

"Zapatismo lives! That is the message brought to us from the authors and subjects of this book, who in a variety of inventive ways, on both sides of the Mexico-U.S. border, live life with dignity, joy, and confidence in the future. Here we find hip-hop artists, do-it-yourself communities, radical single moms, organized tomato pickers, Chicano student activists, outspoken teenage girls, undocumented immigrants, feminist peasants, striking teachers, indigenous corn farmers, and others—lots of others—who walk with the Zapatistas, building community and sometimes winning victories but always creating love. Here we find voices speaking from the heart, from their real selves, about a world in which many worlds fit. We should all listen, and with care."

—JOHN FORAN, professor of Sociology at the University of California, Santa Barbara

"This valuable compilation of fresh narratives offers an inside look at Mexican/U.S. grassroots movements formed by women, peasants, indigenous people, and others—inspired by Zapatismo as a cultural and political practice—creating autonomous spaces as part of a movement of 'globalization from below.' In an era when the logic of the global market is presented as inexorable, this book is an important reminder of the power and agency of community-based organizing."

—RICHARD STAHLER-SHOLK, professor of Political Science, Eastern Michigan University

C*ultural Politics and Resistance in the 21st Century* focuses on immigrant social movements in the U.S. and community-based organizations in Mexico, highlighting struggles that involve themselves to varying degrees in the Global Justice Movement. The essays reflect the Zapatistas' call for "autonomy" and its resonance in various social movements while disclaiming political parties and elections. The cases presented in this volume develop important steps toward a theory of social change that can adequately address the complex realities and intersectionality of race, class, and gender within and among these new global social justice movements.

KARA Z. DELLACIOPPA is a professor of Sociology at California State University, Dominguez Hills.

CLARE WEBER is the Chair of the Department of Sociology at California State University, Dominguez Hills.

Cover design by Oscar Spigolon

palgrave
macmillan



www.palgrave.com

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CULTURAL POLITICS AND RESISTANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

COMMUNITY-BASED SOCIAL MOVEMENTS
AND GLOBAL CHANGE IN THE AMERICAS
EDITED BY KARA Z. DELLACIOPPA
AND CLARE WEBER



**Cultural Politics and Resistance
in the 21st Century**

**Community-Based Social Movements
and Global Change in the Americas**

Edited by
Kara Z. Dellacioppa
and Clare Weber

palgrave
macmillan



CULTURAL POLITICS AND RESISTANCE IN THE 21ST CENTURY
Copyright © Kara Z. Dellacioppa and Clare Weber, 2012.

All rights reserved.

First published in 2012 by PALGRAVE MACMILLAN® in the United States—a division of St. Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Where this book is distributed in the UK, Europe and the rest of the world, this is by Palgrave Macmillan, a division of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries.

ISBN: 978-0-230-34004-6

Chapter 7 was previously published in *Re-inventing Critical Pedagogy: Widening the Circle of Anti-Oppression Education*, eds. César Augusto Rossatto, Ricky Lee Allen, and Marc Pruyv (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), 225–34, and is reprinted with permission. Chapter 9 was previously published in *Globalizations* 5, no. 3 (September 2008): 357–77, and is also reprinted with permission.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Cultural politics and resistance in the 21st century : community based social movements and global change in the Americas / edited by Kara Z. Dellacioppa and Clare Weber.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-230-34004-6

1. Social movements—United States. 2. Social movements—Mexico. 3. Social change—United States. 4. Social change—Mexico. 5. Political culture—United States. 6. Political culture—Mexico. I. Dellacioppa, Kara Zugman, 1969– II. Weber, Clare, 1963–

HN65.C833 2011

303.48'4097209051—dc23 2011025825

A catalogue record of the book is available from the British Library.

Design by Scribe Inc.

First edition: January 2012

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America.

To Felix Aguilar, René Aguilar-Weber,
Joey Dellacioppa, and Sofia Alexis Dellacioppa

Conclusion: Local Movements? Global Movements? <i>Clare Weber</i>	177
--	-----

Notes on Contributors	181
-----------------------	-----

Index	185
-------	-----

Local Communities and Global Resistance

Social Change and Autonomy Struggles in the Americas

Kara Z. Dellacioppa

Introduction: New Languages of Resistance to Globalization

Over the last twenty years, we have witnessed an abundant growth of research on globalization. Within this vast body of work, studies have analyzed regional economic integration and debated the shifting role of the nation-state (Robinson 2001; Wade 2003), the globalization of production (Gereffi and Korzeniewicz 1994), and global citizenship (Sassen 2005). By the late 1990s, social movements had emerged as a central research topic of globalization (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Smith and Bandy 2005; Della Porta and Tarrow 2005) that included a prolific body of scholarship on the impact of neoliberalism on Latin American social movements (Escobar and Alvarez 1992). However, it wasn't until the Battle of Seattle in 1999 that a global (but diverse) "movement of movements" (Mertes 2004) emerged, working to understand, combat, and possibly transform the "globalization project" (McMichael 2000; Epstein 2001). Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's "Empire" (2000) was widely read in leftist academic and activist circles and was considered the most "optimistic" reading of globalization. Their descriptions of the cacophonous revolts of the "multitude" included all movements from the Hamas of the Gaza Strip to the Landless Movement of Brazil (without making much distinction between the two). However, their reading of the current global climate, while innovative, lacked an empirical analysis of social movements and of the structure

