

FORGING A GENDER PATH IN MODERN MEXICAN HISTORY

In 1975, Richard Graham asked me to give a paper on Mexican women at the Southwestern Social Science Association meeting. Surely, he asked me only because he thought that as a woman I would know something about women—I am sure that was my only qualification in his mind. Thankfully, he also asked Dawn Keremitsis, who had done work on Mexican women workers.¹ Fortunately, I had included in my 1973 dissertation a chapter on women’s vocational education. I wrote my entire dissertation on José Vasconcelos’s educational crusade in a state of shock at the race and class biases I encountered in the documents. In the case of women, my outrage soared, propelled by my second-wave-feminist conviction that women had to be liberated from the slavery of the home. So I had written a dogmatic chapter and paper on how revolutionary educators wanted to remove women from the workforce, restore them to domesticity, train them to work in small, badly paid, home-based industries, and subordinate them to men and motherhood. Middle-class women prescribed class practices of motherhood and domesticity as if, I argued, women of the subaltern classes knew nothing of homemaking and mothering.²

As I completed the delivery of this paper, I noted an older woman in the audience agitated, near tears, and seeking the support of colleagues who comforted her. She said, in essence, about my presentation, “This is terrible. I was there. It was nothing like that. We were helping those women and their families. It was a glorious time!” Quickly, I learned I had stepped on the toes of the grand dame of Mexican history, Nettie Lee Benson, who had apparently taken part in José Vasconcelos’s grand crusade for civilization. I truly regret

The CLAH Award for Distinguished Service is conferred upon a person whose career in scholarship, teaching, publishing, librarianship, institutional development, or other fields demonstrates significant contributions to the advancement of the study of Latin American history in the United States. For 2016, the recipient was Mary Kay Vaughan, who specializes in the cultural, gender, and educational history of modern Mexico. She is former coeditor of the *Hispanic American Historical Review* and past president of the Conference on Latin American History. She has received fellowships from the John Simon Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (Fulbright), and the Social Science Research Council. She has published three monographs and coedited four collections. Her book, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930–1940*, received the Herbert Eugene Bolton Prize and the Bryce Wood Award.

1. Dawn Keremitsis, *La industria textil mexicana* (Mexico City: SEP-Setentas, 1973).

2. The paper was published as “Women, Class, and Education in the Mexican Revolution,” *Latin American Perspectives* 4:1-2 (1977): 63–80.

this unhappy encounter, not only because I had not intended to insult anyone, but also because as time went on, I became aware of the insensitively presentist perspective I brought to my analysis. I came to recognize the ways in which maternalism empowered women by advocating for their strong role in the home as its organizers, accountants, and nurturers of sentiment, and as partners with the state—often too, the church and private sector—in the raising of healthy, productive, disciplined children.

In 1996 I wrote an essay about this modernization of patriarchy.³ I had observed some of its empowering dimensions for teachers, for girls and mothers, when I looked at education in rural Puebla and Sonora in the 1930s.⁴ I reaffirmed my convictions as I wrote the biography of the painter Pepe Zúñiga who, growing up poor in Mexico City in the 1940s and 1950s, benefitted from his mother's unflagging advocacy.⁵ I have become further convinced through living in a Zapotec town, where the effects of reforms aimed at domesticity in education, health, production, and household organization are as important—likely more important—than the assistance provided to male farmers.

However, the modern patriarchy is still patriarchy and, thank goodness, younger women—as well as my contemporaries—have lent their scholarship to the examination of women's struggles in the labor movement. Among them are María Teresa Fernández, Susan Gauss, Jolie Olcott, and Heather Fowler Salamini; in the Communist Party, Jolie Olcott and Veronica Oikión; and in the struggle for women's rights, Katherine Bliss, Sarah Buck, Jolie Olcott, Susie Porter, Carmen Ramos, and Esperanza and Enriqueta Tuñón.⁶ Similarly, fine

3. I first presented the essay at a conference on gender and the state in Latin America, held at the University of London's Institute of Latin American Studies in 1996. It was published as "The Mexican Revolution and the Modernization of Patriarchy in the Countryside, 1930–1940," in *Hidden Histories of Gender and the State in Latin America*, Elizabeth Dore and Maxine Molyneux, eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 194–214.

4. Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930–1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press 1997).

