disasters because of many countries' scant preparation;
4. the increased perception that environmental problems are closely linked to other challenges for societies, for example, in the fields of sanitation and food production and distribution; and
5. the enormous economic cost of environmental deterioration.

ENVIRONMENTAL SECURITY

For these reasons one concept more and more frequently used by ecologists and social scientists is "environmental security."

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This alludes to different issues, outstanding among them the effects of environmental deterioration on societies and its associated potential for conflict. However, there is no consensus on the definition of the concept. For example, one definition couples it with the adverse affects of human activities on the environment, including military activities, since it is conceived as a global public good, valuable for current or future human life. Another weighs the effects of environmental changes, particularly scarcity due to environmental degradation, on the stability of the most vulnerable countries. In this sense, it recognizes that this degradation may not be the only cause of violent conflicts, but could very well contribute to their breaking out, particularly when combined with other elements of vulnerability or government weakness, low legitimacy of authorities, and other factors. It would also be wise to weigh unsustainable behavior by some companies (like those in the fields of oil and mining) and the corruption related to the use of natural resources.

Another definition of the concept underlines the effects of environmental changes in human security and the well-being of populations. This includes, among other things, natural disasters with variable degrees of anthropogenic causality. Despite societies' being increasingly aware that environmental devastation endangers human life and that ecocide is a threat to security, voices have been raised to express concern about what they consider the "securitization" of the environmental agenda. One argument is based on the interpretation that the concept of environmental security was coined with the sole aim of situating the environment in the sphere of "high politics" for "sinister purposes." There is also a risk of militarizing the issue, that is, that the military participate in determining agendas that, presumably, do not fall within their purview. Some say that it is not unthinkable that environmental security rhetoric could be used to justify military operations in the name of "protecting global resources." The case of the Chinese soldiers stationed in Darfur to protect oil platforms is just one example.

Others find in the environmental security discourse another hegemonic resource of the "North," since its definition depends to a great extent on how "someone's security" is defined. These same people point to the need to include the vision of the countries of the "South" in any concept developed. Some oppose an analysis of the dynamics of the control of resources like oil, diamonds, or precious woods to the vision of environmental security threatened by resource degradation.

Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya,
the United Nations Environmental Program
coordinates activities, offering assistance
to member countries to implement appropriate
environmental policies and foster sustainable
development.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENDA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In 1987, the *Our Common Future* report introduced the concept of sustainable development: the practice that assigns responsibilities to today's generations in their interrelationship with their natural surroundings, which has been, and clearly continues to be, very destructive.² Thus, sustainable development is defined as satisfying the needs of today without compromising those of future generations.

The concept itself implies a very important change in the idea of sustainability, mainly ecological sustainability, and proposes an analytical framework that also emphasizes the economic and social context in which development takes place. The aim of sustainable development is to satisfy human needs assuming that there are restrictions of different kinds:

1. ecological: that is, it promotes the conservation of the planet Earth;
2. moral: based on renouncing consumption levels that not all individuals can aspire to;
3. regarding economic growth in places where the most basic needs are not satisfied, that is, in the poor countries;
4. demographic control, mainly regarding birth rates;
5. not endangering the natural systems that sustain life on Earth;
6. the conservation of ecosystems must be subordinate to human welfare, since not all ecosystems can be preserved in their virgin state; and
7. the use of non-renewable resources must be as efficient as possible.

Aspiring to sustainable development requires understanding that inaction will have consequences and that, therefore, institutional structures must be changed and certain forms

The Green Fund Mexico proposed would create a financing system under the aegis of the convention and with the participation of all its members for increasing global mitigation efforts.

of individual and social behavior fostered to attain the aforementioned ends.

Despite increased environmental awareness worldwide, this is not reflected in the actions of the institutions necessary for attacking the problem. Suffice it to mention that, to date, no multilateral international body is specifically dedicated to environmental issues. The UN has only one environmental program, the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), created on the recommendation of the 1972 UN Conference on Human Development in Stockholm. Headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, the UNEP coordinates activities in this area, offering assistance to member countries to implement appropriate environmental policies and foster sustainable development.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

In the absence of a full-fledged international body, it has been necessary to deposit environmental responsibility in specific instruments like the Kyoto Protocol. This international agreement's aim is to reduce approximately 5 percent compared to 1990 levels the emissions of six gases responsible for global warming (carbon dioxide, or CO₂; methane gas, CH₄; nitrous oxide, N₂O; and three industrial fluoride gases: hydrofluorocarbons, or HFC; perfluorocarbons, or PFC; and sulfur hexafluoride, or SF₆) between 2008 and 2012.

This instrument operates in the context of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), written in 1992 during the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit. The protocol made binding what the UNFCCC could not at that time. The main objective is to diminish anthropogenic climate change based on the greenhouse effect. According to UN figures, the average temperature of the planet's surface will increase between 1.4 and 5.8 degrees Celsius from now until 2100, which

could make life on Earth impossible. In reference to the Kyoto Protocol, the European Commission has stated that these changes will have a grave impact on the ecosystem and its economies.

FROM COPENHAGEN TO CANCÚN

Thus, given that the Kyoto commitment must be renewed to avoid further global warming, the UNFCCC has been organizing international climate change conferences since 1995. Last year, Copenhagen played host to the 15th International Conference on Climate Change, which proposed coming to a consensus on a legally binding agreement about the measures for mitigating climate change starting in 2012. The discussion centered on three topics:

1. The reduction of carbon dioxide (CO₂) by the developed countries. The European Union, for example, announced a plan to reduce its CO₂ emissions by 20 percent by 2020 (a goal adopted in 2008), but no other country has set concrete reduction goals. Barack Obama also announced the United States' desire to reduce its emissions, and decided to participate in the summit, where he promised large investments in renewable energy sources. However, the developing and poorest countries demanded bigger efforts by the United States and that developed countries drastically reduce their polluting emissions.
2. The dilemma in the developing countries is how to promote development without damaging nature. These countries argue that most climate change has been caused by the richest countries. Nevertheless, some developing countries have also committed to reducing their emissions. In March 2009, Mexico was the first developing country to propose a drastic reduction in polluting gases, committing to cut its emissions 50 percent by 2050. Worldwide, Mexico is responsible for 1.6 percent of greenhouse gas emissions. Thus, it introduced into the debate the issue of voluntary commitments, in addition to the mandated-contractual commitments that are hoped for at the 16th International Conference on Climate Change.
3. With regard to aid to poor countries so they can adapt to the imperatives of reducing emissions, Mexico once again has shown leadership by proposing something

new: a World Fund for Climate Change (or Green Fund) to complement the current system.

MITIGATION, ADAPTATION, AND THE GREEN FUND

The so-called Green Fund would create a financing system under the aegis of the convention and with the participation of all its members for increasing the scale of global mitigation efforts. Two issues are at play in the current negotiations: mitigation and adaptation. The first refers to concrete actions for attacking the problem, and the second is based on a financial package to help countries to implement those measures.

Certainly, opinions are divided between those who support the Green Fund proposal and those who are reticent, particularly with regard to earmarking funds. To solve this problem Mexico also proposed the concept of differentiated responsibilities, so that all the developed countries who want to use the fund can participate and contribute to it. In exceptional cases, the nations officially known as “least developed” could also benefit from the fund without contributing money to it. This financing system would come under the most intense scrutiny to guarantee it be used appropriately.

Mexico’s role in the negotiations in support of policies to fight climate change can also be seen in the fact that the 16th United Nations Conference on Climate Change will be held in Cancún next December, where it is hoped there will finally be a binding agreement. As mentioned before, a series of countries are pushing for voluntary commitments, many of them discretely. This is a matter for concern because if nations do not comply with what they promise, they assume no legal responsibility and are not accountable at all. In any case, voluntary commitments should complement and not replace binding commitments, because without the latter, there can be no appropriate environmental governability in the face of the global warming challenge.

It should be remembered that Mexico’s experience has been good in dealing with the environmental issue, even in trade negotiations, as demonstrated by the 1994 side agreement to the North American Free Trade Agreement. That agreement created the Commission on Environmental Cooperation of North America (CEC), whose aim is to deal with environmental matters of common concern, contribute to preventing environmental conflicts arising from trade relations, and promoting effective enforcement of environmental leg-

islation in the three member countries. The CEC is not a supra-national but rather an intergovernmental body; its strategic objective is to ensure environmental sustainability in markets and regional protection of the environment.

The CEC is not only important because it links economic and trade activities to the environment, but also because it puts forward a series of opportunities to promote environmentally friendly technologies, which in today’s conditions, create a variety of alternatives in a world in need of “clean economic options.” Proposals like making polluters pay for environmental damage are echoed in the spirit of that accord.

Environmental problems respect no borders, which is why concerted action is needed to deal with them. We need go no further than to cite the April 20 explosion in the Gulf of Mexico’s Macondo Prospect, which sparked an oil spill of tens of millions of gallons in the area, considered the worst oil accident in history. The U.S. government blames oil giant British Petroleum, which has used different mechanisms to “plug” the leak, unsuccessfully, at least at the time of this writing. Part of the problem is the huge depth of the oil spill. And while the contamination is particularly affecting the United States, Mexico is also suffering from the fallout, which is why Mexican legislators have voted to investigate it. It would be important, then, for example, for the CEC to take this issue in hand, given that it affects two NAFTA signers.

Unfortunately, few trade agreements reflect any concern about the environment. Nevertheless, Mexico has important experience in this area that it could share with other nations, precisely at a time when the international community is forced to join forces to overcome the environmental problems plaguing it. ■■

NOTES

¹ The author is the head of the Olaf Palme Center for Analysis and Research on Peace, Security and Development. Her most recent book is *Las operaciones de mantenimiento de la paz de las Naciones Unidas. Lecciones desde el mundo* (UN Peacekeeping Operations. Lessons from the World) (Mexico City: UNAM/Folke Bernadotte Academy, 2008), <http://www.pargasprodigy.com/mcrosas>.

² This socio-economic report was written for the UN by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), headed by Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, which is why it is also known as the Brundtland Report. It is available at <http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm>. [Editor’s Note.]

China's Impact on Mexican, Canadian, and U.S. Trade

The Beginning of NAFTA's Decline?

Enrique Pino Hidalgo*



Undeniably, trade among Mexico, Canada, and the United States has changed over at least the last five years because of the competitiveness of Chinese manufactures. This is not limited to North America. China's commercial and industrial might has an effect on different spheres of the international scene given its undeniable role as a world player.

The unstoppable Asian locomotive expresses itself in many forms and trends, all linked in different ways to the globalization of the economy. Probably the most emblematic are

the changes in the international division of labor that turned the millennia-old homeland of President Mao Zedong into the "world's factory," supplying an immense gamut of merchandise with both high and low value added, according to whether they were capital- or labor-intensive.

According to Price Waterhouse Coopers, China is the new world giant in the auto sector with a production quota of 10.98 million vehicles in 2009 and a projected output of more than 14 million by the end of 2010. Its closest competitor, Japan, coming in second worldwide, produced 7.51 million units in 2009, while the convalescent U.S. car industry put out 5.62 million. By 2014, Chinese yearly production for the world market will have reached a little over 19 million.¹

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The enormous competitiveness of China's manufactures has allowed it to swiftly achieve an extensive presence in NAFTA partners' markets. This has caused an effect of double substitution of Canadian and Mexican goods by Chinese goods.

A second way the Asian power's influence can be seen is the changes in relative international market prices of tradeables. China's undeniable competitiveness also generates changes in trade patterns for the regional economic blocs, whether it be Europe, Asia, or North America. Its impact on trade among Canada, Mexico, and the U.S. is so huge that it is now creating well-founded doubts about the North American Free Trade Agreement's viability, the topic of this article.

WHO WILL STOP CHINA'S COMPETITIVENESS AND ITS EFFECTS ON NAFTA?

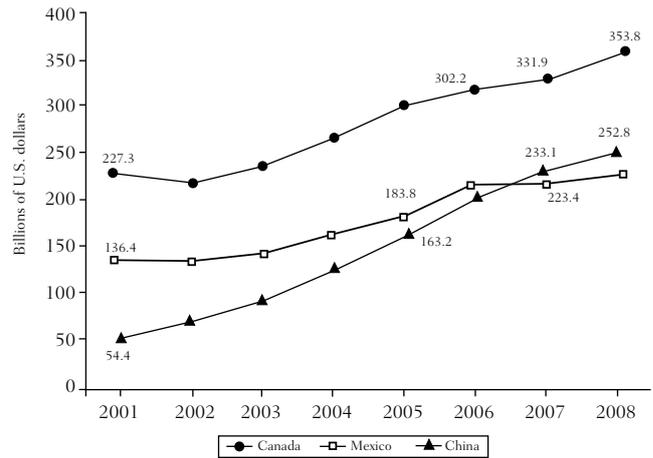
The enormous competitiveness of China's manufactures—mainly, but not exclusively, from international corporations with plants there—has allowed it to swiftly achieve an extensive presence in NAFTA partners' markets, as well as in other regions. This has caused an effect of double substitution of Canadian and Mexican goods by Chinese goods.

Chinese merchandise continues displacing Mexican and Canadian goods in the U.S. market and even at home, in what are considered their "natural," domestic markets. This second effect also deepens unemployment and exerts downward pressure on wages in Canada, Mexico, and even in the United States.²

It is a good idea to look at the magnitude of the effects of Chinese competitiveness on North America's trilateral trade as a world economic trend set in motion by the Asian giant. In 2001, manufactured goods from China imported to the U.S. were valued at US\$54 billion. This figure tripled by 2005, totaling US\$163 billion, and the same dynamic continued so that in 2008, the number reached US\$252 billion. Meanwhile, Canada's exports to the U.S. in 2008 came to US\$353 billion, a considerably larger sum, but one that is continuing to decelerate (see Graph 1).

The rhythm of expansion of Chinese trade has been practically irresistible. Let's look at how it has developed. From 1994 to 2008, its exports to the U.S. grew at a rate of 20 percent a year; almost twice the average growth of Mexican exports to

GRAPH 1
CANADA, MEXICO AND CHINA. EXPORTS TO U.S.
2001-2008



Source: Designed by the author using data from *International Trade Statistics*, UNCTAD/WTO, 2009.

the U.S. in the same period (11.4 percent). Canada, the United States' first partner, had a lower growth rate, with 7.13 percent a year. Chinese exports' dynamism explains why it has captured a growing segment of imports into the U.S.³

In the context of the U.S. and world recession, Chinese exports continued growing albeit more slowly. However, they continued their upward trend, expanding their market segment. The long-term performance of Chinese trade, then, can be considered traumatic for U.S. preferential partners. As we have seen, a 20-percent-a-year export growth rate suggests that the advantages and tariff breaks that NAFTA offers its signers and that constitute disadvantages for other countries have by no means been an impenetrable barrier for Chinese manufactures. From this point of view, we can see that China's industrial and commercial clout may significantly impact on an initial decline of the U.S. market as a key component of the North American economic region. We should remember that the United States has been the dynamic axis of NAFTA's trilateral trade as well as that of the world.

Capital and commercial exchanges between Canada and Mexico have gradually gained in importance. However, their commercial value, nearly US\$21 billion a year, is less than 10 percent of the value of Canadian exports to the U.S. (US\$354 billion in 2008). This means that NAFTA's fate continues to depend on the dynamism of U.S. consumers and a sustained recovery of the economy, something by no means guaranteed, despite the advances so far.⁴

Today there is a latent risk that Canada, the United States' strategic trade partner, will be pushed out of the number-one spot by China. In fact, this is already happening. This suggests that NAFTA may be starting to become exhausted or even displaced in fulfilling its most elementary objective: intensifying trade and investments within North America.⁵

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SAME COIN: CANADA AND MEXICO'S TRADE DEFICIT WITH CHINA

The reduction of Canada's market segment in the United States correlates to the growing weight of Chinese exports in the Canadian domestic market. This trend has increased over the last 10 years and created a negative trade balance, which in 2001 reached US\$5 billion, and by 2007 had quintupled to almost US\$27 billion.

Canada's trade deficit with China has been compensated by its positive trade balance with the rest of the world, especially the United States. However, the international financial crisis and the U.S. recession drastically changed this. By the end of 2009, Canada was facing a global trade deficit of US\$26.92 billion, compared to its US\$24.37-billion surplus in 2008, one year before the U.S. recession.⁶

What we are seeing is Chinese exports' swift penetration of the Canadian market, with negative effects for productive sectors and unemployment levels, considered one of the Canadian economy's biggest weaknesses. Bilateral Mexico-China trade looks similar: the Mexican economy also shows an increasing deficit and competitiveness indices that in some cases are lower than Canada's (see Graph 2).

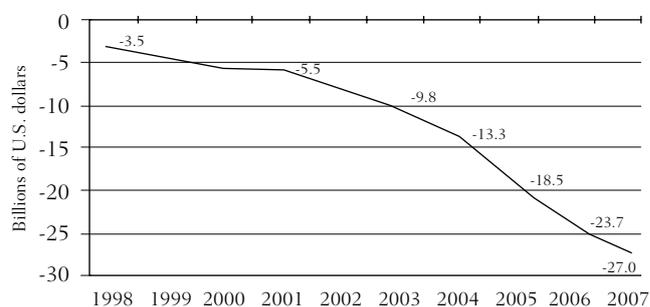
EVOLUTION OF MEXICO'S TRADE WITH THE U.S. AND CHINA

In 2007, Mexico's exports to the United States came to US\$223 billion, less than China's (US\$234 billion), displacing Mexico from its strategic position as the U.S.'s second trade partner, which it had consolidated under NAFTA. In this reshuffle, disadvantageous for Mexico, we can see the magnitude of the transformations in trade, capital, and technology flows worldwide.

Mexico-China bilateral trade results are also a matter for concern. This can be seen in the long-term performance of imports from China, which in 2000 were relatively low

(US\$2.88 billion), though in 2004, they had already skyrocketed to US\$14 billion. In the following four years, purchases of goods from China continued on the rise, and by 2008 were close to US\$35 billion. This figure contrasts with the value of Mexican exports to China (US\$2.05 billion in 2008) and its trade deficit (US\$32.71 billion). This trade gap has been financed by Mexico's trade surplus *vis-à-vis* the U.S. and Canada (see Graph 3).

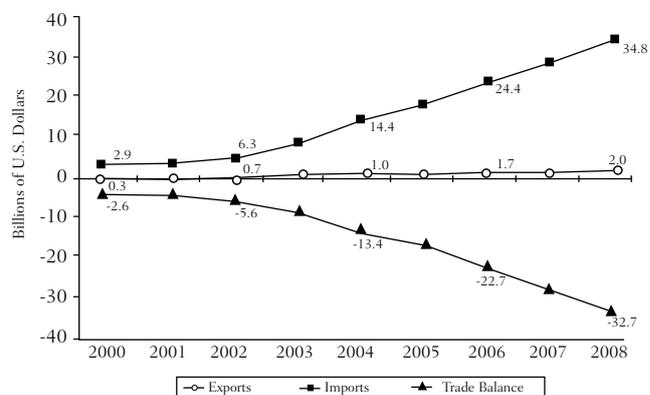
GRAPH 2
CANADA'S TRADE BALANCE WITH CHINA
(1998-2007)



Source: Designed by the author with data from Statistics Canada, www40.statcan.gc.ca/101/cst01/gblec02-eng.htm.

The countries most affected by the dual substitution effect are the ones with an export pattern similar to China's, like Mexico and Canada in some of their main sectors.

GRAPH 3
MEXICO'S TRADE BALANCE WITH CHINA (2000-2008)



Source: Designed by the author using data from Mexican Ministry of the Economy and the World Trade Organization, "Estadísticas de Comercio Internacional," July 2010, www.economia.gob.mx/economia/p_Estadisticas_de_Comercio_Internacional.

**This scenario poses
the need for Mexico and Canada
to revise trade promotion strategies
and policies directed at intensifying bilateral
trade and cooperation.**

Why is this dual substitution of Canadian and Mexican manufactures by Chinese products happening? Both countries share a characteristic: their economies revolved largely around the U.S. economy. However, Canada has had a trade surplus with the U.S. and the rest of the world, in addition to being a net exporter of capital. Mexico's trade with Canada and the U.S. also has a surplus, but its total trade with the world shows a deficit that it finances with its position as a net receiver of foreign capital.

In this context, the countries most affected by the dual substitution effect are the ones with an export pattern similar to China's, like Mexico and Canada in some of their main sectors. In this sense, Canada, Mexico, and China are considered competing economies in the U.S. market in industries like auto, auto parts, electronics, electro-domestic appliances, and computers. In precisely these kinds of goods, Chinese industry has advantages that make it highly competitive and allow it to penetrate international markets.

Amidst intense competition in international markets, Mexico's trade position is critical. Its loss of competitiveness in manufactured goods can be explained by lags in education, training, research, infrastructure, and transportation. From the institutional standpoint, the business and investment climate is being gravely disrupted by the growing insecurity and out-of-control criminal violence, mainly in the northern and central part of the country.

Business people face an increasingly adverse climate for actually doing business, as a result of a new kind of corporation with transnational operations *protected* by a huge financial, military power. The drug traffickers have shown themselves to be highly integrated into the production, distribution, and marketing of hard and soft drugs. These corporations have the direct or indirect collaboration of groups in Mexico's police forces and very often benefit from the ineffectiveness of public administration officials on all levels, or what they simply do not do.

As we know, insecurity, criminal violence, and corruption create a severe crisis in public institutions and the federal government itself. All this accelerates the loss of the

nation's economic competitiveness. In addition, companies have to make expenditures that raise their operating costs: in security technology, protection, and private security forces. This is a very sensitive topic that liberal analysts rarely consider when they look at the state of business in Mexico.

THE IMPACT OF THE U.S. RECESSION
AND CHINA'S COMPETITIVENESS ON NAFTA

Canada and Mexico's big dependence on the U.S. market constitutes both a strength and a vulnerability, according to what phase of the business cycle the U.S. is in. For Canada, that market represents 78 percent of its exports, and for Mexico, 83 percent. Under these conditions, the recent U.S. recession caused a retreat in output, employment, and earnings for all NAFTA partners, but Mexico had the worst of it (see Table 1).

In 2008, Mexico's exports to the United States reached US\$291 billion, but by the end of 2009, they had plummeted to US\$229 billion, that is, a 30 percent drop. In turn, this spurred a contraction in production, which gave GDP a 6.5 percent negative growth rate, the lowest in the world after Russia.

Actually, Mexico's exports to the U.S. were already losing steam. From 2003 to 2008, they expanded 10.2 percent a year, while China's grew 24.12 percent a year in that same period.

The long-term decline that Canadian and Mexican products were experiencing in the U.S. market became sharper when the bottom dropped out of U.S. economic activity and consumers stopped demanding imports. This impact of the

TABLE 1
IMPACT OF THE RECESSION ON NAFTA PARTNERS

	Growth Rate (%)	2008	2009	2010*
United States	GDP	0.4	-2.5	2.7
	Inflation	3.8	-0.4	1.7
Canada	GDP	0.4	-2.6	2.6
	Inflation	2.4	0.1	1.3
Mexico	GDP	1.3	-6.8	4.0
	Inflation	5.1	5.4	3.5

* Estimates for 2010.

Source: International Monetary Fund, World Economic Fund, January 2010, <http://blogimfdirect.org/tag/world-economic-outlook/>.

crisis has confirmed the risks of dependence and the resulting vulnerability of the Canadian and particularly the Mexican economies *vis-à-vis* U.S. business cycles.⁷

DOES NAFTA OFFER MEXICO AND CANADA ALTERNATIVES?

Mexico and Canada have lost important market segments in the United States and domestically due to the competitiveness of Chinese exports. This trend opens up the question about the regional trade integration of North America. In fact, NAFTA's limits in fostering trilateral trade have been accentuated by the U.S. economic recession.

This scenario poses the need for Mexico and Canada to revise trade promotion strategies and policies directed at intensifying bilateral trade and cooperation. Both nations need to move ahead and diversify their markets more in Latin America and the Asian Pacific, the main driving force of world economic recovery.

For Mexico, the Canadian market is particularly interesting because of the size of the demand for goods and services generated by its ethnic and cultural diversity, plus other factors like seasonal climate variations and the population's high income levels, all of which influences consumer and preference patterns. The still low trade levels and financial

flows between Canada and Mexico reveal a great deal of potential for development if we do not lose sight of the fact that both economies complement each other. ■■

NOTES

- ¹ *Excelsior* (Mexico City), August 24, 2010, p. N-3.
- ² José Luis de la Cruz Gallegos and José Antonio Núñez Mora, "Importaciones de EUA: posibles efectos de la competencia china para México," Alfredo Sánchez Daza, comp., *Proceso de integración económica de México y el mundo* (Mexico City: UAM Azcapotzalco/Eón, 2005).
- ³ *Boletín de la Secretaría de Economía* (Mexico City), August 2009, and "Asian Development Bank, Key Indicators 2009," http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2009/pdf/Key-Indicators-2009.pdf. [Editor's Note.]
- ⁴ International Trade Statistics, UNCTAD/WTO, 2009, http://www.wto.org/english/res_e/statis_e/its2009_e/its09_toc_e.htm. [Editor's Note.]
- ⁵ Ramiro de la Rosa, "Comercio e integración económica: el vínculo México-Estados Unidos y la competencia china por el mercado norteamericano," Ricardo Buzo, Enrique Pino, and Ana Teresa Gutiérrez, comps., *Enfrentando el cambio. Estrategias de inserción de los países de la Cuenca del Pacífico en la posguerra fría* (Mexico City: UAM Azcapotzalco/Eón, 2008).
- ⁶ Statistics Canada, "International Economic Account 2009," <http://www40.statcan.gc.ca/101/cst01/gblec02a-eng.htm>.
- ⁷ Enrique Pino Hidalgo, "Tendencias del comercio y las inversiones entre Canadá y México," Gregorio Vidal and Arturo Guillén, comps., *Globalización y regionalización. Economía y sustentabilidad* (Mexico City: Miguel Ángel Porrúa/UAM Iztapalapa, 2008).

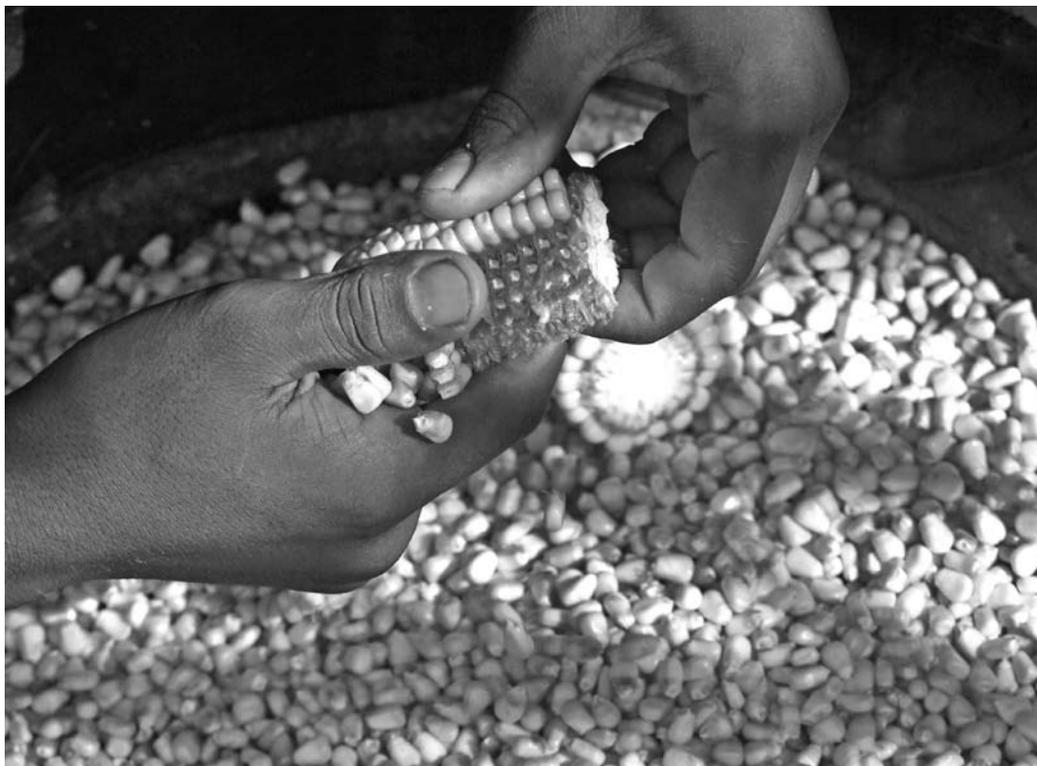
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	<p>Precio del ejemplar \$70.00. Suscripción por un año, 3 números, \$150.00 (en el extranjero USD \$25.00). Forme su colección. Números atrasados \$50.00 (USD \$8.00).</p> <p>Instituto Matías Romero</p> <p>Ricardo Flores Magón núm. 2, 1er. piso, Ala "A", Col. Guerrero, Del. Cuauhtémoc, México DF, CP 06300. Informes: Tels.: 36 86 50 47 y 36 86 51 00 extensiones 2785 y 4720, fax: 36 86 51 00 extensión 4467.</p> <p>SRE</p>
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Eating Patterns in Mexican and U.S. Marginalized Groups in the 1940s

Bernardo Olmedo Carranza*



Akhtar Soomro/REUTERS

INTRODUCTION

“Mesoamerica has been the origin and center of genetic diversity of some of humanity’s most important food crops. Suffice it to mention just grains like maize and beans, plus other crops like tomatoes, chili peppers, squash, amaranth, cacao, vanilla, different cacti, and foods made from insects and edible mushrooms as merely a sample of the food and nutritional wealth our region has contributed to the world.”¹ A 1940s study of the poorest population in the United States contrasted with a similar one using the same research and analytical parameters but among residents of an indigenous

community considered among the poorest in Mexico reveals the wealth of Mesoamerican eating patterns. The indigenous community located in the semi-desert area of the Mezquital Valley in the central Mexican state of Hidalgo, with its particular consumption patterns and cultural identity, is contrasted with the eating patterns constructed in U.S. society, a prism of diverse cultures that also generates a specific way of eating that is not only low in nutrients, but particularly harmful.

The six-decade-old study of the United States showed the detrimental effects of eating habits based on what today is known as “junk food.” The Mexican sample, on the other hand, revealed the beneficial effects of a food culture based on the consumption of natural foods in accordance with the Mesoamerican food economy, apparently “austere,” but suited

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to this population's basic needs, using fundamentally white maize and its derivatives, beans, chili peppers, tortillas, and *pulque* (a beverage made from fermented agave sap).

Unfortunately, due to a process involving both imitation and marketing-induced subjection and disinformation by huge multinational corporations, particularly from the United States, the benefits of an ancient Mesoamerican tradition have been severely transformed. Second only to the U.S. population, Mexico's inhabitants are the world's most obese, with the corresponding negative impact on their individual health and the country's development.

According to this study, the diet of one of the poorest sectors in Mexico was highly nutritious and resulted in good teeth with none of the problems of obesity, high cholesterol, triglycerides, glucose, or other harmful substances. Neither was there any hypertension, colon cancer, diabetes, obesity, or caries. The indigenous population studied did not have deficiencies—but rather even excessive natural production—of calcium, vitamin C, and other nutrients derived from the consumption of vegetables and meat, even if it was of tiny species like insects, with high protein content.

NUTRITION AND CULTURE

Appropriate nutrition, plus efficient, broad health coverage, creates a less costly public health system because it produces a healthier population. Thus, we underline the importance of local food cultures—in this case the anthropologically delimited and broadened out Mesoamerican one—as opposed to the standardized, homogeneous Western pattern of consumption disseminated as a result of the internationalization and transnationalization of food production and consumption.

Generally speaking, our local cultures are not improvised: they are the result of diverse factors and have generated their own forms of survival and development using the resources available. A culture generally depends on what it finds around it in nature. Due to the development of communications and trade, some cultures adopt aspects of others, but these do not become predominant. Paradoxically, these same advances have left local cultures extremely vulnerable and, in certain cases, deprived of their originality, or worse, having lost their identity altogether.

Today, this phenomenon is strikingly evident in the case of Mexico. We must not forget the close historic link between

ancient Mexican culture and the nutritional prototype of the American Way of Life, disseminated worldwide: so-called junk food. It has been proven that this kind of transnational eating pattern causes malnutrition, disease, and other new evils in previously local cultures.

For the purposes of this essay, we will cite some results of a survey on nutrition done in 1943 and 1944 in the Mezquital Valley by American Richmond Anderson.² His study produced rather surprising results, since the region where it was carried out is historically one of the country's poorest and most backward.

This study came after another done shortly before in the United States that sampled marginalized sectors of the population. That is what made it seem possible to compare it with Mexico. However, the enormous difference is that the Mexican target population had an ancestral food culture history: the Otomís from the Mezquital Valley, a region lacking certain resources, among them water, but where the popu-

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lation's diet was made up of foods found in their semi-desert surroundings.

Since pre-Hispanic times, these people have consumed an apparently small variety of foods, basically of plant origin. The study omits products of animal origin since what it found was very small species (small animals and insects) that still exist, but are less and less common. It should be pointed out that some of these have become highly prized, costly gourmet products.

THE RESULTS

The survey is very revealing. In terms of caloric consumption, the social group studied in Mexico was slightly below that reported in a similar poll done at the same time in Mexico City, but curiously on a level closer to what was found in certain regions of the United States. However, the average

calorie intake of Mezquital Valley residents was higher than that of Afro-Americans in the regions studied.

Given the fact that the Otomí indigenous people are slender and short of stature, on the average, their calorie intake was higher than their basic requirements. The energy they consumed came from a diet relatively high in carbohydrates and low in fats and proteins —although the protein count is quite debatable after looking again at the importance of insects as an enormous protein source. A substantial part of this energy came from a pre-Hispanic beverage that, despite its production and consumption having dropped, can still be found in Mesoamerica: *pulque*. It is derived from an agave plant related to the one used to make tequila, mescal, and innumerable other beverages, but with a much lower alcohol content and different nutritional characteristics.

The average protein consumption of the Mexican indigenous group was 80 percent of what the U.S. National Research Council (NRC) recommended at the time, even though

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only 4.8 percent was of animal origin. Not even pregnant or nursing women had serious protein deficiencies.

Generally speaking the protein nutrition of the Mezquital Valley Otomís was good. Their main source was tortillas (75 percent), followed by beans and *pulque*. It was thought that the insufficient growth of these people may have been due to deficiencies in the quantity or quality of the protein they consumed.

Few clinical signs of vitamin A deficiency were found. Their thiamin consumption was even higher than NRC recommendations, despite the high consumption of carbohydrates. Nevertheless, their riboflavin and niacin consumption was low —only 41 percent of the recommended amount for the former— but without dropping to such a serious level that they were in danger of getting pellagra (today we know that niacin is produced by corn when mixed with calcium oxide slaked with water to soften it in what is called the *nixtamalización* process).

Average vitamin C intake was, on the contrary, quite a bit higher than the recommended amount (142 percent); in adults, this was due to *pulque* consumption. Blood tests showed adequate results compared to those habitually found in the United States. Anemia was uncommon, indicating that iron consumption was rather high. Today we know that high levels of iron are compensated by high levels of vitamin C intake, and the traditional diet, a reflection of the food culture of the social group studied 65 years ago, was already part of their wise daily food equilibrium.

On the other hand, average calcium intake was 85 percent of that recommended at the time by the NRC, a level then considered adequate. This is why no cases of rickets or other calcium-deficiency-related diseases were found. The average consumption of phosphorus was adequate, as was the calcium-phosphorus ratio. Both elements came specifically from tortilla consumption.

The researchers considered at the time that it was not necessary to measure vitamin D consumption among the indigenous group given their great exposure to sunlight, since, as is well known, this is a natural factor in fixing calcium in the human body.

CONCLUSIONS

The diet of the Otomís studied showed very good levels —higher than NRC recommended— of vitamin A, thiamin, ascorbic acid (vitamin C), and iron. Calcium levels were found to be slightly low, but satisfactory.

The consumption of proteins, calories, and niacin was considered slightly low, from the point of view of their quality, particularly the niacin, associated with high consumption of maize. Riboflavin consumption was the only indicator that was insufficient enough to produce clinical signs, although, in summary, only scant clinical indications of nutritional deficiencies were found.

Although the Otomís are short and slender —but not in the extreme— and the children were short and slow to develop, it was not possible to determine if this was due to nutritional deficiencies or it was a racial trait. Given the clinical results, it may well have been associated with the latter or with other factors that had not yet been discovered almost seven decades ago.

Illnesses like hypertension and others that by then the U.S. population was already suffering from were practically

non-existent among Otomís and *mestizos*. Their teeth were excellent and problems of gingivitis were associated more with the almost non-existent use of toothbrushes than with their nutrition. Almost 50 percent of adults had perfect teeth, and the rate of pyorrhea was low.

Even though their diet was high in carbohydrates, they consumed practically no sugars. Their intake of meat, dairy, fruit, and vegetables was extremely low, but their food culture, based on tortillas, *pulque*, beans, chili peppers, and other plants available in the arid, sterile soil of the Mezquital Valley, was generally adequate and sufficient, and their noticeable deficiencies easy to remedy. From this we can conclude that the food culture of these indigenous people, which is fundamentally the same as that of the Mexican people as a whole, enriched in the different regions by other foods available in each locality—vegetables and animals—has been appropriate, balanced, healthy, and wise.

The case of tortillas and the corn dough with which they are made is unique in the world. Corn by itself does not have great nutritional value. However, it is the *nixtamalización* process it undergoes that enriches the end product. Even though its carbohydrate count is high (about 45 percent of its total weight), these are unrefined carbohydrates, and even when tortilla production is mechanized, “whole” corn kernels are still the raw material. Recently, in the process to make the corn dough, other nutrients have been added like prickly pear cactus flour made from this highly nutritional plant with excellent digestive properties. Tortillas are also very moist (about 40 percent moisture), with high levels of proteins and fiber and low fat levels. They also have phosphorus, calcium, magnesium, iron, zinc, copper, magnesium, sodium, potassium, thiamine, riboflavin, niacin—the latter was not very easily detected in the 1940s when the comparative study was done—folic acid, pantothenic acid, and vitamin B6.

Beans are an important source of vegetable protein, complemented with maize and a small amount of chili peppers. Suffice it to mention that no matter what the variety, fresh or dried chili peppers contain proteins, carbohydrates, calcium, thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, retinol (vitamin A), very few fats, and are an important source of vitamin C. The effects of this particular variety of *capsicum* give it wide-ranging, diverse effectiveness for problems stemming from rheumatism and rheumatoid arthritis.

In summary, the results of the survey are surprising and lead us to a reflection about the need to recuperate much of our forgotten Mesoamerican culture, to keep alive practices

that fortunately still survive, like the production and consumption of tortillas, beans, chili peppers and *pulque*, for the benefit of Mexican society. We should rediscover, recover, and preserve our ancestral, traditional food culture; take advantage of the healthiest aspects of other non-traditional foods both from Mexico and abroad; promote the consumption of whole-grain products; and create a counterculture that will steer us away from transnationalized eating patterns based on high consumption of fats, salt, carbohydrates, and refined sugars and/or sugar substitutes, as well as other highly harmful agents. We must give our natural foods the status of “appropriate for healthy consumption,” to favor individual health and that of society. It is important to underline this, which is linked to the concluding reflection of Anderson’s study: “You get the impression that, despite the sterility and poverty of the region, over many centuries, its inhabitants have developed eating habits and a way of life adapted to that environment. Any attempt at changing it would be a mistake as long as their economic and social conditions are not improved and truly more favorable conditions achieved.”³

Our purpose is precisely to reproduce the traditional food culture on all levels of Mexican society, both in Mexico and abroad, through the so-called “magic foods,”⁴ “ethnic and nostalgia products,”⁵ particularly sought out by those who have migrated to the United States, and to avoid products that are bad for the health of both the individual and the collective. ■■■

NOTES

¹ Octavio Paredes López, Fidel Guevara Lara, and Luis Arturo Bello Pérez, *Los alimentos mágicos de las culturas indígenas mesoamericanas*, first edition (Mexico City: FCE/SEP/Conacyt/CAB, 2006), p. 9.

² *Revista de Investigación Clínica* 2, vol. 45 (March-April 1993), Mexico City, published by the Instituto Nacional de la Nutrición Dr. Salvador Zubirán; Bernardo Olmedo Carranza, “El Valle del Mezquital: ¿nutrición inadecuada? *El Financiero* (Mexico City) May 19, 25 and 26, 1993; Margaret Mead and C. E. Guthe, “Manual for the Study of Food Habits,” *Bulletin of the National Research Council* (Washington, D.C.), 1945. Margaret Mead has been cited as the author of one of the pioneering works on food habits in the United States. See also Miriam Bertrán Vilá, *Cambio alimentario e identidad de los indígenas mexicanos* (Mexico City: Programa Universitario México Nación Multicultural/Coordinación de Humanidades, UNAM, 2005), p. 20.

³ *Revista de Investigación Clínica*, op. cit.

⁴ Octavio Paredes López et al., op. cit.

⁵ For more on “ethnic and nostalgia” products, see another article by Bernardo Olmedo, “Latin American Migrant Markets in North America. ‘Ethnic and Nostalgia’ Products,” *Voices of Mexico* 86 (Mexico City), pp. 57-60. [Editor’s Note.]