Part I

Cultural Resistance and Identity

In the first part of this volume, we examine the effects on cultural identity and activism, along with issues of autonomy reflected in the Zapatista movement or Zapatista-influenced movements. These essays focus on the ways in which the notions of autonomy have affected cultural identity. Aída Hernández Castillo and Gisela Espinosa Damian discuss the development of feminist consciousness in the early days of Zapatismo movement in Chiapas as well as the history of the development of women's peasant and indigenous organizations in that Mexican state. Jessica Taft's essay focuses on the involvement of teenage girls in the Zapatistas' "Other Campaign" in Mexico City and how they used it to find their own political voice. Next, Melissa Gove analyzes how feminism has emerged in two Chicano-based organizations in the United States and how Zapatismo has impacted gender equity politics in both. Lastly, Oscar Marquez analyzes the intersection of the liberatory discourses of hip-hop and Zapatismo through the creation of "temporary autonomous zones of education" by means of an ethnographic study of two Los Angeles hip-hop artists who have adopted Zapatismo specifically as a way of creating community and popular education.

New Political Actors in Rural Mexico

The Challenges and Achievements of Peasant and Indigenous Women

Aída Hernández Castillo and Gisela Espinosa Damian

Translated by Kara Z. Dellacioppa and Clare Weber

Introduction

In the last few decades, amid the emergence of profound transformations in the Mexican countryside, two noteworthy processes coincide. On the one hand, we find the feminization of those regions, associated with the decline of small-scale peasant production and the unstoppable wave of mostly male migration. On the other hand, we find an explosion of women's political participation and social struggles that at the same time share, in their various organizations, social agendas that threaten the oppressive structures of power operating against them and encapsulating their unique demands for gender equality and rights.

The indigenous and peasant areas of Mexico have suffered accelerated changes in their communities, related in great measure to the effects of neoliberal agricultural policies on the peasant economy. Since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) went into effect in 1994, the price of basic grains has plummeted, while the price of basic foodstuffs has risen by 257 percent. In the case of corn producers, during the last presidency some 3.75 million tons of corn has been imported to cover the basic food needs of the population, without the government's charging the

tariff agreed to by the United States, leaving Mexico without the \$429 million it is owed and with a negative impact on some 3 million Mexican corn producers (Hernández Castillo 2007). Today, 40 percent of these imports are used to cover basic food needs. At the same time, Mexican agricultural products are displaced from the internal market and rural families struggle with difficult conditions in order to survive and continue farming.

The antipeasant neoliberal policies have influenced “northern migration”—a generic term that denotes the border between northern Mexico and the United States. Migration north has been converted into a survival mechanism for hundreds of thousands of farmworkers who have given up living at the mercy of international market price fluctuations or hoping for a share of the agrarian product that never comes. Before the Mexican agrarian crisis and the subsequent demands of rural movements, governments initiated projects of “development” that sided with agribusiness in imposing “democratic-liberal” values under the preconceived notion that these values were superior to the vision of the world and organizational forms of Mexico’s indigenous peoples’ and peasants.

The problems that rural communities are living through also profoundly affect women, as male migration brings about the most significant changes in women’s lives. Indeed, their traditional task of reproductive labor is added on to their becoming the head of households. The women are responsible for maintaining their parcel of land and are overburdened with work, at the same time that they continue to acquire new skills, a sense of security, and some sense of freedom. The absence of their men is opening up new political spaces and positions of authority for women, not simply because of a critical reflection of the system of gender exclusion, but by default.

Although various state institutions recognize the feminization of the countryside, the rural women’s social programs are steeped in very traditional ideas, creating small-scale productive projects, oriented toward subsistence consumption and based on the misconceived notion that a woman’s participation in the economy through supporting her household is marginal. The major economic support programs are geared toward men, even though women hold 20 percent of the titles to arable land. Due to the increase in female-headed households and because of long periods when women assume responsibility for the maintenance and care of the family, programs do not exist to generate employment for women. In other words, even though the winds of change are blowing for peasant and indigenous women in the countryside, programs are based on women’s roles of the past.

Facing this ethnocentric, probusiness, and sexist vision of cultural development of global capitalism, dissidents have raised their voices in

the countryside, demonstrating that this crisis is based on a civilizational model of individualism and both ethnic and gender discrimination, as well as on an exploitative and predatory relationship to the environment (see Hernández Castillo and Suárez Navaz 2004). In this chapter we describe the critical perspectives of indigenous and peasant women’s organizations that are developing their own theorizations of the economic crisis of rural Mexico. The critiques developed by the organic intellectuals of these movements not only are directed toward the political economy of agrarian policies in Mexico but also include powerful statements about human beings’ relationship with nature, how people should live together, and social justice.

Nevertheless, it is impossible to understand either the growth of indigenous and peasant women’s participation in contemporary social movements or the rise in their gender-specific demands without recognizing their history of struggle and resistance since colonial times (Gall y Hernández Castillo 2004), as well as the multiple dialogues of the last several decades that have influenced their political identities. Campesino movements, guerrilla movements, theology liberation movements, rural feminisms, and international organizations, as well as government programs, have all contributed to creating political spaces for peasant and indigenous women. Each of these contributed various elements to help construct a culturally specific, gender-based agenda for change. They rearticulated or rejected various elements of other discourses about the rights of women.