5. Mary Kay Vaughan, *Portrait of a Young Painter: Pepe Zúñiga and Mexico City's Rebel Generation* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

6. The bibliography is very long now and I cite here just a portion of it. See, among others on women in labor struggles, María Teresa Fernández, "The Political Mobilization of Women in Revolutionary Guadalajara, 1910–1940" (PhD diss.: University of Illinois Chicago, 2000); Fernández, "Once We were Corn Grinders. Women and Labor in the Tortilla Industry of Guadalajara, 1920–1940," *International Labor and Working Class History* 63 (2003): 81–101; Fernández, "The Struggle between the Metate and the Molina de Nixtamal in Guadalajara, 1920–1940," in *Sex in Revolution: Gender, Politics and Power in Modern Mexico*, Jocelyn Olcott, Mary Kay Vaughan, and Gabriela Cano, eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 147–161; Susan Gauss, "Working Class Masculinity and the Rationalized Sex: Gender and Industrial Modernization in the Textile Industry in Post-revolutionary Puebla," in *Sex in Revolution*, 181–198; Jocelyn Olcott, "Miracle Workers: Gender and State Mediation among Textile and Garment Workers in Mexico's Transition to Industrial Development," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 63 (2003): 45–62; Heather Fowler Salamini, "Gender, Work, Trade Unionism and Working Class Women's Culture in Post-revolutionary Veracruz," in *Sex in Revolution*, 162–180; and Fowler Salamini, *Working Women, Entrepreneurs, and the Mexican Revolution: The Coffee Culture of Córdoba, Veracruz* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2013). On women and the Communist Party, see Jocelyn Olcott, *Revolutionary Women in Post-Revolutionary Mexico* (Durham:

work has been done on women who served the state in social policy and led the struggle for women's rights; here we can recognize the work of the late and ever so gifted Ann Blum, as well as Gabriela Cano, Alicia Civera, Jolie Olcott, Susie Porter, and Nikki Sanders.⁷

I need to mention some of the critically important research on the nineteenth century, particularly that of Silvia Arrom, Francie Chassen López, Marie Francois, Florencia Mallon, Carmen Ramos, and Susie Porter.⁸ I also need to recognize studies of Catholic women opposed to the postrevolutionary state, some of whom came to collaborate with it in post-1940 Mexico in social work: Kristina Boylan, Nikki Sanders, Patience Schell.⁹ In 1994, Heather Fowler

Duke University Press, 2006) and Verónica Oikión's biography of María Refugio García Martínez (forthcoming). On the struggle for women's rights, see Katherine Bliss, *Compromised Positions: Prostitution, Public Health and Gender Politics in Revolutionary Mexico City* (University Park, Penn State University Press, 2001); Sarah A. Buck, "Activists and Mothers: Feminist and Maternalist Politics in Mexico, 1923–1953" (PhD diss.: Rutgers, 2002); Buck, "New Perspectives on Female Suffrage," *History Compass* 3 (2005), onlinelibrary.wiley.com; Gabriela Cano, "Debates en torno al sufragio y la ciudadanía de las mujeres en México," in *Historia de las mujeres en España y América Latina, del siglo XX a los umbrales del XXI*, Isabel Morant Deusa, ed. (Madrid: Cátedra, 2005–6), 535–551; Ana Lau Jaiven, "Mujeres, feminismo y sufragio en los años veinte," in *Un fantasma recorre el siglo. Luchas feministas en México 1910–2010*, Gisela Espinosa Damián and Ana Lau Jaiven, coords. (Mexico City: UAM-X, CSH, Departamento de Relaciones Sociales, 2011); Anna Macias, *Against All Odds: The Feminist Movement in Mexico to 1940* (Westport, CT and London: Greenwood Press, 1982); Susie Porter, *From Angel to Office Worker: Women, Middle Class Identity, and the Emergence of a Female Consciousness in Mexico, 1890–1950* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, forthcoming); Jocelyn Olcott, *Revolutionary Women*; Carmen Ramos Escandón, "Women's Movements, Feminism, and Mexican Politics," in *The Women's Movement in Latin America: Participation and Democracy*, Jane S. Jaquette, ed. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994), 199–221; Stephanie Smith, *Gender and the Mexican Revolution: Yucatán Women and the Realities of Patriarchy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009); Shirlene Soto, *Emergence of the Modern Mexican Woman. Her Participation in Revolution and Struggle for Equality, 1910–1940* (Denver: Arden Press, 1990); Enriqueta Tuñón Pablos, *Por fin!—ya podemos elegir y ser electas* (Mexico City: Plaza y Valdez, 2002); and Esperanza Tuñón Pablos, *Mujeres que se organizan: El Frente Unico pro Derechos de la Mujer, 1935–38* (Mexico City: UNAM/Porrúa, 1992).