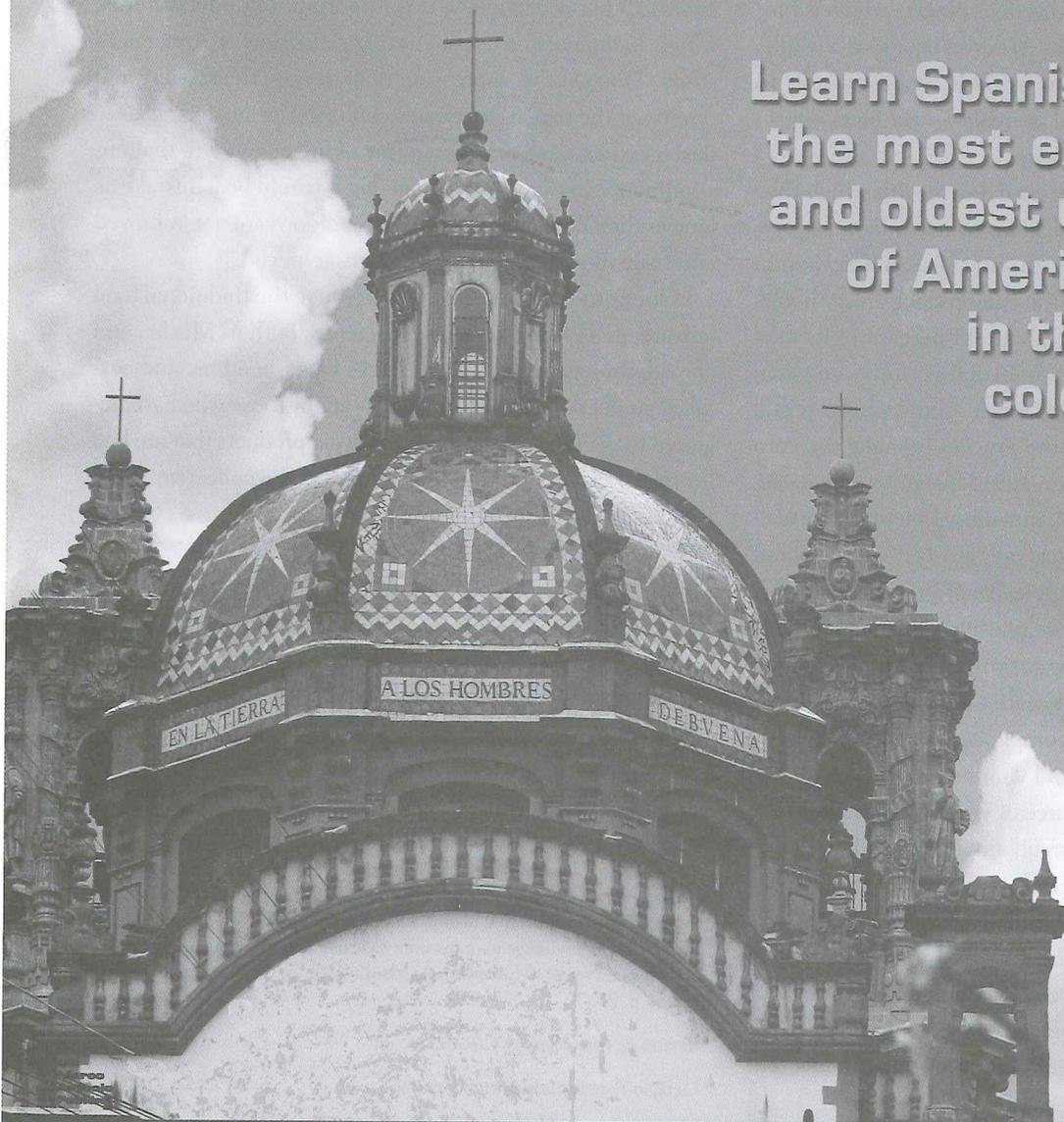
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From Independence To the Revolution Six Views from the Present

Reflecting on the events that molded contemporary Mexico implies profound knowledge of the historical period in question. The six articles in this dossier were written by specialists in each of the historical stages between the last years of New Spain's colonial regime and the Mexican Revolution, culminating in a constitutional framework that incorporated a series of aspirations that can be traced back to the thinking of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. The *Voices of Mexico* reader will find in these essays interpretations that emphasize certain topics more than others. They must be read as pieces that invite you to delve more deeply into the vast historiography dealing with the formative years of a project that has sought the consolidation of a national state.

The vignettes used in this section are from the book *Parafernalia e Independencia* (Mexico City: Conaculta/Secretaría de Cultura Cd. de México/Fundación Cultural de la Ciudad de México/CIÉ/Fundación 2010 Conmemoraciones, 2008).

New Spain and Independence

Alfredo Ávila*



Old and New Spain at the hands of Religion to avenge Fernando VII.

In the early nineteenth century, in the lands that are now Mexico, a society was growing dominated by the Spanish monarchy. Strictly speaking, New Spain had no borders. The sovereignty of the Catholic kings and queens reached as far as their Spanish, indigenous, and mestizo subjects lived. The faculties of Mexico's viceroy included ad-

ministering justice, governing, making war, and collecting taxes. The Audiencias of Mexico City and Guadalajara were the highest tribunals in the land. The intendentes headed the governments in each of the provinces, aided by their lieutenants. The dioceses of Mérida, Oaxaca, Puebla, Michoacán, Guadalajara, Monterrey, and Durango, together with the archdiocese of Mexico City, were charged with the spiritual guidance of a little over six million Catholics.

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Seals used by the caudillos of Independence, Don José María Morelos and Don Ignacio López Rayón. Don J. E. Hernández Dávalos Collection.

Numerous corporations provided their members with privileges in a society with no guarantee of equality before the law. The king bestowed privileges on all his subjects to protect them in exchange for their loyalty. In practice, many of these privileges ended by hurting those involved. The indigenous peoples (called the “Indian Republics”)¹ made up more than half of the population. More than 4,000 towns with their own governments were exempt from taxes, paying tribute instead; they had control over their natural resources, but were subordinated to the lieutenants. Those with the most privileges were the whites, called Spaniards regardless of whether they had been born in the Iberian Peninsula or in the Americas, as only a few had been born in Spain. They came to about 16 percent of the population. The rest was mestizo, many descended from Africans, who had no privileges at all.

The economy of New Spain was very diverse. Thousands of towns lived only from agricultural production as they had been doing since before the Spanish arrived. Large *tianguis* (open-air markets) and fairs were hubs for regional trade networks. Major mining centers like Taxco, Real del Monte, Bolaños, Zacatecas, and Guanajuato generated enormous riches that stimulated the economy of regions like the Bajío or Guadalajara. Large mine-owners and some merchants took advantage of this prosperity to accumulate fabulous fortunes. At the same time, however, as Alexander von Humboldt ob-

Strictly speaking, New Spain had no borders. The sovereignty of the Catholic kings and queens reached as far as their Spanish, indigenous, and mestizo subjects lived.

served, millions of people were mired in poverty. The bishop of Michoacán, Antonio de San Miguel, and his most important followers, like Manuel Abad y Queipo or Miguel Hidalgo, suggested reforms to solve these problems: freeing up commerce and production and giving rights to everyone regardless of race.

The Spanish crown also took advantage of New Spain’s prosperity. Wars between Great Britain and France had forced Spain to take sides, and it needed increasing amounts of money to cover its military expenditures. In 1803, the Spanish government forced its American colonies’ treasuries to pay their foreign creditors. A year later, it decreed that the resources of the ecclesiastic tribunals would be sent to the crown to cover debts. Many people realized that this would be disastrous for New Spain’s economy, since the ecclesiastic tribunals gave credit to landowners, merchants, and mine owners. The 1804 decree caused many people to lose their properties, in addition to cutting off fresh loans. Nevertheless, neither the social nor the economic crisis explains the fall of the Spanish government in North America. Generally speaking, the population was loyal to the monarchy and its institutions. A political crisis was necessary for this to change.

In 1808, the conflicts in the Spanish royal family threatened Napoleon’s plans in Europe. The French emperor forced King Carlos IV and his son, Prince Fernando de Borbón, to renounce the Spanish throne in exchange for privileges, properties, and pensions. Joseph Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned king of Spain. Many Spaniards accepted this change since the new monarch was enlightened and a reformer. He even offered Spain a constitution. However, Spain was losing its independence to the French empire. For this reason, many did not recognize the Bourbon abdications. Throughout Spain, government councils or “juntas” were formed that fought to keep the kingdom independent.



The same thing happened in some cities in the Americas like Caracas or Buenos Aires. In New Spain, the Mexico City government also rejected the abdications and asked the viceroy to disobey any new government set up in Spain. In July and August 1808, several meetings were organized by Viceroy José de Iturrigaray. Some people proposed setting up a council of authorities to govern the kingdom in the absence of the king. Others favored recognizing one of the government councils that had been established in Spain.

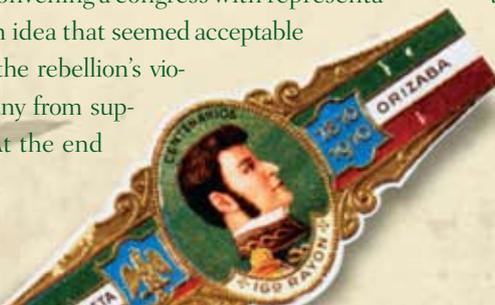
These proposals were discussed from Campeche to Chihuahua. Everyone declared themselves against Bonaparte and for Prince Fernando, but no one could agree on the most urgent matter: who should govern New Spain. None of the governments set up in Spain had the right to govern the Americas, but the main corporations opposed forming their own government.

In September, a group of merchants violently deposed Viceroy Iturrigaray and set up a government that threw its allegiance to the Seville Council. Protests broke out immediately. The merchants had deposed an official appointed by the king, and there was no reason to obey the government established in Seville. To keep order, the new viceroy dispersed the criollo troops billeted in the province of Veracruz. Conspiracies spread throughout the viceroyalty. In February 1809, a newssheet was published proclaiming independence. In December a conspiracy in Michoacán was uncovered. In early 1810, Manuel Abad y Queipo warned that social conditions, the political crisis, and the lack of reform would bring about an insurrection that would lead to independence, which the new Viceroy Francisco Xavier Venegas could not avert. In September, the authorities discovered another conspiracy, this time in Querétaro. The participants decided to stage an insurrection to avoid being taken prisoner. Parish priest Miguel Hidalgo and criollo Captain Ignacio Allende headed a rebellion that spread in a few weeks through Guanajuato, the viceroyalty's most prosperous region. A severe agricultural crisis spurred many people to rise up in arms. In a short time, dozens of towns or *villas* had joined the insurrection. Criollo governments were set up in the provinces of Guanajuato, Michoacán, Guadalajara, San Luis Potosí, and Zacatecas. Miguel Hidalgo proposed convening a congress with representatives of the *villas*, an idea that seemed acceptable to many. However, the rebellion's violence dissuaded many from supporting the rebels. At the end



of September, the city of Guanajuato witnessed a horrible slaughter, which would be repeated even in cities that had opened their doors to the insurgents, like Guadalajara.

Thousands of criollos, mestizos, and indigenous supported the insurrection, but thousands of others also readied themselves to oppose it. Both Spanish and Americas-born members of the clergy preached against Miguel Hidalgo. Merchants, mine owners, and landowners refused to participate in such a violent undertaking. The viceregal army, headed by Félix Calleja, was made up of ranchers, peons, and agricultural day laborers just like Miguel Hidalgo's forces, but had a different strategy. In January 1811, Calleja's disciplined troops defeated the insurgents outside Guadalajara. Calleja readied himself to form armed groups of men in each villa and city to sustain the viceregal government. Hidalgo, Allende, and their followers fled to the North, where they would be caught, judged, and executed by firing squad.



Neither the social nor the economic crisis explains the fall of the Spanish government in North America. The population was fairly loyal to the monarchy and its institutions. A political crisis was necessary for this to change.

The criollos who wanted to govern their provinces saw an opportunity in the Spanish government itself. In 1809, a Central Council had been set up in Spain, which ordered the meeting of a parliament known as the “Cortes.” While in principle, only Spanish deputies had been convened, it soon became clear that this government would only be viable if they included representatives of the American dominions. Naturally, the Spaniards were not willing to give the criollos the number of deputies that would have been proportional to their population, but only called for one deputy for each province in the Americas. Nevertheless, the criollos were willing to accept this offer in order to participate. Elections were held in 1810. Soon, deputies from almost all the provinces of New Spain left for Cádiz. Some of them, like Miguel Ramos Arizpe, promoted local self-governing institutions. Others, like Manuel Beye de Cisneros and José Miguel Guridi, fought for equality of Spaniards and those born in the Americas. The participation of the criollos was very important in this parliament, contributing to the writing of the 1812 Constitution and the new liberal institutions.

Spain’s 1812 Constitution brought unprecedented changes in the political culture of New Spain. The indigenous and the Spaniards would have the same civil rights. More than 1,000 elected city councils would be set up in old *villas* and indigenous towns. Elections were held to choose provincial deputies and deputies for the Cortes. Freedom of press allowed newspapers to be published and public debate to begin. However, the Spanish authorities obstructed these measures. Venegas suppressed freedom of the press and delayed the elections. In many places, the Constitution was not applied because of the war. As if that were not enough, the Spanish deputies to the Cortes were not willing to accept that there should be the same number of representatives from the Americas as from Spain. Arbitrarily, they decided that anyone of African descent would not be given rights or counted as part of the population, which was what determined the number of deputies for each province. Since in certain parts of the Americas, people of African descent were very

numerous, the number of deputies that these provinces could elect was reduced.

For these reasons, some criollos who had considered the 1812 Constitution acceptable decided to throw their support to the insurgents. In 1811, Ignacio Rayón tried to create an independent government, the National American Council. A short time later, José María Morelos decided to carry out a more ambitious plan: he created a Congress with deputies from the provinces of New Spain, which declared independence and promoted a Constitution of its own. This Congress was inspired in the 1812 Constitution, but organized the country as a republic. Thus, the insurgents’ main ideologues, like José María Cos and Carlos María de Bustamante, tried to turn the civil war into a war between two nations: Spain and the Mexican part of the Americas.

In 1814, King Fernando VII abolished the Constitution and reestablished absolutism. This allowed the viceregal authorities to act more expeditiously against the insurgents. The numerous deaths caused by “mysterious fevers” in 1813 also limited the insurgents military capabilities. After José María Morelos was captured and executed by firing squad, the rebellion waned. The new viceroy, Juan Ruiz de Apodaca, managed to defeat the expedition of the young Spanish



José María Morelos y Pavón.



Vicente Guerrero and Agustín de Iturbide join forces.

Taken from *La Bandera de México* (Mexico City: Nacional Financiera, 1985), p. 117.

In early 1810, Manuel Abad y Queipo warned that social conditions, the political crisis, and the lack of reform would bring about an insurrection that would lead to independence.

mented in Spain, but also the liberals, because it offered them a constitutional government. Similarly, it won the support of Vicente Guerrero, the most important insurgent leader. The offer that all Americans, regardless of ethnic origin, would have political rights was very attractive. Many commanders, governors, ayuntamientos, and deputies began to accept Iturbide's proposal. In September 1821, a government council wrote the declaration of independence. Mexico had been born. **MM**

commander Xavier Mina, who opposed absolutism. The authorities offered pardons, which were accepted by many insurgents. In 1820, the viceregal government was no longer threatened by war. However, in the provinces, royalist commanders had been strengthened. In Monterrey, Joaquín Arredondo had the luxury of disobeying government orders. In Guadalajara, José de la Cruz was very powerful. It was no easy task to reestablish order after a decade of war.

In 1820, Spain restored the Constitution. Many inhabitants of New Spain thought equality of Spaniards and American residents should be demanded. A group of deputies, headed by Mariano Michelena, Lucas Alamán, and Lorenzo de Zavala, proposed that three parliaments be established in the Americas, headed by Spanish princes, to maintain the unity of the Spanish monarchy and give the Americans self-government. Their proposal was rejected, and they decided to return to Mexico.

For his part, a young coronel, Agustín de Iturbide—who had participated in the hunt for the insurgents—made a similar proposal: set up a congress in Mexico and crown the king of Spain emperor. Iturbide's Independence Plan satisfied privileged sectors who feared the reforms being imple-

NOTES

¹ The term “republic” here is taken from the Latin *res publica*, or “public matter,” and refers to a political body of a territory or community, and is not used in the modern sense of the word “republic.” [Translator's Note.]

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Independent, Inexperienced, and Disorganized Political Life in Mexico (1821-1855)

María del Carmen Vázquez Mantecón*



The Mexican Republic in the first half of the nineteenth century.

I will attempt here to briefly sketch like in an impressionist painting what I think determined events in Mexico between 1821 and 1855. Many topics could be tackled in doing this, but given the need to pick among the most representative, I have opted to single out the vicissitudes of those in power in their attempts to consolidate the Mexican state. I will also look at the time and space where all this

happened, giving geography its place: the changes in territoriality, both internal and those due to external threats. I include the ups and downs of the economy, and a consideration about the criollos, who held the affairs of their recently unveiled country in their hands. These issues have been part of my concerns and love for historical research and what I have written about up to now. This is where most of these reflections stem from.

Mexican historiography of the first half of the nineteenth century was concerned with pointing out the terrible “national ills” that afflicted Mexico from 1821 on. This vi-

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sion of continuous failures—in each case written from a different perspective—contrasts with that of the historians of the last decades of the same century. The latter had been lucky enough to witness the outcome of the history of revolutions and barracks revolts typical of Mexico after independence. Armed with the victory of the 1867 Republic and the order and progress that it brought, they quickly dubbed the previous period “the years of anarchy.”

Mexicans who lived through those turbulent days saw the creation of a constitutional monarchy with the regency that preceded it, three constitutions (the 1824 Federalist Constitution, later reformed in 1846; the so-called Constitution of the Seven Laws of 1835, and the Organic Bases of 1843), which respectively sanctioned the existence of two federal republics and two centralized republics, and many governments based on political plans or administrative schemes, some of which turned into true dictatorships. Except for Guadalupe Victoria (1824-1828), none of the presidents served

out their full terms. For this reason, interim or substitute presidents became unavoidable; most of those who sat in the president’s chair were military men, and not a few, whether military or civilian, sat in it more than once, regardless of whether they had previously espoused an opposite set of principles to get there. The different Constitutions gave more power to Congress out of

fear of despotism, so the presidents resorted to using extraordinary powers. For its part, the judicial branch was never a counterweight to the executive or the legislature.

It is impossible in so few pages to deal with each administration and its vicissitudes. Suffice it to say that between 1821 and 1855, the chief executive changed more than 30 times, with the resulting changes in ministers of state. This gives us an average of one president or executive power per year. They tried all forms of government, only to find to their confusion that none of them worked. The issues debated for decades were about whether they should be republicans or monarchists; followers of Iturbide or the Bourbons, of York or the Scots; federalists or centralists; representative democrats or oligarchs; liberals or conservatives (including all the possible degrees of each); and, among other things, small property owners or in favor of communal property.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Mexico’s territory extended to the 42nd parallel to the north and to the border with Belize and Guatemala to the south. Only during the time of the First Empire was Mexico united with

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the country Central America, but it separated after Agustín Iturbide’s abdication in March 1823. At the time independence was achieved, the population is estimated to have been six million, very badly distributed over that vast territory. And soon, that huge expanse was subjected to colonizing, expansionist interests that led to the loss of more than half of it (Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, La Mesilla) between 1836 and 1854.

By mid-century, the Mexican republic had a population of 7,661,919, of whom 200,000 lived in the capital. Approximately four million were indigenous, and the remaining 3.5 million were a minority European and criollo, and a majority mestizo. Eighty percent of the population lived in poverty. Both internal and external borders were in constant flux. There was a frontier between “whites” and indigenous; between Mexicans and foreigners; between barbarians and the civilized; between sedentary people and nomads; between individuals and communities; between owners and the dispossessed; and between some owners and others. The new dividing line to the North was finally fixed at the Rio Grande



Antonio López de Santa Anna, the caudillo who was in power several times between 1833 and 1855.



J. S. Hegi, *The Cathedral and the Promenade of the Chains on Thursday of Easter Week*, 1854.

or Río Bravo in 1856, the year in which the agreement both countries signed in 1848 ending the war between Mexico and the United States was ratified.

The most complete expression of the indigenous and peasant rebellions in defense of their communal lands and their autonomy—which took place all over the country—in the period occupying us here was Yucatán’s Caste War. For “people of reason,” it was a true struggle between two different races, in which they argued that the indigenous were the ones who abhorred the “whites” because they did not want to submit to “white” laws of order and sociability. The whites feared this confrontation more than the invasion of the “Indian barbarians” from the North, whose outrages were seen as a struggle between barbarism and civilization, or, rather, between “property” and the pillaging of the nomadic tribes.¹ In the end, those who maintained the need for individual property would prevail, believing, like Manuel Payno, that “from the moment that the brigand has consummated his attack against property and has received its fruit, he is the new owner.”²

The economy fluctuated between a ban on imports that affected commerce, protecting the incipient textile industry, and, on the other hand, supporting free trade, heedless of the country’s industrialization. Mexico exported silver, hemp, cochineal grain, logwood, indigo, vanilla, and sugar; it imported almost everything it needed, plus luxury items. Mining,

which had declined during the War for Independence, bounced back a little with the investment of English capital. Since there was no money in the public coffers, taxes and fees were increased. The country was indebted internally and abroad, which led to Mexico’s weakness and impotency in the face of foreign interests—and our country sought recognition abroad—manifested not only in the military invasions of Spain (1829), France (1838), and the United States (1846-1848), but also in aggressive political and economic expansionism and interventionism. Since there were no banks or institutions of credit, loans and foreign currency operations were always in the hands of loan sharks who speculated to the country’s detriment; and not only individuals fell into their clutches, but even government businesses. The disinterest of the majority of Mexicans accustomed them to political convulsions, military revolts, barracks uprisings, foreign invasions, national and foreign wars, and filibusterism. The meager public budget was used to pay and maintain an army that beleaguered the country more than defended it, and fund the wages of the government bureaucracy, which found a way to thrive on the taxpayer’s money and, as Miguel Lerdo de Tejada pointed out, helped propagate anarchistic ideas.³

For their part, those in government were more interested in politics than in culture, education, or the country’s economy. In the opinion of historian Luis González, “After three decades of independent life, Mexico, trounced, ragged, without

The economy fluctuated between a ban on imports that affected commerce, protecting the incipient textile industry, and, on the other hand, supporting free trade, heedless of the country's industrialization.

any national cohesion, without peace, could only display with pride its intellectuals.”⁴ He was referring to José Joaquín Fernández de Lizardi, to Manuel Eduardo de Gorostiza, to Andrés Quintana Roo, to José Joaquín Pesado, to Manuel Carpio in the front line, plus Bustamante, Mora, Zavala, and Alamán. And he added the importance of journalism as a genre, which ranged from the time of *El Sol* and *El Águila*, to that of *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, *El Monitor Republicano*, *El Tiempo*, and *El Universal*.

The lack of government can be explained in part by the situation of the clergy and the army. The vast economic power of the Mexican Catholic Church has already been pointed out, in addition to its unrelenting influence in Mexicans' legal, social, moral, and spiritual matters. Its being a true rival for political power allowed it to use its economic wealth to support or bring down governments. On the other hand, the ills plaguing the army included, among other things, its upwardly-mobile, ambitious, privileged officer class. They came from having fought for the interests of the Spanish Crown, and then, from just joining the independence pact proposed by Agustín de Iturbide. Their favorite pastime was making revolutions in which they always won more promotions and prerogatives. Some authors have argued that that period was the time when caudillos reigned supreme, and this could also describe the mid-century. For Lucas Alamán, conservative politician and historian, the panorama of government in Mexico from 1822 to 1853 could be summed up in eight words: “the history of the revolutions of Santa Anna.”⁵ While it is true that Santa Anna was the victorious caudillo, this is partially the case because the other contenders (Agustín de Iturbide, Anastasio Bustamante, and Mariano Paredes, among many others) gave him plenty of room in the struggle for power, which almost always included disavowing rivals; alliances, some truly remarkable and contradictory; confrontations on the battlefield; and, finally, the proposal of new pacts that were unlikely to be lived up to.

The optimism of 1821 ended by fading away only three decades later. In his resignation from the presidency in Jan-



Agustín I, emperor of Mexico from 1822 to 1823. He became famous, however, as one of the liberators of Mexico.

uary 1853, moderate liberal Mariano Arista listed the ills plaguing the country: maritime customs offices invaded by contraband; the disappearance of tax monies in many places; the destruction of the government monopoly over tobacco; the rise in internal and foreign debt; deficit-ridden agriculture; an illiterate majority; rural workers living in conditions of servitude; military officers who soaked up the little money in the public coffers; a reactionary, hoarding clergy; multiple caste wars and the failure to contain the “barbarian Indians”; a lack of police forces; the absence of morals in public administration; and, above all, political instability. The liberals never stopped seeking progress for Mexico, with a project that underlined the need to become a federal, representative, popular republic, eliminating the privileges of the corporations by selling their goods, inviting foreigners to colonize and work unoccupied lands, subjecting the power of the clergy to the state, with a tamed army, and looking to the United States as the model to follow.

To find some sort of a remedy to these ills, around 1853 the conservatives also insisted on the importance of progress, but with their own vision of things. For them, progress could only be attained if material improvements were introduced. They saw the country as an organism with no arteries. So they proposed building roads, funded by private companies' investments. They also fostered colonization by foreign, Catholic workers, who, together with the new roads, would renovate the country's broken-down agriculture. They proposed providing guarantees for labor and industry. In the field of politics, they dreamed of a monarchy, for which they sought the support of Europe, sustained by a powerful army and clergy. However, although they tried to order the existing legislation and to reform the administration, they achieved little because the flighty government that protected them (the sixth and last headed by Antonio López de Santa Anna) was ephemeral. Though given broad faculties, these were not sufficient for containing a liberal revolution begun by the moderates, known as the Ayutla Revolution (because it began in a town of that name), which took place between 1854 and 1855 and marked a change of direction of the history of power, in which criollo caudillos would no longer have any place.

The historiography of the late nineteenth century contributed greatly to forging the myth of a consolidated nation after the victory of the liberals in 1867. This is a fundamental doctrine of the contemporary Mexican state, whose reason for being has been to harmonize the enormous jigsaw puzzle that had existed since time immemorial. However, this unifying process undoubtedly began before Mexico became independent from Spain, and in 1821 took on new vigor. Both liberals and conservatives proposed integrating what the evangelizers called the "indigenous nations," through individual property, the Spanish language, political centralism, and Catholicism.

From then on, several symbols key to our national being were created, which, in addition to the four matters I just mentioned, were an important symbolic, discursive legacy of that Mexican state founded by the criollos between 1821 and 1855. I am referring to the flag and its coat of arms, the celebration of the "cry of Independence" ceremony on September 15, the national anthem, and, among other things, the reinforcement of other symbols from the religious sphere like the cult of Guadalupe, inherited from the so-called New Spain, criollo nationalism. The generation that lived through Independence and tried to form its own government gave the territory they

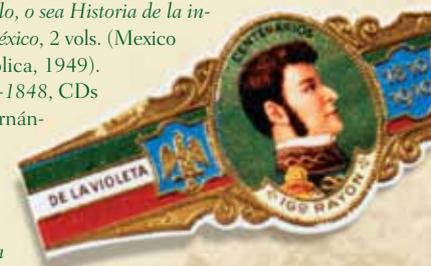
were born in a name and new borders, but, above all, it gave birth to a language and a political way of being that continues to be in force and is one of the most important components of that complex weave that identifies us as Mexicans. **MM**

NOTES

- ¹ In Spanish, the word for "property" is also the word for "propriety," thus indicating the close relationship between being an owner and being proper. [Translator's Note.]
- ² Manuel Payno, *Tratado de la propiedad*, facsimile of the 1869 first edition (Mexico City: Secretaría de la Reforma Agraria, 1981), p. 13.
- ³ "Carta de Miguel Lerdo de Tejada a Antonio López de Santa Anna, abril de 1853," Carlos J. Sierra, *Miguel Lerdo de Tejada (1821-1861)* (Mexico City: Dirección General de Prensa, Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, 1961), p. 22.
- ⁴ Luis González, "El periodo formativo," *Historia mínima de México* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1974), p. 103.
- ⁵ Lucas Alamán, *Historia de Méjico desde los primeros movimientos que prepararon su Independencia en el año de 1808 hasta la época presente*, vol. 5, facsimile of the 1852 Lara edition (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica/Instituto Cultural Helénico, 1985), p. 686.

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The Significance of the Reform Period (1855-1862)

Silvestre Villegas Revueltas*



Benito Juárez, defender of the Constitution and the rule of law.

When the government of Juan Álvarez passed the Law of the Administration of Justice, or *Ley Juárez*, in 1855, it meant that the victorious Ayutla Revolution had materialized in a legal reform that established the equality of citizens before the law in criminal matters. This was a break with the old order in a society that, besides being divided into social classes, differentiated its legal proceedings, clearly revealing two estates above the rest of Mexicans (the clergy and the army). The immediate consequence of this was the conservative rebellion that General Tomás Mejía began in the mountains of Querétaro under the banners of “religion and immunity!”

These were the issues and actions on both sides that characterize the period historiography has called the Reform. A little more than a month later, Ignacio Comonfort took office as president, and, with that, the second administration headed by a southerner launched “the liberal reform that was the only one in the country’s interests.” This began with the creation of the Regulation on Freedom of the Press, whose author, José María Lafragua, argued that given the clampdown prevailing during Santa Anna’s dictatorship, the revolution-cum-government understood that one of the undeniable rights of Man was the individual’s freedom to express his opinions about public life.

However, the Minister of the Interior added that criticisms should not be anonymous: newspapers were obliged to report who the editor in charge was and include the names of their editorialists. The edict clarified that all administration actions could be criticized, but not the private life of public officials. The printing press had been and continued to be one of humanity’s great inventions. The press should include analysis and reflection, but newspapers should not turn into an arena of individual passions, much less reproduce the “howling” of political factionalism or encourage sedition, because that would be a perversion of the freedom of expression.

Undoubtedly, the central reform of the period (1856-1857) was the Law on the Seizure of the Goods of Civil and Ecclesiastic Corporations, written by Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, “a solid radical, through and through,” who, as minister of finance worked for a moderate liberal administration. The law sparked dozens of pronouncements all over the country, was condemned from the pulpit, and shook many private individuals whose spirit was linked to religious orders but

Undoubtedly, the central reform of the period was the Law on the Seizure of the Goods of Civil and Ecclesiastic Corporations, written by Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, a radical working for a moderate liberal administration.

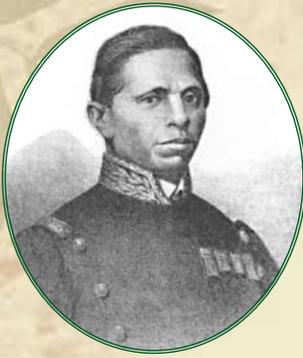
who as property owners also rented out real estate. On the other hand, the law sought to create a broad class of small owners in Mexico, to get public wealth moving through the expropriation, and, despite the fact that the Catholic Church was thereafter banned from acquiring more real estate properties, to allow it to invest its monies as a shareholder in private companies.

At first glance, the results were not to substantially improve tax earnings as the Comonfort administration had wanted. However, in the medium and long terms, it did create powerful interests that pressured both inside Mexico and abroad against the reversal of the expropriation/nationalization. On the other hand, although the law benefitted many individuals who finally were able to acquire a piece of property, it is also true that because officials wanted to rush the Reform, it caused the accumulation of buildings and agrarian latifundismo, to the detriment of the civic corporations: in other words, the indigenous communities’ *ejidos* or collective farms. The confiscations also negatively affected institutions like hospitals, schools, and rest homes, for centuries managed by the Catholic clergy, because, by 1856, the civilian government had neither the financial nor the human wherewithal to take them over.

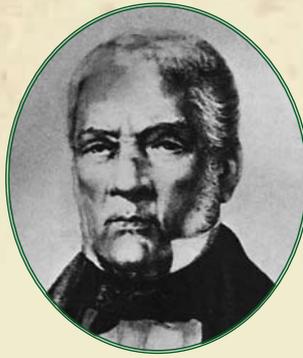
Something else that marked the beginning of the Reform were the labors of the Constituent Congress, the material result of which is the 1857 Federal Constitution, and the whole discussion about whether it was the ideal legal framework for the daily life of a country that had a foreboding of civil war. It gave the impression that the actions of one side and the other were throwing them into an unfathomable abyss reminiscent of Greek tragedies. In this sense, Mexican society was shaken when the “fair sex” protested in the streets and in the Chamber of Deputies for the first time

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Tomás Mejía, the most fervent defender of the Conservative cause.



Juan Álvarez, revolutionary hero and strongman of the South.

against the proposal to create freedom of religion. Society woke up suddenly when it found out that the government had demolished the ancient San Francisco Monastery because “reactionaries” conspired within its walls, accumulating weapons and munitions, and working a clandestine press that produced seditious leaflets. The cabinet was relieved when the deputies in the Constituent Congress put to one side the more radical issues proposed by Ponciano Arriaga, Melchor Ocampo, and José María Mata.

Issues like the agrarian reform, the rights of indigenous peoples, and universal, direct voting, among others, were still far from the minds of some liberal representatives concerned with instituting, regulating, and strengthening those powers that could give form to a true Mexican state. But at the same time, the Comonfort government looked with disapproval and concern on the cutback of the executive branch’s powers in favor of a single-chamber legislative branch that “was everything.” The executive clashed daily with the liberals’ decided enemy, who did everything from staging barracks revolts and criticizing government actions through their newspaper *La Cruz*, to entering the sacred circle of the home through the confessional. On the other hand, the legislature saw Comonfort and the figure of the president as the eternally cloaked specter of tyranny. The experience of the Santa Anna dictatorship was in the mind of all the liberals, but Don Antonio’s excesses also concerned the most enlightened conservatives.

The Constituent Congress was responsible for changing the country, and the deputies represented the sovereignty of the people. But since Mexico first became independent some conservative politicians had wanted to eliminate popular sovereignty because it did not always go along with the wishes of the president. When in early 1857, the Constitution was fin-

Issues like the agrarian reform, the rights of indigenous peoples, and universal, direct voting, among others, were still far from the minds of some liberal representatives.

ished, it satisfied no one. Deputy and chronicler Francisco Zarco said that the conservatives looked at it as a compendium of impieties; it stuck in the craw of the moderates because of its supposed excesses; and the radicals were concerned because it did not take innovations far enough. Months went by and rumors began to circulate of a coup being prepared against the Constitution. However, it was not a disaffected coronel or a clergyman who openly called for it to be disavowed, but the radical newspaper *El Monitor Republicano*, emphasizing that if it was impossible to govern with it, then, Down with the Constitution!

A mediation was arrived at with the conciliatory spirit of Zarco himself, who said that the Constitution contained the appropriate ways for legislators to make all kinds of changes, but warned that they would have to have the backing of the Mexican people.

Toward the end of November, Guanajuato Governor Manuel Doblado told Comonfort that as the future constitutional president, he should not disavow the Constitution. First, it was necessary to ask Congress to deal with a series of reforms stemming from the first executive’s well-founded concerns. If the deputies did not move on these or rejected them, then a more violent course of action could be taken.

On December 17, 1857, General Félix Zuloaga headed a barracks revolt rejecting the Constitution; days later, the move was seconded by Comonfort, who said that his legitimate title of constitutional president had been laid aside and now he had only that of a common revolutionary. The Tacubaya coup d’état had the approval of some liberals, but others opposed it, like the minister of the interior, the president of the Supreme Court, and, in the absence of the head of the executive branch, the person the Constitution designated interim president, Benito Juárez. It was the beginning of a confrontation that would end 10 years later (1857-1867) and ever since the nineteenth century, Mexican historiographers have called it “the great national decade.”



This Is the Life, anonymous, nineteenth century. Violence, drinking, and courtship among Mexicans.

The War of the Reform (also called the Three Years' War, since it lasted from January 1858 to December 1860), a conflict that could have lasted until December 1861, had several characteristics that made it different from the flood of “revolutions” that Mexico had experienced since 1829. First, from the beginning, the rebels based their power in Mexico City, and second, the representatives of the European powers gave both the Félix Zuloaga administration and the later one headed by Miguel Miramón diplomatic recognition. In contrast, the liberal regime established in Veracruz received recognition and naval back-up from the United States.

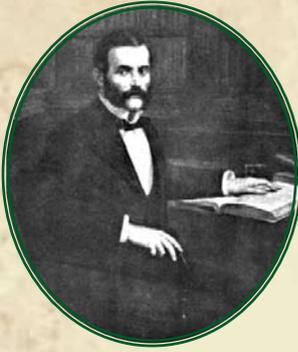
This means that for three years, there were simultaneously two conservative governments and one liberal one, something that had not happened during the times of either Iturbide or Santa Anna. The conservatives argued that Juárez was not interim president because Comonfort's coup put an end to the constitutional order, and they called him “he who had been the president of the Supreme Court.” The liberals underscored that Juárez was the legitimate president because the Title VIII, Article 128 of the Constitution stipulated that “this Constitution will not lose its force and validity even if a rebellion interrupts its implementation.”

London, Paris, Madrid, and Washington did not go into the judicial niceties and treated them all as *de facto* governments. But, using dual language, England's Prime Minister

Palmerston recognized Juárez's liberal regime as a belligerent faction in 1859. This date is crucial because it was the most violent year of the civil war, and particularly because the liberals understood that the 1857 Constitution and the legitimacy of the Juárez government were not enough to get more support and win the war.

Given this, and after carefully analyzing the dangers and advantages that could arise, the Juárez cabinet passed what were called the Laws of Reform, which radicalized the liberal edicts emitted by Ignacio Comonfort's administration. The matters the laws dealt with were not only important for their time (1859-1860), but they also make it possible to understand the cultural and political profile Mexico has developed up until today. The liberal Reform put forward the suppression of monasteries and convents, the secularization of cemeteries, matrimony as a civil contract, and a calendar based on civic holidays, although it maintained five religious ones. It stated that the contributions of the faithful to priests for religious services were completely voluntary, contrary to the obligatory tithe; and that the internal administration of the





Miguel Lerdo de Tejada, a radical reformer.

The reform ended with two central questions that linked Mexico with the world: the nationalization of all real estate in the hands of the clergy and freedom of religion.



Miguel Miramón, paladin of the Conservative armies and Mexico's youngest president.

Catholic Church and the Mexican state was completely independent and separate one from the other.

The reform ended with two central questions that linked Mexico with the world: the nationalization of all real estate in the hands of the clergy and freedom of religion officially declared in December 1860. As mentioned above, from 1856 on, foreign individuals had been buying houses and haciendas belonging to the Catholic clergy. Starting in 1861, they began to purchase churches to use for Protestant services. This meant that freedom of religion not only made worship a private, individual matter, but also established the right to publically exercise a different faith, something that, for example, would not happen in Spain for many decades.

If Mexico was seeking to attract investment, Prussians, Englishmen, Swedes, and Americans living in the country had demanded to be able to worship according to their own beliefs and, if the case arose, to be buried with dignity. This is why the monopoly over cemeteries was taken away from the Catholic clergy and civic cemeteries created as the century's "hygiene and modernity" demanded.

All this leads us to put forward the existence of another characteristic of the War of the Reform: active intervention from abroad in matters that were originally seen as local issues. The European chancelleries ended by saying that the republic's political instability had seriously affected their citizens' investments, and added that all the Mexican governments, regardless of their political persuasion—federalist or centralist, liberal or conservative—had shown their disregard for fulfilling the obligations acquired when they took out debt in terms of amounts and percentages that should be speedily and expeditely paid. The correspondence between these chancelleries reflected on the fact that the civil war being waged both in Mexico and the United States offered the opportunity to stop Washington's advance southward in

the hemisphere. Napoleon III, for example, astutely commented that it was the right time for Europe to regain importance in Latin American affairs.

The industrialized world was in the midst of competing for raw materials and diversified markets. Lord Palmerston commented in January 1862 that if Mexico's political system could be replaced with a monarchy that would calm the waters and offer appropriate guarantees for new European investment, it would be a blessing for the country itself, and manna from heaven for the powers with relations in Mexico, as well as an arrangement that could be very advantageous for his countrymen.

At the same time, large contingents of French and English soldiers were debarking in the port of Veracruz. Together with the Spaniards who had arrived in December 1861, they made up the 10,000-strong occupation force. Karl Marx said it was a mistake for European political equilibrium, but the imperial banking system had caught a glimpse on the horizon of juicy profits. **MM**

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“When We Were an Empire” The Monarchical Experiment in Mexico (1864-1867)

Érika Pani*



Édouard Manet, *Execution of Emperor Maximilian*, 1868. Kunsthalle, Mannheim.

Few events in the history of Mexico had an impact on the Western imaginary like Maximilian’s empire. By 1868, vanguard painter Édouard Manet immortalized his tragic end in a canvas that would cause a sensation

both in France and in other European countries. The sad story of the unfortunate prince and princess —young, intelligent, and supposedly handsome— has been the topic of a large number of testimonies, history books, novels, plays, and even a movie starring Bette Davis. Mexicans, on the other hand, have an ambiguous relationship with this episode. The descendants of the “victims” of the French intervention also get excited at the imperial melodrama that inspired the theater of Rodolfo Usigli, a short story by Carlos Fuentes, the fantastic novel by Fernando del Paso, and several soap operas. Maximilian and Carlotta are characters —poor things!— that

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The illustrations on pp. 42, 43, 44, 45, and 46 were taken from the book *Testimonios artísticos de un episodio fugaz 1864-1867* (Mexico City: Museo Nacional de Arte-INBA, 1995). Reprinted by permission of the National Fine Arts Institute.

The painting on this page is a file from Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Edouard_Manet_022.jpg.



Jean-Adolphe Beaucé, *Emperor Maximilian on Horseback*, 1865 (oil on canvas).
National History Museum.

**For official history,
the only value the so-called “empire”
left behind was that its defeat won Mexico
the right to call itself a nation.**

the average Mexican is both familiar and most of the time sympathizes with.

However, traditional history has written off the imperial episode, holding that nothing of importance happened under the monarchy. As José Fuentes Mares said, between 1864 and 1867, Mexico took refuge in the desert and only the initiatives of Juárez and his charmed circle, holed up in Paso del Norte, actually shaped historic events. The empire has been classified in the national memory as a frivolous government, but above all as something totally alien to Mexican reality, against which all the true sons of the homeland rose up, except for a couple of recalcitrant conservatives. For official history, the only value the so-called “empire” left behind was that its defeat won Mexico what Justo Sierra would call “indisputable and undisputed” right to call itself a nation. However, the empire shared many of the objectives and faced many of the same challenges that governments before it had. Thus, Maximilian’s administration managed to build an efficient

machine to govern, foster economic development, and invent a shared memory that would link together a profoundly damaged, splintered society, at the same time that it tried to deal with the pressures from the powers Mexico owed money to. The *chiaroscuros* and complexities of the imperial project reveal that the episode is firmly ensconced in Mexican historical experience.

Setting up a “modern” state in Mexico that could resist the onslaught of foreign aggression and internal instability, and that could ensure order and the rule of law across the country was an objective shared by all men in public life in the nineteenth century, regardless of political persuasion. Given the chronic disorder and the post-colonial context of economic backwardness and increasing expansion of the European powers, this dream became an obsession, above all after the defeat at the hands of the United States, alarming proof that things were in a very bad way indeed.