The voices of these women began to be heard in the early 1980s, as part of a broader series of social mobilizations and struggles of urban and rural women participating in popular movements (labor, urban popular, peasant). They began to develop a criticism toward the inequalities and injustices they suffered as women. The women’s campesina movement was part of this pioneering process whereby a popular feminism, in its rural form, was constructed.

From that time until today, rural women’s movement (whether campesina, mestiza, or indigenous) has grown in numbers and relevance. Now women are no longer just companions in their men’s struggles, but are consolidating themselves as new social actors, with their own voices and own demands. Distance and dispersion of their communities, rural poverty, and the patriarchal rural culture all affect their ability to mobilize. However, in the thirty years since the movement took its first steps, one can see the slowness and fragmentation of their organizing processes. But one can also observe the richness of their reflections and contributions, even amid organizational discontinuity and fragmentation. Today, rural women have opened up a political space for equality, a space from which

for hundreds of years until recently one could only hear the voices and perspectives of men.

Here we reflect on how, from the margins of the campesino and indigenous women and from the margins of the feminist movement, rural women's voices emerge with a discourse that touches the heart of the mechanisms of exclusion, race, gender, and class. In the case of indigenous women, there is even a deeper struggle that oppresses, excludes, discriminates against, and exploits them. In this way, in spite of the social and political marginality from where they begin to become politically active, these women radicalize alternative projects for social change in both rural and feminist movements.

First, we look back to the rural women's organizations that were rooted in the 1970s through the first five years of the 1990s, a period when the two most important aspects of the campesino movements changed the struggles for land and for control over the process of production. Women participated in these processes, which allowed them to reflect on their own problems as well as the Zapatista uprising of 1994. Then we examine the rise of the indigenous rights movement, which was developing at the time and which erupted into a broad movement for indigenous rural women that shared their demands for personal rights and autonomy for their people. Women also raised their voices to criticize the gender inequalities that were naturalized by their cultural institutions and demanded recognition and respect for their rights. Finally, we recount the current struggles of rural women, both *mestiza* and indigenous, and consider the political and cultural transcendence of their political organizing as well as the nature of the challenges they face in the second decade of the twentieth century.

Women and Rural Social Struggles

In the last twenty years, the emergence of women's rural movement is related to the rise of the campesino movement; challenging the control over the campesino movement is the National Peasant Confederation (CNC), the most important official representative of peasants in Mexico. The CNC was designed to maintain political clientelism over the Mexican peasantry. It maintained this control through difficult and drawn-out legal proceedings as peasants attempted to gain access to land guaranteed to them by Article 27 of the Mexico Constitution.¹ During the entire decade of the 1970s, peasants from all over Mexico fought with landowners, political bosses, businesspeople, and state authorities, whose means of production were much sought after (Barra 1985, 120–42). Invasions and land takeovers were commonplace for hundreds of groups and campesino struggles

that, by 1979, had achieved the establishment of the National Coordinador Plan de Ayala (CNPA), whose saying—"Today we fight for the land, also for power"—reflects the political character of agrarian struggles of the day.

During the last decade, in the violent struggles for land led by men, women were present, elbow to elbow, as a show of support. In moments of great tension and risk of repression, they put themselves on the frontline of these mobilizations or land invasions under the concept (not always confirmed) that, as women, they would not be treated as brutally as the men would.² Women participated in social struggles and joined in debates, but they rarely spoke up and voted, their role clearly being secondary. They took on traditional women's tasks such as preparing the meals or growing their families' food and taking care of their families while their husbands participated in meetings. But silence doesn't mean a lack of thinking, so their presence in the assemblies and mobilizations also familiarized them with agrarian and radical political discourses of the rural environment. Because of their participation in rural organizing, campesinos were identified with revolutionary Zapatismo; but they were also identified as being part of the broader popular movement of exploited, subaltern people who stood alongside the campesino movement. This broader popular movement included independent unions, the urban popular movement, the student movement, and the independent left political parties that emerged during the seventies and the eighties. In this context, rural women began to share both a political perspective and a project of social change.

Rural Women Speak Out

At the beginning of the 1980s, rooted in other spaces, rural women focused on repositioning themselves within social movements and constructing a new discourse around gender. In 1980, various civil organizations, liberation theologians, and popular movements³ organized the First National Women's Gathering, with the intention of opening up a debate about the "problematic of women" within the popular sectors. Rural women had gained experience in multiple rural struggles, but in that gathering, for the first time, they began to allow the problems they have as women to become known.

Collectively, they realized that they were subordinated and treated unequally in all aspects of their personal and political lives—in the home and with their families, in their communities, and in the campesino organizations. They began to analyze the amalgam of class and gender conflicts in the social arena, but they also shined a light on the contradictions and conflicts with their menfolk, with whom they shared dreams of social

change. The issues they raised had to do with rights regarding the politics of housework, land rights, and sexuality. This was the first spark of the movement, but it lacked enough time for reflection to turn that initial spark into a movement and authentic changes.