7. Ann Blum, *Domestic Economies: Family, Work, and Welfare in Mexico City, 1884–1943* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2009); Gabriela Cano, *Amalia Castillo Ledón: mujer de letras, mujer de poder. Antología* (Mexico City: CONACULTA, 2011); Alicia Civera Cerecedo, *La escuela como opción de la vida. La formación de maestras normalistas rurales en México, 1921–1945* (Toluca: Colegio Mexiquense, 2008); Jocelyn Olcott, *Revolutionary Women*; Susie Porter, *From Angel to Office Worker*; Nichole Sanders, *Gender and Welfare in Mexico. The Consolidation of a Post-Revolutionary State, 1937–1958* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2012).

8. Silvia Arrom, *The Women of Mexico City, 1790–1857* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985); Arrom, *Volunteering for a Cause: Gender, Faith, and Charity in Mexico from the Reform to the Revolution* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2016); Francie Chassen López, "'Cheaper than Machines': Women and Agriculture in Porfirian Oaxaca, 1800–1911," in *Women of the Mexican Countryside, 1850–1990*, Heather Fowler Salami and Mary Kay Vaughan, eds. (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1994), 51–73; Chassen López, "A Patron of Progress: Juana Catarina Romero, the Nineteenth Century Cacica of Tehuantepec," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 88:3 (2008): 393–426; Marie Eileen Francois, *A Culture of Everyday Credit. Housekeeping, Pawnbroking, and Government in Mexico City, 1750–1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); Florencia Mallon, "Exploring the Origins of Democratic Patriarchy in Mexico: Gender and Popular Resistance in the Puebla Highlands, 1850–1876," in *Women of the Mexican Countryside*, 3–26; Susie Porter, *Working Women in Mexico City: Public Discourses and Material Conditions, 1879–1931* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2003); Carmen Ramos Escandón, *Industrialización, género y trabajo femenino en el sector textil mexicano: el obraje, la fábrica y la compañía industrial* (Mexico City: CIESAS, 2004).

9. Kristina Boylan, "Gendering the Faith and Altering the Nation: The Unión Femenina Católica Mexicana and Women's Revolutionary and Religious Experiences (1917–1940)," in *Sex in Revolution, 199–222*; Nichole Sanders, *Gender and Welfare*; Patience Schell, *Church and State Education in Revolutionary Mexico* (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 2003).

Salamini and I edited a collection on rural women, the result of a conference held at the University of Illinois at Chicago.¹⁰ Thanks to Jolie Olcott and Gil Joseph, many feminist scholars of modern Mexico came together again in 2001 at Yale and produced two edited collections and an issue of *International Labor and Working Class History*.¹¹ Out of the Yale meeting came the Red de Estudios de la Historia de Mujeres y de Género en México (REDMUGEN), which has widened the circle and the breadth of our research, particularly by integrating Mexican scholars. Volumes from two REDMUGEN conferences have been published in Spanish.¹² I need also to recognize the male scholars who have made major contributions to the study of gender and masculinity in Mexico: Rob Alegre, Steve Bachelor, Rob Buffington, Bill French, Victor Macías, Robert McKee Irwin, Edward McCaughan, Pablo Piccato, Michael Snodgrass, and Steve Stern.¹³ And we need to thank Joanne Hershfield, Julia Tuñón, and the ever so creative Anne Rubenstein for their studies of women and gendered culture.¹⁴

10. Fowler Salamini and Vaughan, *Women of the Mexican Countryside, 1850–1990*.

11. *Sex in Revolution*; Gabriela Cano, Jocelyn Olcott, Mary Kay Vaughan, eds., *Género, poder y política en el México posrevolucionario* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2009); Stephanie Mitchell and Patience E. Schell, eds., *The Women's Revolution in Mexico, 1910–1953* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007).

12. María Teresa Fernández, Carmen Ramos Escandón, Susie S. Porter, eds., *Orden social e identidad de género. México, siglos XIX y XX* (Guadalajara: CIESAS/Universidad de Guadalajara, 2006); Susie Porter and María Teresa Fernández Aceves, eds., *Género en la encrucijada de la historia cultural y social* (Mexico City: Colegio de Michoacán/CIESAS, 2015).