For the young liberals who walked onto the stage of national politics with the 1855 Ayutla Revolution, the happiness of the nation—and even its survival—was firmly fixed in the destruction of what they saw as the dead weight handed down from colonial times. In addition to reestablishing federalism and democratizing public life, with the 1857 Constitution, they sought, then, to guarantee equality before the law, eliminating any kind of immunity; to rev up the economy by confiscating the goods of civic and ecclesiastic communities; and to put a brake on the Catholic Church’s economic, social, and political power, taking away its real estate and establishing freedom of the press and education. For the conservatives, who opposed this by taking up arms, liberal principles were fundamentally a source of disorganization: they set up a weak government, and, by attacking the Church, and therefore the Catholic religion, destroyed the only link that united Mexicans. The civil war that this clash produced was the bloodiest the country had experienced since independence. After the liberal victory, Benito Juárez took the helm of a nation divided, spent, and ruined.

Under these circumstances, and with the Mexican government’s decision to suspend payments agreed to with its creditor nations, a foreign invasion would superimpose itself on the conflict between liberals and conservatives. Napoleon III saw in the Mexican conflict and the civil war that was consuming the United States an opportunity to be able to put into practice what some called “the grand thinking” of his reign: establishing a presence for France in the New World, to ensure its access to the markets and raw materials

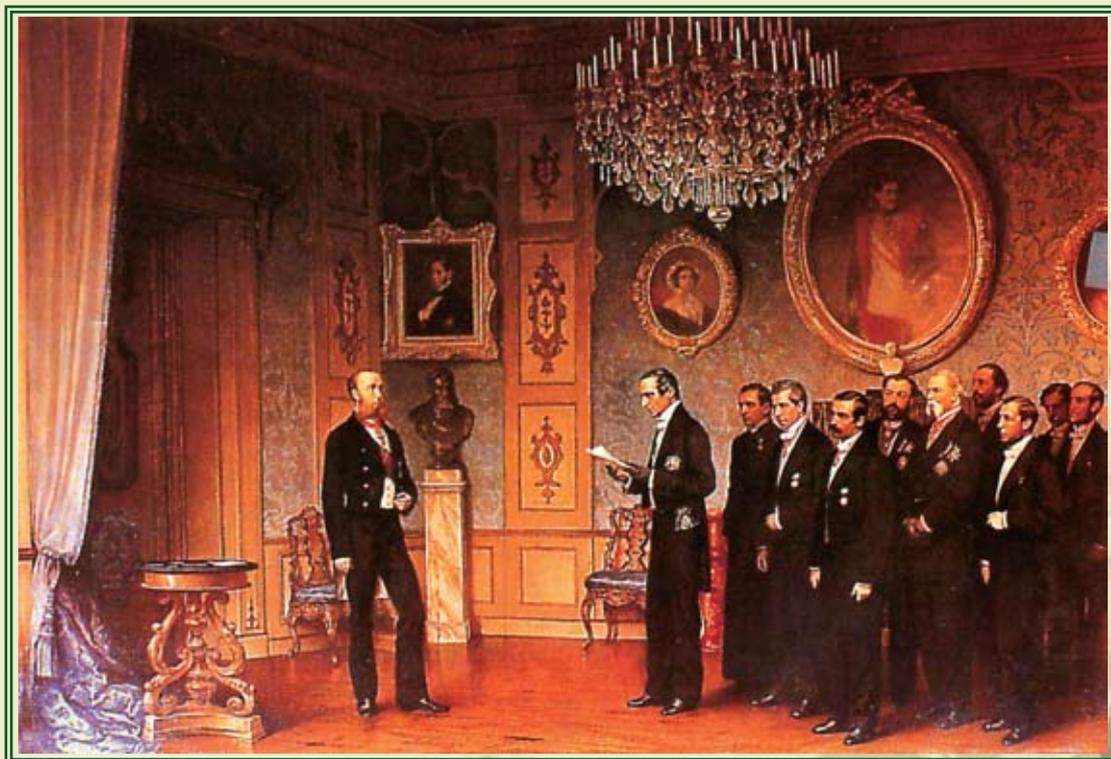
of the Americas, particularly the silver, essential for a country whose currency had a two-metal base, and to protect the “Latin race” from its voracious northern neighbor. The suspension of payments and the lobbying a few Mexicans had been doing since the 1840s to get a foreign prince to Mexico were the excuse the French emperor needed to embark on the “Mexican adventure.”

The tripartite intervention had the single aim of forcing a recalcitrant republic to live up to its financial obligations. Spain and England withdrew once their claims had been satisfied, but the French army remained to put Maximilian of Habsburg, the younger brother of the Austrian emperor, on the throne and keep him there. The resplendent Mexican empire owed its existence to the expeditionary forces, and agreed to be responsible for the claims of French subjects, for the costs of the military expedition, and the debts accumulated by previous governments. Between 1862 and 1867, 30,000 French soldiers occupied Mexico, suffering no definitive defeats, but they were unable to pacify it. In the end, in the face of U.S. diplomatic pressures once the War of Secession was over, and since France was threatened by an expansionary Prussia, the French emperor’s cost-benefit analysis began to tip into the red, with which he decided to put an end to the ex-

pedition and repatriate the army. With the advance of the republicans and without its military base, the empire collapsed.

In hindsight and given how scandalous the failure was, the “Mexican adventure” seems to be the least reasonable of Napoleon the Little’s initiatives. What springs to mind is that in Mexico, important sectors of the population saw a monarchy imposed by French bayonets as a viable regime and even an opportunity for building a better life. In answer to Maximilian’s requirement that to accept the throne, he had to be called by “the entire nation,” an important portion of the city councils in central Mexico wrote “declarations of allegiance.” These sanctioned the intervention and subscribed to the government of the Austrian emperor.

There is no doubt that the pressures of the invading army were decisive for the writing of these documents: their proclamation came on the heels of the advancing French troops. The very towns that declared themselves for the empire in 1863 and 1864 wrote similar declarations two, three, or four years later to hail the return of the republican order. However, it should also be taken into account that the arrival of a modern, professional army that announced it would not live off the land it was occupying meant for many communities a temporary relief from the forced conscription and pillage



Cesare Dell'Acqua, *The Mexican Delegation Offers Maximilian the Crown*, 1864 (oil on canvas). Miramar Castle, Italy.



Jean-Adolphe Beaucé, *Visit of the Kikapoo Tribe Legation to Emperor Maximilian*, circa 1865 (oil on canvas). Artstetten Castle Museum, Austria.

they had been afflicted with for so many years of war at the hands of both liberals and conservatives. While communities like Xochipulco in the mountains of Puebla preferred to burn their houses down rather than hand the town over to the invaders, many others saw in the intervention a favorable moment to restructure their relations with regional and national powers. The enthusiastic way that these towns went to the Council to Protect the Deserving Classes, a body created by Maximilian to deal with complaints from peasant communities, as well as the military support the French were given by indigenous groups (the Coras from Lozada, Nayarit; the Ópatas from Tanori, Sonora; and different communities in Oaxaca and Michoacán), seem to confirm this point of view.

The expeditionary army said it was bringing peace, something long yearned for by a society that practically since 1854 had been living in a permanent state of trepidation because of increasingly intransigent violence. By contrast, those politicians who cooperated with the empire did so based on very different projects. The supporters of the monarchy were not only those one would naturally expect: conservatives who, defeated on the field of battle, saw in the empire the last card to be able to stay in the political game. Another group of public men with long experience and diverse party ties who had played an outstanding role in the country's political and cultural activities since the 1840s also collaborated with Maximilian. These liberals and moderate conservatives believed that the regime headed by a European prince, "protected" by

Historiography would trim down the role of the conservatives, labeling them not only myopic, but traitors, and turn the empire into a ridiculous regime. However, it is an episode that deserves to be reevaluated.

France, and sustained by its army, was an opportunity to put their house in order and do all the things that, since independence, political instability and the constant clashes between the legislative and executive branches of government, national and state authorities, had not allowed them to do.

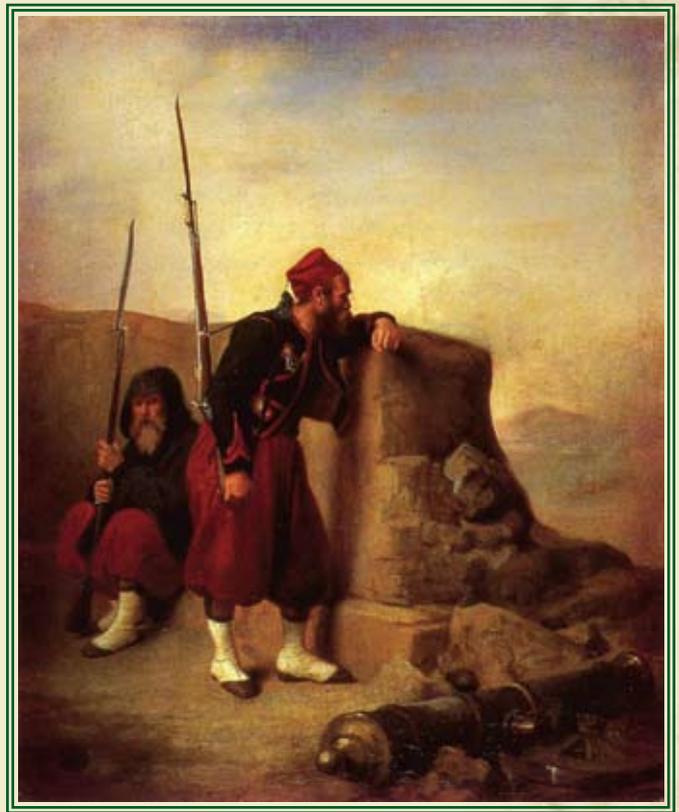
The presence of the "the world's foremost army" in Mexico inspired ambivalence among those who collaborated with the empire. Most perceived it as humiliating. This was the case, above all, of military men who had to submit to the orders of French officers or who, like two of the main conservative leaders, Miguel Miramón and Leonardo Márquez, left the country on merely ornamental diplomatic missions. Nevertheless, many Mexican politicians saw an advantage to the invasion: they believed that the presence of professional armed forces firmly subjected to state authority would free up the government from its exhausting negotiations with "strongmen" who, down through the century, had so often tipped the scales of political order. They did not take into account that this was a disciplined, civically-oriented "armed wing" of a state that was not Mexico's.

On the other hand, all the supporters of the empire wanted to consolidate an efficient state that would join in brotherhood—the term used at the time—order and liberty. They had different visions, however, of the form it should take and what its policy priorities should be. On the one hand were those who, like Zacatecas-born lawyer Teodosio Lares, wanted to provide the government with the administrative tools to be able to act effectively, but not arbitrarily, to have an impact on the national situation. While since the fall of the Emperor Agustín de Iturbide, few had tried—and all unsuccessfully—to promote a monarchy, these men defended a monarchical system with decidedly modern arguments: this was the form of government most in Mexico’s interest, not because of its monarchist, centralist traditions, but because it was the regime that could tame and channel modern political struggle. As the newspaper *La Razón* explained, under the aegis of the empire, Mexicans could be anything they wanted, except emperor.

Thus, the executive branch could not be the prisoner of either armed uprisings or electoral trickery. The political parties, which had been the driving force of instability and conflict, would not stop existing; they would merely be left without a sparring arena to get hurt in. Therefore, by freezing political struggle, the empire made it possible to pass laws and build institutions that the country so urgently needed. Thus, in 1866 the first national civil code was passed. The imperial civil code, written by lawyers Benito Juárez had commissioned in 1861 (José María Lacunza, José Fernando Ramírez, Pedro Escudero y Echánove, and Luis Méndez) was the basis for the one the liberal government would publish in 1870.

Historian, geographer, and linguist Manuel Orozco y Berra based himself on “scientific” criteria to develop a new division of the national territory into 50 departments, with the aim of breaking up the power base of regional *caciques* or strongmen. In addition, there was no lack of empire supporters who thought that the government of a prince linked to the main European dynasties would attract investors. In the end, they were not so wrong, even if the results were not as desirable as they had hoped for. So, while within the imperial government, they were never able to come to an agreement about what proportion of foreign capital a national bank should have, the Bank of London, Mexico and South America opened a branch in Mexico City with no government authorization. The construction of the railroad from Mexico City to Veracruz, a project that had dragged along since the 1830s, got a decided push forward when the French army,

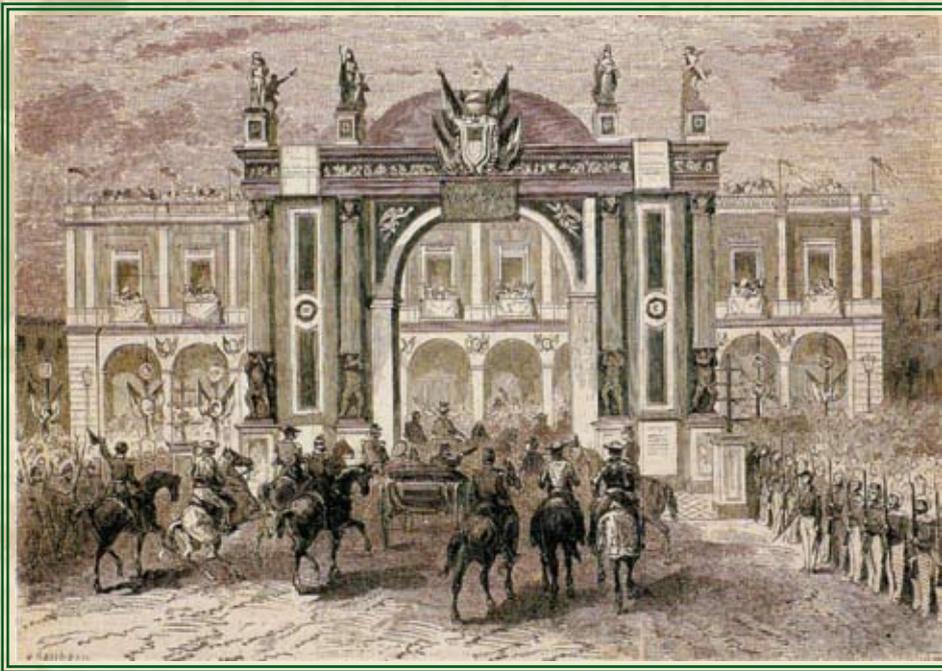
concerned about the unhealthy climate on the coast, concluded the length of track to Paso del Macho and Maximilian inaugurated the route from the capital city to La Villa. Also, for the first time since the end of the 1820s, the Mexican government managed to float debt in the European markets. However, this was of no benefit to Maximilian’s government, since the expeditionary army consumed all the resources that came in; it also did no good for the small French savers who bought the imperial “little blues”—as the debt was known—since the



Pablo Valdés, *Advance Guard of Zouaves*, 1865 (oil on canvas).
Artstetten Castle Museum, Austria.

Juárez government would ultimately disavow Maximilian’s financial commitments.

On the other hand, no one saw the ascension of the young Habsburg with as much hope as the Catholics, who had faith that a prince descended from the Catholic kings and who had gone to Rome to ask for the Pope’s blessing before embarking for Mexico, would reestablish harmony between civil and ecclesiastic powers. They thought Mexico, as a Catholic people, “should be catholically ruled.” They did not count on the devout Austrian turning out to be not only a liberal but also a defender of royal supremacy *vis-à-vis* the Church. Maxi-



J. Gaildrau, *The Emperor and Empress of Mexico in Vera-Cruz* [sic], 1864 (engraving). Álvaro Castillo Olmedo collection.

milian ratified the nationalization of ecclesiastic property, the abolition of immunity, and religious tolerance. He also proposed a concordat with the Vatican that stipulated that the emperor would appoint the country's bishops, and the government would pay for expenses involved in worship, to avoid the abuses the priests committed when they charged money to perform the sacraments. Even the most intransigent of bishops, like Clemente de Jesús Munguía, archbishop of Michoacán, reluctantly recognized that the form of separation of Church and state implemented by the republican government was more in their interest than Maximilian's.

Similarly, as the long yearned-for project of erecting a regime in which Catholicism was the cement of the body politic faded away, many conservatives felt excluded from the historic saga with which Maximilian's government hoped to create a shared memory that would link all Mexicans together through patriotic fiestas and public art. With the participation of renowned historians like José Fernando Ramírez, a former cabinet minister, and Manuel Larráinzar, who would propose his project of writing a "general history" of Mexico to the Imperial Academy of Sciences and the Arts, the imperial government wanted to narrate the nation's past as a long, conciliatory odyssey with a great many more heroes than villains. Nevertheless, the exaltation of the pre-Hispanic past, which the conservatives dubbed barbarian, of the heroes of liberalism, who they considered criminals, and of the possibilities of mixing the races offended many Hispanophile, European-enamored conservatives. It was not the

time for a moderate historical vision like that of the empire's supporters.

The first general history, by Spaniard Niceto de Zamacois, was not to appear for another 10 years. The monumental work of nineteenth-century historiography, *México a través de los siglos* (Mexico Down through the Centuries) (1884), which for decades would be the model for the shape of Mexico's past, made the rise of liberalism the central theme of the nation's history. This left out the conservatives, who did not turn out to be very good Mexicans.

At the end of the day, in the context of constant warfare, imperial policies had scant results. After the French withdrawal, the regime that had channeled such different interests and conflicting projects seemed to have very little to offer. Thus, two experiments failed: the French imperialist project in the Americas, and the Mexican monarchy. With the defeat of the empire, 1867 is a watershed in the political development of the Mexican state, when one of the alternatives that had given shape to the struggle for power at least since 1857 was cancelled. Historiography, as we have seen, would trim down the role of the conservatives, labeling them not only myopic, but traitors, and would turn the empire into a ridiculous—and above all, irrelevant—regimen. Nevertheless, it is an episode that deserves to be reevaluated since it sheds light on the complex attempts and efforts of a political class that, after decades of failures and with no prescribed model, was still seeking to create the regime that was possible. ■■

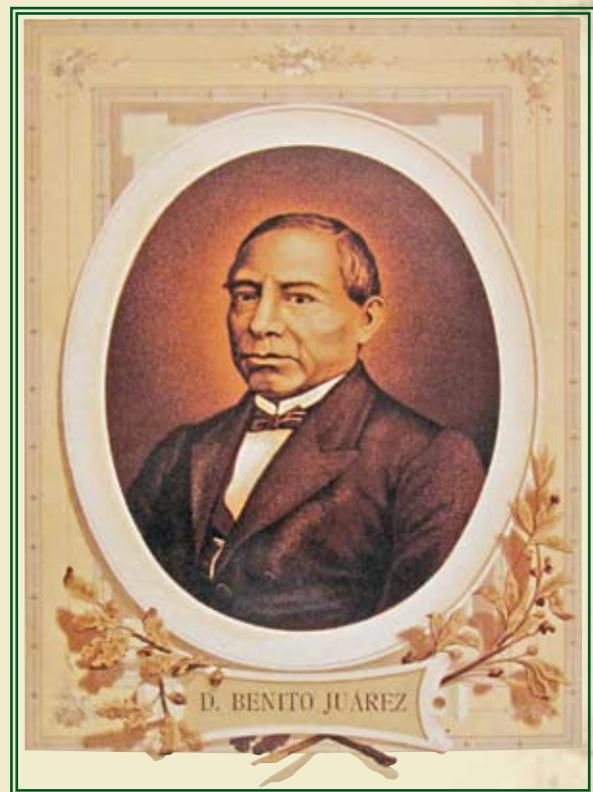
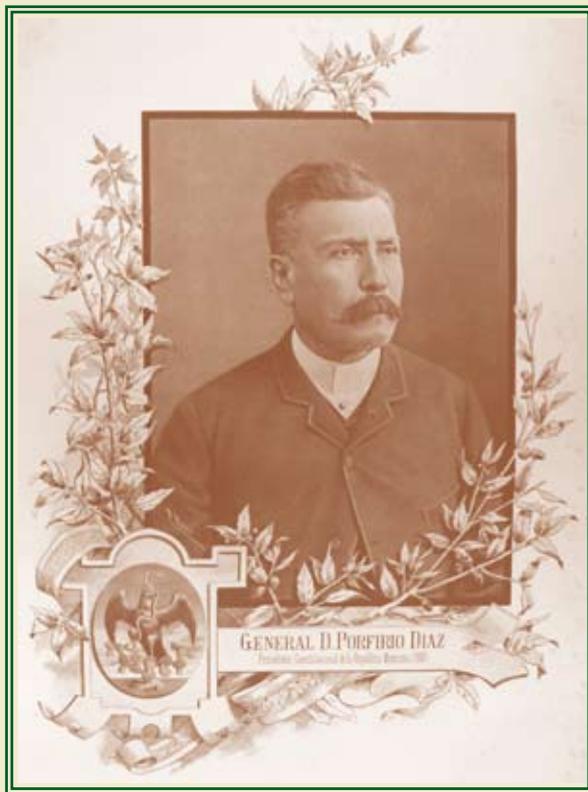
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From the Restoration of the Republic to the Dictatorship Of a Single Man

(1867-1910)

Evelia Trejo*



The period known in Mexico as the “Restored Republic” began in 1867. It was called that because for the nine years from 1867 to 1876, the task of Mexico’s rulers centered on consolidating a long yearned-for dream:

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Photo Credits: Porfirio Díaz (p.47), Justo Sierra, ed., *México, su evolución social* (Mexico City: J. Ballezá, 1900-1902); Benito Juárez (p. 47), Vicente Riva Palacio, comp., *México a través de los siglos*, Vol. 5 *La Reforma* (Mexico City and Barcelona: Ballezá and Espasa, respectively, 1887-1889); lithographs (pp. 48 and 50), Decaen, ed., *México y sus alrededores* (Mexico City: Establecimiento Litográfico de Decaen, 1855 and 1856).

creating a republic in the full meaning of the term, with a division of powers and guaranteed independence and national sovereignty, just as the nations considered models of development like the United States and France were seen to have, with a society well on the road that would inevitably lead to a higher level of civilization and progress.

In the judgment of the liberals, who had finally managed to hold on to power, Mexicans had something that guaranteed the achievement of these goals: the Constitution passed a decade before, in 1857, held in the highest esteem. Once the Laws of Reform were incorporated into it in 1873, it be-



The period known as the Restored Republic tested the imagination and political strength of those who wanted to organize Mexico according to liberal principles.

came a firm basis upon which to organize a country that had left behind the tutelage of the Church, an institution inherited from the time when Spanish domination had marked the country's history and that was understood as a constant prop of the Conservative Party, and therefore, responsible for Mexicans' backwardness.

Once the national and foreign military forces that had supported the empire were defeated, the most important liberal caudillos felt themselves masters of the situation and enthusiastically looked forward to tracing the nation's destiny. This historic moment was so significant that one of the most famous histories of Mexico, the five-volume set of *México a través de los siglos* (Mexico Down through the Centuries), published between 1882 and 1889, traced the march of the people of Mexico from their pre-Hispanic origins to the exact date when Mexico City celebrated the triumphal entrance

of the liberal victors. Six decades later, in the mid-twentieth century, the impression of these times had not substantially changed.

When one of Mexico's most renowned intellectuals, Daniel Cosío Villegas, wrote and coordinated his *Historia moderna de México* (Modern History of Mexico) dealing with different political, economic, and social facets, he did not doubt a moment about beginning his narrative precisely in 1867. He thought that examining the process begun in that year would lead him to fully understand his own time. From then on, study and the generation of knowledge has never ceased about a decade that put to the test the imagination and political strength of a large group of individuals who for a long time had wanted to organize Mexico based on liberal principles. The challenge was enormous, given that they were facing the task after years of civil war and, in addition, they were divided as they arrived at their goal.

The most prestigious figures, Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz, both from Oaxaca, were the protagonists in clearly opposing episodes: one represented the civilian forces and the other, the military. Both came to the fore during the years of the Wars of the Reform and the Intervention and had the opportunity to consecutively head up political life. First

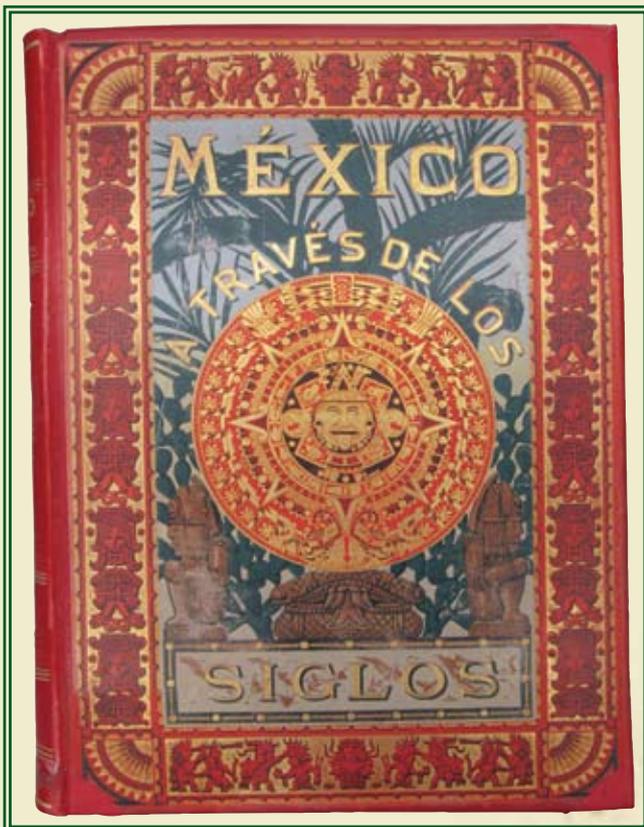
came Juárez, and later, his former student at the Oaxaca Scientific and Literary Institute, Porfirio Díaz, who would shoulder the government of Mexico from 1876 to 1911. Between the two of them, there would be only the four-year interval from 1880 to 1884 when Manuel González was president. Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz have filled the pages of the history books, one as the highest expression of republican liberalism and the other as a dictator, the shameful example of a man who centralizes power and stays in the presidential seat without respecting the principle of non-re-election that had been the slogan which ushered him into office in the first place.

Both were ingenious enough to govern with the 1857 Constitution, changing the laws to allow them to stay on as first executive. In the case of Juárez, this was done to deal with the urgent need to consolidate a very fragile power structure. Díaz invoked the need to maintain political order to foster economic growth, applying a maxim that was useful for a very long time: "Little politics and lots of administration," taking care that local power structures did not grow too much and that political bosses always went along with his decisions.

If it had been easy to keep a population in line, a population that grew in many ways precisely because of the country's stability, Díaz's long period in power would not have ended until his death. However, even given those circumstances, a large number of problems that Mexico had been accumulating for a long time were not resolved. Perhaps the most pressing was the inequality among its inhabitants. The dearth of mechanisms for alleviating the economic straits of the poorest classes, as well as the lack of opportunities for incorporating interested individuals and groups into the sphere of political decision-making would exact a high price for the apparently invincible government that gives its name to a whole era: the Porfiriato. All this caused the discontent that in different ways would gradually give rise to the 1910 Revolution.

For more than four decades of Mexico's history these two and other figures (Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada [1873-1876], and Manuel González [1880-1884], or illustrious men like Ignacio Manuel Altamirano, Justo Sierra, and José Yves Limantour) would have an impact on the life of Mexico. However, none of them alone can explain the changes in society

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Cover of a modern reprint of *Mexico Down through the Centuries*.

that spurred a transformation big enough to conclude that the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth had situated the country closer to the models of modern nations, concerned with the enlightenment of men and women, trusting that increasingly widespread education would guarantee the longed-for progress that some of the world's most famous thinkers had talked about.

Among other factors favoring the creation of a modern world in the times of the Restored Republic was, for example, the acceptance of religious tolerance. This meant opening the doors of a traditional, majority-Catholic nation to new creeds, above all Protestant denominations, rather a good fit with the political aspirations of liberals who wanted to limit the powers of the Catholic Church without necessarily de-Christianizing Mexicans. The proliferation of propaganda from different churches and their establishment in Mexico became more and more unmistakable starting in 1872 under the Lerdo de

Tejada administration. To expand, the Protestants used schools and periodicals, two means welcomed by those who wanted to see Mexicans creating a secularized, modern society. Nevertheless, their progress could not be effective in the short term, since the majority of the population resisted the changes and remained faithful to the doctrine disseminated for more than three centuries.

The conservatives, who had supposedly been defeated in the Wars of the Reform and the Intervention, far from disappearing, found the way to regroup and gain strength. Like the liberals, they were not homogeneous, but they did react in the face of what they saw as a threat to the country's traditions, even using the same weapons as their enemies. They continued to be present in schools and journalism, even though official policy stipulated something else.

In addition to fulfilling the need for elementary instruction, it was proposed, particularly during the years of the Díaz administration, that nationwide, education be mandatory, secular, and free in order to overcome backwardness and integrate the nation. From the time of the restoration of the republic, a very firm step forward had been made in the field of intermediate education with the founding of the National Preparatory School, an institution inspired in Auguste Comte's positivist doctrine that attempted to channel young students into the fields of science, putting to one side the shadows of what were considered traditional teaching, akin

The longed-for road to progress had already been built in Mexico, but many of its achievements were based on an acutely fractured social and political structure.

to metaphysics. This school soon became the seedbed for what would turn into the intelligentsia and the scientific vocations that years later, in September 1910, would promote the inauguration of the National University under the Díaz administration, but very shortly before the outbreak of the Revolution.

Although positivist thinking and the new creeds seemed to be at odds with the older models of thinking that had forged the Mexican people's mentality, the reality is that they only had an impact among a minority of the population. In any case, little by little, down through this period, society developed in such a way that all these elements coexisted together without eliminating the profoundly entrenched previous traditions. This can be seen in acts like the coronation of the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 1895 in sumptuous celebrations, and the plethora of fiestas and religious activities that continued to be carried out, particularly after the Díaz government implemented a conciliatory policy toward the Catholic Church.

Journalism, long considered the ideal vehicle for forging public opinion among the citizenry, also underwent interesting changes in the period in question. It went from enjoying almost unrestricted freedom during the Restored Republic, to greater control under the Porfiriato, when, in addition, journalists' attention turned from the doctrinaire nature of previous publications to focusing on getting out the news. So, even when publications were the mouthpieces of specific interests like the Catholics, the positivists, or others, the lifespan of newspapers and magazines depended more on continuing to capture the public's interest (a readership increasingly inclined to seek in their pages national and international news) than on government sponsorship or commercial publicity, which also was becoming more and more widespread. In addition, the gradual incorporation of women into this area of the generation of public opinion became more and more evident. The history of newspapers like *La Voz de México* or *El Imparcial* and magazines like *Violetas del Anáhuac* show an important part of these changes.





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Inauguration of the National University of Mexico in September 1910.

From the time of the restoration of the republic, a very firm step forward had been made in the field of intermediate education with the founding of the National Preparatory School.

New developments came in from all sides, often fostering an exaggerated perception of the modernity that some sectors wanted to create in Mexico. What cannot be doubted is that those who were analyzing the situation based on the evolutionist theories in vogue at the time sought to show Mexicans' capacity for achieving the well-being they legitimately aspired to. This was the case of the so-called *científicos* ("scientists") who surrounded Díaz's administration and who, like many others, were proud that the advances in the economy were palpable: foreign investments, particularly from the United States and England, had helped extending the railroad lines until they covered a large part of the nation's territory; communications fostered commerce and the growth of cities and ports; there was a bonanza in public finances and mining productivity and an increase in the number of banks and powerful entrepreneurs; and the cities even festooned themselves with buildings as modern as downtown Mexico City's Palacio de Hierro, the country's first depart-

ment store, just to mention one of the architectural works erected at the height of the Porfiriato.

Certainly these and other elements were proof that the longed-for road to progress had already been built in Mexico. But it is also true that many of these achievements were based on an acutely fractured social and political structure. The living conditions of a population that was by far mostly rural and the limitations of political liberties would very soon open the floodgates for different kinds of demands that in a few years would bring about the defeat of Porfirio Díaz and give way to an authentic Revolution. **MM**

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The Mexican Revolution

(1910-1917)

Álvaro Matute*



Robert Dorman

As the twentieth century began, Mexico suffered from a myriad of problems: on the one hand, in 1900 President Porfirio Díaz was reelected for the fifth time, which, while it guaranteed stability, also implied the lack of

political mobility for new generations of professionals who aspired to high positions in the government bureaucracy. This was replicated in most states nationwide. Many governors were reelected indefinitely and the emerging groups began to express their disagreement.

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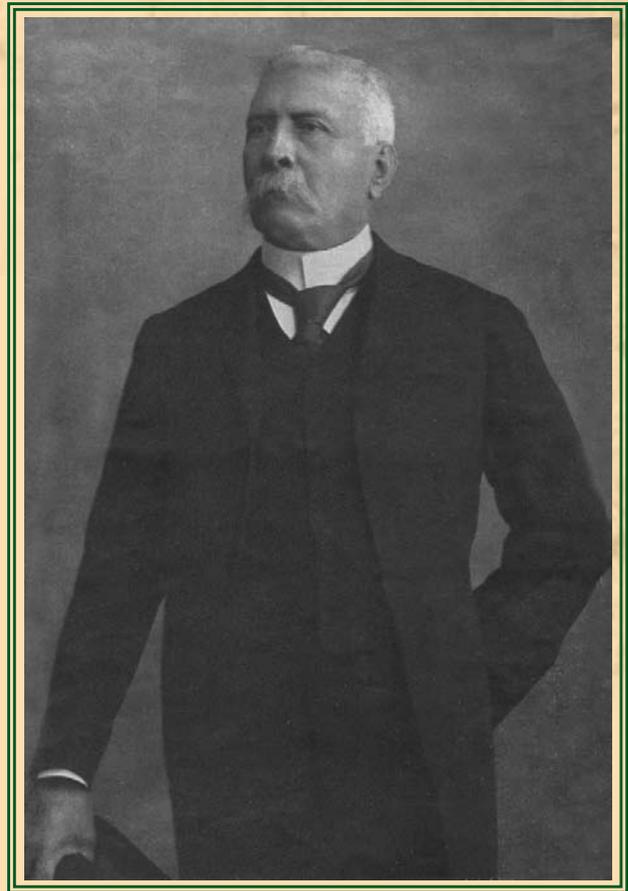
Photo Credits: The photo on this page was published on Brenner, Anita, *The Wind that Swept Mexico. The History of the Mexican Revolution 1910-1942* (Austin and London: University of Texas Press, 1943). Porfirio Díaz (p. 53), Archivo Histórico Ezequiel A. Chávez, Instituto de Investigaciones sobre la Universidad y Educación; Emiliano Zapata (p. 54), Fototeca Archivo General de la Nación; Venustiano Carranza (p. 55), Colección fotográfica sueltas, Fondo Reservado, Biblioteca Nacional, UNAM; Little girl (p. 57), Metropolitan Magazine, n.d.

As a result of the 1856 Lerdo Law that confiscated ecclesiastic property, but which also tended to destroy community goods and foster individual private property, and the laws on fallow land stemming from it, many peasant communities lost their *ejido* lands to the expansion of latifundios formed in the last third of the nineteenth century. Emiliano Zapata from the state of Morelos was an outstanding spokesperson demanding the return of communal goods; in his state, the owners of large tracts of land planted with sugar cane had

taken it from peasant communities. Industrial workers suffered under a different yoke: among others, they were denied their rights to association and to strike; and there were no regulations establishing minimum working ages, the length of the work day, or wage and benefits policies, despite the fact that the workers had already developed mutualism and cooperativism. This spurred the emergence of anarchist and anarcho-sindicalist groups and ideas, as well as the propagation of the ideas derived from Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, establishing what has been identified as social Catholicism, which would soon manifest itself in the organization of Catholic workers congresses that demanded, just like their anarchist counterparts, an answer from the state. The liberal heirs of the reformist tradition protested the rapprochement between certain Catholic Church hierarchs and the government, pressing for the need to apply the Laws of the Reform establishing the separation of Church and state. Thus, a series of factors came together bringing with them political, agrarian, labor, and religious problems.

In 1900 President Porfirio Díaz was reelected for the fifth time, which, while it guaranteed stability, also implied the lack of political mobility for new generations of professionals.

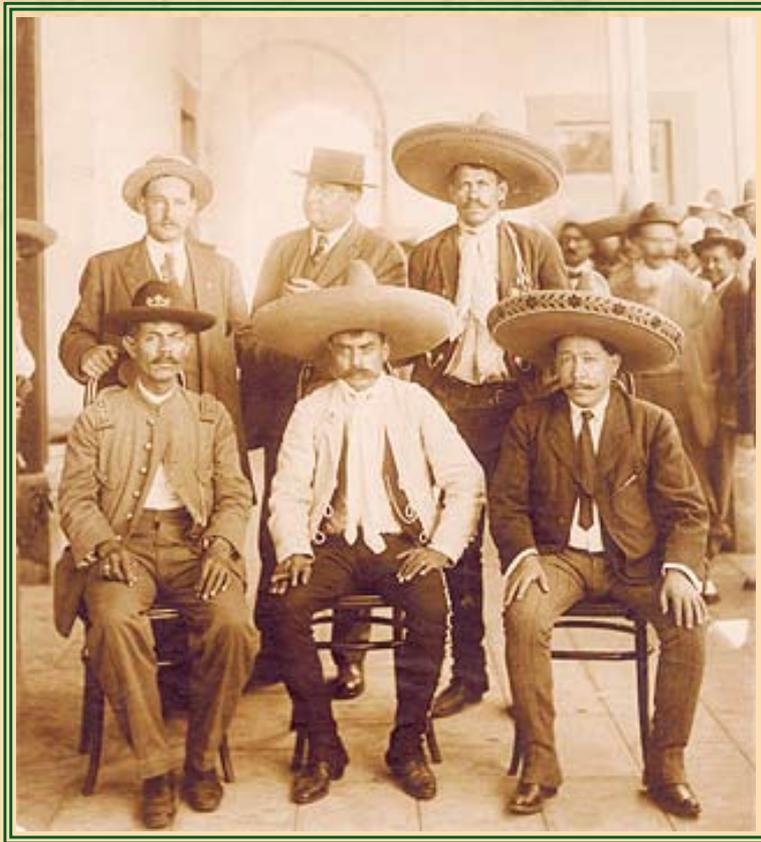
People began to act. In the city of San Luis Potosí, the liberals held a congress in 1903 where complaints were voiced to the government because of its rapprochement with the church. Out of that congress emerged the group that three years later would publish the Plan and Program of the Liberal Party, a well crafted document in which, while the relationship between church and state still had a place, the most important focus was a series of political, economic, and social proposals for reforming the country. This plan dealt with labor issues like limiting the work day and establishing a minimum wage; and agrarian measures, like making sure there were no fallow lands in the country. It also put forward the need for mandatory, secular, state-run education. This group's ideas circulated among broad sectors of workers through the newspaper *Regeneración*, whose editor, Ricardo Flores Magón, was its main ideologue. For his trouble, Flores Magón was persecuted and jailed many times, to the point of being forced into exile in the United States. The Catholic



Porfirio Díaz.

Workers Circles, for their part, broadened their grassroots organization and held congresses in which they debated advanced labor reforms.

In urban areas, professionals close to the political class began to speculate about the succession of General Porfirio Díaz. They expressed their concerns about how the presidential succession should be resolved in articles, pamphlets, and books, and asked themselves if the Mexican people were ready for democracy or not. They also discussed whether it was possible to organize political parties. These speculations were fueled even more by President Díaz's statements to journalist James Creelman from *Pearson's Magazine*, published in March 1908, announcing that he intended to retire at the end of his term in 1910. The book written by vineyard-owner Francisco I. Madero, *La sucesión presidencial en 1910* (The Presidential Succession of 1910) in San Pedro de las Colonias, in the northern state of Coahuila, explained the author's expectations about the dictator's announced retirement. In his book, he expressed an agreement with "Don Porfirio" —as Díaz is still known today in



Emiliano Zapata, the caudillo of the South.

Mexico: because the middle class had grown stronger, the possibility existed for the exercise of democracy. Other writers, on the other hand, were skeptical on this point. One of them, evolutionist Andrés Molina Enríquez, the author of what was undoubtedly the best diagnosis of the situation, warned that democracy was still far off. In his book *Los grandes problemas nacionales* (The Great National Problems), published in 1909, he took into account factors like the interaction among ethnic-social groups with different forms of land ownership. From this analysis, he was able to come to important conclusions foreseeing that in the face of kind of diversity that existed, it was impossible to evolve. A homogeneous society, by contrast, could have a democratic government, but before that, it would evolve from a personal dictatorship into a party dictatorship.

When 1910 came around, Porfirio Díaz changed his mind and decided to launch his campaign for president again. After a bad experience, the Democratic Party, formed in 1909 to support General Bernardo Reyes, dissolved when some of its members were persecuted. The only party left standing was the Anti-re-electionist Party, organized by Francisco I. Madero, who

The Maderistas' victory immediately had transcendental political consequences: Porfirio Díaz resigned and, at the end of the same month, left the country on a boat bound for Europe.

went on the first campaign tour worthy of the name in the history of Mexico. Despite harassment and persecution, the campaign was successful; but when the elections were held, fraud handed the victory to the dictatorship. Madero, basically imprisoned in San Luis Potosí, wrote the Plan of San Luis, in which he called for an uprising on November 20, 1910 and for the population to disavow the fraudulently elected authorities. At first, the response was small, but in the first three months of 1911, increasing numbers of rebel groups joined him, particularly in the northern part of the country.

By May, when a large number of rebellions had broken out nationwide, the forces came together in Ciudad Juárez, on the U.S. border, where what was to be the decisive battle was fought. The Maderistas' victory immediately had transcendental political consequences: Porfirio Díaz resigned

the presidency and, at the end of the same month, left the country on a boat bound for Europe, where he would spend the last five years of his life.

Between May and November was the period known as the “Interim,” headed by Francisco León de la Barra. Madero made a triumphal tour from the border to the capital, where many problems awaited him. On the one hand, the groups around him were divided. In addition, there was a commitment to disband the revolutionary troops, some of which, like the Zapatistas, refused as long as the government had not fulfilled its agrarian promises. In addition, the freedoms Madero guaranteed, in particular the freedom of the press, were used against the revolutionary leader himself, who was even personally satirized. Even with all of this, in November he took the oath as president and began his administration.