Among the most important agreements reached at that meeting was the organizing of women by sectors, workers, urban activists, peasants, each separately, with the goal of broadening the reflection of the grassroots in order to organize another larger, more broad-based and representative meeting of women at the national level. Later, in various local meetings and in view of the economic crisis and the dispersion and distance between rural communities, the rural women who began this organizing process decided to organize regional gatherings. They organized one in the state of Jalisco, another one in Sonora, and three in the southeast (in Morelos and Chiapas). Rural women from the CNPA attended, as did members of rural groups that organized against the "appropriation of the productive process" (collective ownership of production, credit, supplies, and the commercialization of harvests, as opposed to the inherent paternalism of the state bureaucracy). They postulated the concept of autonomy from the state and its corporative entities. They had already been organized by 1984 in UNORCA (National Union of Regional, Peasant, and Autonomous Organizations)⁴ and members of Christian-based communities. In some cases, women were already organized in production and craft cooperatives, or in health or nutrition fields. These included collectives like UAIM (Agricultural and Industrial Women's Unity). These were self-managed organizations in the corn-mill, small-scale farming, and sheep-herding industries. But perhaps the majority of the attendees were just a part of the multiethnic campesino movement, without having any affiliation with a specific activity as women.⁵

The promotion and organizational processes were supported by civic organizations like Women for Dialogue, CIDADAL-Cuernavaca, Equipo Pueblo, and Christian-based communities. Just like Chiapas, Morelos had a broad-based organizing effort in the countryside, as did SEPAC (Services in Popular Education A.C.). Among these organizations, during the first half of the eighties, CIDADAL was key in developing processes for reflection, with a focus on gender, showing their commitment to women from the popular sectors and their critical position toward gender inequality. Some groups, such as Equipo Pueblo or Women for Dialogue, had more relationships with the campesino movement, but only CIDADAL had developed methodologies for popular education and specific themes for women in the popular sectors. Here we can see their importance and their feminist imprint on the construction of new discourses and identities for rural women.

In February 1986, the First Encounter of Peasant Women of the National Coordinator of the Plan of Ayala was held and, from then on, reflections on gender developed during multiple regional and local meetings. These meetings touched on the themes of rural women and the family and community, women's agrarian rights, Agricultural and Industrial Women's Unity, domestic work and agricultural labor, cooperatives, sexuality, health, and nutrition. The 1986 meeting was rich in reflections. Rural women showed themselves to be the poor among the poor, as they recognized their nutritional deficiencies, their multiple health problems, and their long, intense workdays due to the lack of basic services in their homes and communities. Their reflections shifted the political discourse of the campesino movement. They were rendered invisible in their rural organizations, without a voice or vote in assemblies in spite of their participating, shoulder to shoulder, with men in agrarian struggles. They were regarded as nobodies by all public institutions in spite of their strong participation in the agricultural workforce, had scarce access to land rights, and were treated poorly by their husbands and denied even the possibility of deciding how many children they would have. That 1986 gathering was promising, but the internal conflicts of the campesino movement disarticulated the fragile national organizing apparatus that they had achieved over a number of years, demonstrating the hierarchy among their membership and political identities, as well as the subordination going on inside their organization.

Under these circumstances, the processes were growing stronger at the local and regional level, in part because of the women's efforts to make their projects acceptable in the peasant communities. But the progress was also due to the multiplication of civil groups that supported them and their efforts, among them being the National Network of Rural Promoters and Advisors, which, since the mid-1980s up to today, has maintained an exchange of experiences working with women on their gender demands. Also important was the "wave" of grants that demanded a "gender perspective" in their project and relatedly the feminization of social programs developing in rural communities, such as *Opportunities* and those that came before, like *Progresos y Promosol*.⁶

One characteristic of the peasant movement that emerged in the 1980s, and even up until the Zapatista uprising of 1994, is that *peasant identity* and political agendas overshadowed the *gender-specific* and *ethnic-specific* demands of the women, since the word "peasant" emphasizes the link to the land, the struggle to "appropriate the productive process," a confrontation with capitalism and the political system and official corporatism, as well as the struggles against peasant exploitation in the marketplace (land, work, commodities, money), and peasant demand for the democratization of social spaces.

The emergence of gender in peasant struggles divided peasant identities, because the eruption of difference has a conflictive character, a harsh appearance, and a demand to recognize the legitimacy of difference (Gutiérrez 2002, 80). Therefore, the politics of women tended to enrich the peasant movement, but it also caused tensions and conflict within it; in the same way and for many years, in peasant women's organizations, indigenous women's identities were not recognized, as they appeared only as *peasants*. This is how the various organizing processes developed in the rural women's movement between 1980 and 1994. They reemerged during the second half of the nineties, as part of the indigenous women's movement, since by that time that no one was blocking women's expressions of ethnic identity and belonging.

Convergences and Conflicts in Gender Identity

In each region, rural women adopted diverse organizing dynamics. In Chiapas, for example, the first contacts women made were with the peasant movement, which opened up spaces and facilitated a basic agenda during the first gatherings. The organizing processes were influenced by other actors as well, among them the "women's ministry," which sought to "promote organization with a religious commitment in peasant families and communities . . . respecting God's plan [in incorporating them] more actively in the struggle against exploitation" (Garza and Toledo 2004, 197). The religious workers began a literacy campaign and created groups dealing with health or a "reflection and analysis of reality." But soon came forth "timid questionings of women's submission," and religious workers organized gatherings of peasant women of the south in 1986. And so began a long process that in 1994 developed into the creation of the Coordinator of Diocesan Women (CODIMU).⁷

In certain electoral districts, official programs are created directly for women, and peasant organizations begin to get resources and open spaces through these organizations. This was the case of San Jolovil (Casa del Tejido), which was opened by Fonart in 1979; of the Jpas Joloviletik, promoted by the National Indigenous Institute (INI), whose ranks swelled, even in the 1990s; and of the Jolom Mayatek (Mayan Tejidos), which was supported by Kinal Anzetik, A.C. (Garza 2002, 129). Another important anchor for indigenous women's organizations in Chiapas was health, as its first traditional medicine clinic was developed, herbal medicine was supported, and with the aid of civil groups a project was set up to address reproductive health and midwifery.