13. Robert Alegre, *Railroad Radicals in Cold War Mexico: Gender, Class, and Memory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2014); Steve Bachelor, "Toiling for the 'New Invaders': Autoworkers, Transnational Corporations, and Working Class Culture in Mexico City, 1955–1968," in *Fragments of a Golden Age: The Politics of Culture since 1940*, Gilbert M. Joseph, Anne Rubenstein, and Eric Zolov, eds. (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 273–326; Robert Buffington, *Criminal and Citizen in Modern Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000); Buffington, *A Sentimental Education for the Working Man: The Mexico City Penny Press, 1900–1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015); William French, *A Peaceful and Working People: Manners, Morals, and Class Formation in Northern Mexico* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1996); French, *The Heart in the Glass Jar: Love Letters, Bodies, and the Law in Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015); Robert McKee Irwin, Edward McCaughan, Michelle Rocío Nasser, eds., *The Famous 41: Sexuality and Social Control in Mexico, 1901* (New York: Palgrave Press, 2003); Robert McKee Irwin, *Mexican Masculinities* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 2003); Victor M. Macías González, "Masculine Friendships, Sentiment, and Homoerotics in Nineteenth-Century Mexico: The Correspondence of José María Calderón y Tapia, 1820s–1850s," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 16:3 (2007): 416–435; Macías González, "The Transnational Homophile Movement and the Development of Domesticity in Mexico City's Homosexual Community, 1930–70," in *Gender, Imperialism, and Global Exchanges*, Stephan F. Miescher, Michelle Mitchell, and Naoko Shibusawa, eds. (Chichester, UK, and Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2015), 132–157; Macías González, "Transnationalism and the Development of Domesticity in Mexico City's Homophile Community, 1920–1960," *Gender History* 23: 3 (October 2014): 519–544; Macías González, "The Lagartijo at the High Life: Notes on Masculine Consumption, Race, Nation, and Homosexuality in Porfirian Mexico," in *The Famous 41*, 227–250; Macías González and Anne Rubenstein, *Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012); Pablo Piccato, *City of Suspects: Crime in Mexico City, 1900–1931* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001); Piccato, *Tyranny of Opinion: Honor in the Construction of the Mexican Public Sphere* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010); Michael Snodgrass, *Deference and Defiance in Monterrey: Workers, Paternalism, and Revolution in Mexico, 1890–1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Steve Stern, *The Secret History of Gender: Women, Men, and Power in Late Colonial Mexico* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1997).

14. Joanne Hershfield, *Mexican Cinema/Mexican Woman, 1940–1950* (Tucson: University of Arizona, 1996); Hershfield, *Imaging the Chica Moderna: Woman, Nation, and Visual Culture in Mexico, 1917–1936* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008); Anne Rubenstein, *Bad Language, Naked Ladies, and Other Threats to the Nation: A Political*

PATRIARCHY, CHANGED BUT NOT UNDONE

A major problem remains. Mexico is a country in which a ruthlessly male-dominated trade union movement pushed most women out, women did not vote for president until 1958, and where patriarchy with its deep hierarchy of privileges, punishments, and arbitrariness reached its apex of political power in the mid 1950s. In such a country, gender has been almost totally ignored by historians of Mexican politics. Indeed, since 1968, as scholars have focused on the relations between the dominating and the dominated in Mexican political history, rarely have they included gender as a category. It is ironic that the first serious and laudable attempt to put gender at the heart of Mexican revolutionary politics came from Sandra McGee Deutsch, who does not consider herself a Mexicanist.¹⁵

If we are to study politics, gender has to be at its center as it is the fundamental expression of equality or inequality. The Mexican system has for centuries rested on this inequality as a grounding principle. How can anyone look at a political boss like General Gonzalo N. Santos, with all his exaggerated macho performance of bigger-than-life largesse, pistol-toting intimidation, and swagger on steroids and not see the connection between gender and a political system built not on the functioning of a neutral system of laws, security, and justice, but on the personal obligation to manipulate and the right to abuse? The simple description of Santos as macho is not enough—one has to look at gender's systemic dimensions.

The men of state in the post-1940 period, in their fine suits, ties, and better manners, formed part of the same patriarchal matrix in their paternalism, their authoritarianism, their subordination of personal *camarillas*, and their not infrequent use of the violence of others to assure obedience and their own advancement. Indeed, politics depended on *camarillas*, mafias, and gangs. Democratic, law-based systems have come to depend on interest groups and networks, but the fiercely competitive aspects of the Mexican system, which *used* laws more than it obeyed them, meant that no politically engaged person could stand outside a personalized, organized *cuervo*, as these were

History of Comic Books in Mexico (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998); Rubenstein, "Bodies, Cities, Cinema: The Death and Funeral of Pedro Infante as a Political Spectacle," in *Fragments of a Golden Age*, 198–223; Rubenstein, "The War on 'Las Pelonas': Modern Women and their Enemies," in *Sex in Revolution*, 57–80; Rubenstein, "Locating Male Sexualities in Latin American History: Two Latin American Models," *History Compass* 57 (2003): 11–19; Victor Macías and Anne Rubenstein, *Masculinity and Sexuality in Modern Mexico*, (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2012); Julia Tuñón, *Mujeres de luz y sombra en el cine mexicano: la construcción de una imagen (1939–1952)* (Mexico City: Colegio de México–Imcine, 1998); Tuñón, *Mexican Women: A Past Unveiled* (Austin: University of Texas Press, Institute of Latin American Studies, 1999), Tuñón, "Femininity, Indigenismo, and Nation: Film Representation of Emilio 'El Indio' Fernández," in *Sex and Revolution*, 81–98.