A few days later, the Zapatistas’ impatience manifested itself through the Plan of Ayala, which urged the restitution of the towns’ collective *ejido* farms. New anti-Madero outbreaks



Francisco I. Madero, who overthrew Porfirio Díaz.

In 1913 Carranza gave the movement a national dimension by sending contingents to the South and Southeast and occupying ports and customs offices, allowing him to raise money for his movement.



Venustiano Carranza (right).

were not long in coming: General Bernardo Reyes, Pascual Orozco, and Félix Díaz headed important military uprisings. In the midst of this difficult situation, a new Chamber of Dep-

uties—the twenty-sixth— was elected, with a government plurality, and began the task of writing legislation to satisfy the discontented groups.

When the president thought he had mastered the situation, a new military uprising in Mexico City freed Generals Bernardo Reyes and Félix Díaz from the city’s prisons. Reyes was killed when he tried to take the National Palace, as U.S. Ambassador Henry L. Wilson orchestrated a conspiracy in which General Victoriano Huerta betrayed the president and took him prisoner in February 1913 in what is known as the “Tragic Ten Days.” Madero was assassinated and Huerta instituted a dictatorial regime by dissolving the Chamber of Deputies and sending anyone who opposed his government to prison, or even murdering them, including a senator.

After Huerta took over the presidency, the governor of Coahuila, Venustiano Carranza, disavowed him and incited the people to bring down his government based on the Plan of Guadalupe published in March 1913. Up until then, very little had been advanced regarding the reforms that had fueled the revolutionary movement. The deputies began to debate about restoring the *ejidos* to the towns and labor reform issues; peasant groups continued their struggle, while the workers—both the anarcho-syndicalists, organized in the House of the World Worker, and the Catholics— developed labor proposals for social justice.

The center of this period is Carranza’s struggle against Huerta, which



different groups from the north joined, like the Division of the North under the command of Francisco Villa and the Sonorans who would create the Northwest Army, under its supreme commander General Álvaro Obregón. For his part, Zapata continued the struggle. Carranza gave the movement a national dimension by sending contingents to the South and Southeast and occupying ports and customs offices, which allowed him to raise money for his movement. The military actions against the federal army took place between March 1913 and August 1914, when the latter was defeated.

Once having overthrown President Huerta, the different groups agreed to hold a convention to design a program of reforms. It began in October 1914, but the groups around Villa argued that it should be transferred to the city of Aguascalientes, considered neutral territory. Once established there, the convention declared itself sovereign and disavowed Carranza, who left Mexico City and set up his government in Veracruz. The struggle between Constitutionalist and Conventionist forces was imminent, and the Sovereign Revolutionary Convention forces moved to Mexico City.

In December 1914, the Pact of Xochimilco was signed, unifying the forces of Villa and Zapata and putting them-

selves momentarily under the command of the president elected by the convention, Eulalio Gutiérrez. General Obregón, for his part, decided to throw his support to Carranza, which was instrumental in the Constitutionalist victory in mid-1915. Parallel to the military battles, another struggle, this one along ideological lines, was being waged through the publication of legislation and decrees on social issues that benefitted peasants and workers. The latter, members of the House of the World Worker, lent their support to the Constitutionalist army and joined it in what they called Red Battalions to fight against Villa. Maintaining the revolutionary armies active meant that the meager existing harvests and cattle were used to feed the troops, causing fairly widespread famine. This was accompanied by monetary chaos since each army minted and issued its own currency. As if this were not enough, epidemics spread due to the lack of hygiene in both cities and countryside.

Although the military phase had not concluded in 1916, its eventual outcome was clear, and this would be the year to channel the revolutionary reforms into legislation that would be applied immediately. Both the defeated conventionists and the victorious constitutionalists applied themselves to writing plans and laws designed to satisfy the demands emanating from the struggle. In fact, the convention survived in the territory controlled by Emiliano Zapata. In that year,

1916, he would publish a “Program of Reforms” that included many of the ideas expressed by Magón’s followers since 1906, plus others that had emerged during the revolutionary struggle itself. Carranza, for his part, would convene elections for a Constituent Congress to session at the end of the year in the city of Querétaro, where he would present a constitutional reform proposal for debate.

The congress was elected and began its session in December 1916, concluding February 5, 1917. While the only participants present were from the victors’ camp, in social, generational, and professional terms the composition of the delegates was representative and varied. Carranza’s plan was rapidly surpassed by the more radical wing, whose proposals on educational, agrarian, labor, and religious issues overshadowed his more moderate project that ran along traditional liberal lines. The radicals—dubbed Jacobins—went much further. As a result, the state was given more faculties as the supreme arbiter in labor, agrarian, educational, and religious matters. Although individual guarantees were established, many of them ceded precedence to a preponderance of the state, manifested in a strong government centered on the figure of the president, who was not limited at all, except for the republican norms that maintained an equilibrium of the

Although the military phase had not concluded in 1916, this would be the year to channel the revolutionary reforms into legislation that would be applied immediately.

branches of government and individual freedoms. The Constitution also gave the ownership of the land, the sub-soil, minerals, and hydrocarbons to the nation, as well as the faculty of transferring it to individuals.

Thus, the new Constitution established mandatory, free, secular, state-regulated education. It dealt with the agrarian problem by establishing the nation’s power over the soil and sub-soil and the ability to divide up large tracts of land. It handled labor issues by establishing a maximum number of hours of work, a minimum wage, and certain benefits, plus prohibiting child labor. It controlled the number and nationality of the Church’s clergy and banned worship in the street. Lastly, it strengthened the institution of the presidency.

It would not be easy to apply the Constitution, that is, to turn the majority of its articles into legislation that would make it possible to actually put in into practice. The commitment of the administrations that came out of it would be to make it an effective document. No easy task, since the country was plagued by a great deal of unrest, and the international scene was complicated by World War I, making the situation no easier.

The final results made possible the construction of a state headed by a strong central government based on workers and peasants who benefitted from it, as well as a popular army and the collaboration of the emerging middle classes, who expressed all manner of scientific, technological, and cultural advances. **MM**



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Film and the Mexican Revolution

David M. J. Wood

The Mexican Revolution, which broke out in 1910 just 15 years after the invention of the Lumière cinematograph, was among the world's first major conflicts to be captured on film. Although previous hostilities, such as the Spanish-American War (1898) and the Boer War (1899-1902), had attracted attention from early cameramen, the Mexican war of 1910-1917 was unprecedented both in the scale on which Mexican and foreign film operators followed, recorded, and exhibited the events of this vast, complex confrontation, and in the impact their footage had over a prolonged period on cinema audiences' comprehension of the military and social upheavals besetting their country. The image and memory of the revolution would also make a deep and lasting impression on subsequent fiction film output both in Mexico—which would turn out to be one of

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Photos on pages 58, 59, 60, 61 and 63, courtesy of the Old San Ildefonso College.

Latin America's leading film-producing nations— and abroad. Just as cinema is crucial to understanding how the Mexican Revolution was fought, lived, and subsequently incorporated into the popular imaginary, the revolution itself plays a key role in the comprehension of how cinema developed in Mexico. This essay will discuss a small selection of films on the revolution, with reference to the following topical and analytical categories: documentary representation, violence, caudillos, gender relations, mobility, photographic aesthetics, and the foreign gaze.¹

Francisco I. Madero's 1910 insurrection against the authoritarian regime of General Porfirio Díaz and the ensuing battle, bloodshed, and political manoeuvring that plagued the country for the following decade inspired cameramen and film exhibitors like Jesús H. Abitia, Salvador Toscano, and the Alva brothers to travel the length and breadth of Mexico, filming the conflict's latest events and displaying them to audiences keen to gain a grip on their country's rapidly changing situation. Stirred variously by ideological and financial motives, these film entrepreneurs frequently travelled with and promoted the causes of the various revolutionary caudillos (most prominently Madero, Venustiano Carranza, and Álvaro Obregón, in the case of the Mexican cameramen, while Francisco Villa entered into an agreement with the Mutual Film Corporation that initially feted him as the hero of the revolution for U.S. film audiences). The popularity of such actuality films and the competition for audiences' attention encouraged filmmakers to elaborate increasingly long and complex narratives: the lost but recently-reconstructed *La toma de Ciudad Juárez y el viaje del héroe de la Revolución D. Francisco I. Madero* (The Taking of Ciudad Juárez and the Journey of Don Francisco I. Madero, Hero of the Revolution) (Salvador Toscano, 1911) is a key early example. Some filmmakers, most notably Salvador Toscano, recycled their actuality footage to create historical films narrating various years of recent history, often several hours long, thus establishing the Mexican Revolution as the scenario of some of world's first compilation documentaries. This genre would attain greater national and even international popularity with the later sound compilations *Memorias de un mexicano* (Memoirs of a Mexican) (Carmen Toscano, 1950) and *Epopeyas de la Revolución* (Epics of the Revolution) (Gustavo Carrero, 1963).

The revolutionary-era compilations continued to feature in cinema programs during the long post-revolutionary period of reconstruction and reconciliation in the 1920s, but they gradually faded from prominence as audiences turned to the escapism and visual allure of the by-then-hegemonic Hollywood industry. By the early 1930s, though, with the onset of the sound era, Mexican fictional film was able to enter into a critical engagement with the country's still-recent past. The three films of Fernando de Fuentes' revolutionary trilogy, *El prisionero trece* (Prisoner 13) (1933), *El compadre*

The revolution itself plays a key role in the comprehension of how cinema developed in Mexico.



Program for screening of the documentary *La decena trágica en Mexico* (Mexico's Tragic Ten Days), Salvador Toscano, 1913, Carmen Toscano Foundation.



Still from *La Adelita* (The Women Soldier/Campfollower), Guillermo Hernández Gómez, 1937. Televisa Foundation Collection.



Alfredo Zalce, *La soldadera* (Woman Soldier), engraving, 1946. Museo de la Estampa.

Stirred by ideological and financial motives, film entrepreneurs frequently travelled with and promoted the causes of the various revolutionary caudillos.

Mendoza (Friend Mendoza) (1933) and *Vámonos con Pancho Villa* (Let's Go with Pancho Villa) (1935), are some of the most remarkable moving pictures made on the revolution, and together constitute a damning condemnation of the physical violence, psychological cruelty, and betrayal underlying social and personal relations during the 1910-1917 conflict. The three films are set, respectively, at a federal army barracks in Mexico City during the reactionary regime of Victoriano Huerta; in a rural hacienda whose owner juggles loyalties between the local Zapatista and government forces; and among a group of idealistic friends (the “Leones de San Pablo”) who enlist with Pancho Villa’s forces as they campaign throughout northern Mexico. All three are characterized by an overt politics of violence that structures the revolutionary period: that of an oppressive authoritarian state against its citizens in *El prisionero trece*, that of factional warfare in *El compadre Mendoza*, and between and among Villista and government forces in *Vámonos con Pancho Villa*. More prominent and powerful, though, is the psychological pain that the complex protagonists of these films inflict upon themselves and upon those they love, be it knowingly or otherwise, through defining acts of betrayal that renege on sacred bonds of family and *compadrazgo*.² The revolutionary trilogy, made at a painful juncture in Mexico’s post-revolutionary reconciliation, signals the deep rifts that existed within what 1920s governments had dubbed the “revolutionary family,” both during the revolution itself and in the early 1930s. Few films since have dealt so effectively with the interplay between the revolution’s internal and external violence.

Vámonos con Pancho Villa is the only film of the trilogy to feature directly one of the caudillos of the revolution —quite fittingly, since it was Villa, far more than any other



José Clemente Orozco, *Campo de batalla* (Battlefield), lithographs. SOMAAP.



Raúl de Anda in still from *Vámonos con Pancho Villa* (Let's Go with Pancho Villa), Fernando de Fuentes, 1935. UNAM Filmoteque.



Still from *Chicogrande*, Felipe Cazals, 2010. Eniac Martínez. Creando Films.

military leader, whom cinema turned into the stuff of myth. While portrayals of Villa in Mexican and U.S. films during and soon after the revolution tended to epically lionize or demonize him, the Villa of De Fuentes's movie is all too human, sometimes compassionate but often aloof, making his own final act of betrayal all the more unbearable. As a whole host of later films on the caudillo reflect, Villa was also arguably the most complex, evocative, and ambiguous character of post-revolutionary historical narratives and popular imaginaries.

As the Mexican film industry and the post-revolutionary regime alike consolidated toward the late 1930s, the space for critical readings of national history closed down. *Flor silvestre* (Wild Flower) (Emilio Fernández, 1943) also deals with the trauma of the Mexican Revolution through the metaphorical lens of family and gender relations, but unlike the De Fuentes pictures of the early 1930s, Fernández's far more socially conservative film presents bonds of family, gender, and social class as solid structures that are reformed and expanded by the revolution, but ultimately remain largely unchanged. The film relates the story of José Luis (Pedro Armendáriz), the dashing young son of a hacienda-owner, who challenges the traditional social structures that shape his family life, firstly by joining the Maderista revolution and secondly by eloping with Esperanza, a lower-class, local woman. Finally, though, *Flor silvestre* is deeply ambiguous about the revolutionary process, as we see when José Luis's father is killed by marauding revolutionaries, and he sets out to avenge the murderers. The film's melodramatic narrative structure buttresses the sense of inevitability of underlying social, gender, and class relations, and the revolutionary backdrop is subsumed into a broader and more abstract nationalist discourse on social mobility, bravery, and honor.

A more politically challenging take on the part women played in the revolution is *La soldadera*



Silvia Pinal in *La soldadera* (The Woman Soldier), José Bolaños, 1966. UNAM Filmoteque.



Film frame from the editing script of *Los últimos treinta años de México* (The Last Thirty years of Mexico), Salvador Toscano, c. 1930. Carmen Toscano Foundation.

A more politically challenging take on the part women played in the revolution is *La soldadera* (The Woman Soldier/Campfollower) (José Bolaños, 1966), made at a time when Mexican film production was gaining some financial and ideological independence from the state, despite the continued pressure of censorship. *La soldadera* centers on the story of Lázara (Silvia Pinal), the bride of a federal soldier who is soon killed in battle against Villistas. Pinal's character, for want of any alternative, joins the contingent of women (*soldaderas*) accompanying the revolutionary troops on their campaigns.

The revolution here is incomprehensible, insurmountable, and brutal, but Lázara stoically accepts her lot in the sharply stratified gender relations of the revolutionary *bola*.³ The film's visual style is highly fluid and mobile, reflecting the technological innovations of the era, and its narrative is punctuated throughout by the visual and aural motif of the train transporting the troops from one battle to another. Yet rather than being a romanticized emblem of physical mobility, national integration, and macho companionship, as in many previous films on the revolution, here the train serves as an ironic signifier of the chaos, aimlessness, and uprooting that war brings with it. Only the notion of home, of fixity and stability, drives Lázara, but it is an ideal that is repeatedly, cruelly, denied to her.

If *La soldadera* deconstructs the tropes of the railway and the *soldadera*, idealized in many previous films on the revolution, *Reed: México insurgente* (Reed: Insurgent Mexico) (Paul Leduc, 1970), another independent production of the era, tackles headlong the visual and historical nostalgia surrounding the cinematic representation of the revolution.

In Leduc's poetic reconstruction of the experiences of U.S. journalist John Reed, who reported on the Mexican Revolution whilst "embedded" with revolutionary troops, Alexis Grivas's carefully wrought photographic aesthetic mirrors the visual style of the now-distant actuality footage of the revolution, while the sepia hue in which the entire film is immersed makes evident, and thus implicitly critiques, any facile idealization of the past that cinematic representation might endorse. In tune with broader international currents of militant filmmaking, *Reed* celebrates political engagement and criticizes the pretence of journalistic and artistic distance or objectivity.

Another contemporary film, the Argentine documentary *México, la revolución congelada* (Mexico, the Frozen Revolution) (Raymundo Gleyzer, 1970), actively intervenes in what had by now become the filmic heritage of the revolution, appropriating documentary footage shot during the conflict itself, and turning it into the visual evidence of a revisionist, anti-imperialist reading of the revolution and its failures. Gleyzer was the latest in a long line of foreign filmmakers to find inspiration in the Mexican Revolution; and his militant documentary is far removed from Hollywood epics such as the ostensibly anti-revolutionary *Viva Zapata!* (Elia Kazan, 1952), or from trans-cultural spaghetti westerns such as *Giù la testa / Los héroes de Mesa Verde* (re-



Poster for *Viva Zapata!*, Elia Kazan, 1951.



Antonio Aguilar as Emiliano Zapata. *Emiliano Zapata*, Felipe Cazals, 1970. IMCINE.



Lobby card for *Epopéyas de la Revolución* (Epics of the Revolution), Gustavo Carrero, 1963. Carmen Toscano Foundation.

leased in English as *A Fistful of Dynamite*) (Sergio Leone, 1971). As much as being *about* the revolution, many such films have taken the Mexican conflict as a canvas onto which to project ready-formed cultural perceptions and ideological projects.

Mexican and foreign filmmakers alike have continued to this day to draw upon the narratives, the aesthetics and the mythology of the revolution, with recent titles including *Chicogrande* (Felipe Cazals, 2010) and *El atentado* (The Assassination Attempt) (Jorge Fons, 2010). This tendency sometimes monumentalizes, but often renews, contemporary imaginaries of this crucial and evocative period of Mexican history. Such constant challenges to and reworking of narratives about the past should be welcomed. **MM**

Villa was arguably the most complex, evocative, and ambiguous character of post-revolutionary historical narratives.

NOTES

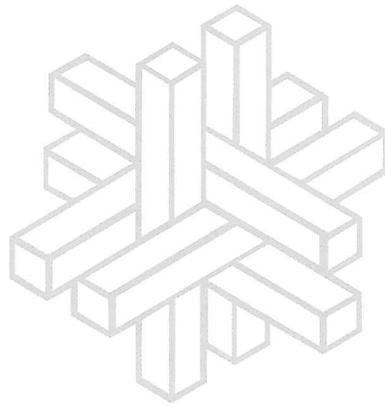
¹ This category structure, and the essay more broadly, draws partly on research conducted by Ángel Miquel, Álvaro Vázquez Mantecón, Eduardo de la Vega, Elisa Lozano, Hugo Lara, Carlos Flores Villela, Claudia Arroyo, Alicia Vargas, and Raúl Miranda, the section curators of the exhibition “Cinema and Revolution,” directed by Pablo Ortiz Monasterio and recently on display, under the auspices of the Mexican Film Institute (Imcine), at the Old College of San Ildefonso in Mexico City.

² *Compadrazgo* is the strong emotional bond of friendship established between the parents and godparents of a child. In Mexican politics, it refers to the particular Mexican brand of cronyism based initially on—but by no means limited to—these close relations. It extends to all relations that put personal loyalties and friendship at the center of political relationships. [Copy Editor’s Note.]

³ *La bola* is the name still used in Mexico to refer to the masses of the poor who flocked to join the popular revolutionary armies. [Copy Editor’s Note.]



Pedro Armendáriz and other actors in a colorized still from *Pancho Villa Vuelve* (Pancho Villa Returns), Miguel Contreras Torres, 1949. Carmen Toscano Foundation.



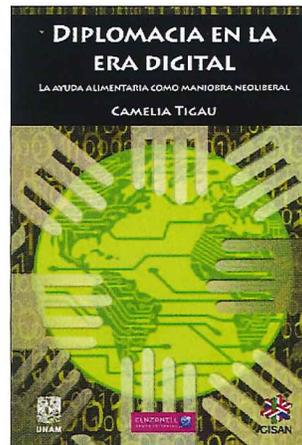
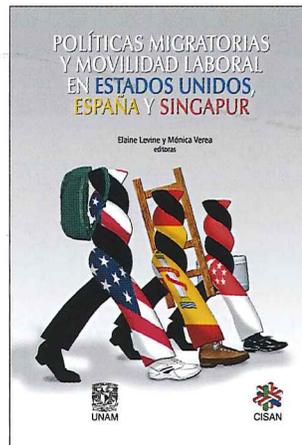
CISAN

p u b l i c a t i o n s

Políticas migratorias y movilidad laboral en Estados Unidos, España y Singapur

Elaine Levine y Mónica Vereá
editors

The authors analyze both the migratory flows, and state politics to control and regulate them in the last decades, in three countries: the United States, Spain and Singapur. Their main thesis is that modern states try to control or regulate migratory flows depending on their current economic or political junctures.



Diplomacia en la era digital. La ayuda alimentaria como maniobra neoliberal

Camelia Tigau

Understanding diplomacy as a series of subterfuges, tricks and other methods of war has had a negative impact on international relations. This includes the issue of food: neoliberal maneuvering has blocked the flow of aid from the rich to the poorest countries. Undoubtedly, moving ahead toward a more democratic or network-based diplomacy would renew the ways individuals, communities, provinces and nations relate to each other, just as this work suggests.

Franklin y Jefferson: entre dos revoluciones. Inicios de la política internacional estadounidense

Ignacio Díaz de la Serna

Until the early nineteenth century, the United States performed an astute balancing act between its own interests and those of France and its former colonial master, Great Britain. This book analyzes the conditions in which it carried out that policy based on the diplomatic achievements of its two main architects, Franklin and Jefferson.



Los contornos del mundo, globalización, subjetividad y cultura

Nattie Golubov y Rodrigo Parrini
editors

Traders and narcissists, intersexed people and Newyoricans, the dead and the "living," migrants, consumers, borders that move, entrepreneurs of their own lives, Zapatistas and social-justice-fighter cybernauts: these are all actors in this book. Its aim is to respond to a substantive question: what are the relationships among the process of globalization, subjectivity and culture? The result is complex, contradictory and surprising.

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Mexico since September 11¹

by Carlos Monsiváis



ON FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF AN END OF THE WORLD

And that day, as the hallucinated dust spreads through the city, among inconceivable versions of flaming swords (planes) and skywriting (explosions), the great dusty cloud began what was unanimously called an “apocalypse.” And the thought of *Apocalypse Now* fed the visual and auditory testimony of a planet glued to radios and televisions, anxiously surfing the web, never sated with the flow of images.

And that day, the first of the Century of Enormous Distrust, disasters of urban Mother Nature came together: flames, dust, the fall of challenges into the sky, rubble, panic that is the blare of survival, and the transformation of ruins into omens.

And from the encounter of the depth of rancor and the solidarity of the latest technology emerge those mythical beasts, the unexpected horsemen of those moments and those cities: the hatred that is a religion made only of sacrifices; the

arrogance that is the dogma of the structures that “immortalize” themselves; the will of a few who offer their lives to strike a death blow to such anthropomorphic symbols.

The tragedy is as innumerable as the ways of perceiving it: people jump out of buildings, firefighters and police officers do their duty, twenty-first-century patriotism finds its homeland in human rights.

Viewers abyss—the verb is descriptive—in front of their sets. Never have so many seen the same thing for so long; never have so many expressed their solidarity with such similar words; never have so many—the rating of history—concentrated so passionately on the fascination of horror.

What can be said or thought about an apocalyptic landscape? And that day, we all knew at the same time that it was the end of any justification of terrorism and the beginning of a new rule: prophecies are only spoken after they have been fulfilled. We’re in the know: terrorism is the Evil of theologies

CARLOS MONSIVÁIS AS TESTIMONIALIST

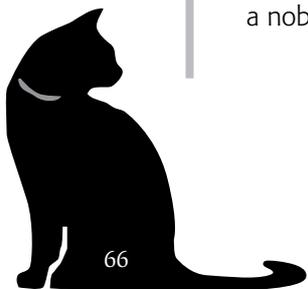


Carlos Monsiváis sent this perceptive, poignant piece in response to a call for testimonios aiming to document the myriad transborder-wise ripple effects of post-September 11, 2001 times. With his customary graciousness, Monsiváis readily responded by sending his testimonio through cyberspace, adding a note that he thought this project was a valuable documenting effort in which he was happy to participate.

Monsiváis’s primary intellectual concern and focus was Mexico, laying bare its fragilities and strengths, its inner struggles and relationships beyond its borders, including the ongoing grating of the Mexico-U.S. border, that “herida abierta” (open wound), as Chicana Gloria Anzaldúa has termed it, opening up in hurt far beyond the geopolitical drawn line. Monsiváis was in a sense a testimonial writer, forever documenting the times in Mexico, its political and social ailments, its pain and, yes, also its laughter. His characteristic sense of humor permeated his chronicles of a Mexico as it was becoming, up into our present.

This piece brings to the forefront Monsiváis’s acute feeling for how a single event in the U.S —he identifies it as a tragedy, without a doubt— had myriad repercussions, ones that he frames here to illustrate —through gross facts as well as slippery nuances— how September 11, 2001 became a statement of what globalization deeply signifies for Mexico. May his words become a noble legacy for us and a true tribute to him. He shall be missed by many.

CLAIRE JOYSMITH
RESEARCHER AT CISAN



because its first victim is its very cause, and in the face of scenes from the end of the world, we think of the transcendental, the banal, our families, the images that envelope us and change us, where the worst that could happen has already happened to some of us.

PLANET OF DUST

What do ordinary citizens —almost everybody— know about terrorism? The word evokes a universe of conspiracies, secret camps, safe houses, forgetting the cause in favor of vengeance against its enemies or against people who don't even know it exists. After September 11, Mexicans justly rejected terrorism. However, unfortunately, there was no serious, systematic effort to understand the reasons for the extermination without justifying it in the least.

Terrorism is an offense against laws, human rights, lives, property, the very peoples it purports to defend and whose humiliations and suffering unflinching mount. And up until that moment, terrorism had been observed by sector; after September 11, we all unendingly watch the hijacked plane crash against the second of New York's Twin Towers. And we all ask ourselves: how did we get here? Is it just madness? Up to what point does the failure of causes, with the degree of justice they contain, turn into homicidal fury?



People talk increasingly about state terrorism, and irrefutable proof is offered: the legalization of torture by the U.S. government, the invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, the prison systems of Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo, the genocide in Serbia or Darfur, the dirty wars in Latin America, and a very long etcetera. However, and with solid reasons, Edward Said is opposed to the term because he says it confuses the actions, and it is better to continue talking about government repression, being specific in each case. Bush is not a terrorist, but he is the promoter of genocides.



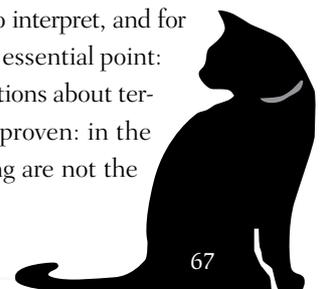
In the first months, reactions in Mexico to September 11 vary after the first impulse to horror. Globalized with no hope of a remedy —and no protest, either— by the events of that day and those that followed, Mexican society finds itself like al-

most all societies around the world, without clear definitions of globalization. Undoubtedly, we are globalized, but what does that mean? Is it simply getting the latest fashions and events at the same time in every country? In Mexico, radio and television reach 95 percent of places, and, after the terrorist attack, all the channels and stations spent weeks covering the events, finding out the identity of the victims, highlighting the heroism of police and firefighters, the acts of protest and memorials, the mourning in the United States and the world. There is no other topic of conversation, and, for example, musician Karl Heinz Stockhausen and essayist Jean Baudrillard are vigorously censored for frivolously commenting about the "portentous aesthetic act" of the collapse of the towers.

Amidst bewilderment and confusion, one idea (a fact) is indisputable: the radical change in history, a day in the life of New York, is literally an international leap revealing the power of violence in the strict hierarchies of globalization and exhibiting the intolerability of the arguments of intolerance.

People talk increasingly about state terrorism, but Edward Said is opposed to the term because he says it is better to continue talking about government repression, being specific in each case. Bush is not a terrorist, but he is the promoter of genocides.

A whirlwind of hypotheses and interpretations is unleashed and, like everywhere, in Mexico the revenge-seeking version also circulated for a while: "the United States was asking for it, and, as you sow, so shall ye reap." This outlook, morally and politically unacceptable, is rooted in the perverse idea that guides the right-wing vision of massacres and genocides: countries, communities, creeds "ask for it." The victims are invariably the guilty parties. For those convinced of the Judgment Day Lottery, it does no good to locate those responsible for terrorism, the criminal castes, the financial perversions, and the psychopathological tremor of fanatics, who set themselves up as judges, pass sentence, and attempt to punish symbols regardless of who represents them. But the sectarian right and left agree on refusing to make the effort to interpret, and for that reason they do not comprehend the essential point: *there are no guilty victims*. And generalizations about terrorism ignore what has been more than proven: in the first place, the ones who do the reaping are not the



ones who do the sowing, but those close to where the crop comes up (and in this case, where the clash takes place).

In Latin America, the most abject demonstration of terrorism in the name of social justice has been the Peruvian group Shining Path. Among his demented demands, President Gonzalo, or Abimael Guzmán, the criminal who presented himself as “the fourth sword of Marxism,” orders the murder of peasants, social leaders, doctors, police officers, soldiers, anyone who gets in the way of “revolutionary purity.” To justify it, they talked of the cruelty and racism of Peru’s great landowners and army officers. Though this cruelty and racism is undeniable and central, they do not explain in the least a single one of Shining Path’s crimes. And, in the Basque Country, ETA is another devastating example. We know this: the monstrous irrationality that says it acts in the name of national social justice is one of the great obstacles to the democratic struggle.

THE EMPIRE AND ITS ENVIRONS

In October 2001, an axiom is propagated almost without the need for words: the center of planetary power is —as always and much more than ever— the United States. The news leaves no room for doubt about the preparations for revenge, the mass detentions of Arabs and Palestinians in the United States, the resurgence of McCarthyism, and the increase in police severity along the border. September 11 shows up and fortifies on the international level the weakness of almost all countries.

THE NATIONALISM OF 2001

The myths and legends about Mexican nationalism belong for the most part to a past that has basically disappeared. In recent years, that nationalism has lost its old militant edge, limiting itself to rituals, to the enthusiasm for sports and food, in the traditions that have been salvaged from the shipwreck imposed by savage modernization... and to the permanent core of rancor against the empire. It is obvious that there is no longer any indignant nationalism in the face of the loss of half of Mexico in 1847, or any of that old organized anti-Yanqui-ism. Today, the “gringo” has stopped being strictly “the other.” He is the other, yes, and the neighbor of the other, who turns out to be our cousin, sister, or the

The irrefutable globalization imposed by September 11 is subject to the most devastating criticism, intensified with the war in Afghanistan and, above all, the monstrous invasion of Iraq and the chain of grotesque lies spewed to try to justify it for a while.

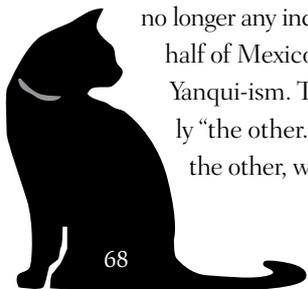
uncle of that sedentary man or woman who did not cross the border. The weight of successive migrations changes extraordinarily the culture and economy of Mexico (with a big impact in its politics), and the notion of the United States has been changing, without the characterizations of racism and labor abuses fading in the least.

Nationalism cannot escape from this influence, and is transformed, on the one hand, into rituals of self-pity, and on the other hand into a grieved, amused national conscience that oscillates between pride and despondence. When U.S. nationalism overflowed very recently, Mexicans were quite aware of it. They have never experienced nor will they ever experience anything like that: the chauvinistic obsession that waves the national flag at all hours, says it is in “the promised land,” and proclaims the twentieth and twenty-first centuries “the American centuries.” But the absence of a bellicose nationalism with that much resonance does not eliminate national feeling nor its diversifications, and the irrefutable globalization imposed September 11, like it or not, is subject to the most devastating criticism, which intensifies with the war in Afghanistan and, above all, with the monstrous invasion of Iraq and the chain of grotesque lies spewed to try to justify it for a while.

We are globalized, yes, but how? The unequal and combined globalization can be felt in Mexico in innumerable ways. Among the most outstanding:

- *Submission* in Mexican government practices, subjection to a series of decisions by the U.S. government. This is expressed very elementally in President Fox’s recommendation to Commander Castro in March 2002, two days before the Monterrey Summit, a conversation divulged by Castro, who completely forgot an explicit commitment and in retaliation for Mexico’s vote on human rights in Cuba:

Castro: Tell me, what else can I do to be of service to you?



What the post-9/11 landscape adds is the knowledge of the style and dimensions of dependency, the dependency born of the lack of alternatives. It resuscitates the old idea of Mexico as “the back yard,” and in the face of that, there are no organized responses.



Iván Stephens/Cuartoscuro

Fox: Well, basically, you can not attack the United States or President Bush; rather, [we should] limit ourselves.

A recommendation like this would have been inconceivable even under the Institutional Revolutionary Party, also submissive to U.S. administrations, but careful about the legal forms of nationalism. What does “limit ourselves” mean? In this context, it seems to mean remembering our second-class status and never attempting to leave it: “I know my place.” President Fox belongs to a generation of Mexicans marked by pragmatism in its most elementary form, the kind that dictates that whoever holds the most power hold the keys to all forms of behavior. The conclusion would be that whoever rules gives the orders and channels the collective psychology.

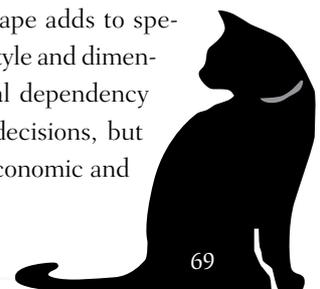
- *Determinism*, a primordial part of Latin America and Mexico’s psychology and culture that becomes more vigorous with globalization. Not only does the society of national states go into crisis, but also, due to transnational bodies, the problems of transborder space become sharper, accenting the unfair division of labor and social inequality. “What can be done against this?” Latin Americans have long asked themselves. And, after September 11, the question fades away partially as the levels of impotence in the face of the aim of unseating the Islamic world are verified.

- *Sovereignty*, a term that in the past was unquestionable, is now subjected to many revisions and polemics. The behavior of the great powers enormously affects the environment (climate changes, the hole in the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect), and the life of every country is powerfully intervened in by holding companies, monetary crises, the price of oil, wars, cable television, and the conception of the fashionable, understood as cloning societies. “There are no borders anymore,” say those who never comment on the atrocious mistreatment of Mexicans in the U.S. border area. And the disappearance of the signs of Mexican sovereignty increases. How is national sovereignty defined in the face of transnational structures?

In day-to-day practice, national states’ freedom of movement is considerably reduced. Their capabilities for international action shrink, and sovereignty is fragmented by national, regional, and international factors. This, something that should be carefully evaluated, immediately hooks up with a determinist mentality, and after September 11, it is commonplace to hear people alluding to “the despair of sovereignty”: if you can’t beat ‘em, join ‘em.

- *Drug trafficking*, the criminal “parallel state” that devastates societies, contributes enormously to the massive spread of crime, and the “Trojan horse” of U.S. police in Mexico’s internal affairs.

In short, what the post-9/11 landscape adds to specific knowledge is the knowledge of the style and dimensions of dependency. This is not mental dependency—there, there would be no collective decisions, but only strictly individual ones— or even economic and



Despite the overused term,
September 11 is a historic turning point.
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humanist reactions of solidarity were put
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reaffirmed including all their vulnerable points.

political dependency —although that certainly exists and in multiple ways. Rather, it is the dependency born of the lack of alternatives. It resuscitates the old idea of Mexico as “the back yard,” and in the face of that, there are no organized responses.

BECOMING AWARE IN TIMES OF CONFORMITY

If the hegemony of U.S.-style globalization was inevitable, the emergence of a very recently perceptible critical sensibility is not so foreseeable. Certainly, it did not look possible. The wrongly dubbed “global-phobes” have been rather invisible in Mexico, even though many understand the justice of their demands and that the real “global-phobes” are those who belong to the capitalist minorities who attack the planet’s resources and freedoms.² However, despite the poverty of left organizations and the weakness of civil society —more a project than a reality— the attacks against Mexicans in the United States are now encountering greater resistance in Mexico. We should emphasize here what is already obvious: if in Mexico anything has changed the perspective of Mexican communities abroad, it is globalization. Unannounced, but ferociously, globalization has informed us of the obvious: destiny hangs from the thread of computer keyboard strokes; investments have no homeland; homelands have no investments; in the face of neoliberalism there are no alternatives; and neoliberalism is not and cannot be an alternative for the majorities and responsible minorities. Globalization exterminates any fetishism or volunteerism of “what comes from outside.” If “what comes from outside” is already here inside, why not accept that Mexicans abroad also be globalized in a tyrannical, monopolistic way? The kinds of opportunities available differentiate us; the enormous difficulty in taking advantage of them makes us similar.

Being “globalized” means being more informed about very different events, among them the immense obstacles for dealing with political and financial power. It

means more people educated in passiveness and also, in many and an increasing number of cases, it means people more willing to defend human rights wherever they are infringed. So, the murders, the beatings, the *Migra’s* arbitrary treatment, and the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision declaring a Mexican worker’s rights non-existent have been met with indignation in Mexico. Similarly, although the war in Afghanistan did not spark much visible response —barely a few letters to the editor— the events in Iraq have been met with almost unanimous response from the collective consciousness.

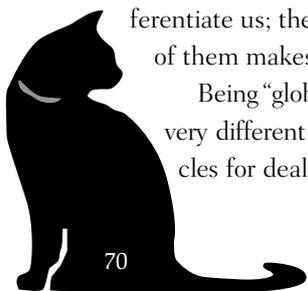
ON THE CONGRESS OF POINTS OF VIEW AND THE MORALS OF THE STORY

Despite the overused term, September 11 is a historic turning point. On that day, the consciousness of globalization was formally launched without exception. The notion of “spectacle” changed profoundly; humanist reactions of solidarity were put to the test; and what are undeniably the powers that be were reaffirmed including all their vulnerable points. In this process, the invasion of Iraq radicalizes people. In the countries of the old Third World, September 11 has been until now the ominous, flashy beginning of the destruction of their expectations. For Mexicans, the awareness of real, inevitable globalization has meant and continues to mean too many things, among them the strengthening of the defense of human rights, resistance to racism, the oppressive feeling of limits, medium- and long-term despair, the clarification of their demands and the possibilities to organize in the United States in a much-needed, broad alliance with the Hispanic communities, another great protagonist of recent years. ■■

NOTES

¹ This text was previously published in Spanish in Claire Joysmith, ed., *Speaking desde las heridas. Cibertestimonios transfronterizos/transborder (September 11, 2001-March 11, 2007)* (Mexico City: CISAN/ITESM/Whittier College, 2007). [Editor’s Note.]

² In Mexico, the media dubbed the global justice movement that first made a name for itself in the 1999 Seattle demonstrations against the World Trade Organization summit a movement of “global-phobes.” [Translator’s Note.]



Carlos Monsiváis Catechizing Mephistopheles¹

Adolfo Castañón*

“So, do you believe in God?” Monsiváis asked me.

“I don’t know,” I answered. “I only know that
He believes in me and in you, otherwise
we wouldn’t even be here.”

“Death is a fiesta and a day for staying in to observe it:
an empty space on the calendar in
whose void we all participate.”

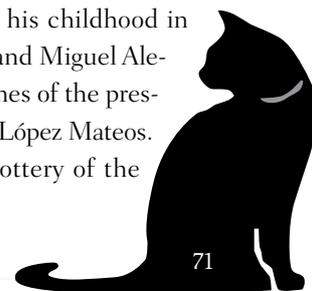


Max Nuñez/Cuartoscuro

A few weeks ago, Carlos Monsiváis participated in a colloquium about Alfonso Reyes at El Colegio de México. He said that Reyes was more widely known than his writings. As he left the conference, I told him that more than 60 anthologies had been published of Alfonso Reyes’s literary work. Now I think that, just like Alfonso Reyes, Carlos Monsiváis is very well known, but read very little. It is up to us, his readers and editors, to prepare the written road to re-transmit his legacy.

*Mexican writer and editor.

Monsi, Carlos, Carlos Monsiváis, Carlos Monsiváis Aceves (1938-2010), the prodigious son that it fell to Doña Esther to give birth to, was born in Mexico City when the Spanish Civil War was about to end and World War II was about to begin. Just like José Emilio Pacheco and Sergio Pitol, the other two musketeers of the threesome whose D’Artagnan would be Elena Poniatowska, he lived his childhood in the Mexico of Manuel Ávila Camacho and Miguel Alemán, and his long adolescence in the times of the presidents named Adolfo: Ruiz Cortines and López Mateos. It would fall to them to manage the lottery of the





Carlos memorized a good part of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament. This training made him a precocious dissident: an already cultured, Protestant child in the midst of intransigent, nationalist Catholics.

PRI's presidentialism—in allusion to Gabriel Zaid—indirectly consolidated by Marshall Plan proceeds/loans.

It is well known that thanks to his heroic, indestructible mother, nourished with the unleavened bread of Biblical culture, the child who was Carlos memorized a good part of the Bible, particularly the Old Testament in the classical translation by Cipriano de Valera and Casiodoro de Reyna.

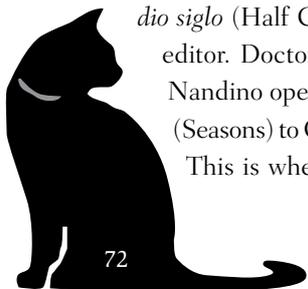
This training led him to being a precocious dissident: an already cultured, Protestant child in the midst of intransigent, nationalist Catholics. Very soon he arrived at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. He studied economics, law, letters, philosophy, history. He was fellow students and made friends with economists like Rolando Cordera, lawyers like Carlos Fuentes and Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, and a miscellaneous group made up of Javier Wimer, Rafael Ruiz Harrell, Margarita Peña, the Galindo sisters,² Marco Antonio Montes de Oca, Arturo Azuela, and Daniel Reséndiz Núñez, among many others. He collaborated in student magazines like *Medio siglo* (Half Century), of which he was the managing editor. Doctor—that's what they called him—Elías Nandino opened the doors of his magazine *Estaciones* (Seasons) to Carlos Monsiváis and José Emilio Pacheco. This is where young Carlos would publish some of

his first essays and articles. A little later, he collaborated at the University Radio and in the *Revista de la Universidad de México* (Magazine of the University of Mexico), edited by Jaime García Terrés and in the company of a brilliant generation of writers and artists like Jorge Ibarguengoitia, Juan García Ponce, Emilio García Riera, Vicente Rojo, Manuel Felguérez, José Luis Cuevas, José de la Colina, and José Luis Ibáñez, among many others.