In Puebla, although many women participated in the construction of the "United We Will Win" Regional Farming Cooperative, or "Tosepan Titantamiske,"⁸ their indigenous and gender identities were diluted because of the masculine peasant face of the cooperative. Analysis of the 1990s showed evidence of women's presence, their productive role, their history of organizing (such as conflict with the Tosepan in their craft projects), their improved management of economic resources, and their proposals to rectify gender inequalities were considered unacceptable by cooperative members.

Even though, at the beginning of the 1980s, some public institutions promoted women's projects in the region, it wasn't until 1985 that "an organizing process for craft workers in San Andres Tzicuilan . . . had been initiated. They were already members but only at the local level; later, after two attempts, they were accepted [in La Tosepan and] in 1987 there were already 300 members" (Pérez Nasser 1999, 71–72). Their process was pointed out by academics in the Postgraduate College of Agriculture in the State of Mexico. Here, the position of the advisors was openly feminist, and they were familiar with the indigenous women's struggles and those issues that provoked conflict from the cooperative's members. Organizational training, productive projects, craft projects, business training, and addressing questions of gender⁹ all strengthened the *Nahuatl* women's collective, but the development of their organization created problems for the larger cooperative and led to its division in 1992.¹⁰ The Craftworkers Organization called "Msealsiuamej Mosenyolthcauanij" ("Indigenous Women Working Together") was a byproduct of this rupture. After their separation, new crafts and tourism project have crystallized, and today they are acknowledged as important social actors and a point of reference for other rural women (see Mejía Flores 2008).

In the center of the state of Guerrero, a similar process occurred: Women of the Society for Social Solidarity Zanzekan Tinemi ("We Stand Together"), an ethnically mixed peasant organization, initiated an organizing process based on production projects (corn mills, garment businesses, and chicken farms), but the Zanzekan faced difficulties by not managing their budget properly and not appropriately prioritizing their work (Aleman Mundo et al., 1999, 257). These factors motivated them to create their own judicial system, called the Society for Social Solidarity, or "Titekitoke Tahome Sihume" ("The Women Are Working"), which at one point had some three hundred members. Nevertheless, problems with the leadership of the Zanzekan in accepting that women could manage their own resources and projects, and that they had a more important role in the interethnic organization and in front of their financing agencies,

caused them to break away and create another organization, the "Noche Sihame Zanze Tajome" ("All Women As One"; Espinosa 2009b).

Just like the women of Puebla, the women from Guerrero had reflected and acted on the issues they faced regarding gender inequality, but in both cases, their bitter experience inside the mixed organization motivated them to rebel. In both of these instances, Nahautl women, who at the beginning of the 1990s were recognized only as peasants, today are considered pillars of the indigenous women's movement, both in their home states and at the national level.

In Oaxaca as in Guerrero, where agrarian struggles in the 1970s were difficult, and later, as the struggle over the appropriation of the processes of production strengthened a powerful tendency within the peasant movement, women from diverse regions joined a number of struggles and organizations. At the end of the 1980s, the collapse of international coffee prices and the dissolution of *Inmecafe* (the state-supported entity that supported coffee producers) led to the development of the State Coordinator of Coffee Producers (CEPCO), which articulated a new wave of regional organizing. Already by 1992, CEPSCO was promoting women's organizing in regional organizations. The productive projects and the health and social service projects were beginning to develop, but little by little women broadened their areas of focus until they embarked on a critique of gender relations (Acuña 2000, 88), supported by advisors with a feminist identity. In 1998, 277 women's groups had been created. Acuña reveals how, in the Mixtec Highlands of Oaxaca, these groups pressured their organization to recognize the women's projects and resources, an experience that led them to reflect more on their circumstances and work more toward social action. Already they were moving beyond productive projects, health projects, and social services toward organizing against gender inequalities that were impeding their potential as well as their exercise of their basic rights.

In Alamos, Sonora, one of those organizing processes began that later would bring together events and discourses of indigenous women. At first, in 1979, health was the most pressing problem that concerned the Yaquis, and four groups were created to deal with this issue. In 1985, there were 25 groups dealing with health, but it wouldn't be until 1986 (after the Gathering of women of the CNPA), when "the First Regional Gathering of Peasant Woman of Alamos brought together diverse experiences, and looking to carry out this meeting" (Alonso et al. 2000, 359) where, in contrast to the earlier period when health was regarded as the only concern, specific problems of women were dealt with, as was the organizing process itself. From that point on, they advanced a critical reflection about the situation of peasant women and gender relations, and had begun to diversify their areas of action. In 1988, in reference to the Third Annual Regional

Gathering, they questioned the priority given almost exclusively to men by credit and rural development programs. In 1989, at the conclusion of the Fourth Regional Gathering, the Regional Organization of Women of Alamos gave rise to associated figures like the Society of Social Solidarity's Susana Sawyer (ibid., 367-77) and the Network of Women of UNORCA, which finally converted into the Mexican Association of Women's Network (AMMOR), with around sixteen thousand members and its own officially recognized organization (Serrano 2000). This broad network of savings and loans inspired diverse productive projects and initiated meetings and reflections with clearly feminist themes such as the *empowerment* of women and masculinity. But it also questioned UNORCA's definition of "appropriation of the means of production" as the central organizational objective, ignoring that the agrarian problem is an unresolved issue for women, since very few of them have agrarian land titles and direct access to land, which thereby limits them as "subjects" of credit and production support programs. At the same time, they are hailed as "beneficiaries" of welfare policies, which reinforces the gendered division of labor and denies the productive role women play in their families and communities.