15. Sandra McGee Deutsch, "Gender and Socio-Political Change in Twentieth-Century Latin America," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 71: 2 (1991): 260–276.

as essential to protection as to advancement. Military violence and the psychological violence of superiors seeking to civilize inferiors were at the root of revolutionary upheaval and state formation. The very theatrical and talented *cacique* Gonzalo N. Santos and Narciso Bassols, the rigid, enlightened, and buttoned-down reformer, behaved differently but were cut of the same patriarchal cloth. Both were essential to Mexico's particular modernization. They eclipsed the soft power exercised by thousands of women as teachers, doctors, nurses, nutritionists, lawyers, and social workers.

But women's soft power was also *essential* to this modernization. How are we going to join these masculine and feminine aspects of the state and politics in a gendered analysis? Undoubtedly, we will find that the binary is far too rigid, and even when it may hold generally, there will be significant variations of male and female behavior within it. *Dictablanda*, the new collection edited by Paul Gillingham and Ben Smith on the period from 1940 to 1968 paints in a convincing manner the high degree of PRI authoritarianism built in this period but does not apply the concept of gender.¹⁶ The excellent essays they collected note that continuous popular protests often involved women—in struggles against conscription and taxation, to secure land, among students, and in elections, particularly once women could vote. But they do not examine their gender relations of power.

Paul Gillingham, who looks at elections in general, and Wil Pansters, who looks at Gonzalo N. Santos, share with an older generation of political scientists (Vincent Padgett) an interesting observation: the most open and competitive politics took place at the municipal level where the federal government had little interest.¹⁷ In municipal elections, several of the *caciques* of this period were undone at the end of the 1950s. Gillingham notes that the PAN established its base at the municipal level, from which it would expand to governorships and national power beginning in the 1980s. He remarks on the importance of PAN women in an election or two, but does not sufficiently explore how important they were in pressing for social services and clean government at the local level. Women acquired the right to vote in municipal elections in 1947, and even earlier in some states. What impact did they have on municipal politics between 1940 and 1968? Did they do men's bidding, or did they begin to shape a degree of autonomy and gendered programmatic complexity in local politics? If so, where and when?

16. Paul Gillingham and Ben Smith, *Dictablanda: Politics, Work, and Culture in Mexico, 1938–1968* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014).

17. Paul Gillingham, "‘We Don't Have Arms, but We Do Have Balls’: Fraud, Violence, and Popular Agency in Elections," in *Dictablanda*, 149–172; Wil G. Pansters, "Tropical Passion in the Desert: Gonzalo N. Santos and Local Elections in Northern San Luis Potosí, 1943–1958," in *Dictablanda*, 126–148.

In the *Dictablanda* collection, only María Teresa Fernández's essay on the *jaliscense* Guadalupe Urzúa Flores (1912–2004) deals with gender.¹⁸ Her argument is that Urzúa, an indefatigable PRI organizer who sought a myriad of social services from the state and served as municipal president, councilor, and federal deputy, was an advocate, but not a *cacica*. She used her organizing abilities and mastery of laws, procedures, and the rules of the game to obtain resources at the local, state, and federal levels. Unlike the caciques, she did not use arbitrary, violent, and intimidating means to acquire personal power over subordinate groups. She did not practice patron clientelism, and she obviously eschewed masculine notions of bonding related to physical prowess, sexual conquest, and drinking. She *did* use her beauty to elicit goods and services for her constituents from male powerholders up the hierarchical ladder, which might be seen either as responsive to the patriarchal order or a means of using it to amplify women's power and presence in politics and the public sphere. It seems important to note that Urzúa Flores's most responsive patron in securing support for a local hospital was President Miguel Alemán's wife, Beatriz Velasco de Alemán. The intervention of the president's wife in affairs related to the modernization of patriarchy was a trend.