Before he turned 30, his fine-tuned, refined vocation for letters led him to publish *Antología de la poesía mexicana del siglo XX* (Anthology of Twentieth-Century Mexican Poetry) (1966), which became an indisputable literary reference work. Film and criticism, poetry and

humor, politics and caricature, the novel and sociology, legitimate theater and *teatro de carpa*,³ the visual arts, the history of art: all this and more seemed to interest this author who defies classification, a dedicated reader and curious wanderer, a son of the prodigious Portales neighborhood.

In 1968, his contemplative itinerary would become an activist one and the road to Damascus of the committed spectator. The 1968—and subsequent years'—experience of violence and political persecution would mature in Monsiváis a civic conscience and a incensed apocalyptic design *vis-à-vis* political institutions. That substantive experience would accompany him to the end of his days, as proven in his books about '68, published jointly with journalist Julio Scherer. His book of articles and essays, emblematically entitled *Días de guardar* (Days to Stay In and Observe) is a token of that moment. Emblematically: "to stay in," an allusion to fasting and a curfew, a tacit evocation of both abstinence and repression. Along with José Emilio Pacheco and Vicente Rojo, Carlos Monsiváis was invited by the charismatic Fernando Benítez to head a weekly literary supplement. He would end up accepting the editor's post in the weekly magazine *Siempre!* (Always), founded by José Pagés Llergo. There, Monsiváis would reveal one of his many virtues: that of editor and master of ceremonies, the shepherd of the words of others, and head-hunter (a term that had yet to come into vogue), importer and translator of esteemed and precious goods of the imagination and, above all, that of a surreptitious commentator on today's world. It would be in the pages of *Siempre!* that Monsiváis would launch a camouflaged, implacable "war machine" that was simultaneously both amus-



ing and critical —and critical because it was amusing: the section “Por mi madre, bohemios” (For My Mother, Bohemians), a kind of forensic *sottisier*. There, the committed audience could take comfort by dotting the “i’s” and the “j’s” of the silly, unconscious, or even intentional statements squandered on the political stage by different pachyderms, flatfoots, parasites, and sea-urchins that give voice to our country’s political and business class, and would ironically help to “document our optimism.” Carlos Monsiváis had found a vein whose course would lead him to the most out-of-the-way dives of the second-rate members of the dominant entrepreneurial and financial class. At the same time, in this famous, unforgettable section, Carlos would display his stylistic talents as the author of impeccable, parodies that bloodied their subjects, incisive vignettes and written portraits of both mentionable and unmentionable public figures —as Jesús Silva-Herzog Márquez said, his art as a portraitist is as impeccable as it is implacable.

Together with oblique denunciation, he gave himself up to the healthy exercise of the parody of manners, gestures, and affected displays of emotion. Monsiváis’s Protestant roots made him a kind of smiling, critical knight errant. He himself would say in his *Autobiografía precoz* (Precocious Autobiography) how passionately he had read John Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* as a child. This reference is by no means trivial if we realize that Bunyan’s book is the root of the modern novel and that Franz Kafka’s *The Trial* can be read and taken apart in the light of this parabolic piece of fiction. Is it possible to read Carlos Monsiváis’s ebullient writing as a kind of echo of the books by Franz Kafka and John Bunyan?

Carlos Monsiváis’s coronation as the editor of *La Cultura en México* (Culture in Mexico) supplement —the place where this author met him in 1974— would confirm him as a kind of guru and —for some leftists— the successor of the Divine Voice that watches over children from the clouds. It would also help him open the doors to the media, radio and television, pseudo-sunlit places from which that never-rancorous spider named Carlos Monsiváis would greet his growing audience.

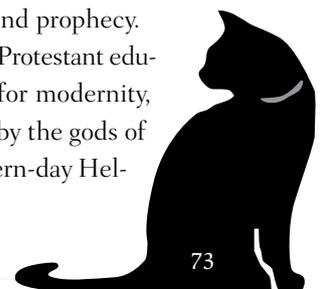
Little by little, Carlos’s style began to change and become cleaner and, if it can be put this way, classical: the baroque, the slight of hand, and the affected displays of emotion of a parody of consciousness began to turn into a transparent mask. The founder of the new Mexican journalism —a mix of mestizo, criollo, and “criollo-naco”—⁴ began to transform himself, and the essayist of *Días de guardar* and *Escenas de*

pudor y liviandad (Scenes of Modesty and Levity) would give way to the prose-writer of *Entrada libre* (Free Admission), one of his most lucid books, *Aires de familia* (The Family Air), and *Imágenes de la tradición viva* (Images of the Living Tradition), works in which the author seems more concerned about the survival and staying power of his discourse than about closely conforming to the mannerisms of a suburban Oscar Wilde. Better known as a writer of journalistic articles than as the author of fiction and fables, Monsiváis also has an imaginative strain in him like the one oriented by the *Nuevo catecismo para indios remisos* (The New Catechism for Remiss Indians), in which the charming trickster who seduces with his flute is capable of sending all us lemmings, denizens of the library, over the cliff.

Monsiváis would display his stylistic talents
as the author of impeccable parodies
that bloodied their subjects, incisive vignettes
and written portraits of both mentionable
and unmentionable public figures.

Definitive in this process was his reading-based friendship with Daniel Cosío Villegas, a figure Monsiváis is not usually associated with, but with whom he does have affinities in his vigorous defense of secularism and civic probity, with Octavio Paz, and I would even say, with Gabriel Zaid, his loyal antipode. His simultaneous participation in the broadcast media and the press, his missionary vocation that prodded him to take the roads of a kind of shaman’s dance around its hounded prey —the press?— his undoubted asceticism and self-denial, his searing sense of humor and his vocation for the joy crystallized in a poem and in a work of art, his mania for libraries, his avid collecting that prompted him to set up a space like the Museo del Estanquillo (Corner Store Museum): all this made Carlos Monsiváis an enigmatic figure, tense and, like someone hung on a cross whose horizontal would be the instant but fleeting and forgetful movement of the media, and whose vertical would be represented by the line of community civic consciousness and of the written word in code that was both testimony and prophecy.

More than Christian, and despite his Protestant education, Monsiváis’s was a culture avid for modernity, thirsty for values like those personified by the gods of Greek mythology and inherited by modern-day Hel-



lenists —from Walter Page on— and very particularly by a handful of devotees of Greece who made up the Athenaeum group, headed by Pedro Henríquez Ureña and Alfonso Reyes. While his virtues as a disinterested spectator and teacher have already been pondered, his capacity for reading all the newspapers before eight in the morning, his sense of humor, and his almost instinctive ability to reduce to the absurd the plots and scenery of book-learned and political consciousness and the dust of the hours projected on cinema and television screens, the intellectual, creative vigor of that treatise-writer of practical and theoretical ease—both read and experienced—means that Monsiváis continues to be an enigmatic, charismatic figure in terms of what was easy and what was difficult for him, his faltering, temptations, and exaltations. An untranslatable figure, like cinema before Lumière, whose glow may have to be explained to future generations who are already peeking around the bend in the river. That won't be so difficult. In Carlos Monsiváis's alternative current are combined the Burrón-type comic book,⁵ and theology à la Bultmann,

red-white-and-green gossip,⁶ the unforgettable anecdote, and Ernst Bloch and Walter Benjamin's principle of hope. These are some of the reasons that feed the fire of that civic fiesta of the word that was and is his polymorphous writing. **MM**

NOTES

- ¹ This article (ver con crisis)
- ² The author refers to Carmen and Magdalena Galindo, currently professors at the UNAM —of literature and economics, respectively— and well-known journalists. [Editor's Note.]
- ³ *Teatro de carpa* ("tent theater") is a form of popular theater, particularly prevalent in Mexico City in the 1920s and 1930s, that mixes circus spectacles, political satire, and vaudeville-type acts. [Translator's Note.]
- ⁴ Criollo refers to those born in Mexico but of Spanish descent (whites) during the colonial period, while *naco*, originally used to denote indigenous people, has now become a more general disparaging term for someone who is crude and ignorant, with the obvious racist connotations. [Translator's Note.]
- ⁵ This refers to a very popular Mexican comic book, *La familia Burrón* (The Burrón Family) that depicts the lives and idiosyncrasies of a typical urban, lower-middle-class family. [Translator's Note.]
- ⁶ This is a reference to the colors in the Mexican flag. [Translator's Note.]

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Nostalgia for Monsiváis¹

Jezreel Salazar*

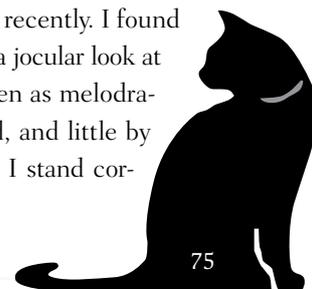


Sáshenka Gutiérrez/Cuartoscuro

The first thing I ever read by Monsiváis was a brief article in a semi-pornographic magazine that used to come out in the 1970s, *Eros*. The title seemed original and interesting: “Es muy Molesto/Tener que llegar a Esto/Tener que Menear el Tiesto/Para poder mal Vivir (Impresiones)” (It’s Really a Drag/To Come to This/To Have to Shake Your Booty/To More or Less Scrape By [Impressions]). When he wrote it in 1975, I hadn’t been born yet; I first came across it when I was a teenager in high school. I remember it well because the author’s language caught my eye right away, a style I had never come across or read. The choice of words

and the way of arranging them inside the phrases, creating images that were both ironic and poetic, made the story a kind of secular revelation. At least, that’s what it produced in me: the feeling of a truth revealed about the day-to-day world, an easeful, playful version of reality. Right away I bought a little book of his, *Los mil y un velorios. Crónica sobre la nota roja en México* (One Thousand and One Wakes: Chronicle of the Crime Page in Mexico), published by Alianza —a corrected, expanded version of this book came out recently. I found there exceptional lucidity, together with a jocular look at something that until then I had only seen as melodramatic. And from then on, I was hooked, and little by little I discovered the rest of his work. I stand cor-

*Mexican writer.



rected: I discovered part of his work, because, clearly, due of his efficient, speedy, super-fertile pen, I will never be able to get through it all—something which seems both magnificent and terrible.

When I heard about the death of Monsiváis and heard the mournful tone of those around it, I remembered his sense of humor, that constant facetiousness that gave him a certain childlike air, as though he had been playing a prank when he was making fun of reality—you really had to be quick to know if he meant things literally or if his words hid some irony that could make you end up the object of fun. Of course, I thought that in place of paying homage, serious faces, and unending condolences, he would have preferred that somebody perform a parody in his name, a Marx Brothers' film be shown, or for Jis and Trino to draw a grotesque comic strip about his wake.² Some years ago, when he was given one of

In Monsiváis's work you can see
not only the depth of his critical interpretations
about what is Mexican, but what the failed novels
of Carlos Fuentes did not achieve: narrating
the great *Human Comedy à la Mexicana*.

his innumerable awards, he said, "My vanity is intact, locked up in a strongbox, and there's no way of getting it out... Unfortunately, I only brought words against myself, and I can't use them, because I'd be behaving badly given what has been said about me here. But another time, I'll explain why this is all false." Contrary to the national custom of melodrama and facile tears, Monsiváis always went with his sense of humor, his lively thirst for shenanigans, and jocular irony, particularly when it was a matter of talking about himself. And that attitude is precisely one of his legacies that I hope survives.

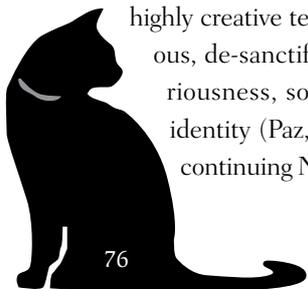
In addition to new characters, voices, tones, and treatments that had not existed before, as well as the renovation of different unorthodox literary devices, Monsiváis contributed to Mexican literature a new way of looking at reality, a privileged, unique perspective for making an inventory of the world in highly creative terms that always implied finding a humorous, de-sanctifying key. In a tradition dominated by seriousness, solemnity, and the existential question of identity (Paz, Rulfo, Fuentes, Elizondo...), Monsiváis, continuing Novo's work, reclaimed laughter as a means

to deal with an adverse reality. By being anti-solemn and irreverent, Monsiváis's work ends up as a breath of fresh air amidst literary priggishness and solemnity. This is an unparalleled parody writer—only Ibarguengoitia is on his level in Mexican letters. The different kinds of irony he practiced deserve a study that has yet to be done.

Christopher Domínguez Michael said that Monsiváis deserves the greatest praise that can be given to an intellectual in Mexico because without his work, the attempt to create a Mexican democratic, liberal culture would be inconceivable. Though limited to the political virtues of his legacy, this accolade takes on meaning if we relate it to literary intent and innovation practiced by the maximum exponent of literary journalism in Mexico. In contrast to what his detractors think, Monsiváis's work has undeniable aesthetic worth, and at its highest point, it was the expression of a highly renovating dynamic. His work—multifaceted, variegated, and practically unfathomable in its vastness—is the original synthesis of diverse literary traditions: English satire, nineteenth-century literary journalism, Biblical language (in the translations of Casiodoro de Reina and Cipriano de Valera), modernist poetry, the chronicles of the Indies, the essay-like fiction of Borges and Reyes, the new American journalism. His is a unique, unrepeatable language. As Sergio Pitol has said, the passion for form and an interest in popular topics do not usually go hand in hand. His eccentric style is one of the liveliest forms of expression invented by Mexican literature.

After his death, a public cultural official remembered him by saying that it was a shame Monsiváis had not written more *really literary* texts. This kind of prejudice permeates people's judgements about Monsiváis's work, as though because of its referential nature, the feature article could not be considered *literature*. With Monsiváis, this is clearly not the case. His capacity for recreating atmospheres, building characters, setting a solid architecture for the story, and reinventing popular speech through oral means, dialogue, polyphony... all this turns him into an exceptional narrator, with a powerful sense of intrigue, probably derived from his passion for detective literature. His chronicles of Mexican life show it:³ in them you can see not only the depth of his critical interpretations about what is Mexican, which prove him to be a unique essayist, but also his gifts as a non-fiction novelist. In my opinion, Monsiváis's work achieves what the failed novels of Carlos Fuentes did not: narrating the great *Human Comedy à la Mexicana*.

If Monsiváis achieved anything, it was constructing an inclusive, plural, critical literature (behind it, there is a nation-



al project). The whole and combination of focuses that he handles, the polysemous gaze he proposes and shines on his objects of study, the multiplicity of the voices he includes in his texts, the gamut of (literary, philosophical, historical...) discourses and references he constantly dialogues with, the mix of genres and the diversity of registers and rhetorical devices he resorts to... these all reveal the work of an author who always sought to put down in his own language the voices of others, the composite voice of the public space, as though we were face to face with the pages of a newspaper in which all of society speaks, and is revealed and deciphered by a demi-urge who reorganized it to make it accessible to the reader.

And herein lies another of his virtues: generosity. I will not recount here the long list of stories that would confirm this. I will just refer to the pedagogical spirit of his work to illustrate it. Monsiváis took from Alfonso Reyes the need to write in a reader-friendly way about the most urgent, all-encompassing matters, always thinking about making the reader an intelligent accomplice. In this sense, if recovering the value of the "minor," popular genres questions the very notion of fiction, then Monsiváis also stands up for a political, civic intention that Mexican literature had left to molder in a nineteenth-century, liberal roll-top desk: his writing sought to turn the reader into a citizen, put him/her in contact with modern, democratic values, denounce the demagogy of languages, and make literature a matter of interest beyond aesthetic purism and elitism, still so in force in Mexico's cultural world.

Here, I should perform an act of contrition. I am a bit disturbed by the fact that everyone recognizes Monsiváis, but so few read and study him. This paradox explains the reception he has had. In this sense, my generation (born in the 1970s) has a conflictive, contradictory relationship with the figure of Monsiváis. In principle, I would say that for young writers, Monsiváis is an uncomfortable reference point. In many cases, interest in his work can only flower after jumping over the hurdles of uncritically created and accepted prejudices. The literary world in Mexico is full of status-related clichés. Opinions in vogue are validated and authors are celebrated who the market or misunderstanding have designated as "legitimate." Platitudes are our favorite pulpits. This is why for several years now, supposedly transgressing, iconoclastic refrains have been sung in chorus: "he's a writer who has nothing more to say"; "a journalist who doesn't do literature, and in any case spends his time on cultural gossip"; "an anachronistic thinker who has not renewed himself and just repeats over and over"; "a patriarch who has no ideas, just quips,"

etc. There is something of the cultural parricide in these—all indefensible—pronouncements. This would have some value if it were based on having read the author and a full knowledge of his work. Unfortunately, this is not the case (Castañón was not in error when he said that his polygraphic nature made Mexico's most public writer into a truly secret writer). I have the impression that the figure of Monsiváis and his transformation into a legend have a great deal to do with this. As was clear at his funeral, the public personage was overwhelming: everyone thought they knew him just because they had heard him on the radio or read some newspaper article that mentioned his opinions—not always accurately—which meant that Monsiváis stopped being read because, "You already knew what he was going to say." People avoided evaluating his work, replacing that with attacks on his cultural omnipresence, the phenomenon of his persona. A text by Luis

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González de Alba entitled "El gran murmurador" (The Great Murmururer) is the paradigmatic example of this ill-intentioned reductionism. Somehow, the public image Monsiváis gradually acquired worked against him. In any case, this is a clear effect of a process of cultural sanctification and institutionalization, the result of the success of his own writing project.

On the other hand, what happens to young Mexican writers *vis-à-vis* Monsiváis is the same thing that happens to certain women who criticize feminism in general and rather blindly: they are incapable of recognizing that the possibility of expressing oneself in certain ways, in certain contexts, with different values than those that prevailed in the past, is related exactly to the achievements of what they are criticizing. Monsiváis is a timely author in the sense that many of his points of view, literary operations, and critical viewpoints still prevail in today's literature. If the themes and commitments have changed, the determination of style and the unfettered vision underlying his work have spread among young writers. I would even say that Monsiváis's writing has been central not only to how we conceive of our place in the history of our country, but to how



The work of several dozen highly informed, lucid, disciplined specialists would be required to replace his daily activity and the patrimony he crafted every day.

the very idea of literature is perceived today in Mexico. Who better than Monsiváis has defended dissidence as a driving force for writing in our context, the right to first-person irreverent expression, the notion of literary creation as a political framework, the recovery of the marginal as a space for renovating literature, the use of irony and parody to offer unofficial versions of history, the need for a literature that breaks barriers —gender, hierarchical, textual...— and dialogue with other forms of discourse?

What is actually no longer current is how Monsiváis conceived criticism of the public space. Clearly, the merely reactive form can no longer have the same value in a country that has undergone the profound changes Mexico has in recent years. The weakening of written culture in light of the rise of the spectacle and the diminishing relevance of the humanities in the public debate are extremely important factors in this process. With Monsiváis dies a way of being an intellectual in Mexico. While for decades he personified the indispensable conscience, the lucid gaze that could interpret the changes the country was experiencing, today that is out of the question. It is impossible to imagine today a writer who could achieve anything like that or who would even be interested in taking on that responsibility.

The way any writer will be received is difficult to predict. There is a great deal of fortuitousness and also whim in what happens to books. Nevertheless, I think that we can say that Monsiváis will be read —and widely— in the future, in part because of his unlimited bibliography. Mexico's publishing world has been enriched by the tens of thousands of pages —let's be clear, this estimate is as vague as it is moderate— that Monsiváis wrote and disseminated in books, articles, essays, prologues, lectures, interviews, etc., as well as the many, many sources that quote him. If Monsiváis wrote obsessively, the bibliography that quotes him incessantly continues growing.

It's not a matter of knowing whether he will be read or not in the next five or ten decades, but understanding what that reading will be like. My opinion is that

for a while, he will still be underestimated as long as his public figure continues as one of the great architects of contemporary Mexican culture —cultural underdevelopment is expressed as a complex when faced with authority. Later on, when this fades, little by little other ways of reading Monsiváis will become more popular, which today, even though they can be predicted, still have not become generalized: the great historian of the mentalities of Mexico's twentieth century, the narrator who practiced a kind of realistic experimental fiction, the great cultural interpreter of our nation, an unparalleled literary critic. Each of these ways of reading him will determine what is recovered and what is left behind in Monsiváis's exhausting work. If readers are looking for testimonies or documentary evidence in his texts, they will hunt for what he published originally in newspapers and magazines. If their interest is in aesthetic values, they will look at his books, which he always revised self-critically. In this regard, it is clear that one of the inevitabilities of literary journalism has to do with its always being written against the clock —Juan Villoro, echoing Fernando Benítez, has said that feature articles are “literature under pressure”— and the only way of dealing with formal errors and imprecise information is to correct them.

In any case, what is certainly the case is that we are dealing here with an author who will never be read in his totality. José Emilio Pacheco said that the meaning of the work of both Reyes and Monsiváis is its variety and ungraspable vastness. That is why any anthology of their texts will always imply a loss. And any edition of their complete works would be an obstacle for approaching the author. In any case, anyone who wrote as a chronicler, bibliophile, polemicist, aesthete, writer of articles, critic of power, collector, historian, film analyst, public opinion maker... cannot be forgotten.

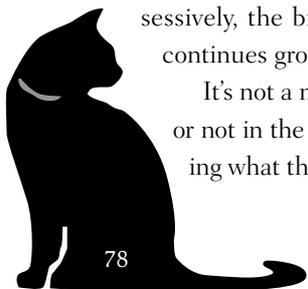
The work of several dozen highly informed, lucid, disciplined specialists would be required to replace his daily activity and the patrimony he crafted every day. When he was in the hospital, the vacuum created by his absent opinion could be felt in the public sphere. We cannot even begin to calculate how much we will have need of him in the future. ■■■

NOTES

¹This article is

²Jis and Trino are two well-known Mexican cartoonists. [Editor's Note.]

³One very important journalistic form in Mexico is called a “chronicle,” which can be anything from a short newspaper article to a series of books. The chronicle looks at daily life over time or in the present, and is not limited to a historical account without analysis or interpretation, as the English word implies. [Translator's Note.]



The Cascading Effects of Arizona's SB 1070 An Overview

Erik Lee*

Henry Romero/REUTERS



Although at the time of this writing, U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton in Phoenix has halted the implementation of several parts of Arizona Senate Bill 1070 in advance of a more thorough hearing on the measure, the bill itself necessitates a broader rethinking of how the United States and Mexico interact on a very important yet poorly addressed policy issue: migration. For this reason, on June 16, 2010, the North American Center for Transborder Studies (NACTS) at Arizona State University and the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) at Mexico's National Autonomous University convened a number of researchers to discuss SB 1070 in detail. What emerged was a portrait of complexity at a particularly difficult juncture in the U.S.-Mexico binational relationship as well as the sense of having witnessed a historical milestone with many "cascading" effects and consequences yet to come.

The presentations and articles for the most part focused on recent developments in local and state anti-immigration measures, but in his article, "The Immigration Debate about Mexicans," Jaime Aguila¹ gives some even broader historical context to SB 1070. He focuses on the complex decade of the 1930s, which saw economic catastrophe, repatriation of Mexicans, and Mexican government attempts to reintegrate re-

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The enormous increase in Arizona's Mexican population in the 1990s was largely driven by U.S. border policy to close down San Diego and El Paso, thus enhancing the relative importance of Arizona as a migration corridor.

turning migrants into Mexican society. The short-term vision and subsequent failure of the two countries' migration-related initiatives was evident for both nations. Aguila highlights Mexico's "unresponsive bureaucracy" and "corrupt local officials," "U.S. employer's perpetual demand for labor," and "lax U.S. enforcement of the border" as evidence for the chronic weakness of both U.S. and Mexican public policy attempts to deal with Mexican migration to the United States and return migration to Mexico.

Mónica Vereá² comprehensively addresses the story of SB 1070 in "Obama and the Anti-Mexican SB 1070." Vereá points out the electoral context of the law—it was introduced in a ferocious environment of primary elections in Arizona. In addition, she emphasizes the enormous increase in the Mexican population in Arizona that came about in the 1990s. This increase, as Vereá points out, was driven in large part by U.S. border policy of the 1990s, which largely closed down San Diego and El Paso (through the implementation of Operations Gatekeeper and Hold-the-Line, respectively) and enhanced the relative importance of Arizona as a migration corridor. Vereá goes on to analyze the ways in which immigration plays into a complex environment of party politics in the United States.

In "Human Rights and the Fetishization of SB 1070," Ariadna Estévez López³ points out the conflict between universal human rights and the legal direction taken by SB 1070 and similar measures. Estévez López focuses on the "fetishization," of SB 1070, or an overly rigid focus on the formal legal issues of SB 1070 rather than the more fundamental issue of migrants and their human rights in the United States. She puts SB 1070 into a broader context when she points out that "the states that approved the most restrictive reforms are the ones that are new destinations for migrants: South Carolina, Nevada, Arizona, and Oklahoma." By contrast, states with a longer and more established tradition of migration from Mexico, such as California, New York, Illinois, and Texas, tend to see more legislation that is protective of migrants' rights.

Doris Marie Provine⁴ analyzes how SB 1070 fits into an overall picture of contradictions and complexity that characterizes how we understand immigration in the United States and particularly in Arizona with "Arizona's New Anti-immigrant Law and Federal Immigration Reform." In particular, "SB 1070 illustrates how the complex compromise of federalism that characterizes the U.S. system of government works in a situation of high political anxiety," according to Provine. Immigration policy is clearly made more difficult by complex local politics in Arizona, particularly in the Phoenix area. As Provine points out, SB 1070 is part of a pattern of similar legislation introduced in Arizona since the 1990s. The "middle" on the immigration issue has all but vanished in 2010: "In an election year, staking out a stand that falls into a reasonable middle ground is difficult. The Arizona public—or at least its most vocal elements—is clearly aroused."

In "The United States v. Arizona," Evelyn Cruz⁵ points out the hard road ahead for SB 1070, major parts of which were enjoined by U.S. District Judge Susan Bolton. Cruz gives us a detailed discussion of the major constitutional issues raised by the bill, including concepts such as the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution (states' rights), concurrent power, and the supremacy clause. Cruz emphasizes that "SB 1070 faces an uphill battle, exemplified by the District Court's order enjoining major portions of the bill from going into effect. The phrases thrown around to defend it may play well in the media, but they do not play well in constitutional construction."

In "Arizona's Law: The Wrong Approach," Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla⁶ frames the issue as the movement of poverty toward abundance and the existence of a real transnational labor market. Márquez-Padilla offers some important statistics for us to anchor our understanding of this movement and labor market dynamic. Namely, she points out the existence of 300 million legal crossings from Mexico to the United States every year, as well as the truly impressive wage differential between the U.S. and Mexico, which reaches 12:1 in

In the new era of “shared responsibility,” this relatively new concept has yet to be applied to international migration. Mexico and the U.S. need new, more creative, and more fully bilateral approaches to this old issue.

some industries. Perhaps most importantly, Márquez-Padilla confronts the two nations’ radically different perspectives on this issue and argues that both need a different one: “As long as the two countries refuse to see this as a shared phenomenon, the situation will continue to be unmanageable.”

Silvia Núñez García⁷ explores the ever-changing character of racism and discrimination in the United States in “On the Labyrinths of SB 1070.” In particular, the discourse surrounding SB 1070 contrasted with falling crime levels in the Phoenix area are particularly challenging to understand. Núñez García links the issue of SB 1070 to particularly racialized aspects of state and national politics in the United States. The intensely dynamic nature of domestic politics in the United States makes it nearly impossible to predict with any clarity the eventual composition of comprehensive immigration reform. In addition, Núñez points out the difficulty (for many Mexican observers) of fully comprehending the intense anxiety felt by U.S. citizens over the deterioration of the U.S. economy and the enormous political challenges facing President Barack Obama. She argues that in the current context, we need to recognize and actively address the enormous socio-cultural distance between the two countries; strengthen binational alliances in order to research the issue in depth in terms of short-, medium-, and long-term goals; and bring additional anthropological and psycho-social analysis to bear on these challenging issues.

In his concluding thoughts, Rick Van Schoik⁸ emphasizes the challenging complexities of the issues raised: “the double-edged nature of the issue arose over and over again.” Against the backdrop of confounding institutional and bureaucratic asymmetries between the two countries, Van Schoik raises the issue of a Mexican border agency and the necessity of enhanced international cooperation on migration. The issue, while an immensely difficult one for both countries to deal with domestically, is too important to push to the bottom of the binational agenda. “The bottom line is that federal inactivity is misguided and even dangerous.”

FINAL THOUGHTS

Though the United States and Mexico share an almost 2,000-mile land border, the two countries do not currently possess anything approaching a workable joint framework for addressing medium- to low-skilled labor mobility. This unfortunate gaping deficit in our public policies and binational relations has been left unresolved for decades. SB 1070 underscores this deficiency and, though a local measure, puts the onus squarely on the shoulders of the U.S. federal government.

Yet while immigration is a federal responsibility in the United States, the complexity of both the issue and domestic politics continue to confound our attempts to address it with legislative actions alone. The two nations find themselves in a new era of “shared responsibility”; however, this relatively new concept has yet to be applied to international migration. What we have done up to this point is clearly not working; the issue is impeding us from advancing on a number of other important fronts, and we are clearly unable to resolve it unilaterally. In this age of such immense challenges to our shared security, competitiveness, and sustainability, we are in need of new, more creative, and more fully bilateral approaches to this old issue. ■■

NOTES

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The Immigration Debate About Mexicans

*Jaime R. Aguila



Fred Greaves/REUTERS

Minutemen on the Arizona border violently oppose illegal immigration, particularly of Mexicans.

Since the late nineteenth century, Mexicans have been migrating northward into the United States in search of employment opportunities. Over the course of the twentieth century, this group represented a significant segment of the immigrant population and labor force within the United States as well as a large percentage of Mexican society. As of 2008, 12.7 million Mexican immigrants lived in the United States and Arizona had 1,784,000 residents of Mexican origin (Mexican born and Mexican-American).¹ Although there are no exact figures for the size of the undocumented population, conservative estimates claim that Mexicans represent 60 percent of the approximately 11 million undocumented people. Consequently, the total Mexican immigrant popula-

tion within the United States represents over 10 percent of the population of Mexico, which in 2010 comes to approximately 112,468,855.²

Current debates over illegal immigration from Mexico have ignored, or at best, over-simplified, the longstanding presence of Mexicans in the United States. These disputes mistakenly focus on individuals or segments of U.S. or Mexican society rather than on larger structural issues such as shared histories, free-trade commitments, and international relationships. Nonetheless, such debates are not unprecedented nor have they lessened the size of the migration stream because its geographical scope has continually expanded. In the late nineteenth century, the Mexican presence within the United States was made up of semi-permanent enclaves along the border, and then in the 1920s, it spread throughout the Southwest and areas such as Chicago, Illinois and Kansas City, Missouri. Today

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Mexicans live throughout the United States and are the fastest growing sectors in areas like the Deep South and the Pacific Northwest.

In Arizona the politics of immigration has reached a crisis of epic proportions. The lives of the immigrants and in many cases their U.S.-born children were being drastically impacted even before Arizona's SB 1070 was scheduled to take effect on July 29, 2010.³ Many Hispanic residents—and particularly Mexicans—have begun to flee Arizona for fear of SB 1070.⁴

Such xenophobia is not unprecedented, especially in times of economic crisis. During the Great Depression various patriotic groups like the Veterans of Foreign Wars and the American Legion led demands in some areas that Mexicans be “repatriated.” The National Club of America for Americans called on all Americans to pressure their government to deport all Mexicans and close the border to all Latin Americans.⁵ In 1954, the Eisenhower administration instituted Operation Wetback in response to criticism that the growing number of illegal immigrants constituted a serious threat to national security. According to the then-commissioner general of the Immigration and Naturalization Service the “alarming, ever increasing, flood tide of undocumented migrants from Mexico constituted an actual invasion of the United States.”⁶

However, such outrageous demands by overly vocal fringe groups rarely had any real impact on public policy. At that time the press claimed that Operation Wetback was a tremendous success. For example, one *Los Angeles Times* article claimed that illegal migrant arrests in Southern California and Arizona dropped by 44 percent while another article was titled “U.S. Patrol Halts Border Invasion.”⁷ However, since then scholars have questioned the accuracy of the Border Patrol's count and have noted that the decline in undocumented immigration was only short-term.⁸

In the twenty-first century the complexity of the issue at hand goes beyond citizenship and begs the question about who deserves the full protection of the state. Should a society's benefits extend to all people who contribute and labor on behalf of that society? Such is the case of Mexican immigrants working and subsisting in the United States over the last 100-plus years. During this period, Mexican immigrant labor has proven indispensable for the success of the U.S. economy; nonetheless, there is tremendous controversy over their place in society.

Mexican citizens working in the United States have subsisted in precarious circumstances influenced by historical legacies and paradoxical geopolitical factors. They are simul-

taneously recruited into the United States, yet loathed in varying degrees depending on the health of the U.S. economy or on the nature of current political issues. Over the course of the twentieth century, the borders of the nation-state have constrained the lives of these transnational migrants and prevented them from sharing fully in the rights promised by either the United States or Mexico. The 1930s is an especially telling decade because of the flagrant abuse Mexicans experienced following a period in which they were not only aggressively recruited to the United States, but when U.S. immigration legislation was constructed and applied in a manner to facilitate their entry. Assessing the evolution of the political debates surrounding immigration in the mid- to late-1930s provides significant context on the current controversies not

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only about immigration, but also about the place of Mexicans in the United States.

PRIOR TO THE 1930S

From 1900 to 1929, upon arriving in the United States, most Mexicans intended to return home to be reunited with their families. For them the United States represented *México de afuera* (Mexico abroad), an image founded on their intention to recreate their culture while they resided abroad temporarily. *México de afuera's* population benefited each nation economically and politically. For the United States, Mexicans provided an inexpensive, exploitable, and plentiful labor source. Their presence allowed policy-makers and employers to create the myth that they were birds of passage and consequently not a threat to U.S. society like immigrants from Asia or Southern Europe. According to Paul Taylor, a “large part, probably the majority of the Mexican population is migratory. It is the most mobile element in our labor supply.”⁹ For Mexico, unemployed and underemployed Mexicans who left for the United States removed potential supporters of

rebellions and enemies of the state. In addition, Manuel Gamio demonstrated the value of remittances, totaling close to US\$3 million a year for the Mexican economy. However, Mexican public opinion was mixed regarding the presence of their compatriots abroad; for some it was a tragedy that so many of their countrymen had to leave to support their families while other sectors accused them of abandoning their homeland.

THE 1930S

The Great Depression witnessed the most extreme examples of racist and negligent treatment of Mexicans and made the 1930s the only decade in which more Mexicans left the United States than entered. In addition, the plight of Mexicans at home was not much better. Although Mexican officials publicly welcomed home their compatriots, their limited resources and the economy's pre-modern condition prevented the state from fulfilling its pledge to aid them on a grand scale. Nonetheless, these circumstances contributed to a unique period in Mexican and U.S. history, which had a significant impact on the status of Mexicans in both nations and on their identity as Americans, Mexicans, or something in between.

Many significant and insightful works have been written about the thousands of Mexicans repatriated during the initial phase of the Great Depression. The majority of these studies have focused on the repatriation process and its impact on Mexican laborers and their families primarily while in the United States. However, such monographs as Francisco Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez's *Decade of Betrayal* and Mercedes Carreras de Velasco's *Los mexicanos que devolvió la crisis* have largely ignored the geopolitical influences and the social welfare of Mexicans in the second half of the 1930s. Such endeavors will provide tremendous insight into the contemporary immigration crisis by providing insightful context. The beloved President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) promised a utopia for all Mexicans, including those who would return from *México de afuera*. Nonetheless, despite his best intentions and limited government resources, his agrarian reform program and nationalization of the Mexican oil industry limited his administration's ability to implement his socialist agenda. Consequently, many repatriates did not receive sufficient arable land and government support like agricultural credits that were absolutely necessary for their livelihood. These limitations on the part

of the Mexican government continue to plague its populace in the twenty-first century.

Those who remained in the United States despite the harsh conditions intensified by the Great Depression and pre-existing xenophobia had essentially determined that *Aztlán* (the United States) was now their homeland. *Aztlán's* coming of age is demonstrated by the emergence of political bodies that sought to create American institutions rather than Mexican links. The development of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) in 1929 and the Mexican American Movement in 1934 are examples of groups seeking to advance an American-based ideology rather than recreate a nostalgic niche of Mexican society. However, as David Gutiérrez has insightfully demonstrated, such strategies created distinct problems within the Mexican community: "LULAC members consistently went to great lengths to explain to any-

Those remaining in the United States despite the harsh conditions intensified by the Great Depression and pre-existing xenophobia decided the United States was now their homeland and sought to create American institutions rather than Mexican links.

one who would listen that Americans of Mexican descent were different from (and by implication, somehow better than) Mexicans from the other side."¹⁰ In this era, identity was not sufficiently complex to include all people of Mexican heritage, but rather segmented the community by citizenship. Such a hierarchy is not necessarily limited to this era since the question of citizen versus non-citizen is one of the central elements of the current immigration debate, as it was for the Italians during the Roman Republican era.

However, today the significance of citizenship and civil rights has become more complex. The 1965 Voting Rights Act, which outlawed poll taxes, literacy tests, and other racist voting practices used for decades to keep Blacks from voting, also aided the Mexican-American community. The recent extension of the Voting Rights Act should be applauded. However, for the media and much of the United States, the struggle for civil rights is still perceived as a Black and White issue. The recent pro-immigrant rallies, especially those of May 1, have introduced a new era for civil rights driven by a demand for worker's rights. At the same time U.S. citizen-

ship has grown in importance, but historically Mexican immigrants have had a low rate of applying for citizenship. Historically, both governments discouraged Mexicans from applying for U.S. citizenship, and many Mexicans believed that their Mexican citizenship was their only source of protection against abuse from employers and discrimination. However since 1965 the explosion of undocumented immigration and the inadequate number of legal immigration slots have become the primary barriers for Mexican workers wishing to obtain U.S. citizenship. "Only 17 percent of the 1973 cohort of Mexican immigrants had naturalized by 1989.... Mexicans constitute the largest single population of non-citizen legal immigrants present in the United States."¹¹

The apprehension that contributed to the 1930s massive repatriation process bore many similarities to the current state of affairs, especially to outrageous demands by anti-

The apprehension underlying the 1930s massive deportations was similar to the current state of affairs, especially the outrageous demands by anti-immigrant groups to eliminate the presence of Mexicans in the United States.

immigrant groups who want to eliminate the presence of Mexicans in the United States. Current nativists such as the Minutemen claim that ridding the nation of the entire undocumented population will solve all other domestic problems, such as overtaxed social programs and rising gas prices, and protect us from future terrorist attacks.¹² One significant underlying element that nativist groups and policy-makers fail to acknowledge—at least publicly—is that each government is, for the most part, unable to minimize the presence of Mexicans in the United States (both then and now). It was the Great Depression—not public policy—that reduced the northern immigration stream. Xenophobia may have driven many Mexicans and their Mexican-American children home, but unemployment and dwindling economic opportunities were profound aftereffects. A more telling fact was that new legislation was unnecessary for the mass expulsion, and the focus was instead on the enforcement of the laws that had been largely ignored over the course of the previous decade.

The same progression has developed today partly as a nativist backlash against the pro-immigrant rallies. A July 31,

2006 *New York Times* article reported that workplace raids and employer sanctions had increased in recent months. The article indicated that the Bush administration was pushing increased enforcement in order to gain greater political power over the battle for immigration reform.¹³ President Barack Obama's administration has pushed deportations to record highs since taking office:

The Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency expects to deport about 400,000 people this fiscal year, nearly 10 percent above the Bush administration's 2008 total and 25 percent more than were deported in 2007. The pace of company audits has roughly quadrupled since President George W. Bush's final year in office.¹⁴

The current administration's inability to implement immigration reform should not be surprising since previous attempts dating back to the 1965 Immigration Act have worsened the legal immigration process rather than improving it.

The unilateral criticisms against Mexican public policy ignore U.S. immigration policy's paradoxical attitudes, U.S. employers' perpetual demand for labor, and lax U.S. border enforcement. Despite such condemnation, the Mexican government maintains significant interest in simultaneously aiding their compatriots abroad and encouraging their return. The 1934-1940 Cárdenas presidency offers an excellent point of assessment because, like no other previous administration, it was committed to implementing the goals of the 1917 Constitution and sought to include the welfare of its compatriots in the United States as part of its developmental agenda. According to the 1935 Six-Year Government Plan, encouraging the population of *México de afuera* to return would help fulfill the objectives of the plan formulated at the Querétaro Convention. Ironically, policy-makers determined that the nation's small population was one of the most significant barriers it had to overcome. The plan called for the return of their compatriots abroad in order to lift them out of poverty, and take steps to prevent their departure in the future.¹⁵ Of course, these goals were tied to the Cardenist agrarian reform program, which distributed 54 million acres of land to rural families and villages. However, by the end of his administration, it was clear that the *ejido* cooperatives such as the ones in the Laguna region and the henequen plantations in Yucatán were failures due to their declining production. The reasons for the failure were mixed and unfortunately not unfamiliar to Mexicans today: unresponsive bureaucracy, corrupt local

officials, parcels of land that were too small and infertile, lack of modern technology and implements, etc.

The repatriates remained in dire straights and many would welcome the opportunity to return to the United States through the Bracero Program and the rebirth of the unregulated immigration process. However, it is important to note that the modern immigration process is not primarily driven by Mexico's inadequate economy. According to Jorge Durand and Douglas Massey, "international immigration does not arise from a lack of economic development, but from development itself."¹⁶ This argument is reinforced by the fact that the number of immigrants entering the United States exploded during the 1940-1970 Mexican Miracle, when "the economy grew at a rate of over 6 percent per year, a rate superior to all other Latin American countries except Brazil."¹⁷ During this same period, millions of Mexicans immigrated to

The questions are no longer how did we reach this point or how do we stop this exodus, but rather what does it mean for the future of each society and the space they share physically and ideologically?

the United States as temporary workers, undocumented workers, and legal immigrants. Mexican immigration to the United States has transcended political systems, economic strategies, healthy economic times, and not-so-healthy economic periods.