Dialogues with Civil and Peasant Feminisms

As mentioned, the processes of reflection and organization of peasants/indigenous have been supported and influenced by academics, by civil and lay organizations influenced by liberation theology, and by feminist organizations or those with a gender perspective. CIDHAL and Women for Dialogue were pioneers in this, but over the years other civilian agencies joined in and supported not only peasant women but also the emerging indigenous women's movements. Agencies that stand out include Comaletzin AC, which was formed in 1987 and has worked with indigenous and cape-skin women from Morelos, Puebla, Sonora, and Chiapas; the Center for Research and Action for Women (CIAM) and the Women's Group of San Cristobal de las Casas, both established in 1989, which worked with women in Los Altos de Chiapas and with Guatemalan refugees; and the Women's Team in Solidarity Action (EMAS), which in the late eighties established a headquarters in Michoacan and worked with Purépecha women. The National Network of Advisors and Rural Promoters, whose members work in different states, has been one of the more permanent bodies in supporting processes of indigenous and peasant women.

While organizational processes of peasant women would be inexplicable without the support and the ideology of the peasant movement, they are not comprehensible without a gendered perspective that promotes civil

organizations that support and ultimately are rooted in feminist thinking. Since the early eighties, feminism and peasant women alike engaged in messy, tense dialogues that were central to the construction of their discourse, identities, and actions. True, advocates and grassroots women rejected an uncompromising feminism, with its reality and its problems,¹¹ but it is false to state that the subversive discourse of these women is alien and opposed to feminist discourse. History shows that social subjects are in dialogue over construction of competing policy proposals and concepts under discussion. It's not about finished speeches constructed in isolation. Rather, there are mutual influences, as well as political and cultural clashes, but it is in the midst of this sea of relationships that building and rebuilding processes, agendas, and political identities take place.

Critical reflection on gender relations among peasant women was not a result of "natural" peasant processes but the product of a dialogue with feminism and women's own mixed organizations. Since the resistance there has been an appropriation and reworking of feminist issues in the context of indigenous and peasant lives. This paved the way in the mid-1990s for the indigenous women's movement to merge with neo-Zapatismo and the national indigenous movement, but from the outset it expressed a critical discourse, not only of class exploitation and ethnic discrimination but also of gender inequalities.

The New Indigenous Identities and Gendered Demands

The 1990s brought about the emergence of new indigenous identities that displaced peasant identities as sites of political organization. This was made visible from the so-called V Anniversary of the Encounter of Two Worlds in 1992. The collective organization against the official celebrations created spaces of confluence among peasant farmers throughout the continent, who began to assert their indigenous identities.

But this resistance movement was only the tip of the iceberg of broader political and organizational processes that have changed indigenous thought from an analytical and legal term into a concept of self-assertion, creating a new collective imagination and a transnational space. This allowed for the sharing of experiences, thinking about joint strategies, and establishing of links between groups as diverse as the Maori of New Zealand, the Adivaci in India, and the Maya of Mexico and Guatemala.

At the same time that indigenous representatives were planning a strategy of resistance to the V Centennial Commemoration, the discourse about the indigenous traveled along rural roads of Latin America, reaching isolated villages through workshops, marches, and meetings,

where community leaders and members of NGOs or religious orders, who embraced liberation theology, began to popularize the concept "first peoples" and denounced the effects of colonialism in their lives and territories. Thus local self-appointed Zapotecs, Mixes, Aymara, and the like added a new sense of identity, as indigenous beings who came to build a new, imagined community aligned with oppressed peoples throughout the world. Analysts say the indigenous rights movement was born transnational (Brysk 2000, Tilley 2002), since from its origins it went beyond local struggles and self-ascription.

Studies of the Mexican indigenous movement of that era do not mention women, but the testimonies show that they were responsible for the "logistics" of marches, pickets, and analysis in those meetings that were documented.¹² Women's role as "escorts" left them in the shade and excluded them from decision making but allowed them to meet and share experiences with indigenous women in different regions of the state.

Religious members who adhered to liberation theology played an important role in promoting opportunities for reflection, especially in the influential Dioceses of San Cristobal (Chiapas); Oaxaca and Tehuantepec (in Oaxaca); and Tlapa (in Guerrero). The Diocese did not promote a reflection of gender, but in their courses and workshops designed to analyze social inequalities and racism of mestizo society, indigenous women began to question the gender inequalities they were experiencing within their communities.