Working at the margins of the cacique-dominated political structure, Urzúa exercised power in land reform. From 1936, she was a member of the regional agrarian committee; she became a founder of the Confederación Nacional Campesina and eventually head of its female sector at the state and federal levels. State and party inclusion of feminine sectors in popular and political organizations from the 1930s empowered her, as did the right to vote. Fernández argues that the female vote invigorated the platform for a modernization of patriarchy—reflected in the promotion of child care and maternity centers, schools and school breakfasts, clinics, hospitals, *molinos de nixtamal*, the distribution of sewing machines, inoculation, and the easing of female access to water sources. With other women town council members in Jalisco, Urzúa Flores formed a league to define and support these women's issues and women's presence in political posts. She went further, demanding the right of peasant women to own land, recommending the formation of women's committees for civic and moral improvement, and promoting instruction not only in domestic issues but in Mexican history, political economy, law, sports, and physical education.

Certainly, access to the vote represented a significant opening for women. Did it change their political behavior within the PRI? Did it change the PRI? When

18. María Teresa Fernández Aceves, "Advocate or Cacica? Guadalupe Urzúa Flores: Modernizer and Peasant Political Leader," in *Dictablanda*, 236–254.

Urzúa took advantage of the death of a powerful cacique to mobilize her own supporters, known as *lupistas*, to “install” municipal officers who were “supportive,” was she practicing a new form of organizing or a variation of caciquismo? We need more studies of postrevolutionary cacicas—studies as illuminating as Heather Fowler Salamini’s portrait of the women leaders of the coffee sorters’ union in Córdoba, Veracruz.¹⁹

Fernández argues that Urzúa Flores’s models were the Catholic activists who began their work in the late nineteenth century (they have been studied by Silvia Arrom and Kristina Boylan), or the secular social workers of the 1940s and 1950s, examined by Nikki Sanders.²⁰ Like them, she was “*servicial*” in the feminine sense of abnegation (men also declared themselves “*servidores*”), but she seems to have practiced an effulgent, challenging sense of empowerment that subverted the notion of abnegation. Does she represent a new type of political woman who came to the fore with the women’s vote and ongoing social changes? Was she less constrained than the earlier feminist professionals and publicists like Amalia Castillo Ledón and Adelina Zendejas, who after 1940 allied their struggle for women’s rights and child welfare with the PRI state?²¹ Was she less constrained than Catholic activists subordinated to the church hierarchy? Should women be included among the new social groups (an expanded urban middle class, landless campesinos, youth), who arose in the face of changing politics and the demise of the *cacicazgos* from the end of the 1950s? Catholic women in the early 1960s joined the vigorous protests against the “*texto único*.” Where did the more secular women go? Many, a younger generation, joined the student protests of 1968 and, like me, would form part of a new wave of feminism that rejected the modernization of patriarchy and the PRI.

Obviously, masculinity and femininity in society and the state change over time and across space, through dynamic and varied processes. We note such changes in the students of 1968 in Mexico City. Their mobilization distinguished itself from previous ones: it did not share a discourse of collective rights integral to PRI patron clientelism and organization. It asked for neither material goods nor corporatist representation. The movement rested on a core of anti-authoritarianism. So argue key participants Luis González del Alba, Gustavo Guevara Niebla, and Hugo Hiriart.²² The students diminished the

19. Heather Fowler Salamini, *Working Women, Entrepreneurs*.

20. Silvia Arrom, *Containing the Poor*; Kristina Boylan, “Gendering the Faith and Altering the Nation”; Nichole Sanders, *Gender and Welfare*.

21. See Susie Porter, *From Angel to Office Worker*.

22. For example, see Luis González de Alba, “1968: La fiesta y la tragedia,” *Nexos*, September 1993–Numeralia, <http://historico.nexos.com.mx/articuloEspecial.php?id=3764>; Gilberto Guevara Niebla, *La democracia en la calle*:

sacred president in withering language, calling him “dude,” “big mouth,” and “monkey.”²³ The official press gasped in horror. The students demanded that the president descend from his throne to speak with them in public. They asked for no favor but rather a nation of laws and justice, and an end to kings who decided the public interest in secret.