Mexican immigration to the United States has grown to become an elemental component of the U.S. and Mexican economies, whose growth for the most part has transcended world wars, governmental changes, economic policies, the Cold War, and the rise of global terrorism. The questions are no longer how did we reach this point or how do we stop this exodus, but rather what does it mean for the future of each society and the space they share physically and ideologically? Also, during this same period, many developed nations have received mass immigration induced by similar factors, such as foreign policy, legacies of colonial periods, globalization, and refugee demands. Although the intake of large numbers of migrants has posed significant challenges for receiving countries, their presence has also provided many benefits, most importantly inexpensive and exploitable labor. In

2010, the place of the Mexican immigrant within U.S. society is not only uncertain, but under attack. History demonstrates that immigration is not a problem, but rather the intended and unintended consequence of the economic evolution of each nation and their growing integration. ■■■

NOTES

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Obama and the Anti-Mexican SB 1070¹

Mónica Vereá*



President Calderón criticized sb 1070 during his last visit to the United States.

SB 1070: BREWER V. BOLTON

Facing a primary election and convinced it was necessary to resolve a crisis the federal government has refused to fix, Arizona Governor Jan Brewer signed SB 1070, the Safe Neighborhoods, Immigration, and Law Enforcement Act on April 23, 2010. The law actually went into effect, with adjustments and restrictions, however, on July 29, 90 days after being signed into law.

As originally proposed, the law criminalized undocumented immigrants and allowed local authorities to detain anyone about whom they had a “reasonable suspicion” to verify their migratory status. The detainees had the obligation of presenting official identification to prove their legal status, and, if they could not, the authorities could arrest them.¹ The

new law also criminalizes undocumented immigrants who offer themselves for hire in public places and makes it a crime to transport or harbor an unauthorized immigrant, including a family member, if a person knows or “recklessly disregards” the fact that the individual does not have legal status. To make sure the law is really put into practice, it authorizes residents of Arizona to bring lawsuits against municipalities and law enforcement agencies that limit or restrict the enforcement of immigration law, among other things. That is, they are assuming that because illegal immigrants are by definition in violation of federal immigration laws, that makes them criminals and they can be arrested.

SB 1070 was voted exclusively along party lines. No Democrats supported it. That is, this highlights the electoral tendencies of both Governor Brewer, now facing a primary election challenge in a heated race in this year’s election, and Senator John McCain (R-A), the author of the failed immigration reform bill, also up for reelection.

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The United States seeks to declare SB 1070 invalid because it creates tougher law enforcement standards than those enacted by the federal government.

In response, the Obama administration's Justice Department filed a suit against the state of Arizona in an effort to block the law. The United States v. the State of Arizona in federal court in Phoenix seeks to declare SB 1070 invalid because it is preempted by federal law and violates the Supremacy Clause of the United States Constitution by creating tougher law enforcement standards than those enacted by the U.S. government. The Supreme Court has always supported the federal government's primacy in establishing and enforcing immigration policy. SB 1070 goes beyond the intent of federal program 287(g), which allows arrangements with the states to assist in immigration enforcement and which many Latinos and members of Congress have requested be suspended.² The Justice Department also argued that the state's interference in immigration policies would inadmissibly force the federal government to redirect resources away from U.S. government priorities and would trample on the federal government's prerogatives regarding foreign policy.

Susan R. Bolton, a federal judge in Arizona appointed by President Clinton in 2000, blocked the enforcement of several provisions of the law last July 29. She found that many provisions of the Arizona statute would interfere with federal law and policy. Nevertheless, Governor Brewer said the state would appeal. Bolton said that the Arizona police would have to question every person they detained about their immigration status, which would generate a flood of requests to the federal immigration authorities for confirmations, and would probably inadmissibly burden federal resources. She also considered that there was a substantial likelihood that officers would wrongfully arrest or detain legal resident aliens as well as foreign tourists. For all these reasons, she blocked the possibility for local authorities to detain people who looked like they were undocumented. Although Judge Bolton's ruling is not final, it seems likely to at least temporarily halt some of these measures. She must decide in the coming weeks whether the parts of the law she froze should be permanently struck down as unconstitutional.

Meanwhile, unionists, activists, and religious leaders, among others, fearful of final approval, have held marches protesting the law in many cities and have asked President Obama and Congress to revise the broken-down immigration system and pass immigration reform. They argue that SB 1070 will incite racist behavior and similar abuses as happened during the civil rights struggles of years ago. They consider that the situation may lend itself to harassing legal residents of Latino origin and encourage other states to put into practice similar or even more severe measures. It is a matter for concern that the law will jeopardize public safety by making immigrants afraid to contact the police. For many, this kind of law and the debate that has followed its passage can become a hothouse for extremist, racist, and intolerant groups that blame all their problems on immigrants, particularly in times of economic crisis.

Civic organizations have organized several marches in cities like Dallas, Chicago, and New York, although the largest was in Los Angeles. The National Council of La Raza, the main Latino coalition, called for a boycott on products from Arizona, and on travel or organizing events there, and for organizations to cancel meetings and conventions previously planned with Arizona as a venue, as long as SB 1070 and HB 2162 are not struck from the books. Many city councils from San Francisco to Boston have encouraged boycotting the state.³

ARIZONA, AN ANTI-IMMIGRANT STATE

The feeling of the majority of Arizona's population and of anti-immigrant groups is very similar to what Brewer and McCain have said, in the sense that the law is the result of the federal government's "failure" not only to stop drug smuggling and illegal entries, but also to discuss and approve a comprehensive immigration reform, something particularly necessary due to recent surges in violence along the U.S.-Mexico border. Similarly, the law expresses the feeling of a population in times of an economic crisis that has severely affected the state, in which immigrants are perceived as responsible for their ills: more than half the population thinks that the Arizona law is "about right" in its handling of illegal immigrants.

Arizona is the country's sixth largest state, with a population of 6.5 million, according to 2009 figures, and a 550-kilometer border with Mexico. The Latino population has grown from 16.2 percent of the state's total inhabitants in 1980 to 31 percent in 2009. Only in the last decade, the Hispanic pop-

ulation jumped from 330,000 in 2000 to 560,000 in 2008; estimates put the number of undocumented migrants at 460,000, of whom 94 percent come from Mexico.⁴ This is why it can be considered an anti-Mexican law.

Such a significant hike in immigration to Arizona in recent years is mainly due to the “rebordering” policy the Clinton administration began. Starting in 1992, different operations were established on the southern border with Mexico to build double and triple fences in the areas most traveled by migrants entering the United States, mainly in California and Texas. This began with Operation Gatekeeper in California, and continued with Blockade/Hold the Line on the Rio Grande and Safeguard in Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona. Detentions increased significantly in Arizona and dropped in California and Texas.⁵ Seventeen years after these operations were set up, instead of simply reducing the number of entries, the flow of migrants has changed somewhat:

- The Arizona desert, despite its harsh, dangerous conditions, has become the favorite crossing point.
- Physical risks and accidents have increased, with a death toll of more than 5,000 along the entire border during this period.
- People tend to stay longer, meaning that traditional circular migration patterns have been replaced by longer stays.
- Networks of *coyotes*, or human smugglers, have begun to participate more, enriching them even more. This makes them the ones who benefit from this reinforced surveillance: at the beginning of the 1990s, they charged US\$300, but today they get about US\$3500 per crossing, which is neither necessarily safe nor successful.

To comprehend the full dimension of the “rebordering” process, it should be noted that before it began in 1992, almost 5,000 border patrol officers were watching the border at different points. By 2009, almost 20,119 agents are on the payroll.⁶

Increased unauthorized migration has had vicious effects on the perception of Arizona citizens, who think that this is the reason spending on education, health, and border reinforcement has increased, thus causing big tensions, reflected in growing anti-immigrant feelings. One example of this is the emergence of the Minuteman Project civic surveillance groups, an initiative that has set a precedent for discrimination. These bitterly divisive feelings have also been seen in the passage of many bills by the Arizona state Congress against the pres-

Higher immigration to
Arizona in recent years is mainly
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ence of undocumented migrants, particularly Mexicans, who now find it more difficult to access education, health care, and jobs, and in general to lead their lives in the community. In 2006 alone, almost 570 bills were introduced in the state about immigration policy-related issues, although many are still pending passage or have already been vetoed. Among the most important of these are the following:

a) *Investigating migratory status by local authorities.* Local authorities would be able to investigate the migratory status of any detainee and cooperate with federal authorities (HB 2461 in 2007); police officers would be able to apply immigration law and will get training to do so (IIMPACT Arizona 2007).

Local authorities would have to verify migratory status to register an automobile in the state (HB 2063, HB 2079, HB 2446, HB 2475), recover cars confiscated because the driver did not possess an Arizona driver’s license (Proposition 300 in 2006), and also deny bail to anyone who did not prove legal migratory status (Propositions 100, 102, and 103 in 2006).

b) *Access to public health and educational systems.* Undocumented migrants would not be able to go to health centers or educational institutions (Proposition 200 or HR 4437 in 2004); they would have to prove legal status to be able to go to them (SB 2738 in 2006); the authorities would be able to denounce those who request these services (HB 2448 in 2006); and they would only be allowed emergency health care (SB 1137 in 2006). Officials would be able to send information regarding the immigration status of any individual for the purpose of determining public benefit eligibility (HB 2807 in 2008). Also, state funds for scholarships or financial aid could be restricted for undocumented migrants (Proposition 300 in 2006).

c) *Making English the official language* (Propositions 100, 102, and 103 in 2006).

d) *Sanctions for smugglers and employers.* One bill would allow local authorities to prosecute human smugglers who transport illegal immigrants and make human smuggling a felony punishable by up to three years in prison (SB 1372 in 2005); another would confiscate remittances to Mexico alleging that they will be used for drug trafficking or human smuggling (HB 2464 in 2007 and HB 2842 in 2008).

Employers would have to swear that they have not knowingly hired an undocumented immigrant. Fines would be a minimum of US\$2,500 for a first offense and suspension of the business license for 10 days. If the offense were repeated, it could merit the suspension or cancellation of the employer's business license and fines of up to US\$150,000 (HB 2779 and HB 2745).

e) *Guest Workers Program.* Considered imperative as part of a migratory reform, this kind of program recognizes

During Obama's 18 months in office, what we have seen is an "enforcement only" policy similar to that of his predecessor George W. Bush.

labor market needs that go unsatisfied by local workers (HB 2018 in 2006).

Between 2003 and 2009, an estimated 1,400 bills have been discussed in different states that would criminalize the presence of undocumented migrants. Of all these, almost 100 were passed, and others were struck down as unconstitutional.

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION AND CONGRESS⁷

The biggest effect of the Arizona immigration law has been to show up the Congress and the lack of leadership and interest on the part of the Obama administration in developing a project to partially or fully solve the failings of the weak immigration system. Until before the passage of SB 1070, the president had stayed out of the debate, but he has also

not presented an immigration reform bill before Congress as he had promised during his campaign, nor has he lobbied hard in both houses around this issue. But on several occasions he has come out in favor of fortifying the border and punishing employers who hire undocumented migrants rather than establishing a legalization program.

After 18 months of his administration's inaction in this area, President Obama has very astutely made use of SB 1070 to take up the issue of immigration reform in the national debate, pointing out that he considers it urgent and necessary. In his July 1 speech at the American University, he underlined the very important role immigrants have played in society, stating, "Immigrants have always helped to build and defend this country." However, he recognized that "each new wave of immigrants has generated fear and resentments toward newcomers, particularly in times of economic upheaval" like today. The sad truth is that "they live in the shadows; they're vulnerable to unscrupulous businesses who pay them less than the minimum wage or violate worker safety rules." He said it would be "both unwise and unfair" to declare a blanket amnesty for illegal immigrants, but added that "it would be logistically impossible and wildly expensive to round up and deport 11 million illegal immigrants, and it would tear into the fabric of our country. A program for mass deportation would disrupt our economy in ways the most Americans would find intolerable."⁸

Despite the fact that President Obama understands the frustration of Arizona citizens at the growing flow of undocumented migrants, he considers that SB 1070 is the wrong way to resolve the problem. He considers it unconstitutional because migration is an issue that comes under federal jurisdiction, not that of the states. In addition, SB 1070 threatens to undermine the basic notions of fairness as well as the trust between police and their communities, and violates constitutional rights and the 14th amendment, which guarantees equality under the law.

With mid-term elections approaching, Obama has publically recognized Congress's lack of "appetite" for a polemical, explosive issue like an immigration reform bill, plus the political wear and tear of having labored under the enormous pressure brought to bear during the first year and a half of his term to get the health system reform passed, among other priorities. He has publically said that a bipartisan agreement is indispensable and that 60 votes are needed to pass a comprehensive immigration reform. Despite the fact that in theory he has 57 Democrats out of the 100 seats in the

Senate, actually, about 10 of them would not support such a reform because their constituents do not agree with it.

Speculations have been made that fewer Democrats in both houses and some Republicans who previously had backed some aspects of the failed immigration reform have shifted their positions. Some Democrats have made it clear they will not support any bill that could be criticized as an “amnesty.” In general, debate in Congress has been timid, and many legislators have taken the opportunity to call on Obama to show leadership and send a proposal to both houses.

It should be pointed out that immigration is not necessarily a topic on which there is a party line. Things are not clear: sometimes the position of conservatives and liberals, Republicans and Democrats is ambiguous. Attitudes on migration are more influenced by regional, class, or ethnic prejudices. For example, some Republican senators have come out in favor of a guest worker program, something employers need; and certain Democrats oppose establishing greater restrictions on family reunification, a verification system, and, of course, limiting eligibility for eventual legalization.

Actually, during the 18 months of the Obama administration, what we have seen is an “enforcement only” policy similar to that of his predecessor George W. Bush. One example is that in answer to pressure from conservative members of Congress in an election year—which causes political anxiety—Obama has ordered 1,200 National Guard troops to boost border security—500 to be sent to Arizona—and asked Congress for an additional US\$600 million to support personnel and improve technology, turning the southern border into the most fortified, heavily monitored border ever dreamed of.⁹

In general, Congress has conducted a very timid debate on immigration. In the Senate, the Republicans have hardened their positions and the Democrats have supported much more restrictive proposals than the 2006 McCain-Kennedy bill. For example, the Schumer Bill presented by Senator Charles E. Schumer (D-NY), greatly emphasizes the fortification of the border and more technology for border surveillance, supports job verification procedures, and argues for a restrictive legalization program. Little has been said about the need to increase the number of visas granted to temporary workers and permanent residents in accordance with the demands of the labor market. Representative Luis Gutiérrez (D-Ill), who recently opposed the Arizona law, was one of the congressmen in 2009 most committed to designing a new immigration bill. While he did say it was necessary to secure

the borders more, he also considered establishing a generous legalization program, incorporating initiatives like the Dream Act and AgJobs (Agricultural Job Opportunities, Benefits and Security Act),¹⁰ canceling round-ups and deportations, and increasing punishment of employers. He thinks a reasonable, fair formula should be created to determine the number of immigrants to be granted entry based on labor market demand and humanitarian needs.

CONCLUSIONS

SB 1070, one of the most aggressive pieces of legislation passed on a state level, highlights Congress and the federal government’s lack of leadership and interest in developing joint bills to partially or completely solve the failings of the immigration system. This federal vacuum has been filled by local initiatives, revealing a lack of understanding of migrants’ con-

SB 1070 has created a hostile, divisive environment and a separatist climate, legitimizing xenophobia and abuse that will gradually exclude migrants from the society in which they live.

tribution—whether they be documented or not—to the U.S. economy and society. We understand that the mere fact of being present without legal immigration status is a civil violation under federal law, but that is no reason to turn a foreigner into a criminal. Rather, he or she is someone who, in most cases, has been hired by an employer, who, eager for cheap labor to keep the company competitive, is breaking the law, but is seldom punished or penalized.

The passage of SB 1070 has created a hostile, divisive environment and a separatist climate, legitimizing xenophobia and abuse. The perverse effect of this is that it will gradually exclude migrants from the society in which they live and limit their ability to integrate themselves even into their own communities. This law also has a negative influence on other states. Politicians in Ohio, Texas, Missouri, and Utah, among others, have announced plans to introduce similar pieces of legislation, while others may wait to see whether the courts uphold the Arizona law or find it unconstitutional.

It is a short-sighted law because it does not take into account the enormous power and influence of the Latino community in the United States in general, and in the border states in particular.

The politics of immigration has a complex past and an unclear future. This is why the challenge civic organizations in the United States and the Mexican government face is enormous: it includes both defending the human rights of our fellow Mexicans and persuading their counterparts through open, intensive lobbying that the current immigration law is inoperative and contradictory, and not appropriate for today's situation. It does not offer options for the employment of foreigners that the economy constantly demands, which is why there are already about 11 million undocumented migrants in the United States.

Given the growing anti-immigrant sentiments that have polarized the environment for the discussion and passage of a possible comprehensive immigration reform, particularly regarding a generous, realistic amnesty, perhaps getting smaller pieces of immigration passed is an option. Issuing a larger number of temporary visas for workers currently employed without immigration documents in their labor markets would be an indispensable initiative, consistent with the demand for labor in the United States.

SB 1070 has negatively affected bilateral relations with Mexico. This forced President Calderón to be demanding about the issue on his recent visit to Washington. In his speech before the U.S. Congress—he is the seventh Mexican first executive to make this kind of address; the first was Miguel Alemán in 1947—regarding the Arizona law, he underlined that criminalization is not the way to solve the phenomenon of undocumented migration and that the Mexican embassy and the Mexican consulates in Arizona will step up their actions in the areas of consular assistance, protection, and legal counseling. He correctly pointed out that joint responsibility, trust, and mutual respect should be the basis for addressing common challenges. Nevertheless, for three years, the government has “de-migrationized” the bilateral agenda, making it about drug trafficking instead.

We recognize that President Obama's excellent speech about the need to approve a comprehensive immigration reform was indispensable after 18 months of indifference and that the lawsuit against SB 1070 was a courageous act by his administration in an atmosphere that is increasingly hostile to migrants. We hope he goes on to make it clear that states should not seek to adopt cruel measures like SB 1070 and

that he moves forward with an overhaul of the immigration laws. However, we also hope that these actions are not brought out just for election campaigns and will really lead to more committed measures being adopted and an immigration reform bill being drafted and formally sent to Congress for its discussion and final passage. ■■■

NOTES

- ¹ I wish to thank Érika Veloz and Jazmín Casas for their technical advice.
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- ⁸ For more information, see Mónica Vereá, “Obama y la reforma migratoria: promesas y acciones,” Jerjes Izcoatl Aguirre Ochoa and José Odón García García, eds., *Comunidades mexicanas en Estados Unidos: Diáspora, integración y desarrollo en México* (Morelia, Michoacán: Instituto de Investigaciones Económicas y Empresariales/Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolás Hidalgo/El Colegio de Tlaxcala A.C., 2010).
- ⁹ Barack Obama, “Remarks on Comprehensive Immigration Reform,” American University School of International Service, Washington, D. C., The White House, July 1, 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-comprehensive-immigration-reform>.
- ¹⁰ These troops will work on intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance support and will eventually be replaced by more border patrol and customs agents.
- ¹¹ The Dream Act is a bill that would allow undocumented students who arrived in the United States before the age of 16 to legalize their migratory status by fulfilling certain requirements. The AgJobs bill would grant “earned legalization” to undocumented temporary foreign agricultural laborers.

Human Rights and the Fetishization of SB 1070

Ariadna Estévez López*

Arizona's SB 1070, passed in April 2010, makes it a crime to not have documents of legal residence and not carry others to prove that one's migratory status is in order. The legislation, also called the "Arizona law," not only permits the detention of anyone who transports an undocumented migrant, even if that person is a relative, but also allows the police to detain and require anyone they have a "reasonable suspicion" is an "illegal" immigrant to produce his or her migratory documents.

Clearly, criminalizing migration inhibits and even prohibits the enjoyment of different universal rights: specifically the right to not live in slavery or be subjected to forced labor; the right to health, to adequate housing, to a family life, to guarantee a minimum subsistence for oneself, to fair conditions of employment, to be a part of a union and other associations, to social security, to a name (in the case of little boys and girls), to education, to equal treatment to that of other nationals in a court of law, to due process if prosecuted, to not being deported collectively, and to not being discriminated against.

Because they are universal, enjoying these rights must not be conditioned to possessing legally recognized migratory sta-



Joshua Lotv/REUTERS

tus. However, the growing tendency to criminalize migration with legal instruments like the Arizona law systematically violates them. In the more restricted sphere of the U.S. Constitution, the Arizona law also violates fundamental rights, which is why President Barack Obama brought legal suit against it last July 6. Only a few days before that, his Mexican counterpart, Felipe Calderón, filed an *amicus curiae* brief backing the suit brought by civic organizations against the legislation. In its fierce opposition to SB 1070, the Mexican state, through the Congress, also requested and received political backing from parliamentarians from Ecuador, Uruguay, Panama, Bolivia, Guatemala, Cuba, and Chile.

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However—and without denying for a moment the importance and implications of this legislation—it should be said that it is a mistake to make the Arizona law the only focus for criticism and protests against the violation of migrants' human rights. In Arizona and other states of the Union, the criminalization of migration and racism have propitiated the constant violation of Latino migrants' human rights for a long time now, way beyond the scope of this law. Students of migration are concentrating on its unconstitutionality and on promoting its eventual repeal, but by doing that, they fall into a kind of legal fetishism that does not deal with the basic problem: a national crisis of migrants' human rights violations.

Lemaître distinguishes three types of legal fetishism in legal theory. First, he critiques formalism in legal interpretation. This type of fetishism consists of a merely formal, implacable interpretation of the law, without considering a social context or casuistical contingencies. The second kind is Marxist legal theory. In old Soviet law, legal fetishism consisted of making an analogy between law and the commodity in Marxist analysis. Marx criticized a commodity being seen as a good with intrinsic value instead of one with a superstructural value. Law, like the commodity, is not a neutral instrument, but has a function in class relations, which is that of maintaining and reproducing exploitation. Finally, Lemaître points to the legal fetishism that borrows a little from both positions and is blind to the tension between the law and its application, focusing more on legal rituals more than its efficacy.¹

Focusing exclusively on the Arizona law brings us face to face with fetishism of the third kind, since there is emphasis on legal ritual (the approval and possible eventual repeal of SB 1070), which assigns the strategy of legally challenging it a greater effect than it can actually have. While SB 1070 could have an effect similar to that of California's Proposition 187,² focusing on that makes it impossible to deal with the grave panorama of migrants' human rights violations throughout the United States. This is for three reasons:

1. the human rights violations that this law makes legally possible in Arizona had already been going on *de facto* for a long time;
2. the criminalization of undocumented migration is advancing nationwide, not only in Arizona; and
3. the existing generalized climate of racism systematically attacks migrants' rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ARIZONA BEYOND THE SCOPE OF SB 1070

The violations of migrants' human rights in Arizona dates at least since 1999, when Operation Safeguard was launched to apply the same strategy of "prevention by dissuasion" used in the early 1990s in El Paso, Texas, with Operation Blockade/ Hold the Line, and in San Diego, California, with Operation Gatekeeper. This strategy consists of preventing undocumented migration by dissuading prospective migrants with the presence of hundreds of border agents and the detention and search of any "suspected" migrants. Very often the people stopped and searched were legal residents and even U.S. citizens of Latino descent. The strategy was so effective at those border crossings that the routes of undocumented migration moved to the Sonora desert, across the border from Arizona, making it the ideal place to implement Operation Safeguard. With this program, southern Arizona has become the most important crossing, where migrants die from dehydration, sunstroke, and heat stroke. From 1995 to 2002 alone, 1,600 deaths were registered along this stretch of border.³

This sparked a solidarity campaign that has in turn triggered the criminalization of migrants'-rights defenders. For example, in 2005, volunteers Shanti Sellz and Daniel Strauss were accused of human smuggling after trying to transport a group of injured immigrants to the hospital. In 2008, Dan Millis, from the migrant aid humanitarian organization "No

The violations of migrants' human rights in Arizona dates at least since 1999, when Operation Safeguard was launched to apply the same strategy of "prevention by dissuasion" used in the early 1990s in El Paso, Texas, with Operation Blockade/Hold the Line, and in San Diego, California, with Operation Gatekeeper.

More Deaths,” was fined by the U.S. Fishing and Wildlife Service for leaving bottles of water near the paths used by immigrants. He refused to pay the US\$175 fine arguing that humanitarian aid is not a crime.

Even though this kind of repressive atmosphere to prevent undocumented migrants from crossing the border is nothing new, direct criminalization of undocumented migration inside Arizona itself is more recent, but predates SB 1070. It began immediately after the federal migration reform bill was put on hold in 2006.⁴ HB 2779 was passed by the state Congress in 2006 and confirmed in 2008, authorizing administrative and criminal sentences for employers who hired undocumented immigrants, requiring the state attorney general to notify immigration authorities of the presence of undocumented workers, and broadening out the definition of identity theft. The Legal Arizona Workers Act requires employers to verify whether their employees are authorized to work in the United States using a federal data base called e-Verify. It should be mentioned that a similar reform was carried out in 2007 in Oklahoma mandating state employers to use the Basic Pilot electronic system, whose application is optional federally.

Simultaneously, in the light of this anti-immigrant climate, in 2006, Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard confiscated remittances of more than US\$500 being sent to Mexico through Western Union. According to Goddard, the entire amount he confiscated (US\$14 million) was going to be used to finance human smuggling. In the health care field, in Phoenix, St. Joseph’s Hospital repatriates 96 migrants a year; the hospital justifies itself legally arguing the irregular migratory status of its patients.⁵ Civil rights organizations have also uncovered 16 hate groups acting with impunity, two of them expressly anti-immigrant: United for a Sovereign America-American Patriots, in Phoenix, and the American Border Patrol, in Sierra Vista. Along these same lines, in 2009, a federal court found in favor of rancher Roger Barnett who detained at gunpoint 16 Mexicans who were entering the United States without documents. The court denied that this was a violation of the Mexicans’ civil rights, although it did find that the defendant should pay six of the immigrants US\$78,000 in damages for suffering and emotional distress.

SB 1070 was passed in this kind of legal panorama and atmosphere of human rights violations. Nevertheless, the problem did not stop there: since May 2010, ethnic studies have been banned if they focus on the structural position of systematically and historically discriminated-against racial

In Arizona and other states, criminalization of migration and racism have fostered the constant violation of Latino migrants’ human rights for a long time now, way beyond the scope of this law.

groups, like Hispanics, who make up almost 30 percent of the state’s total population. This is a clear affront to Mexican-Americans’ cultural rights, but has remained in the shadows because of the predominance of SB 1070.

THE CRIMINALIZATION OF MIGRATION BEYOND ARIZONA

Since 2006 when the federal reform bill did not pass, each of the 50 states of the Union has focused on making local reform proposals. According to a 2008 report by the National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy and the Migration Policy Institute, in 2007, a total of 1,059 migration reform bills were presented, but only 167 were voted into law.⁶ The writers of the report underline that among the bills passed, a greater proportion of the laws actually extend migrants’ human rights (19 percent of the 313 bills of this kind) rather than limit them (11 percent of 263 proposed bills). However, if the ones that restrict human rights are added to those dealing with enforcing the law (11 percent of 263) and those that regulate employment (10 percent of 237), the percentage of bills approved that criminalize migration is greater than that of those that promote human rights (40 percent versus 19 percent). This is because the bills dealing with enforcing the law and employment are just as restrictive as those that openly limit rights.

The bills dealing with enforcing the law establish the competencies of enforcing immigration law at a local or state level, reform the criminal justice system, or create new offenses related to migration. These kinds of bills deal with issues like requiring proof of migratory status to get any kind of official identification; increasing state police or state’s attorneys’ powers to detain migrants; excluding offenders without legal migratory status from the benefit of fines as sentences; and requiring jail staff to demand that detainees held for administrative offenses prove their migratory status. These

are actually very damaging, as proved by Arizona's law 2779 and Oklahoma's law, which categorizes transporting, giving refuge to, hiding, and hiring undocumented migrants as a serious crime, and punishes anyone who aids an undocumented migrant with up to a year in jail or a US\$1,000 fine. It also requires landlords to verify the migratory status of anyone who wants to rent from them.

The measures that directly restrict migrants' rights condition access to public benefits, like demanding that a person show citizenship in order to get a driver's license, and exclude from work-compensation programs all persons who cannot prove their legal presence in the country. The states that approved the most restrictive reforms are the ones that are new destinations for migrants: South Carolina, Nevada, Arizona, and Oklahoma.

Measures affecting access to employment regulate undocumented migrants' income and treatment on the job, as well as their relationship to federal employment supervision programs *vis-à-vis* migration. This includes positive measures, like labor rights protection, but that also criminalize immigrants, like the measures that sanction employers who hire people without documents; those that grant winning bids for public works only to employers who can prove they have not hired unauthorized workers; and also when professional or commercial licenses are only awarded to those who can show their migratory status is regular.

By contrast, the bills that broaden out migrants' rights include actions like eliminating the citizenship requirement for jobs with the police and fire departments and as teachers, as well as for migrants' children's access to public benefits; undocumented students access to education; making it giving crime to blackmail immigrants (for example, to threaten them with calling in immigration or other kinds of authorities in charge of enforcing the law); and writing into the law more offenses related to slavery and human smuggling or the destruction of migratory documents. The states that approved

more bills promoting migrants' rights are those that have a long immigration tradition like California, New York, Illinois, and Texas.⁷

RACISM AND HATE CRIMES IN THE UNITED STATES

In addition to the criminalization of migration in Arizona and different states of the Union, the existing climate of racism and discrimination systematically violates migrants' human rights. These violations often go unpunished because the victims do not make a complaint for fear of being deported or jailed. This in itself is a violation of the right to receive the protection of the state from hate crimes.

According to the latest Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) figures, 51.3 percent of hate crimes are motivated by race. Although the majority of them are committed against African-Americans (72.6 percent), from 2003 to 2007 attacks against Latinos increased every year: 426 attacks affected 595 victims in 2003; 475 attacks affected 646 people in 2004; 522 attacks against 722 persons in 2005; 576 attacks affected 819 victims in 2006; and 595 attacks against 830 persons in 2007.⁸ The total increase for this time period is 40 percent. This rise has coincided with the discussion about immigration reform and the economic crisis, which in turn has been marked by the racist language of anti-immigrant groups lobbying for repressive laws against foreigners who enter the country without papers. These groups have also grown in number: from 2000 to 2008, the count rose from 602 to 926, a 54-percent jump. Although many of these groups openly promote white supremacy, many have incorporated the anti-immigrant discourse into their ideology.⁹

Despite the gravity of the problem these figures indicate, the phenomenon may be much more serious because the figures are enormously biased. FBI statistics are developed based on local police reports, and the last poll on this topic, in 2007, indicated that only 15 percent of them report hate crimes, and some report only a single case. The Local Law Enforcement Hate Crime Prevention Act, which has both passed and been voted down in both the upper and lower houses of Congress several times since 1999, would allow for greater coordination among federal, state, and local authorities to fill in these gaps and to make it possible for some particularly grave cases to be channeled to federal jurisdiction. However, the law cannot revert one of the main problems, which is undocumented migrants' fear of making a complaint: they

The latest FBI figures say 51.3 percent of hate crimes are motivated by race. Though most are perpetrated against African-Americans, from 2003 to 2007 attacks against Latinos increased 40 percent.

In 2007, 1,059 migration reform bills were presented nationwide, but only 167 were voted into law. Forty percent criminalize migration, while only 19 percent protect migrants' human rights.

are rightly afraid that this could be the basis for their eventual deportation. And the cases themselves illustrate the problem.

In 2007, in Gaithersburg, Maryland, several anti-immigrant groups tried to burn down a day-laborer's work center; in Woodbridge and Culpepper, Virginia, migrants are subject to provocations like being photographed and insulted from moving automobiles or detained by individuals pretending to be police. In December 2007, Mexican citizen Miguel Barrón Martínez was beaten to death when he tried to defend his nephew and other persons: he was attacked by two U.S. citizens in his workplace. He had been living in Roger City, Arkansas for 14 years. Also in December 2007, in San Francisco, California, two men shot two Maya youths, José Chel Cámara and Javier Nah Carrillo, originally from Akil, Yucatán, killing them instantly. Javier had been in the United States for three years and his childhood friend, José Chel,

just a month. They both worked in a restaurant, which they had just left to go to the store where they were murdered.

In 2008, 37-year-old Ecuadoran Marcelo Lucero was stabbed to death by a white teenager in Patchogue, New York, as he and a friend walked to an acquaintance's house. The teenager who insulted and taunted them before stabbing Lucero had a record of prior violence against Latinos and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. In 2008, brothers Oswaldo and Romel Sucuzhana, from Ecuador, were attacked by a group of youths who shouted racist slogans at them as they walked home after leaving a night club. Oswaldo suffered grave injuries to his head and Romel escaped with a few cuts on the hand after being attacked with a glass bottle wielded by a pair of African-American youths, according to witnesses. The attackers were caught and are now facing charges that could carry a sentence of up to 78 years in jail. ■■■

NOTES

¹ J. Lemaître, "Legal Fetishism at Home and Abroad," *Unbound Harvard Journal of the Legal Left* no. 3 (2007), pp. 6-18.

² In California, Proposition 187, which passed but was revoked by a federal court in 1994, attempted to ban undocumented migrants' access to public education and free medical services (except in emergencies) in order to dissuade them from entering the United States. It also simplified the appeals process in deportation cases and gave the Border Patrol and immigration officers more elements for investigating about fraudulent documents, employers, and people who remained in the country once their visas ran out. The greatest impact of this failed proposition was its influence federally, since it was the inspiration for the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act which took away undocumented immigrants' access to public social services and increased financial and human resources for border surveillance. See Mónica Vereá, *Migración temporal en América del Norte. Propuestas y respuestas* (Mexico City: CISAN, 2003).

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act (CIRA, S. 2611), introduced by Senator Arlen Specter, proposed stepping up security all along the border with Mexico and granting amnesty to the 7 million undocumented migrants. It also included the creation of a "blue visa" or H-2C, which would have made it possible to bring in temporary guest workers for up to six years, at the end of which the worker would have to return to his/

her country for at least one year. It also proposed increasing the annual number of H-1B visas from 65,000 to 115,000, with a 20 percent increase yearly.

⁵ Since the 1996 federal immigration reform, neither undocumented nor recently arrived documented migrants have a right to government social services. However, since the law stipulates that hospitals cannot deny emergency health care or abandon an injured person in the street, they are obliged to offer first aid. If the cases are very serious, the hospitals must either take charge of their care or refer them to private institutions. When this happens and the hospital does not want to be held responsible, the patients are repatriated.

⁶ L. Laglagaron, C. Rodríguez, A. Silver, and S. Thanasombat, *Regulating Migration at the State Level: Highlights from the Database of 2007 State Immigration Legislation and Methodology* (Washington, D.C.: National Center on Immigrant Integration Policy/Migration Policy Institute, 2008).

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ "2008 Hate Crime Statistics," <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/hc2008/index.html>. [Editor's Note.]

⁹ "Confronting the New Faces of Hate: Hate Crimes in America," Leadership Conference on Civil Rights Education Fund (LCCREF), Washington, D.C. (2009), http://www.civilrights.org/publications/hatecrimes/lccref_hate_crimes_report.pdf.

Arizona's New Anti-immigrant Law and Federal Immigration Reform

Doris Marie Provine*



Joshua Lott/REUTERS

Arizona's Governor Jan Brewer with the press after the SB 1070 District Court hearing in Phoenix.

Arizona's recent legislation creating several immigration-related offenses occurs against the backdrop of long-standing U.S. ambivalence about immigration, particularly in times of economic stress. As in the past, concerns about immigrants "stealing" U.S. jobs and creating a drain on public resources are mixing with fears that the essential character of the republic will change under the pressure of too much immigration. Such fears of inassimilable "others" are a reminder that race, despite its lack of empirical basis, continues to play a role in national identity, and therefore in debates about who belongs. Racial fears have long underlain the sense of crisis and occasional violence that large-scale immigration provokes. What is new about the current wave of anti-immigrant anxiety is the widespread use

of local legislation to express anger at immigrants without legal status and a desire for more restrictive policy at the national level. The trend appears to be gathering steam. Politicians in nearly 20 states have expressed interest in adopting a version of Arizona's law.

SB 1070 creates several new misdemeanors, including working or seeking work without legal status and transporting an immigrant without legal status while engaged in other criminal activity. During any stop, police must ask about immigration status ("when practicable") if their suspicions are aroused. Racial profiling is prohibited, but there is no statutory guidance as to what constitutes reasonable suspicion of illegal status and no standardized training for police officers. Even before the law was scheduled to take effect, there were substantial differences in interpretation among police agencies over how to handle cases involving juveniles and asylum

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seekers and over whose status must be checked. Any law-enforcement agency that resists prioritizing immigration enforcement in its day-to-day work is liable to a citizen-initiated lawsuit for damages.

Arizona's new law has been widely and rightly condemned for stirring racial antagonisms and creating an impossible job for local police. Seven lawsuits, including one by the federal government, have been filed to block its enforcement on constitutional grounds. Arizona's law may not survive these legal challenges, but that does not appear to matter to the law's defenders, who dismiss the lawsuits as "pure politics." They appear undeterred by a federal judge's decision to temporarily block enforcement of key provisions of the law, including the requirement that police inquire about immigration status. One can assume that the goals of the law's creators extend beyond transforming law enforcement in Arizona to changing the national dialogue about the control of illegal immigration. The Arizona law makes "attrition through enforcement" the basis of its policy. The buzz created by the law helps to publicize this idea, while at the same time pushing proposals for eventual citizenship to the background.

The adoption of SB 1070 should not come as a surprise to observers of Arizona's escalating campaign against immigrants without legal status and the federal government's shifting stance toward enforcement of its immigration laws. Over the past 15 years, the federal government has progressively loosened its hold on immigration enforcement without overseeing the process effectively. It has created a variety of programs to partner with local police. The federal government's own enforcement efforts have included some legally indefensible actions against immigrants. Most significantly, the federal approach has become harsher. The list of crimes that result in deportation of legal immigrants has grown longer; prosecutions for immigration offenses are at an all-time high, and so is the use of detention. On the border, Operation Streamline facilitates the charging and criminal conviction of migrants caught in the act of entering the United States illegally. From this perspective, Arizona has simply accepted the federal government's implicit invitation to come down hard on immigrants without legal status, while taking the approach a few steps further.

Many reasons lie behind Arizona's decision to adopt a hard-line stand toward illegal immigration. They include an ugly and obvious racism that regularly finds expression in blogs and demonstrations, but also a sense of injury at the federal government's purported indifference toward the costs

that Arizona has borne as a border state. The flow of migrants into and across Arizona has increased dramatically in the past decade as easier routes through urban areas in other states have been cut off by federal initiatives like Operation Gatekeeper and Operation Hold the Line. Arizona has a large population of retired persons who have come from elsewhere in the United States, which contributes to a weak sense of history and place and a high potential for anxiety about non-English speaking foreigners. Enormous differences in wealth and education also separate voters from immigrants without legal status. Plus, there are practical political considerations. The state has an estimated 500,000 immigrants without legal status in a population of approximately 6.5 million people. New immigrant voters could challenge the conservative Republican domination of the state. A campaign that targets vulnerable people who cannot vote also helpfully diverts attention from other pressing problems in the state, while at the same time positioning its leaders as willing to stand up

What is new about the current wave of anti-immigrant anxiety is the widespread use of local legislation to express anger at undocumented immigrants and a desire for more restrictive national policies.

to the federal government, something that always plays well in Arizona.

The population that is the target of SB 1070 is largely Mexican. Most either neglected or were unable to obtain permission to migrate legally when they came to Arizona for jobs in agriculture, construction, restaurants, hotels, and factories. Others who will be affected by the law include U.S. citizens: for example, children born here of parents who lack legal status, and children who were brought to Arizona at a young age, the so-called 1.5 generation. This population of mixed legal status is visible and visibly disliked by some Arizonans, who nevertheless rely on them for low-wage services. These are not the only immigrants without legal status in the state. Arizona also attracts Canadians and some Europeans who violate the terms of their stays by obtaining jobs or moving in. These "non-visible" migrants, however, do not appear to be a concern of either Arizona lawmakers or the general public.

PLENARY POWER AND THE DEVOLUTION OF ENFORCEMENT AUTHORITY

The power to set immigration policy rests firmly at the national level in the United States, as it does in every modern nation. At the same time, the constitutional system also protects local authority from federal intrusion in many matters, including policing. This division of authority has not prevented federal immigration authorities from working with local police on an *ad hoc* and informal basis when the occasion demands. Local police have also sometimes initiated contacts with federal immigration authorities to seek deportation of criminal migrants, a strategy that was popular in the Prohibition era as a way of dealing with foreign-born gangsters. Not until 1996, however, did Congress formally recognize this relationship, for the first time offering a specific opportunity for local police to partner with federal authorities to enforce immigration law.

In 1996, Congress adopted two statutes with the idea that local police could be a “force multiplier” in the effort to root out criminal migrants from the nation’s interior. The constitutional separation of powers meant that all that could be offered was an invitation to participate: the federal government cannot require local police to enforce its laws. The Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA) authorized training of local and state police to enforce federal immigration laws. The program that resulted and the agreements reached have become known informally as “287g,” a reference to the location of the law in the Immigration and Nationality Act. The second 1996 law, the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, amended the Immigration and Nationality Act to clarify that local police have the authority to arrest previously deported non-citizen felons. At the operational level, federal immigration officers are increasingly engaged with local police. A variety of partnering programs are now available under an umbrella program entitled ICE ACCESS (Agreements of Cooperation in Communities to Enhance Safety and Security). One of the most far-reaching is Secure Communities, designed to link all local jails in the nation with ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) so that anyone booked in a U.S. jail can be checked for immigration status.

Federal devolution of enforcement authority to the local level has occurred in tandem with a stalemate in federal immigration reform. The result, exacerbated by the sour economic climate, has been the development of a perfect storm

The goals of the law’s creators presumably extend beyond transforming law enforcement in Arizona to changing the national dialogue about illegal immigration control.

of controversy across the nation about immigration enforcement. Beginning in 2005, states and municipalities began to respond to rising levels of illegal immigration with their own bills and resolutions that attempt to make it more difficult for immigrants without legal status to live in their jurisdictions. Most tracked areas of traditional state authority. Statutes making English the state’s official language and restricting drivers’ licenses to citizens and legal permanent residents, for example, have been favorite topics for legislation. But a few states and localities have pushed these limits, raising the question of how far a state or city may go before encroaching on the federal government’s claim of absolute power to determine who may remain in the country.