Similarly, civilian feminist organizations that for years had combined their support for productive projects with reflection to promote gender awareness now continued their work in indigenous areas that claimed not only the rights to land but also rights to a specific culture and control of the territory. However, it was after the public appearance of the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in 1994 that indigenous women began to raise their voices in the wider spaces, not only to support the demands of their peers or the interests of their communities but as well to demand respect for their specific rights as women.¹³

Since then, attention has been given to the numerical and politic importance of indigenous women in the political-military organization of the EZLN. Several were at the forefront of making municipal presidencies. The Commanders Ramona, Trini, and Andrea and the Lieutenant Ana Maria quickly became symbols of resistance for indigenous women. What from the outset distinguished Zapatismo from other Latin American guerrilla movements, in which women have also participated, was the inclusion of gender demands on their platform of struggle. The so-called Revolutionary Act of Women¹⁴ resulted from a consultation held among several activists

and Zapatista bases of support, and is known, according to a statement from the Subcommander Marcos, as “the first Zapatista uprising” (1994).

The Act consists of ten points, including the right of indigenous women’s political participation and leadership positions, the right to live free of sexual and domestic violence, the right to decide how many children to have, the right to a fair wage, the right to choose to marry, and the right to quality health services and education, among others. Although all indigenous women do not know this law in detail, it has become the symbol and the possibility of a more-just life for them. Under the influence of the Zapatista movement and its Revolutionary Law for Women, we see for the first time in Mexico a movement on a national scale; it is still emerging and has many internal tensions. However, through various and distinct local efforts, the movement demands the incorporation of gender into the political agenda of the indigenous movement.

The National Movement for Indigenous Women

In 1997, over seven hundred women from different parts of the country attended the National Meeting of Indigenous Women, called “Building Our History.” They established the National Coordination of Indigenous Women (CNMI). This umbrella organization grouped together women from about twenty indigenous villages, along with women from the states of Chiapas, Michoacán, Morelos, Distrito Federal, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Mexico state, Puebla, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Sonora, Veracruz, and Oaxaca. In its introductory brochure it cited as being among its objectives: “Strengthen the leadership of indigenous women from a gender perspective, drawing from our cultural identity, establishing a nationwide communication network of indigenous women; provide training and support to indigenous women nationally; manage financial resources to implement regional productive projects, training and service for the indigenous peoples; raise awareness among indigenous peoples and the national society about respect for the human rights of indigenous women and a vision of gender. Training should include an appropriate methodology that takes into account gender identity according to our worldview” (Hernández Castillo, 2004).

Although the members of the CNMI did not publicly claim to be feminists, their gendered demands and interest in combating the subordination of indigenous women have caused many analysts to talk about the genesis of a new indigenous feminism (see Espinosa 2009a, Hernández Castillo 2001 and 2008, and Marcos 1997). Although the participation of women in peasant and indigenous struggle is not new and predates by centuries the

Zapatista movement (Gall y Hernández 2004), the creation of a national organization and the struggle for their specific demands as women are unprecedented in the history of the indigenous movement.

Unlike other aspects of the feminist movement, indigenous women have maintained dual membership, linking their gendered claims to the struggles for autonomy of their people; hence, their interest to remain in mixed organizations that fight for land and control of territory and for political and cultural rights. This double militancy has faced resistance from both the feminist movement and the indigenous movement, although both movements have been stimulated: feminists to incorporate cultural diversity in their vision of gender inequality, and the indigenous movement to incorporate gender perspectives into ethnic and class inequality under which indigenous people live.

Since its inception in 1996, the National Indigenous Congress (CNI, one of the main areas of convergence for indigenous movements after the Zapatista uprising) relied on the active participation of women on their working boards, where the most active leaders pushed for the creation of women-specific boards. Again, as has happened in the history of the Latin American Left, the ghost of divisiveness arose to deny the right to a private space. Finally, in the CNI meeting held in Nurió, Michoacán, in March 2001, with the presence of the Zapatista high command, a women’s board was created. Despite the commitment of the leadership of CNI, at the time of the discussion, many indigenous leaders demanded that the board be open to men. Purépecha, Mixe, Zapotec, and Chocholec women all patiently explained to their companions that it was not an initiative to divide the CNI, but a working strategy to create a climate of trust in which indigenous women, mostly monolingual, may express their feelings. A Purépecha leader cut off the discussion, grabbing the microphone from the coordinator of the board and demanding that attendees discuss “really serious” items. The board ended up being a “majority” of women. This incident illustrates the uphill struggle of indigenous women to open democratic space and relationships in their joint movement.

Some 13 years after the creation of the CNMI, its activists have had to face not only the resistance of their comrades, but also the internal factionalism of the coordinating committee, whose top leaders have left. The different positions of indigenous organizations, with respect to their relationship to the state and the Zapatista movement, hinder the consolidation of a national movement for indigenous women. Similarly, the lack of funding to support grassroots work through workshops and promotion of organizational processes has hindered the work of the coordinating committee in different regions of the country. Against this background, many indigenous women who became leaders of the solidarity movements with

Zapatistas, and who occupied important positions within the CNMI, have chosen to concentrate their political and organizational work locally.

These difficulties led to a retreat and a weakening of the CNMI national articulations, but the political knowledge that was acquired in these areas is affecting the consolidation of state or local processes, around community justice, participation in local government, sustainable development, and health, among others. Although it remains difficult to speak of a national indigenous feminism, nevertheless the Zapatista women, the experience of the CNMI, and the dozens of local processes that exist today oblige us to recognize that the struggles against racism, sexism, and economic exploitation can, and should, be complementary, concurrent, and articulated.