The students recognized the importance of gender in their movement. As editors of the *Hispanic American Historical Review*, Barbara Weinstein and I were delighted to publish Deborah Cohen and Lessie Jo Frazier’s essay, in which they argued that the young men imprisoned in Lecumberri after Tlatelolco saw themselves as masculine heroes, saviors of the people, a hierarchical icon they borrowed from the past and uttered as a sort of last gasp.²⁴ But these men would not live their future lives according to this model. Cohen and Frazier located the cultural creativity and subjective transformation in the student brigades that brought men and women together on the streets interacting with the public. For thousands of women, wrote Paco Ignacio Taibo, ’68 represented “an opportunity to be equal ... previous to feminism ... better than feminism. It was violently egalitarian ... and to be a man in ’68 was better because there were these women.”²⁵

Eduardo Valle Espinosa marveled at the female students of nursing and biology in the Politécnico who led the defense of the institution against the army occupation, tended to the wounded, and helped others to escape. “In the last speech at the Silent March,” he recalled, “I made an error I regret to this day. I included an inappropriate phrase, ‘We do not cry like women because we do not know how to defend ourselves as men.’ The next day when I got to my school there were two brigades of women waiting for me. I spent hours explaining to them between their shouts and just accusations, that I meant it in a metaphorical sense.”²⁶ Not all realizations came so quickly. It was not until 1975 that Luis González de Alba, Carlos Monsiváis, and Nancy Cárdenas issued a declaration in favor of the rights of lesbians and homosexuals. But under the covers, 1968 created an opening for same sex love.

crónica del movimiento estudiantil mexicano (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1988); Hugo Hiriart, “La revuelta anti-autoritaria,” *Nexos*, January 1, 1988, <http://www.nexos.com.mx/?p=5039>.

23. Michael Soldatenko, “Mexico ’68: Power to the Imagination!” *Latin American Perspectives* 143 (2005): 117.

24. Lessie Jo Frazier and Deborah Cohen, “Mexico 68: Defining the Space of the Movement, Heroic Masculinity in the Prison and Women in the Streets,” *Hispanic American Historical Review* 83 (2003): 617–660. On gender and 1968, see also Elaine Carey, *Plazas of Sacrifice: Gender, Power and Terror in 1968 Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2005).

25. Paco Ignacio Taibo II, *’68* (Mexico City: Planeta, 1991), 42–44.

26. As quoted in Elena Poniatowska, *La Noche de Tlatelolco* (Mexico City: Era, 1999), 126.

This was my generation, and these my friends, but I personally did not find the men so anti-authoritarian nor the women so feminist. My assessment now, almost a half century later, is that none of us lived the full transformation we imagined for ourselves. However, we did live an enormous change in ourselves—and in Mexico. I reached that conclusion through turning to the genre of biography to examine the growing-up experience of a painter, José Zúñiga, a bit older than the students of '68 (born in 1937) and from a blue-collar not a middle-class family. Zúñiga studied at Esmeralda art school, not at UNAM or the Politécnico.²⁷ Biography allows the historian to get at intricate processes of subjective formation. It allowed me to probe the interwoven socialization processes shared by a rebel generation. I learned about a sector of children growing up in Mexico City, benefiting from rapid economic growth, state programs of education, health, sports, recreation, housing, and apprenticeships, and flourishing mass media that included radio, film, and comics—all censored but ever so stimulating for children.

If they attended public school, it is true that they no longer learned of collective rights but rather of their role in Mexican and universal progress, a role they would fill through realizing their individual talents. Their imaginations and sensibilities soared as they listened to the songs of the cricket 'Cri Cri' over the radio. The singing cricket celebrated animals, insects, flowers, birds, and liberty tempered by prudence. Children crowded into the matinees to watch films made for them that celebrated the adventures of Flash Gordon or emphasized children's rights to love, protection, and nourishment, like the Disney movies and many made during the Mexican Golden Age. For these children, Pedro Infante represented a significant transformation in Mexican masculinity, turning away from the swaggering bravado of Jorge Negrete and toward the father or uncle who did not sprinkle his seed randomly across the Mexican terrain but cared tenderly and responsibly for children.²⁸ "Oh, had we had such love from our fathers," Pepe and his friends moaned.

The subtle shift toward a more emotionally open and responsible masculinity was promoted in books that made big impacts: Octavio Paz's *Labyrinth of Solitude*, Oscar Lewis's *Children of Sánchez*, and Erich Fromm's *The Art of Loving*. Also part of the shift were the satirical and humorous songs written by Chava Flores.²⁹

27. Mary Kay Vaughan, *Portrait of a Young Painter*.

28. On Pedro Infante, see Anne Rubenstein, "Bodies, Cities, Cinema: Pedro Infante's Death as Political Spectacle," 199–233; and Carlos Monsiváis, *Pedro Infante: las leyes de querer* (Mexico City, Editorial Aguilar, 2008).