ARIZONA’S LAW

Arizona began its legal assault on its immigrants without legal status in 1988 with a ballot initiative to adopt English as the state’s official language. That law was struck down by the state Supreme Court as overly broad, but legislative leaders and anti-immigrant activists were undeterred. In 2004 voters approved restrictions on access to social services by residents without legal status and imposed stricter identification requirements to prevent non-citizen voting. A 2006 citizen’s initiative was successful in changing the state Constitution to make English the state’s official language. Another initiative cut off access to punitive damages for immigrants without legal status who seek redress in the state’s courts. The same year the state made people without legal status ineligible for state-sponsored English classes and other benefits, including in-state tuition and financial aid for the colleges and universities in the state. The law affected nearly 5,000 high school graduates when it took effect, and forced those already enrolled to pay much higher tuition to finish their education. All of these propositions passed easily, some by a margin of nearly three to one.¹

The power to set immigration policy rests firmly at the national level in the U.S., as in every modern nation. But federal immigration authorities work with local police on an *ad hoc* and informal basis when needed.

The state has also experimented with criminal sanctions. In 2006 the Arizona legislature adopted an anti-smuggling law that the prosecuting attorney interpreted to apply to the immigrants who paid for these services. Under this interpretation of the law, persons smuggled into Arizona are treated as co-conspirators, facing the same criminal sentences as the smugglers. In 2007 the legislature limited the availability of bail for immigrants without legal status who are accused of serious crimes. Arizona gained national attention in January 2008 with a law that suspends or revokes the business licenses of employers who knowingly hire workers without legal status. That law is currently under review by the United States Supreme Court.

All of these earlier efforts to discourage immigrants without legal status from moving into Arizona or remaining in residence laid a kind of ideological groundwork for SB 1070, somewhat misleadingly entitled Support Our Law Enforcement and Safe Neighborhoods Act. In fact, the law ties the hands of police departments and cities that do not want to become involved in enforcing federal immigration law because it interferes with other priorities, such as community safety. A concept that has gained much favor with police departments across the nation is community policing, which seeks to cultivate the trust of *all* residents within an area in order to promote law-abiding behavior and crime reporting.² Some Arizona departments and municipalities are also worried about the costs involved in detaining, housing, and transporting immigrants.

Critics of the law have focused mostly on the potential for racial profiling. Although state leaders insist that racial profiling is prohibited in the legislation and in Arizona law generally, it is far from clear that it will not occur. Racial profiling is hard to detect except with difficult-to-gather statistical evidence of actual stops and interrogations. There is also the issue of consent. Under SB 1070, police officers are allowed and even encouraged to ask questions, not just in an arrest situation, but any time their curiosity is aroused by suspicious

circumstances. Such questioning is likely to be directed at persons who, because of skin color, dress, or language, appear to be immigrants; the questions police ask will likely focus on immigration status, given Arizona's priorities. The individual has the option of refusing to communicate, but many people, especially immigrants, do not know that, or fear retaliation for not cooperating. Another issue is stops based on the pretext of minor driving violations or other offenses. The Arizona law sweeps as broadly as possible to approve immigration questioning even in cases involving local ordinance violations. This makes people subject to police investigation for having grass that has grown too long, or for a loud party.

Arizona is already feeling the impact of its new law. The prospect of implementation has provoked an outflow of Mexican and Central American immigrants from the state. They are leaving behind vacant apartments and empty seats in public schools. Most are fleeing to other states, but some are returning to their countries of origin. A study released by the University of Arizona estimates a drop of at least US\$29 billion in annual output if all non-citizens were removed from the state's workforce.³ The law has also provoked political protests. Some professional organizations and city governments have pledged to boycott the state until the law is withdrawn. Mexico has expressed its dismay at Arizona's law and has refused to conduct much of its diplomatic business in the state. The loss of revenue from such actions has been estimated at US\$90 million thus far. There are also political impacts as immigrant-rights organizations find new support in their effort to register immigrant voters who have legal status, which may eventually affect the state's voting patterns.

UNDERSTANDING SUPPORT FOR SB 1070

Backers of the law have nevertheless gained at least short-term political support in this process. When she signed the legislation, Governor Jan Brewer received a significant boost in her approval ratings, enough to put her ahead of her rivals for the Republican nomination for governor. The federal government's success in winning a preliminary injunction against enforcement of key provisions of SB 1070 and President Obama's statements against the law have only boosted her political support more. The local context includes many other signs of hostility toward the presence of these immigrants. Huge, sprawling Maricopa County, with over half of the state's population, has repeatedly chosen Joseph Arpaio as its sher-

Federal devolution of enforcement authority to the local level has occurred in tandem with a stalemate in federal immigration reform. The result has been a perfect storm of controversy across the nation about immigration enforcement.

iff. Since 2005, when Sheriff Arpaio realized that combating illegal immigration could be a winning platform, he has gained notoriety for the priority he puts on detecting and removing immigrants without legal status.

Many political leaders are also clear in their desire to remove these residents. The undisputed leader of this group, state Senator Russell Pearce, has been emboldened by his victory in sponsoring SB 1070. Now he is working on legislation to deny birth certificates to children born in Arizona of immigrants without legal status, a move that has resulted in a call for national hearings on this idea. There are, of course, dissenting voices, particularly among Latino politicians, political activists, and liberal Democrats. But in an election year, staking out a stand that falls into a reasonable middle ground is difficult. The Arizona public—or at least its most vocal elements—is clearly aroused.

CONCLUSION

SB 1070 illustrates how the complex compromise of federalism that characterizes the U.S. system of government works in a situation of high political anxiety. The system is flexible enough to permit localities to have a meaningful political voice, even in an area traditionally reserved to the federal government. With the warm support of national organizations seeking stronger immigration controls, Arizona has shown how a state can make its voice heard. By adopting SB 1070 the state was finally able to provoke a definitive response from the federal government concerning its policies on illegal immigration.

The government's brief in opposition to SB 1070 entirely bypassed the issue of an individual's right to be free of unwarranted stops and intrusive questioning based on skin color, a basic civil rights guarantee. This may be an issue of timing: the government's objective in its initial brief was a preliminary injunction to block enforcement. Issues based

on implementation are premature in this context. But it is also true that the powerful concept of civil rights remains too linked to citizenship to be easily transportable to the field of immigration. Immigration policy in the United States is fundamentally contractual: the government sets up requirements that the prospective immigrant must follow. And on the civil rights side, while the concept has expanded beyond its original focus on the legalized subordination of African Americans, that historical legacy remains strong. The basis on which civil rights stands is citizenship in the United States, not the human condition or other universal ethos.

Nevertheless, the situation in Arizona is eerily reminiscent of the on-going effort to achieve racial equality in the United States. The connection is not just with the potential that police will engage in racial profiling and stops on the pretext of skin color. The connection also lies in state leaders' decision to create a law like SB 1070, which disregards the many contributions that immigrants without legal status and mixed families have made in Arizona. SB 1070 treats these residents as if they are undeserving of respect and consideration, and unconnected to the state's economy, cultural life, and neighborhood vitality. The harsh policy of "attrition through enforcement" would be indefensible and unpopular if Arizona's immigrants were regarded as neighbors and friends. It is this aversion to inclusion and disregard for those who appear different that most clearly defines contemporary racism in the United States. ■■■

NOTES

¹ For an overview of Arizona ballot propositions, their contents, and their outcomes, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Arizona_Ballot_Propositions. For the complete text of Proposition 300, the ballot proposition that required citizenship for in-state tuition and various other social services, see <http://www.azsos.gov/election/2006/info/PubPamphlet/english/Prop300.htm>.

² Scott Decker, Paul G. Lewis, Doris Marie Provine, and Monica W. Varsanyi, "On the frontier of local law enforcement: Local police and federal immigration law," *Immigration, Crime, and Justice*, edited by W. F. McDonald (Bingley, United Kingdom: Emerald Publishing, 2009), pp. 263-278.

³ Judith Gans, "Immigrants in Arizona: Fiscal and Economic Impacts" (Tucson, Arizona: Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, University of Arizona, 2007), <http://udallcenter.arizona.edu/immigration/>.

The United States v. Arizona The Power Struggle Over Setting Immigration Enforcement Priorities

Evelyn Cruz*

On April 23, 2010, Arizona Governor Brewer signed into law state senate bill 1070 (SB 1070). In signing the bill, the governor declared that Arizona could no longer stand idly by while the federal government failed to protect Arizona from the criminal acts caused by undocumented migrants in the state.¹

In the weeks leading up to the bill's passage, scores of protestors had been urging the legislature not to enact the statute. The protestors feared that the law would result in a cascade of anti-Latino fervor in the state. When signed, the federal government expressed mild concern about the statute's ramifications and did not immediately act, to the dismay of civil rights activists. However, a few weeks before the bill was to go into effect, the federal government filed a lawsuit challenging the law's constitutionality, but not raising concerns over racial profiling. In response to criticisms about the federal government's failure to raise objections to the statute based on civil rights, Attorney General Holder indicated that if the statute does go into effect, the federal government will monitor closely and file suit if any civil rights violations occur.

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Joshua Lot/REUTERS

Anti-immigrant groups saw Arizona's actions as a model and began courting politicians across the country to encourage them to pass copycat legislation. On the other side, Latino leaders began encouraging a boycott of Arizona. Both sides can claim some victories. Politicians in over 15 states have indicated interest in enacting SB 1070 copycat statutes,

and at least four states have already proposed legislation to do so.² In contrast, a number of cities have terminated their business dealings with Arizona, and the state's conference industry is facing a 50-75 percent drop in new bookings.³

High emotions have given way to a multiplicity of lawsuits, seven at last count, filed to prevent the statute from going into effect and to declare it unconstitutional. The fate of the lawsuits is pending as I write this; however, at the core of the grievance are fears that the law is difficult to enforce without prejudicing Arizona's Latino residents, and concerns that the state is engaging in regulating a field reserved for federal action.

Stepping back from the spectacle that surrounds SB 1070, it is not difficult to see that Arizona is trying to straddle between state and federal fields of regulatory power and between state and federal priorities, while also attempting to redefine both relationships. The state attempts to accomplish this first by claiming that what it is doing fits squarely within its state rights, and second by arguing that its statute helps the federal government achieve what should be a common goal: the removal of undocumented migrants.⁴ But before shedding light on constitutional tensions created by the statute, we must strip away the rhetoric and look at SB 1070's actual statutory language.

THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF SB 1070

We must understand that SB 1070 is not one law, but rather a series of laws joined together by the common goal of creating a hostile environment for undocumented migrants in the state of Arizona. Each of the different provisions must withstand constitutional scrutiny independently, and it is possible that some parts of SB 1070 will survive and others fail as the lawsuits wind their way through the U.S. legal process.

The bill creates several new state crimes designed to punish individuals without immigration status by making it:

- Illegal for a non-citizen not authorized to work under federal law to seek or be employed in the state. Arizona Revised Statutes ("A.R.S.") § 13-2928(C).
- Illegal to hire or be hired at a public place, if in the process of the transaction traffic is blocked or impeded. A.R.S. § 13-2928 (A) and (B).
- Unlawful for a person who is in violation of a criminal offense to transport, move, conceal, harbor, or shield an undocumented non-citizen in order to further the

illegal presence of the non-citizen; or to encourage a non-citizen to come to Arizona knowing that it will be in violation of law. A.R.S. § 13-2929(A)

- Illegal for any non-citizen in the United States to fail to register or carry a federal immigration document that has been issued to the person under 1304(e) or 1306(a) [The Alien Registration Act of 1940]. A.R.S. § 13-1509(A) (F). But note that, "This section does not apply to a person who maintains authorization from the federal government to remain in the United States."

In addition to creating new criminal statutes targeting undocumented persons present in Arizona, SB 1070 specified a number of activities that law enforcement must undertake to identify, arrest, and remove undocumented migrants found in the state of Arizona. Namely,

- When lawfully stopping, detaining, or arresting a person that the police have reasonable suspicion is undocumented, the police must, when practicable, make reasonable efforts to determine the person's immigration status, except when it would interfere with an investigation. When a person is stopped or detained, presentation of an Arizona driver's license or another specified form of identification may be sufficient to show legal status or citizenship. A.R.S. § 11-1051(B).
- When a person is arrested, their immigration status must be determined before they are released by checking with the federal government. A.R.S. § 11-1051(B).
- When a non-citizen who is unlawfully present is discharged after conviction of an offense, federal authorities must be notified. A.R.S. § 11-1051(C).
- Police may make a warrantless arrest for any offense that makes the arrestee removable from the United States. A.R.S. § 13-3883(A)(5).
- Law enforcement agencies must not establish "sanctuary cities." A.R.S. § 11-1051(A).

The U.S. Supreme Court
has held that states may enact statutes
with an incidental effect on federal immigration
regulation if they are tailored to combat
a local problem.

Arizona claims that what it is doing fits squarely within its state rights, and argues that SB 1070 helps the federal government achieve what should be a common goal: the removal of undocumented migrants.

THE STATE'S ATTEMPT TO EXPLOIT A GREY AREA IN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

State Rights

Arizona's best argument in defense of SB 1070 is that the state is engaging in legislative actions reserved to the states through the Tenth Amendment, which reads, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."⁵

The U.S. Supreme Court has held that states may enact statutes that have an incidental effect on federal regulation of immigration if the statute is focused directly upon and tailored to combat a local problem⁶ or if the subject matter of the law in question is an area traditionally occupied by states and Congress has not clearly manifested its intention to preempt the regulation in question.⁷

Arizona's statute was drafted by Kris W. Kobach who has authored a series of articles promoting the theory that states can operate within the confines of the Tenth Amendment by simply criminalizing particular conduct by undocumented migrants in a way that mirrors federal law, thereby acting under the state's undisputed right to address crime and avoiding federal preemption.⁸

SB 1070 attempts to bring Kobach's vision to fruition by creating state criminal statutes that punish undocumented aliens who seek employment and/or who fail to register under federal law.

For the argument to prevail, however, Arizona will need to convince the courts that SB 1070 is addressing public safety and employment, two traditional state areas of regulation. The governor and legislature laid the foundation for the public safety argument by linking the need for SB 1070 with the need to address the allegedly high incidence of crimes by undocumented migrants in the state and the downward pressure on wages created by the availability of undocumented

workers.⁹ However, SB 1070 does not address a problem unique to Arizona nor does it do so in an insular fashion.

Arizona may be a border state and it may be disproportionately affected by illegal crossings into the U.S.; however, illegal immigration is a national concern, not a localized problem unique to Arizona. There are over 12 million individuals without immigration status living in the United States, roughly five percent of them in Arizona. Arizona's crime statistics and unemployment are actually lower than the national average. Although localized violence in Mexico near the border has increased, the state does not face similar violence.¹⁰ Moreover, Arizona may be resolving its own purported illegal immigration problem by forcing it onto other states. News reports indicate that undocumented individuals are not returning to their country of nationality, but rather moving to other states with already higher percentages of undocumented migrants, like New Mexico, Nevada, and California.

Also, SB 1070 requires Arizona's police officers to detain and transfer undocumented migrants to federal authorities. In order for SB 1070's law enforcement mandate to work, the federal government would need to be a willing participant in determining the immigration status of those arrested, and in detaining undocumented individuals caught by Arizona law enforcement officers. Although the federal government has not refused outright to participate in the enforcement of SB 1070, it has raised concerns about its ability to effectively meet its enforcement obligations to other states while submitting to the multiplicity of requests it anticipates receiving from Arizona law enforcement agencies attempting to transfer undocumented aliens from state to federal custody.

The effects of SB 1070 on other states and the federal government are too numerous for Arizona to be able to argue that the law is narrow and only regulating local activity. While Arizona may believe that SB 1070 presents the best solution to address illegal immigration, the policy decision to enact laws with such sweeping national effects cannot come from unilateral state action.

CONCURRENT POWER

Arizona's legislators and the governor have also purported that SB 1070 mimics federal immigration statutes and therefore both can coexist without causing externalities.¹¹ However, the actual language of SB 1070 belies this attempt at several points. Some of the new crimes carry different penalties (smuggling) or *means rea* (registration). Some do not have a federal counterpart. The worst offender is the law criminalizing the act of non-citizens not authorized to work under federal law to seek or be employed in the state.¹²

Arizona Revised Statutes § 13-2928(c) has no parallel in the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA). In 1986, Congress enacted the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), implementing a complex and extensive national system for employers to verify the ability of an employee to work legally in the United States. Congress consciously chose to punish the employer for hiring an undocumented migrant, not the employee.¹³ The federal law subjects undocumented workers to removal if arrested by ICE, and to prosecution, but only if the individual used fake ID or documents belonging to someone else in the attempt to obtain employment.

This mistake may prove critical to Arizona. The Supreme Court has ruled that states cannot enact laws that “stand as an obstacle to the accomplishment and execution of the full purpose and objectives of Congress.”¹⁴ In its lawsuit, the federal government complains that Arizona's emphasis on prosecuting employees restructures the government's immigration enforcement method adversely to Congress's carefully deliberated design. If the court agrees that the two laws diverge in intent, the Arizona provision will be struck down.

However, the possibility that the crime of “seeking employment when not federally authorized to do so” may prove unconstitutional does not terminate the possibility that other sections touching on employment of undocumented migrants will survive. To illustrate, another of SB 1070's provisions makes it a crime to block traffic in order to hire a worker. Past fed-

eral cases have held that controlling the movement of vehicles and traffic solely within state lines is a traditional state action and therefore constitutional.¹⁵

CHALLENGING TRADITIONAL
STATE AND FEDERAL ROLES

Arizona's Governor Brewer often defends SB 1070 by claiming that Arizona is only doing what the federal government has failed or refused to do.¹⁶ The phrase is politically advantageous. It allows Republicans to present the federal government, currently controlled by the Democrats, as ineffective and lacking common sense for failing to embrace Arizona's offer to assist in controlling illegal immigration. The message is working in Arizona. The governor, who is running for reelection, is using SB 1070 to propel her campaign. Republican candidates in other states have taken notice and have used promises of enacting SB 1070 copycat legislation to enhance their own reelection hopes.

Although it may be a popular battle cry in a state that sees the Beltway as disconnected and aloof to the needs of Arizona, it does not hold up under constitutional scrutiny. The U.S. Constitution states,

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the supreme law of the land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.¹⁷

States enjoy concurrent sovereignty with the federal government, subject to the Supremacy clause.¹⁸ The Supreme Court has held that “for local interests the several States of the Union exist, but for national purposes, embracing our relations with foreign nationals, we are but one people, one nation, one power.”¹⁹

Arizona's best argument in defense of SB 1070 is that it is engaging in legislative actions reserved to the states through the Tenth Amendment, which reads, “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States.”

Arizona may be a border state and it may be disproportionately affected by illegal crossings into the U.S., but illegal immigration is a national concern, not a problem unique to Arizona.

The Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Justice argue that Arizona's claim that the federal government is not doing its job rests on a faulty assumption as to what constitutes the federal government's immigration enforcement job. They argue that Arizona fails to recognize the complex nature of immigration enforcement and the need for the federal government to control and balance a number of variables in deciding how to use enforcement resources to address illegal immigration. If Arizona is permitted to dictate how and when immigration enforcement is warranted by unilaterally declaring it a priority for local law enforcement to arrest individuals who are unlawfully in the United States and forcing federal authorities to receive the individual for removal processing, then the balance of power between the states and the federal government is turned on its head. This is constitutionally impermissible because, as the courts have repeatedly held in other cases, "whatever power a state may have is subordinate to the supreme national law."²⁰

CONCLUSION

SB 1070 faces an uphill battle, exemplified by the District Court's order enjoining major portions of the bill from going into effect. The phrases thrown around to defend it may play well in the media, but they do not play well in constitutional construction. Arizona's local problem with illegal immigration is no different from the problem in the nation as a whole. Arizona's immigration statutes are not just like federal immigration statutes. And Arizona's offer to do the federal government's job changes the job description.

Yet, even if Arizona is precluded from using the means it has chosen to address undocumented immigration, the ends envisioned may come to pass through other avenues. Many predict that Republicans will regain control of at least the House of Representatives. If the idea of SB 1070 proves to be popular with voters, a Republican-controlled Congress

could amend federal laws regulating collaboration between state and federal enforcement entities to accommodate the kind of involvement envisioned in SB 1070. Popular or not, constitutional or not, SB 1070's approach for handling illegal immigration is front and center in the immigration reform dispute. ■■■

NOTES

¹ Statement by Governor Jan Brewer on Signing Senate Bill 1070 issued April 23, 2010, available at azgovernor.gov/dms/.../PR_042310_StatementByGovernorOnSB1070.pdf.

² For example, North Carolina (SJ 1349), Pennsylvania (HB 2479), Rhode Island (HB 8142), and South Carolina (SB 4919).

³ Statement by Debbie Johnson, president and CEO of the Arizona Hotel and Lodging Association, "Horizon" show aired July 7, 2010, <http://www.azpbs.org/horizon/detail.php?id=1399#BusinessLeadersRespondtoSB1070>.

⁴ *United States v. Arizona* CV-1013-PHX-SRB (AZ Dist. Ct 2010).

⁵ U.S. Constitution, Art. X.

⁶ *DeCanas v. Bica* 424 U.S. 351 (1976).

⁷ *Rice v. Santa Fe Elevator Corp.* 331 U.S. 218 (1947).

⁸ Kris W. Kobach, "Reinforcing the Rule of Law: What States Can and Should Do to Reduce Illegal Immigration," *Georgetown Immigration Law Journal* vol. 22 (2008).

⁹ Craig Harris, Alia Beard Rau, and Glen Creno, "Arizona Governor Signs Immigration Law; Foes Promise Fight!" *The Arizona Republic*, April 24, 2010.

¹⁰ Dennis Wagner, "Violence Is Not Up on Arizona Border despite Mexican Drug War. Mexico Crime Flares, But Here Only Flickers," *The Arizona Republic*, May 2, 2010.

¹¹ Statement by Governor Jan Brewer on Signing Senate Bill 1070, April 23, 2010, available at azgovernor.gov/dms/.../PR_042310_StatementByGovernorOnSB1070.pdf.

¹² Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.) § 13-2928(c).

¹³ H.R. Rep. No. 99-682(I) at 46.

¹⁴ *Hines v. Davidowitz* 312 U.S. 52, 6 (1941).

¹⁵ *ACORN v. City of Phoenix* 798 F.2d 1260 (9th Cir. 1986). See also *Comité de Jornaleros v. Redondo Beach* 2010 U.S. App. Lexis 11733 No. 06-55750 (9th Cir. June 9, 2010).

¹⁶ Craig Harris, Alia Beard Rau, and Glen Creno, *op. cit.*

¹⁷ U.S. Constitution Article VI, Clause 2.

¹⁸ *Tafflin v. Levitt* 493 U.S. 455 (1990).

¹⁹ *Chae Chan Ping v. U.S.* 130 U.S. 581 606 (1889).

²⁰ *Hines v. Davidowitz* 312 U.S. 52, 68 (1941).

Arizona's Law The Wrong Strategy

Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla*



Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio is one of SB 1070's most enthusiastic supporters.

Mexico, an underdeveloped country, is next door to what is still the world's most powerful economy and continues to be a magnet not only for the unemployed, but also for millions earning low wages with poor prospects. On the other hand, north of the border there is a real need for foreign workers in some sectors and regions, a need that becomes more obvious during economic growth, although more restrictions apply in times of recession. In short, two essential circumstances are linked to migration: a real transnational labor market and the attempt to move from poverty to abundance.

Migration between the United States and Mexico cannot be considered a problem, but rather a reality that both countries have no alternative but to accept, trying to encourage the creation of benefits and lessen the risks. Naturally, it has consequences and not all of them are positive. That is the challenge. But what oceans, deserts, fences, mountain ranges,

or wars have not been able to do is stop it. Neither will laws, or more fences, or intelligent robots.

Almost 300 million people enter the United States legally from Mexico every year. A million legal crossings take place every day, and probably another million people are deported a year when they try to enter illegally. Today, 11 million undocumented migrants are officially recognized in the United States, but the real number could be several million more. Many of these are Mexicans who melt into new communities; and this causes social tension, undoubtedly a serious problem for the United States.

The wage differential is astounding. In the United States, working in agriculture or housework, a person can earn in one hour what someone in Mexico earns in a whole day. In certain occupations, the differential has grown to a ratio of 12-to-1 according to 1990-1998 data.¹

It is true that the cost of living is lower in Mexico, so people can more or less get along day to day, prospects for improvement are limited. That is why millions risk their lives for a

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better future, not only for themselves, but also for their children. They think that in the United States, even as agricultural laborers with long working days, bad pay, and suffering abuse, they will very probably be able to give one of their children a college education and a profession. This is repeated generation after generation, so that the prospect of migrating becomes an existential driving force for many teenagers, who have the idea that if they do it, they will be able to go to school.² Unfortunately, many Mexicans actually experience terrible tragedy, some of them dying in the attempt. We are looking at the heart-breaking face of capitalism.

Today, more or less six million Mexicans live illegally in the United States. Mexico could argue that as long as there is a demand for workers, illegal migration will continue. The United States, for its part, can only talk about law-breaking, but as long as both countries do not take it on as a shared problem, the situation will be unmanageable. There is no simple solution, but at the very least, a different perspective from the two countries could help exercise some control over the matter. In line with Saskia Sassen's thinking, migration cannot be understood as an individual decision, but as a process involving complex economic, social, and ethnic networks, a phenomenon that is part and parcel of the great transnational geopolitical and economic dynamics.³

We could easily imagine a positive situation for the two countries. Given low U.S. population growth, we all know that the U.S. Congress is feeling a certain amount of pressure to change immigration policy as well as to not completely close the border because workers are needed for businesses to be successful. At the same time, the Mexican economy does not generate enough jobs to absorb its growing population.

Undoubtedly, Mexico benefits from the remittances sent home. However, these have dropped given the economic crisis: in April 2010, workers sent US\$1.78 billion home to their families, while in 2008 the figure was US\$1.95 billion.⁴ Despite this, remittances continue to be the third source of income for the Mexican economy, with the greatest amounts going to the states of Mexico, Jalisco, and Michoacán.⁵

As long as Mexican workers continue to be undocumented, they will earn very low wages and their human rights will continue unprotected. Mexico cannot, or should not, bet on the policy of "the whole enchilada" and send its workers abroad.⁶ In the long run, that would be very bad for the country since the economy that loses its young people will eventually suffer the consequences. In Mexico, population changes begin to be noticeable, with a marked increase in the num-

Migration is not an individual decision; it involves complex economic, social, and ethnic networks, and is part of the great transnational geopolitical and economic dynamic.

ber of senior citizens. Temporary workers with full rights can benefit both economies, but they would also have to pay a certain price. Agreements for temporary migration will have to be fostered, taking into account experiences like the Bracero Program and trying to surpass them, avoiding their pitfalls. Our two countries should stop blaming each other and assume responsibility for a phenomenon immersed in a globalization that is here to stay.

Sassen also argues that migration should be dealt with in a broader context. She says that it is one of the constituent processes of globalization even if this is not recognized as such by the main explanations of the global economy.⁷ In other words, it is illusory to think that illegal immigration can be ended by building a barrier that will put a brake on globalization itself. This author thinks that the idea of sovereignty implicitly includes the state's capacity to determine who its citizens are. However, she also insists that it is necessary to reconstruct the concept of citizen, formulating it from the economic point of view as a person who enjoys universal rights regardless of his or her nationality. Rather than calling migrants "illegals," they should be classified as workers in the informal economy.⁸

Unfortunately, the prospects seem bleak. Samuel Huntington tells an imaginary story that has had unfortunate results.⁹ This influential Harvard professor created a narrative that dominates the social imaginary of the United States even today. In his famous work *The Clash of Civilizations*, he already pointed to Mexican migration as the main threat to the United States.¹⁰ After the 9/11 terrorist attack, his analysis reinforced his hypothesis that the great threat was not from the Muslims, but the continued "invasion of Mexican immigrants."

According to Huntington, given that the country receives large numbers of immigrants from many countries, and given civil rights movements, U.S. identity is defined today in terms of culture and creed.¹¹ This creed includes the predominance of the English language, Christianity, the rule of law, individ-

Agreements on temporary migration will have to take into account experiences like the Bracero Program and try to surpass them, avoiding their pitfalls.

ual rights, Protestant values, and the work ethic. Down through history, different immigrant cultures have enriched the founding culture. In his opinion, today's multiculturalism has emphasized the group identity based on race, ethnicity, and gender, while national identity has suffered the consequences. He affirms that this is the result of globalization, which is endangering the national state. In this new stage, he affirms, the single most immediate threat to U.S. traditional identity comes from the immense, continual immigration from Latin America, especially Mexico, and the high birth rates of these immigrants compared to those of U.S.-born Blacks and Whites.¹² Hispanic immigration is different from prior waves of migrants since they have not been culturally assimilated. Huntington posits that if the flow of Mexican immigrants were to stop, wages for the lowest-paid U.S. workers would improve. If Mexican migration stopped, others would feel motivated to learn English and their education and training would improve. But the core of his position is that he thinks Mexican migration is a potential risk for the country's cultural and political integrity.¹³

When it is to his advantage, Huntington includes Mexicans in the Hispanic community, but sometimes he separates them out to underline the danger they represent for Americanness. This belief has become dominant and, as a result, many Americans feel threatened by Mexican-Americans. Unfortunately, the Harvard professor never mentions the benefits of this migration for his country's economy. Naturally, it is wrong to just talk about the "danger" of Mexican migration, particularly when the United States has an economy that until very recently had been in constant expansion, in large part due to the boom in certain areas where Mexican undocumented workers predominate and where previously Poles, Irish, or Asians were employed. Denying this reality is simply unserious.

There is no viable solution to the problem Huntington imagined; he limited himself to sparking anti-Mexican sentiments that have been just as damaging for all Americans as

for Mexican-Americans, since the latter are part of the United States whether Huntington likes it or not.

It is precisely this kind of thinking that prevents building bridges of understanding. Other countries that look at the relationship between the United States and Mexico can easily see the benefits to both nations, although the stakeholders themselves seem to not see the opportunities.

Arizona Governor Jan Brewer's justification for signing SB 1070, the law criminalizing undocumented immigration, was that the federal government had not fulfilled its function of protecting the borders and those decades of inaction and mistaken policies had led to a dangerous situation. According to Brewer, violence has increased along the border, and 500,000 undocumented migrants already live in Arizona.¹⁴ She says that the law only penalizes on a state level what is already classified as a crime in federal legislation. She adds that the federal 1940 Alien Registration Act already mandates legal immigrants to carry their green cards or some other immigration document with them.

The problem is that the new law allows police to demand seeing the identity papers of persons who in their judgment *look like* Mexicans or Latinos: an unequivocal act of discrimination. It is also a violation of the rights of Mexican-Americans, since, despite their being citizens, this law authorizes their detention simply because of their phenotypical characteristics when "reasonable doubt" exists about whether they are legal or not.

Even Arizona police are afraid of the repercussions of enforcing this law. They think that they are going to lose either way: if they enforce it and if they do not. The law states that any citizen can demand a police officer enforce it and make a complaint against him/her for not carrying out his/her duty; in addition, the Arizona government will earmark funds to defend officers accused of non-compliance.

The federal government, for its part, has argued that the Supremacy Clause giving it authority over and above state governments in these matters should not be violated. Obama presented the case in a local court, arguing the law was unconstitutional. Fortunately, the judge ruled that it was not acceptable to request documents from someone merely on the basis of his/her appearance.

The situation reveals the existing consensus about the breakdown of the immigration system. Despite the fact that 2008 was the year the Border Patrol made the fewest arrests, that the crime rate has dropped, and that, in addition, immigration also dropped due to better controls and the economic

recession, now is the time that this discriminatory bill emerged.¹⁵ This is due in part to the problem of unemployment, to the perception that Mexican immigration is the United States' main problem, and to the fact that this is an election year. Suffice it to point out that in the polls, the governor's ratings went up immediately. And the law itself has 70 percent approval.

It is clear that with a difficult economic situation, many blame the budget deficit on undocumented immigrants,¹⁶ and find the solution to the problem in denying them public services or reducing their number. Now, it is up to Mexico to understand that this is not just a matter of the political decisions of a governor, but that in many other states discontent about the issue of immigration is spreading. According to Gallup polls, 51 percent of those who had heard of the law supported it and 39 percent opposed it, plus, eight out of every 10 citizens are in favor of a restrictive immigration reform.¹⁷

In 2010, in 45 states 1,180 bills and proposed resolutions related to immigrants and refugees were placed before local Congresses. Of these, 107 bills and 87 resolutions were passed and went into effect; in addition 38 bills are waiting to be signed into law by their respective governors.¹⁸ Twelve states are considering passing laws similar to Arizona's, or even harsher ones. Many conservative groups have taken up the anti-immigrant banner, like the Tea Party against Amnesty and Illegal Immigration Team, Americans for Legal Immigration, the Federation for American Immigration (FAIR), the Law Enforcement Association, and the nativists. All of them have come out for stricter measures and against amnesty, that is, against legalizing the status of undocumented immigrants. We know that measures like the 2006 Secure Fence Act, which proposed building a fence between the United States and Mexico, or SB 1070 will not resolve the immigration problem. Rather, they will fan the flames of xenophobic feelings that often lead to deaths, attacks, and a very tense environment.

Fortunately, President Obama has recently changed his position to a much more realistic, conciliatory one. He accepts that the Arizona Law has the potential to violate the rights of innocent U.S. citizens who can be judged by how they look or speak.¹⁹ Each state will begin to establish rules when what is needed is a national standard. "Our task then is to make our national laws actually work, to shape a system that reflects our values as a nation of laws and a nation of immigrants."²⁰ Obama proposes going beyond the false debate. He is against amnesty because it would not be fair to those who have been waiting years for legal status, and it would promote illegal immigration. However, he does accept that while it is

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of the repercussions of enforcing this law.
They think that they are going to lose either way:
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not possible to simply legalize the status of 11 million people, it is also not feasible to deport them since he realizes that many are intimately integrated into the social fiber of the nation since they have children born in the United States.

Undocumented migrants have been the workforce on farms. Therefore, "a program of mass deportations would disrupt our economy and communities in ways that most Americans would find intolerable."²¹ In any society, everyone must be accountable, including businessmen and women, since it cannot be ignored that a significant part of the economy is outside the law: illegal workers. A comprehensive immigration reform must take all this into account.

Undoubtedly, the fact that the president of the United States conceives of the migration issue in terms of its complexity is a step the right direction. But this position has yet to become the dominant one. Immediate actions must be taken for it to dominate the discourse and the U.S. social imaginary.

In November there will be congressional elections. If the voters punish the president's performance, as they often do at midterm elections, the bipartisan consensus necessary for immigration reform will be even more difficult to achieve. Not all Republicans are against the reform, nor do all Democrats support one. This is an issue that has divided communities. Karl Rove himself, the famous neo-conservative Republican, has said that the Arizona law forced a dilemma on Republicans who wanted to look tough on illegal immigration, given their conservative constituencies, but who did not want to alienate Latino voters.²²

The existence today of 11 million undocumented migrants allows us to understand Huntington's concern when he underlines a future problem. But what is more, we can understand that a country with that many undocumented migrants already has a big problem.²³ Unfortunately, the Harvard expert's words aim in the wrong direction because they have created fear and mistrust among the U.S. white population instead of promoting what we really need: being able to put ourselves in the place of the other to find common interests. We

can understand that the interests of Mexican-Americans and undocumented migrants are necessarily linked to the interests of the country as a whole. Like Huntington, we can concentrate on the “cons,” the differences, and the irremediable tensions associated with them, or we can look for a middle ground that includes some interests of all the parties involved.

Why see the border only as a conflict zone and not an area for cooperation? It is necessary to understand it as the space of a labor market where there is a supply of labor, but also a demand for it; and as long as both exist, migratory movements will be unstoppable. Demographics are what will fundamentally make this situation change. In two decades, the young population in Mexico will decline, and there will no longer be so many young people who want to emigrate. On the other hand, the population of the United States is aging rapidly and will need young people to pay taxes to sustain their Medicare and Medicaid systems, above all now that the recently passed health care reform stipulates that the entire U.S. population, including senior citizens, must have medical insurance.

The border area is one of the most dynamic in the world.²⁴ It contributes 24 percent of the total U.S. and Mexican economies together. From 1996 to 2006, the border economy grew 4.2 percent, while that of the United States grew 3.4 percent, and of Mexico only 3 percent. In 2008, 40 percent of direct investment in Mexico was made in the six border states, where the *maquiladora* plants are located.²⁵

More than a conflict zone, the border should be seen as a pole for development that can contribute to lowering the effects of the crisis on both economies. In 2009 alone, almost nine million Mexicans visited Arizona spending almost US\$250 million. Visitors from Arizona came to almost seven million, and they spend about US\$275 million.²⁶ If politicians do not understand the weight of this reality and its positive impact, it is because short-term interests are blinding them. It is undeniable that the governments of Arizona and Mexico must promote cooperation because, in fact, it already exists without them. For all these reasons, I have no doubt that SB 1070 is a wrong strategy. ■■

NOTES

¹ See Alejandro Diaz-Bautista, José Alberto Avilés, and Mario Alberto Rosas Chimal, “Desarrollo económico de la frontera norte de México,” *Observatorio de la Economía Latinoamericana*, <http://www.eumed.net/coursecon/ecolat/>. The authors analyze the impact of the crisis in the U.S. border area, underlining economic differences among states.

² Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, *Estudio binacional de migración* (Mexico City: Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1999).

³ Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. 66.

⁴ *El Economista* (Mexico City), June 1, 2010.

⁵ “Ingresos por concepto de entidad federativa,” Banxico, <http://www.banxico.org.mx>.

⁶ Jorge Castañeda, briefly foreign relations minister during the Fox administration, wanted to implement a policy of free flow of workers. I think that no country should implement this kind of policy; to the contrary, we should desperately try to keep our workers at home and create well-paying jobs. An explicit policy to create migrant workers is a mistake. Opening the flow of workers would necessarily go against the interests of Mexico.

⁷ Saskia Sassen, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: The New Press, 1998).

⁸ Sassen, *Losing Control*, op. cit., p. 97.

⁹ Samuel P. Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges of America's National Identity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004).

¹⁰ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ According to the FBI, the four cities with the fewest crimes are on the border: San Diego, Phoenix, El Paso, and Austin. Ken Dilanian and Nicholas Riccardi, “Border Security Trips Up Immigration Debate,” *Los Angeles Times*, June 15, 2010.

¹⁵ In Barack Obama's opinion, the southern border is safer today than it has been at any other time. See “Remarks on Comprehensive Immigration

Reform,” a speech at the American University School of International Service in Washington, D.C., published by the White House July 1, 2010, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-comprehensive-immigration-reform>.

¹⁶ Saskia Sassen quotes a study by an urban Washington, D.C. institute which argues that undocumented immigrants contributed US\$30 billion more in taxes than they utilized in services. *Globalization and Its Discontents*, op. cit., p. 72.

¹⁷ Rasmussen Reports showed that the support comes from the possible voters in Arizona, <http://www.rasmussenreports.com/content/search?Searchtext=arizona+immigration>.

¹⁸ Regardless of whether these laws are approved or not, it is symptomatic of the wave of initiatives related to migration. See “State by State Immigration Policy Changes Ahead,” National Public Radio, Sept. 9, 2010, <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=128193244>.

¹⁹ Barack Obama, op. cit.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² Stephanie Condon, “Karl Rove Speaks Out against Arizona Immigration Law,” CBS Political Hotsheet, April 28, 2010, http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-503544_162-20003631-503544.html, and www.freerepublic.com/tag/rove/index.

²³ Ruth Ellen Wasem, *Immigration Reform Issues in the 111 Congress*, Congressional Research Service, July 13, 2009, www.nationalaglawcenter.org/assets/crs/R40501.

²⁴ Alejandro Díaz-Bautista, José Alberto Avilés, and Mario Rosas Chimal, “Desarrollo económico de la frontera norte de México,” *Observatorio de la Economía Latinoamericana*, <http://www.eumed.net/coursecon/ecolat/>, p. 2.

²⁵ Economic Section, U.S. Embassy in Mexico, <http://mexico.usembassy.gov>.

²⁶ Centro de Información y Estadística para el Empresario Turístico, using information from El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, Tourism Section, Banco de México, and Mexico's Institute of Geography and Statistics (INEGI).

On the Labyrinths Of SB 1070

Silvia Núñez García*



Rick Scuteri/REUTERS

“Nothing important can come from the South.”
HENRY KISSINGER¹

Beyond debating whether the key for harmonious interaction among the different groups in U.S. society, including ethnic, racial, or religious minorities, is to be found in the economic variables, the labor market has proved itself an arena for conflict and ideological competition there. Here, we can note the recurrence of exclusionary laws and positions that marked even the first workers’ organizations in the nineteenth century, all the way up to the racial prejudices that speak to how U.S. capitalism is anchored in individualism and the meritocracy, but also in the institutionalized exercise of discrimination.

* Director of CISAN.

What this means is that, even today, simply being born white in the United States makes for advantages over people from other minorities, and that, despite many Americans considering themselves anti-racist, their society has not completely gotten away from explicit or implicit patterns of behavior that perpetuate the stereotypes of inferiority that many groups are assigned for reasons of differences in creed, national identity, ethnicity, etc. This forces us to understand that racism and discrimination are not fixed and that every culture, being essentially ethnocentric, will seek to surpass others or even subject or exclude the “others” it considers “different.”

THE POLITICAL SCENARIO

A concrete example of this is SB 1070, which came into effect with the limitations that U.S. District Court Judge Su-

san Bolton stipulated to lessen its impact without violating the sovereignty of the state of Arizona and at the same time safeguard the federation. Putting to one side the openly discretionary, racist measures the law contains, clearly all political forces in the United States have agreed that the path forward for any discussion about the scope of a migration reform must start with safeguarding border security.

Based on this, to understand the political polarization this law has unleashed, we must begin by probing Arizona's conservatives, who are betting on what they expect to be victories in November's midterm elections.

The Arizona strategy, which has combined the legitimate use of self-defense with a media campaign using numbers to demonstrate that it has fulfilled the citizenry's demand for protection, has already had a national impact regardless of Bolton's decision, given that more than 20 states are now exploring similar bills (among them Alabama and Colorado) promoted by activists and lobbyists identified with the Republican Party (GOP).

We are watching a kind
of reality show typical of the U.S. political game,
in which theatrics are unavoidable for getting
the increased attention undocumented
migration deserves.