29. Octavio Paz, *Laberinto de la soledad* (Mexico City: Cuadernos Americanos, 1950), published in English by Grove Press (New York) in 1961; Oscar Lewis, *The Children of Sánchez* (New York, Random House, 1961), published in Spanish as *Los hijos de Sánchez* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1964); Erich Fromm, *The Art of Loving*

When Pepe and his friends reached adolescence, they embraced the Hollywood films of James Dean and Marlon Brando, which depicted male youth's tortured struggles to express their inner feelings resolved in tender communication with sensitive young women and men. In 1952 when Pepe Zúñiga was 15, he saw *Singing in the Rain*. He sought solace in the movie theater after his partner in a radio repair business had cheated him badly.

I adored Gene Kelly. My father, who adored Fred Astaire, thought Kelly was effeminate. I thought he was a graceful acrobat and emotionally genuine, unlike Astaire who was more style than substance. I adored Debbie Reynolds. They danced and sang *You Were Meant for Me*, so intimately, so emotionally. I wanted a partner like her, faithful and loving. What tenacity Gene Kelly's character showed in his struggle against corruption, cruelty, and crime around him in the big city, and in his determination to follow his own path, his ideal. I wanted that too. Like me, he was defrauded but what saved him was his conviction he had the talent to dance, just as I was soon to be convinced of my vocation to paint. With what dignity and conviction he danced and sang *Singing in the Rain*. Honor is dignity in the struggle against corruption and in everything you do.³⁰

The changing notions and meanings of honor are themes taken up by historians of masculinity in Mexico. In the 1960s, we sense a new concept of male honor moving away from the abusiveness and insecurity of hierarchical power to a new form of citizenship, particularly in Mexico City, one that sought a legally guaranteed relationship between state and society and one whose construction would proceed through vigorous dialogue between them. This dialogue opened the political system, cultural expression, and social relations from the 1970s. New research on youth outside of Mexico City in the 1960s and 1970s suggests similar transformations, although they are conditioned by different educational experiences and contexts.

One suggestion that requires future research is that of a new attitude toward service on the part of the young who entered the Mexican state in the 1970s and 1980s. For example, recent studies of Christopher Boyer and Andrew Matthews on forestry politics suggest a more open, more egalitarian, and more solidarity-driven attitude on the part of young state foresters and the new environmentalists toward the campesinos who worked the forests.³¹ Their attitude contributed in the 1980s to turning forests over to the communities

(New York: Harper, 1956), published as *El arte de amar* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1966). Chava Flores's songs are available at youtube.com. See also the excellent essay of Eduardo Guizar, "Crónica musical en México: el caso de Chava Flores," *Studies in Latin American Popular Culture* 23 (2004): 55–69.

30. Synthesized from pp. 134–5, Vaughan, *Portrait of a Young Painter*.

31. Christopher Boyer, *Political Landscape: Forests, Conservation, and Community in Mexico* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015), 13. The contribution of young forestry officials, environmentalists, and NGOs to the rise

that would act as their stewards and managers, finally moving us beyond the official image of the campesino as ignorant, destructive, and in need of education, discipline, and punishment.

More generally, we note that notions and practices of gendered citizenship vary from place to place and class to class in Mexico, just as transformations in gender relations and subjectivities vary. But they have changed, and they have changed the country. What is the relationship between the social and the political in this process of change that is today most visible in private lives? The movement these changes engender for a politics without corruption and under the rule of law stands in sharp relief against the excessive corruption, irresponsibility, and arrogance of Mexico's current government. It stands too in stark, near-tragic relief against the prodigious masculinist brutality that has surged in organized crime to present an epochal challenge to both society and the state.

In 1972 when I entered academia, I worried that I might be leaving the political struggle we had waged around the Vietnam War and civil rights. Fortunately, I did not, as I spent years in a collective fight for Latino admissions and services at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Today, none of us can retreat from political struggle. It is thrust upon us by our recent elections and the broader challenge to effective democracy that crosses a thousand borders, penetrates walls, destroys the schemes that have given us comfort, and threatens the institutions that have provided our security. Implicit in our work has always been a fundamental belief in Anglo-American institutional superiority. Now, that deep-seated and isolating prejudice has to go.

Our most fundamental role as Latin Americanists in a crisis without precedents is as teachers of the young, obligated to unpack ideologies (beginning with our own), nurture respect for empirical knowledge, and honor human solidarity and nature. It is a struggle that cannot be addressed frontally as in the past, but one that requires a lot of thought, sensitivity, and sharing. I no longer teach in a U.S. university, but I have every confidence that those of you who do will rise to this task.

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of community forestry runs through Andrew Matthews's study of forest communities of Oaxaca's Sierra Juárez, *Instituting Nature: Authority, Expertise, and Power in Mexican Forests* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011).