Examples are cited like University of Arizona experts' figures showing that between 1990 and 2008, the Tucson-area Border Patrol has increased the number of detentions of undocumented migrants from one out of every 20.6 to one out of every 2.2. At the same time, estimates of undocumented crossings into Arizona have dropped 49 percent since 2004. It is also said that in the last seven years, homicide figures have dropped 50 percent in Phoenix. These figures are a dual paradox for analysts: they can be interpreted in the sense of promoting the belief that "Yes, we can completely seal the southern border," or they can make us reflect about why the decreasing crime rate does not directly correlate to reality, since the fear of being the target of violence at the hands of an undocumented migrant has permeated many people's thinking.

What we are watching today is a kind of reality show typical of the U.S. political game, in which theatrics are un-

avoidable for getting the increased attention that should be paid to undocumented migration, previously just one topic among many, and which has now come to be considered an important problem that has even turned critical.

As rational actors, in the United States, not only influential individuals, but also interest groups, political candidates, public officials, and particularly opinion leaders are perfectly familiar with the strategies of getting their interests included in the sphere of decision making, and the steps needed for them to become visible in the public eye on different levels: local, state, and national.

In the midst of clear political antagonism, President Obama has firmly ratified his commitments and convictions about the defense of civil rights by joining the rejection by progressives in the United States who fight against any indication of racism. However, his political opponents have denounced his stance against SB 1070 and more recently, his emphatic support for the construction of an Islamic cultural center and mosque in New York's Ground Zero, as supposed signs of his anti-U.S. position.

While for conservative reactionaries, the enforcement of SB 1070 is necessary—and for the Tea Party movement, it is patriotic—since it simply protects law-abiding citizens and legal residents, in mid-August, news reports began circulating alleging that Governor Jan Brewer has interests beyond a simple vocation for attending to the demands of her state: they link her to the business of privatizing the prisons.² It has been pointed out that a year ago, the state of Arizona intended to privatize its entire penitentiary system, setting a very polemical precedent in the United States, which for that reason was discarded. It is also interesting to note that in the rest of the country, the number of private prisons has actually dropped.

In the United States, private companies interested in running detention centers are engaged in one of the country's most powerful lobbying efforts. Analysts insist that Brewer is very closely linked to political consultant Chuck Coughlin, who in turn works for the most important company in this field, Corrections Corporation of America. The firm currently has an US\$11-million-a-month federal contract, but, with the impact of SB 1070, it foresees a spike in the number of undocumented detainees and, as a result, in its profits. It is to be expected, then, that as the midterm elections approach, these kinds of reports will probably increase, in order to have an impact in the political arena.

In the pluralist model of democracy identified with the United States, the capability to effectively and efficiently link

up different interests around issues like the migration control is a result not only of the political will or conviction of individual and collective stakeholders, but above all to their ability to mobilize the financial and material resources that allow them to promote and profile the specificities the debate of an eventual migratory reform should include. Selective amnesty? Temporary guest workers? Obligatory English? Overturning the 14th Amendment to end “birthright citizenship?” Etcetera. This kind of horizon is very difficult to predict.

THE VIEW FROM THE SOUTH

In Mexico, SB 1070 has caused generalized indignation. But we should point out that for most of us, it is difficult to understand the degree of anxiety many Americans experience because of the deterioration of the economy and lowered expectations. Our starting point should be that our reference points are generally opposed to each other, as demonstrated in recent data from the Jus Semper Global Alliance: “In Mexico, the State policy that deliberately pauperizes Mexican workers has imposed for three decades on manufacturing sector production-line workers the endurance of the worst real wages, in PPP terms...with an abysmal living-wage gap with the U.S. of 83 percent.”³

On the other hand, even though absolute control of the U.S.-Mexico border has proven illusory, the degree of social tension along it has increased for different reasons, like the existence of greater socio-spatial, economic, and cultural interdependence. Anchored in the growing asymmetry that we already pointed out, this tension is exponential on the Mexican side, given the ominous inequality between the “haves” and the “have-nots.”

It may be worthwhile reminding ourselves that the Mexico-U.S. border is unique worldwide because, with globalization, it stopped being a point of contact between two traditional communities. It was harder hit by this opening to the world of the free market when it became the center of attraction for new, more diverse stakeholders (migrants from Mexico’s interior, from Central America, from Asia, women alone and single mothers, businessmen, multinational firms, illicit businesses, new religious cults, sects, etc.). As a result of this mosaic, the social interaction among a wide gamut of groups each with its own perceptions, expectations, and values became fragmented and until now has not found com-

mon aims or objectives to give it cohesion, leaving it at the mercy of violence and organized crime. We could even consider the effects on their socialization of the fact that most of them arrived at Mexico’s northern border only to get to the United States, or to remain a short time and make the most of it.

It is precisely in the framework of all these tensions between our two countries that joint reflection about the underlying determining factors becomes imperative. The cultural variable is one of them, although for the most part it is unexplored. Dealing with this area, considering that it is an active component of any identity, might allow us to glimpse the reasons why the links between the two nations end up marked by ambiguity time and again.

In another sense, we Mexicans are obliged to remember the Obama administration’s limitations for articulating consensus domestically on particularly sensitive issues like migration. The president’s margins for action were clear when he presented his first State of the Union address, mention-

In mid-August, news reports began circulating alleging that Governor Jan Brewer has interests linking her to the business of privatizing the prisons.

ing that the country is facing a deficit of internal and external trust and the challenge of leaving behind fear and division.

It is true that the United States is going through a time when what is at stake is rebuilding social trust, since it is proportionately facing similar challenges to those of the world’s other nations: globalization, inequality, and now, significantly, intolerance. However, for us, it is imperative to remember that on a local level in the United States, innumerable norms exist that have favored immigrants and their families.

FINAL THOUGHTS

It is undeniable that the reactions to SB 1070 show that social equilibrium in the United States can be upset. Even though an important part of the citizenry remains optimistic,

the first African-American taking office as president did not mean the automatic emergence of a new social paradigm based on inclusion.

If the objective of politics is order, and that of the state is to suppress the division of its members, Barack Obama will have to show signs very soon that his youth is not an impediment to redirecting his leadership. Getting through this trial period is perhaps more difficult than winning the election in 2008: between June and August 2010, his approval rating has remained at 49 percent.

So, in U.S. political culture, it can be seen that the public's trust is not centered on the government as an institution in general, but on the performance of the individual actors with whom people identify their own interests. If we remember then that countering the overwhelming majority of approximately 67 million voters who cast their ballots for Obama in 2008 are the 58 million voters who chose his rival,

Mexico's biggest responsibility is building a future with dignity for all its nationals, since despair, violence, and fear have now been added to the lack of opportunities.

we can appreciate the climate of challenges that he has to overcome if he wants to become a true statesman.

In politics, losing to your adversary means you did not perceive the slivers of pessimism taken over by the opposition forces who want to win power. One of these is the melding of undocumented migration and security very ably achieved by emissaries from the past who remind us that the conservative logic is in essence not thinking, but unthinking reaction.

In this context, their liberal counterpart is exemplified by Beth F. Merenstein, when she writes, "The idea that the United States is still 'the land of opportunity' has not dissipated much in the last two hundred years."⁴ However, we would even go further, saying that the economic, social, and cultural influence on the United States represented by the labor of Mexican immigrants—documented or not—cannot be erased by decree.

Nevertheless, it is worthwhile asking ourselves: what is it that generates greater consensus in the United States in

the light of the current characteristics of its society *vis-à-vis* the size of the undocumented population, taking into account the specificities of each region or locale? Is the step forward or backward that SB 1070 exemplifies now a medium- and long-term trend? What are the perceptions about this and what mediations could reverse them?

On the other hand, Mexico's greatest responsibility is building a future with dignity for all its nationals, since despair, violence, and fear have now been added to the lack of opportunities. Our society has low levels of trust—perhaps even enormous mistrust—and weak or even non-existent institutions. This means that our problems can no longer be addressed with isolated—much less improvised—responses.

The lucidity of Alexis de Tocqueville, who warned that substantive differences in people's living conditions are a barrier that impedes social empathy, now offers us the way forward for both countries to talk together. We think that our interaction is not only increasing, but is absolutely irreversible and cannot be abandoned. Therefore, there is no way to promote the material success of either of our countries if it is preceded by the social failure of one of them.

The obligatory question is: Can we contribute from our side? Some ideas for this are

- recognizing the socio-cultural gap between the two nations, seeking alternatives to narrow it;
- strengthening bi-national alliances to study the phenomenon in depth and come up with short-, medium-, and long-term goals; and
- adding anthropological and psychosocial variables to traditional economic, political, and sociological variables. **MM**

NOTES

¹ Former Secretary of State Kissinger said this to Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabriel Valdés during the Eduardo Frei administration after Valdés disagreed with statistical data Richard Nixon had cited on Latin America at a meeting headed by Kissinger in June 1969. [Editor's Note.]

² "The Rachel Maddow Show," <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/3096434/#38685023>, August 12, 2010.

³ <http://www.jussempor.org/contactus.html>, accessed August 20, 2010.

⁴ Beth Frankel Merenstein, *Immigrants and Modern Racism. Reproducing Inequality* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner, 2008), p.78.

Concluding Thoughts

D. Rick van Schoik*



Joshua Loty/REUTERS

The Arizona State Capitol in Phoenix.

Passion and complexity create hysteria about migration issues but also mis- and dis-information. So it was especially refreshing to initiate a dispassionate but complex dialogue on the topic with our partner center, the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Center for Research on North America (CISAN). However, even though there was clear articulation of the issues, the double-edged nature of the topic arose over and over again.

The North American Center for Transborder Studies (NACTS) cannot work in the real world without Arizona's Senate Bill 1070 confounding our ability to be heard on the border, security, prosperity, and competitiveness problems we work on. Foundations that support us in Mexico have already asked us not to broadcast the fact that we are from Arizona, as it taints them as well.

So, rather than focusing on the rippling and ricocheting effects of 1070, we are instead using it as a stepping stone

to a broader discussion of the bilateral relationship, of labor and skill mobility to and within North America.

One double-edged finding of the workshop was that migration has different costs, benefits, and returns on investments in different parts of both the sending nation and the receiving nation. "Homogenizing" the discussion—as so often happens—can be counter-productive.

Another disparity is among the legislative and enforcement actions at the state, local, tribal, and municipal levels creating a patchwork of policies in anticipation of action at the federal level and the juxtaposition of those two realities against the almost absolute void of binational or international diplomacy between sending and receiving nations.

Another conundrum was migration tending to position the advocates of human rights, dignity, respect, and protection against law enforcement, which tends to result in the unintentional criminalization of the issue.

The risks of irregular migration range from the real danger of dying in the ovens of the deserts and hazards in the remote wilds of the borderlands to the actual threats migrants

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face during the crossing ordeal, and then their presence as economic migrants. The benefits of migration to the individual and to nations also cover a wide gamut.

The U.S. has an alphabet soup of border and migration agencies —DHS CBP, ICE, and CIS—¹ and Canada has reciprocated by establishing the Canadian Border Security Agency and rededicating the efforts of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canadian Security Intelligence Service to border issues. Mexico has yet to develop counterparts to each of these agencies, complicating diplomacy on migration issues.

The bottom line is that federal inactivity is misguided and even dangerous. Even on such innocuous challenges as a national ID card, the U.S. federal government is still stalled, and the ideal of a tamper-proof remotely-read ID and biometric-validated E-verify employment system will be delayed years due to cost. In the meantime, progress on the most

tragic component of international migration, human trafficking, is hanging back.

NACTS hopes that the two young cosmopolitan presidents rediscover the imperative of progress on development, diplomacy, and defense concurrently. Furthermore, NACTS advocates using the model of Canadian-Mexican migration policy and getting the issue onto the agenda at the North American Leaders Summit.

Since labor and skill mobility enhance our common security, our shared prosperity, and North America's competitiveness, they are too important to delay acting upon. **MM**

NOTES

¹ DHS: Department of Homeland Security; CBP: U.S. Customs and Border Protection; ICE: U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement; CIS: Citizenship and Immigration Services.

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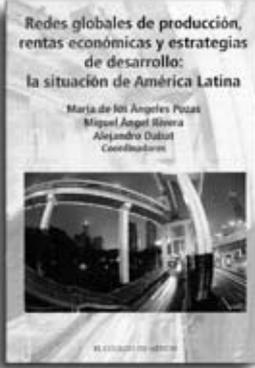
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Primera edición, 2010



Informes: El Colegio de México, A. C. Dirección de Publicaciones, Camino al Ajusco 20, Pedregal de Santa Teresa, 10740 México, D. F.
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Liliana Valenzuela, A Contemporary Malinche: On Being a Bilingual and Bicultural Creative Scribe

Interview by Claire Joysmith*



Liliana Valenzuela smiles broadly, her blue eyes twinkling happily beneath a mass of naturally curly blonde hair. As we talk, she moves easily from Spanish into English and back into Spanish, and we joke about her as a contemporary Malinche “*güera*” figure. As I glean by conversing with her and glancing at her card and website (<http://www.lilianavalenzuela.com/Home.html>), I am aware she readily identifies with la Malinche, a maligned historical figure, and more recently reconfigured (particularly in Chicana writings) as an icon of trans-cultural/linguistic creative production and politics.

Liliana laughs candidly as she responds. “La Malinche has been my alter ego since the days back in 1988 when I was studying anthropology and folklore at the University of Texas. I was attracted to La Malinche, wanted to study her in more depth, find out what was really true and what was slapped onto her as the ‘Mexican Eve.’ I found that many indigenous communities saw her as a powerful being, a duality with Cortés, since they were represented as such in the codices. La Malinche was, after all, one of the first interpreters of the Americas, since she was fluent in Náhuatl, Mayan, and was quick to learn Spanish. I found that La Malinche is also a fertility dance enacted, curiously enough, by men with lizard masks in a remote village in the state of Guerrero. So, I realized that

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Celeste Guzmán-Mendoza

“Translation involves analysis—structural, semantic, cultural, and linguistic—but it also brings in inspiration, the desire and ability to recreate someone’s words in Spanish with as much flair and excitement as the original.”

a lot of extraneous meanings, including that of traitor, had been layered on her throughout the centuries. I sought to reclaim her legacy and give her back her true power. Later, when I became a translator, she seemed like a most fitting symbol for me. Malinalli, *la lengua*, the tongue, she who has the power of the word in several languages.”

Few people are truly aware of the innate talent and skills needed to develop as a translator. So what special skills or combination of skills does Liliana herself bring to the table, particularly as a literary translator? “Our job and our particular talents and skills are often invisible, especially for those who are monolingual. I feel fortunate that, after many years of study and of living in the U.S., I acquired language skills translating from English into Spanish; but I also had a background in anthropology and, as you know, one is translating not only the language but also the culture. That, in addition to my developing as a poet and writer, made literary translation a logical choice for me. It helps enormously to also be a writer, or to have a musical ear.”

Clearly, literary translation is an art in itself. “Translation involves analysis—structural, semantic, cultural, and linguistic—but it also brings in inspiration, the desire and abil-

ity to recreate someone’s words in Spanish with as much flair and excitement as the original.”

Liliana Valenzuela was awarded the 2006 Alicia Gordon Award for Word Artistry in Translation for her version into Spanish of Nina Marie Martínez’s novel *¡Caramba!* And she has translated into Spanish a considerable number of literary works by renowned U.S. Latina/o writers. Among these are Sandra Cisneros (*El arroyo de la Llorona*, *Caramelo*, and *Hairs/Pelitos*), Julia Álvarez (*Devolver al remitente*, *Había una vez una quinceñera: De niña a mujer en E.E.U.U.*, *En busca de milagros*, *Un regalo de gracias*, and *Cuando tía Lola vino de visita/a quedarse*), Cristina García (*Las caras de la suerte*), Denise Chávez (*La última de las muchachas del menú*), Alex Espinoza (*Los santos de Agua Mansa*), Raúl Fernández (*Latin Jazz: La combinación perfecta*, Association of American Museums Best Book Award), and several Latina/o authors in the anthology edited by Cristina García, *Voces sin fronteras*.

Literary translating is a laborious, subtle, punctilious, and time-consuming trade requiring an inborn talent with words. So, when it comes to translating an entire volume, how does she pace herself, what steps does she follow to reach the final publication stage? “Good question. I usually allow four to six months for translating a full-length novel or short story collection. I usually do four thorough revisions, top to bottom. The first one is for accuracy, comparing with the source text, line by line. The second one is for fluency, putting the original away. The third one is for queries and research, finding out all the details that are pending. The fourth one for readability, grammar, and punctuation. It has to be print-ready, even though it usually goes to a copyeditor first, then two or three proofs. By the time the book is published, I have nearly memorized it!”

And what about her relationship with the author whose work she’s translating? “I usually highlight the terms I’m not sure about in the digital document and funnel them to lists, for the author or for friends and colleagues. When I’ve a good page or two of questions, I ask the author. Most have been very

The work of Latina and Chicana authors in the U.S. bring together a crossroads of political, cultural, social, and identity issues that speak directly to and inform not only Chicana/os and U.S. Latinos/as, but other readers on a global scale.

agreeable and interested in the translation. So, many solutions have been the result of brainstorming on the phone or finding something relevant on the Internet, or asking third sources.”

Liliana Valenzuela was named by Univisión as “Orgullo Latino de la semana” (Latino Pride of the Week) in 2007. Publishing in Spanish within the U.S. must surely involve particular challenges. “Spanish is the second un-official language of the United States, with a large reading public, many of them recent immigrants. And even some long-time immigrants prefer to read in their native language, and they want their children to keep the language. So, it makes sense to publish both translations and original works in Spanish in the U.S. The challenge is that many editors and publishing houses are not fluent in Spanish and are not as well-informed about the different Spanish-speaking cultures, and typesetters often don’t know Spanish, so that process is often lengthy and new mistakes are introduced. Right now, the publishing industry is in flux, so there are fewer commissioned translations at the moment.”

Latina and Chicana authors in the U.S. have had considerable publishing success there in the last few decades. Their work brings together a crossroads of political, cultural, social, and identity issues that speak directly to and inform not only Chicana/os and U.S. Latinos/as, but other readers on a global scale. In this sense, what kind of political statement is being made when you translate U.S. Latina/o work into Spanish and these are published in the U.S.? “Well, the publishing model is changing, so nobody really knows how the content is going to be transmitted in the future. As the recession deepens, there is less money to publish and less money for people to buy books. But then you have the Internet and content being provided even via cell phones, so everything is changing. Politically, though, publishing in Spanish today flies in the face of the nativist currents dominating public discourse nowadays. It is an act of defiance.”

Very few translations into Spanish of Chicana/o and U.S. Latina/o writings are available in Mexico and Latin Ameri-

ca. It is highly unusual, even, to find Sandra Cisneros’ novel *Caramelo*, much of which is set in Mexico City, on bookstore shelves in Mexico City itself. What might explain this? “This is a very good question, because it’s not only cultural neglect or ignorance that produces this situation in which many Chicano/Latino authors are still unknown in Mexico and Latin America; it’s also a question of publication rights. The way it works, so far, is that Spain buys the translation and publication rights for Mexico and Latin America. When these books published in Spain are imported to the Americas, this makes for very expensive books, considered imports from Europe. And for some strange reason, books published in Spanish in the U.S. cannot be legally imported into, say, Mexico, because of the way publication rights are sliced up at the beginning. It makes no sense and, in my view, stands in the way of greater dissemination of this new literature, in Spanish translation, in the Americas.”

As a committed translator, what routes has she taken to remain true to the original in English, that is, a loyal *traductora*, yet without betraying the text’s essence and becoming a *traditora*, one of the main challenges translators must face. How to offer the Spanish-speaking reader the true essence of English-language written Chicana cultural and linguistic experience and expression? Liliana smiles as I pose the question and as she responds, “Depending on the background of the author—say Chicana or Dominican or Cuban—I try to imagine how a particular character would speak, if he/she were to speak in Spanish, mixing in some English. It’s like being a ventriloquist. You have to make speech realistic, and yet it’s an interpretation, using words as signs.”

When she deals with interlinguism—that is, the deliberate mixing of both linguistic codes, perhaps in a single sentence, even, which is possibly one of the main hallmarks of Chicana/o literary texts—what specific translation strategies does she resort to? “Well, I can give you an example to illustrate this from my translation of Sandra Cisneros’ *Woman Hollering Creek/El arroyo de la Llorona*:

Micaela, puedes esperar afuera con Alfredito y Enrique. La abuela enojona siempre anda hablando en puritito español, que sólo entiendo si es que pongo atención. ¿Qué? le pregunto en inglés, aunque no es propio ni educado. ¿What? Lo que la abuela enojona oye como ¿Guat? Pero ella sólo me lanza una mirada y me empuja hacia la puerta. (Translation by Liliana Valenzuela)¹

It's not only cultural neglect or ignorance that produces a situation in which many Chicano/Latino authors are still unknown in Mexico and Latin America; it's also a question of publication rights.

Micaela, you may wait outside with Alfredito and Enrique. The awful grandmother says it all in Spanish, which I understand when I'm paying attention. "What?" I say, though it's neither proper nor polite. "What?" which the awful grandmother hears as "¿Guat?" But she only gives me a look and shoves me toward the door. (Original by Sandra Cisneros)²

Liliana Valenzuela's Mexican and Tex-Mex-flavored translations have been published in Spain and read in Mexico. What has the response been? "Well, Grupo Planeta from Spain bought my translation of Sandra Cisneros's novel *Caramelo*, breaking a pattern of commissioning their own peninsular translations. They wanted the more authentic flavor of a Chicana/Mexican translation, but that would still remain understandable and enjoyable to them. I mostly used regionalisms for the dialogue, sometimes weaving in the mean-

ing in other sentences, to avoid using footnotes. Some of the translations have also been well received in Mexico, at least from the audience responses I encountered in Monterrey and Mexico City. I'm sure what Mexican critics have to say about this type of literature or its translation."

—*Zo-rraight, my friend?*

—*Zo-rraight* —contestó Inocencio. —*Zenc iús. Meny zencs.*

—*Iu are moust güelcome* —dijo el hombre del frac con un acento muy curioso, como una escoba barriendo un piso de piedra.

—*¿Espic spanish?* —se aventuró Inocencio.

—¡Por fin! ¡Alguien que hablaba el idioma de Dios! Wenceslao Moreno para servirle —dijo orgullosamente el hombre del frac y se quitó el sombrero de copa, relampagueando por un momento una calva. (Translation by Liliana Valenzuela)

—*Zaw-rright, my friend?*

—*Zaw-rright*, Inocencio answered. —Thank yous. Many thanks.

—You are most welcome, the tuxedo man said with a most curious accent, like a broom sweeping across a stone floor.

—*Spic Spanish?* Inocencio ventured.

—Finally! Someone who speaks the language of God! Wenceslao Moreno to serve you, the tuxedo man said proudly and tipped his top hat, flashing for a moment a bald head. (Original by Sandra Cisneros)³



Liliana Valenzuela



In addition to being a well-known translator, Liliana Valenzuela is a writer and poet in her own right. She has previously written of herself, “Through my poetry and essays in two languages, I seek to voice the experience of a Mexican woman who lives in Texas, yet is a citizen of the world.” Her own writings as poet and author have surely been informed and inspired by her interest in translating Latina authors, haven’t they? “I became acquainted with Latina authors while in college, and their work spoke closely to me, as a woman and as a Mexican. I could relate to it. And I admired their bravery and innovation. Still do. I wanted to write with as much courage and musicality as they do. And in the process I’ve become a Mex-Tex, or Chicalanga (Chicana-Chilanga)⁴ or, according to Sandra Cisneros, a ‘reverse Chicana,’ writer.”

Liliana, who also writes poetry, non-fiction and essays, has won several writing awards, such as four first prizes sponsored by the Austin Poetry Society, among them, The Spoken Word Poetry 2009 Award for the poem “son cubano” and The Mary Oliver Award in 2009 for the poem “Sirena Cómica/Cosmic Siren.” Among her publications we find *Bocas palabras* (Poetry Chapbook competition winner); *Mujer fronteral/Mujer Malinche*, *The Poetry of Rice Fields*; “Reflexiones post 11.7.02: un nopal y una banderita estadounidense,” “Una escritora chilanga texana” (*Blanco Móvil*, Mexico); “Nov. 2, 1988: On the Eve of Becoming an American Citizen” (poetry finalist in the first Panliterary Awards Competition); “Virgencita, give us a chance” (essay in *God-dess of the Americas/La Diosa de las Américas: Writings on the Virgin of Guadalupe*, edited by Ana Castillo); and “Sinvirgüenza” (poem in the video-poem *Ella es fronteral/Border She Is* by Pilar Rodríguez). She has recently completed a full-length poetry manuscript entitled *Codex of Desire/Códice del deseo*.

So, in what concrete ways has the practice of literary translation served as a writing apprenticeship for her? She again smiles charmingly as she muses, “Well, I’ve learnt, for instance, how to craft a well-written sentence, paragraph, chapter. Good writing holds its shape, even when you pour it into a new language, while bad writing falls apart and you have to rewrite it so that it makes sense. Good writing can stand strong winds, intense glare, and icy temperatures and still shimmer. Also, I’ve learned that chapter opening and ending paragraphs are very important. It’s worth spending extra time with them, both as a writer and as a translator.”

Liliana, who also writes poetry, non-fiction, and essays, has won several writing awards, such as four first prizes sponsored by the Austin Poetry Society, among them.

Liliana Valenzuela has been translating fiction, non-fiction and poetry for many years and has earned herself a high reputation in the field —no easy task in the art of translation’s competitive circles. As a writer, however, this poses a true challenge, perhaps we could call it a risk, in juggling both her personal creative urge and her job translating/re-writing the work of others. “I do compartmentalize a bit, especially if I’m translating a novel. I could write poetry or essays, but not fiction. It would hard to hold two imaginary worlds together in my head, and still function in my daily life.”

In some of her work, Liliana’s own particular style is revealed, for instance, in her usage of a singular intentional bicultural interlinguism. This brings up an inevitable question begging to be asked: which of these two writing worlds is closest to her heart? “Well, I’ve become known for my published translations of well-regarded Latino authors, but in my heart I’m a writer first and foremost. I could live without translating, but I couldn’t live without writing.”

As she says this, Liliana smiles that engaging smile of hers, *una Malinche contemporánea y güera*, happy in both languages, in both cultures, ready to juggle linguistics, culture and creativity. And although the interview has come to a close, our conversation carries on, as it were, off the page. ■■■

NOTES

¹ Sandra Cisneros, “Mericanos,” *El arroyo de la Llorona y otros cuentos*, Liliana Valenzuela, trans. (New York: Random House-Vintage Español, 1996).

² Sandra Cisneros, “Mericanos,” *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*, (New York: Random House First Vintage Contemporaries Edition, 1992).

³ Sandra Cisneros, *Caramelo* (New York: Random House/Vintage Español, 2003), simultaneous English/Spanish publication.

⁴ *Chilangalo* is a term used by and for those who are born in Mexico City and those living there who become identified with it.

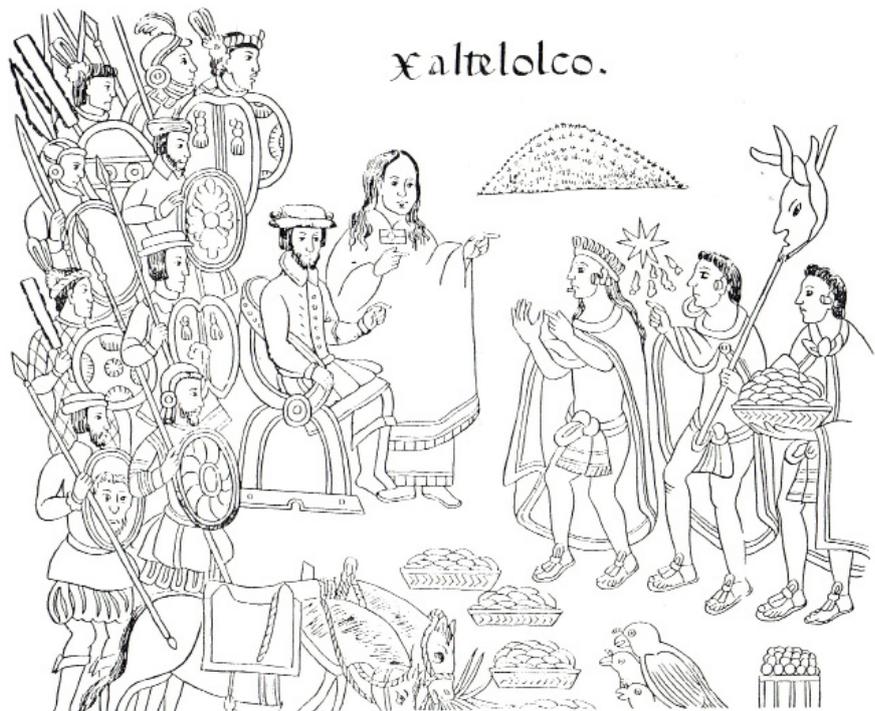
Nov. 2, 1998: On the Eve of Becoming An American Citizen

by Liliana Valenzuela

Not me, not I
a *gringa* I would never be
gritos de "muera el imperialismo yanqui"
resonando en mi cabeza
yo, la *Malinche*,
"there is always me-search in research"
going full circle
me an American
a Mexican-American
a bona fide Chicana *chayote*-head
My life is here now
raising my bilingual *chilpayates*
married, *metida hasta las chanclas*
in this brave new world.

A binational
una Nutella bicolor
vainilla y chocolate
dual citizenship, at least,
los políticos en México finally woke up
to us "raza" on this side of the border.
Welcome *Paisano*, *Bienvenido Amigo*,
hasta que se les prendió el foco, cabrones.
Ahora sí, pásenle, que su nopal está lleno de tunas.

Aquí en la frontera, en el no-man's-land,
mujer puente, mujer frontera,
mujer Malinche.



Ahora sí, cuando me chiflen por la calle
me podrán decir "gringuita" y por primera vez
lo seré, una bolilla, una gabacha,
mis ojos azules y cabello rubio por fin
corresponderán a los estereotipos de la gente
"But you don't look Mexican..."
Enton's ¿qué parezco? ¿acaso tengo changos en la cara?

When I die, spread my ashes along the Rio Grande, the
Río Bravo, where I once swam naked.

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Celebrating Mexico's History



Mexico's celebration of the bicentennial of its independence may be remembered mainly for its spectacular fireworks, the dancing cathedral, the anonymous colossus, or simply for the profligate festivities, that spirit of "sparing no expense," which, as Octavio Paz observed in *El laberinto de la soledad* (The Labyrinth of Solitude), is a vigorous characteristic of our national idiosyncrasy.

Fortunately, the festivities also included other forms of remembering the fights for independence and the revolution: much quieter and more discreet, but destined, if not to last forever, at least to transcend the mere date in question and being a pretext for awakening or creating a vulgar, highly questionable form of nationalism. I am referring here to the materials published to commemorate the centennials.

Given the impossibility of reviewing that entire vast, diverse production, I will comment on the books published by the Senate Special Commission, which used most of its resources earmarked to commemorate these historic anniversaries to create an interesting, well-planned publishing program—even if it did leave out some things.

It should be mentioned that this commission, made up of legislators from different parties, is headed by Senator Mel-

quíades Morales Flores, of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and its *pro bono* executive director is Dr. Patricia Galeana, the well-known historian who designed and guided the editorial work itself, giving it its own distinctive seal.

LEGAL WORKS

1. The *Historia de las instituciones jurídicas de los estados* (History of the States' Legal Institutions) Collection

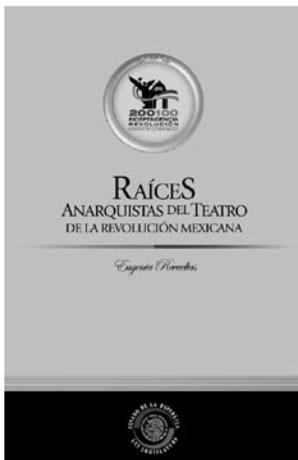
One of this publishing program's most notable proposals is the *Historia de las instituciones jurídicas de los estados* (History of the States' Legal Institutions) collection, a series of 33 books in a medium-sized format with gold covers dedicated to each of the 32 states (including Mexico City's Federal District), plus an introductory volume covering the territories (like Texas, California, New Mexico, and Utah) that are no longer part of Mexico, but which, in their time, produced *sui generis* legal instruments. The collection was published jointly with the UNAM Institute for Legal Research, and coordinated by Dr. Patricia Galeana and Dr. Daniel Barceló.

Despite the high degree of specialization needed to write each volume, *Historia de las instituciones jurídicas de los estados* is not necessarily directed at specialists.

There is no attempt to present a history of the creation of each state's Constitution. However, in every case, different documents are examined that had a definitive influence on the existing legal framework in each state. It would not be wrong to say, however, that each book's center is the story of the vicissitudes of how the local Constitution came into being, how it was written, and how it was amended and its articles repealed.

Despite the high degree of specialization needed to write each volume, the work is not necessarily directed at specialists, but at a wider readership with an above-average education. Almost all the books include a compact disc to show the reader the different documents relevant to each volume.

2. *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* en lenguas indígenas (The Mexican Constitution in Indigenous Languages)



Another of this program's successes is the publication of the *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (Mexican Constitution) in indigenous languages. Indigenous groups' being ignored is a recurring problem in our country, and the publishing industry is no exception. It is thought —although not thought through— that there is no readership for books in indigenous languages. This is a mistake: *Amatlanahuatili Tlahtoli Tlen. Mexicameh Nechico-listli Sentlanahuatiloan*, the Constitution published in Náhuatl jointly with Fondo de Cultura Económica publishers, quickly sold out and had to be reprinted twice because of its popularity. This is still surprising, though if we take into account that most members of ethnic groups who know how to read in their own language, also read Spanish. There may be some who think —erroneously, in my opinion— that this makes producing works in native lan-

guages pointless. But it should be remembered that creating a truly multicultural state like our own is conceived in the Constitution itself, and can only be achieved by recognizing, promoting, and respecting the identity and dignity of every one of its cultures. Not doing that is the same as condemning them to disappear, or at least to live a segregated life, which is the same as discriminating against these Mexicans.

The Senate also announced it is preparing to translate the Constitution into Maya, Mixtec, Zapotec, and Tzotzil. Given the large number of indigenous languages (364, considering the variants of the main linguistic families), these publications are far from covering the needs of the 10 million Mexican indigenous. Nevertheless, it is a good start, and its symbolic importance should not be underestimated.

Lastly, it is important to point out that, together with Hermanos Porrúa publishers, the Special Commission has also published and reprinted a pocket version of our Constitution in Spanish for mass distribution.



Historical complexes, as we all know, are complicated and respond to multiple simultaneous determinants, in which the weft and woof of events intertwine to create unexpected forms subject to diverse readings. In *Soberanía, representación nacional e independencia en 1808* (Sovereignty, National Representation, and Independence in 1808), José Herrera Peña takes a magnifying glass to the crucial moment of independence. The author analyzes the dilemmas that emerged in New Spain because of the crisis on the Iberian Peninsula —“If there's no king, what legitimizes the authority of the viceroy who represents him?” “Should we support Bonaparte, borrow the reins of state to wait for Fernando VII's return, or take advantage of the moment to free ourselves from the yoke of the Spanish?”— leaving nothing as a given and dealing with the events. The author's lively pen makes the text easy reading, making this book, the first of the Senate's silver collection, co-published with the Ministry of Culture of Mexico City's Federal District Government, accessible to all readers.

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Semblanzas, memorias y relatos de la Revolución Mexicana en Durango (Depictions, Memoirs, and Stories of the Mexican Revolution in Durango) is another story altogether. If the previous text was sweeping, this one concentrates on a very specific topic. If the former refers to an oft-cited, well-known event, this focuses on figures familiar only to specialists and readers of local history. However, the book's author, Enrique Arrieta Silva, does something more than just give an account of figures like Domingo Arrieta León or Antonio Gaxiola Delgadillo, who were no less important in the revolutionary struggle for being relatively unknown. Arrieta also offers us a lively picture of daily life in the Durango of that period, sprinkled with pleasing anecdotes. In my opinion, this part of the book is its greatest merit, so woefully missing from ordinary historiographies: showing how revolutions are constituted as a slow, constant transformation of the life of a people.

The work *El constitucionalismo mexicano. Influencias continentales y trasatlánticas* (Mexican Constitutionalism. Hemispheric and Transatlantic Influences), written by several specialists and coordinated by Patricia Galeana, exemplifies how history is nourished by a heterogeneous, tangled series of forces. In this case, the authors investigate the way in which the Constitutions of Spain, France, or the United States and the political philosophy that sustains them oriented the creation of the different Constitutions written in our nation. By no means are the paradoxes omitted, nor the difficulties of adapting to the Mexican situation, trying also, in most cases successfully, to not repeat unidirectional causalities.

If we conceive of a country's constitutions as a mirror of its realities and aspirations—always veiled, always oblique, but faithful for he/she who knows how to interpret them—we will have to agree that their review in some dark way

brings together its becoming and direction. It is precisely here that we can pinpoint one of this work's main virtues: not only does it invite us to revisit independence, the reform, and the revolution through the documents produced by each movement, but it also looks to the uncertain future from their standpoint.

With contributions from 17 researchers, *Secularización del Estado y la sociedad* (Seculariza-

The Senate also announced it is preparing to translate the Constitution into Maya, Mixtec, Zapotec, and Tzotzil, but given the large number of indigenous languages, these publications are far from covering the needs of the 10 million Mexican indigenous.

tion of the State and Society) deals with a stage that is essential for understanding our history: the Reform Period. Seen superficially, the reform should not be included in a publishing program dedicated to commemorating the bicentennial of independence and the centennial of the revolution. However, it occupies a natural place in the bibliography covered in this review because without it, our country would be inconceivable. Themes like the relationship between state and churches, the Masons, the Reform Laws, the obligations of the secular state—so often disobeyed in Mexico—fill its pages providing us with a clear—though by no means simple—vision of the falsely paradoxical principle of secularization in a profoundly religious country. Following the tracks of the long, still-current dispute between clerical interests and those of the state, and showing up the links of our secularity and that of equivalent phenomena in Latin America are some of the book's other qualities. Like the previous book, and the two that follow, this text was published jointly with Siglo XXI Editores.

Historia comparada de las Américas. Sus procesos independentistas (Comparative History of the Americas. Its Independence Processes) is a monumental work—more than 30 researchers from the whole hemisphere participate—that is part of an even vaster project coordinated by Dr. Galeana. This second volume reviewed here—the first was published without the participation of the Senate commission—was published together with the UNAM Center for Research on Latin America and the Caribbean (CIALC), the OAS's Pan-American Institute of Geography and History (IPGH), and Siglo XXI Editores. This comparative history reviews the freedom struggles all over the Americas, opening up unsuspected perspectives for the reader. It is not commonly known, for example, that after the United States, Haiti was the first na-



tion to win independence from Europe; that Brazil and Canada freed themselves peacefully from their metropolises; that there was an intense, confused movement of adherences and separations from South America's viceroalties and captaincies; or that the Central American countries formed and disintegrated different political units.

In contrast with similar works, this book has the undoubted merit of surpassing the merely Latin American point of view to integrate into its perspective and comparison the hemisphere's Caribbean and English-speaking countries. This enriches the contrasts and uncovers unsuspected coincidences, surpassing the hackneyed parallelisms that try to forcibly create a Hispanic America more similar to Bolívar's dreams than to reality. From my point of view, this text is one of the program's best.

Doctors Gloria Villegas and Patricia Galeana are the authors of *Dos siglos de México* (Two Centuries of Mexico), a chronology covering 207 years of history (1800-2007). Despite its title, it not only relates the events in Mexico, but in the entire world, beyond just providing a mere *context* for understanding national history. As with any work in which the

information has to be carefully chosen, and given the impossibility of including everything available, some readers may find it odd that certain events are not included and others may disapprove of some of the ones that are. There is no solution for this: it is part of the very nature of the work. However, there are chronologies and then there are chronologies. This one uses well-honed criteria, and content selection has been meticulous. Certainly, it is perfectible, but it should be pointed to as an

extraordinary effort in Mexico's publishing world. Of course, this is a reference work, among other things because, if read straight through, it leaves the reader with an ominous, forlorn impression of our species.

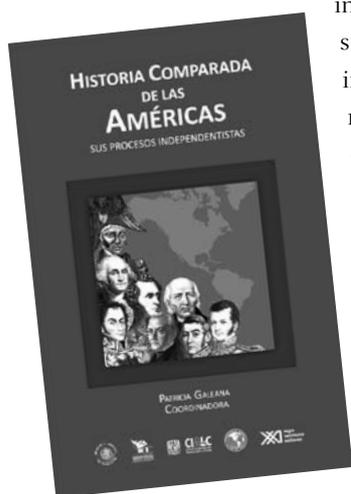
Lastly, *Mujeres insurgentes* (Women Insurgents) introduces the gender perspective into this group of books with a compilation based on the Senate's open call for texts. I think the topic could have been much more developed, but it certainly it is revealing that the participation of women in the fight for independence was included. Despite their social and economic condition, whether they were well known

—Josefa Ortiz, Leona Vicario, Gertrudis Bocanegra— or anonymous, they played a central role in this period, as they have in all others. Recognizing that and repairing their previously being overlooked is a historic debt which only now is there an attempt to repay. It should be recognized that other books besides those reviewed here not only deal with women, but also—and this is no less significant— there may even be more women authors than men.

Lastly, I should underline that the books reviewed here are by no means all those produced by this publishing program. It also includes art books; an exquisite facsimile of the Constitution of Apatzingán preceded by a study by Héctor Fix-Zamudio; works underway about the Mexican Revolution; and others I had to omit because of lack of space.

There are many reasons to praise the way in which the Senate Special Commission in Charge of the Bicentennial of Independence and Centennial of the Mexican Revolution Festivities used its budget to achieve its goal. Some of the most important are that it was able to establish alliances and partnerships to co-publish and disseminate the works. Then, turning its back on a long tradition of centralism, it incorporated in every way the states nationwide, underlining their importance for understanding the country (a special example of this is the chronology *Dos siglos de México*). And, it encouraged works with both a multicultural and a gender perspective; and, of course, its publications are free, as established by law.

Among its failings we should note the lack of children's books, books about Mexico's participation in different international forums and legal instruments, and, lastly, the use of literature (short stories or novels) as a means to disseminate our identity. ■■■



Arturo Cosme Valadez

**Coordinator of the Publishing Program
of the Senate Special Commission
in Charge of the Bicentennial
of Independence and Centennial
of the Mexican Revolution Festivities**