The Voices of Women in the Legal Debate

At the same time that the voices of indigenous women struggle to reconceptualize Mexican feminisms, they have had to confront the use of discourses on women's rights as an argument to deny the cultural rights of indigenous peoples. The debate over autonomy and indigenous rights was at the center from 1994 until the early years of the new century, reaching its peak when the bill prepared by the Commission for Harmony and Pacification (Cocopa), based on the San Andrés Accords (signed between representatives of the EZLN and the federal government), was sent by President Vicente Fox to Congress for possible adoption. Despite the extensive political mobilization in support of the so-called Law of Cocopa, which included members of the EZLN command for 12 states of Mexico³, 3,383 indigenous delegates from 41 ethnic groups in Nurió, Michoacán, who supported the bill; and the historic appearance of the Zapatista command before the Congress, the main demands for autonomy of this initiative were rejected by the majority of both houses of Congress, which passed a very limited Indigenous Law. The EZLN and the national indigenous movement saw this as a mockery of their claims and a betrayal of the San Andrés Accords.¹⁵

The approved Indigenous Law placed a series of limitations on the proposed Cocopa autonomy law. It gives the state legislatures the authority to determine how to recognize the autonomy of indigenous people; it denies their right to management of their collective lands and territories and the legal status of their regulatory systems. Despotic forces control most of the state legislatures, and the freedom granted in the new law will only be a figure of speech without a legal foundation that allows it to be operational. The Indigenous Law was a response to the pressures against autonomy that

the conservative right and ethnocentric liberals had since 1996, when they disregarded the San Andrés Accords.

Indigenous women have played an important role in defending the Law of Cocopa: It was a woman who gave the most important political message of the EZLN to Congress. On March 28, 2001, before the Mexican deputies, she began her speech: "My name is Esther, but that does not matter now. Soy Zapatista, but that does not matter at this time. I'm Indigenous and I am a woman, and that's all that matters now." She and Maria de Jesus Patricio, a traditional *Nahuatl* healer and member of the National Indigenous Congress, expressed a dynamic conception of culture. The two claimed the right to their own culture, while recounting their efforts to transform elements of the tradition they consider oppressive and exclusionary in their own communities. Both women are representatives of a movement within and outside the Zapatistas that has taken up the task of confronting visions of indigenous culture that either idealize it or dismiss it. Indigenous women have sued the state for their collective rights as peoples and their rights as an indigenous movement to change the cultural forms that violate their human rights. Their participation in the Congress, within the Indigenous National Congress, and in their own spaces offers a guide to rethink autonomy from a dynamic view of culture, while claiming the right to self-conceived identity as a historical construction that is formed and reformulated daily. This is a vindication of the multicultural nature of the nation, and it offers a definition of culture that encompasses not only the voices and hegemonic representations of culture, but also the diversity of voices and contradictory processes that give meaning to collective human life.

New National Situations and Local Struggles in the Twenty-First Century

The struggles for recognition of the Law of the Cocopa and indigenous autonomy in the early years of this century served as a political education for the country's indigenous, but it is important to recognize that the intense mobilization also wore many leaders down, and they moved away from their local and anti-like work that women's indigenous and peasant organizations did in the eighties and nineties of last century. The disenchantment with the limitations of the Indigenous Act that was passed and the possibilities of legislative control, or armed struggles that some local groups took up, led many leaders of the CNMI to reassess the basic work and redirect their energy toward promotion of spaces for collective reflection about their needs and demands as women and as indigenous.

More than a failure or disruption of the national movement of indigenous women, we must consider the current retreat to local struggles as another moment in which the experience of the national struggles for autonomy and indigenous rights, and reflection on their specific gender problems, are being collectivized at the community, regional, or state level. They are also strengthening organizational networks to reconstitute community justice, create resistance to megadevelopment projects, struggle for women's health, eradicate violence against women, and search for sustainable alternatives and defense of their rights.

One of the areas where women are redefining "the traditions and customs," as a product of a decade of experience mobilizing around rights and autonomy, is community justice. In various parts of the country, organizational processes of indigenous women have influenced, and in some cases have directly created, spaces of community justice. These are emerging experiences, and an analysis cannot be generalized to all indigenous regions of Mexico, but they have a symbolic importance in the new discourses and imaginaries about indigenous rights.

Some relevant experiences in this area are the spaces of Zapatista justice in the Good Government in Chiapas, Tzeltal, Tzotzil, and Tojolabal (see Mora Bayo 2008; Millán 2008); the case of Community Status in Tlahuilotepic, Oaxaca, in the Mixe (see Vianey 2009), and the Indigenous Court Cuetzalan, Puebla, in the Nahuatl (see Mejía, Celestina, and Rodríguez 2006; Terven 2008). These are very different experiences in regard to community justice, because in the former case we have a totally autonomous space that is not recognized by the state where Zapatista supporters are exercising their own justice, without any intervention by state institutions. In the second case, it is a space for justice that has been recognized by the constitutional reforms that have occurred in Oaxaca in the last decade. Finally, the Indigenous Court in the Mixe area was created by the state itself, as part of a series of judicial reforms that were proposed to decentralize justice, and has been reappropriated by indigenous organizations in the region.

In all three cases, these experiences claim indigenous community justice and the right of peoples to self-determination. But it is not an "indigenous law" that is static or of ancient origin and whose precepts cannot be changed; rather, it is a process that has been changing over time and is able to incorporate and be enriched by the experience and the thoughts of organized indigenous women. In all three cases of indigenous organizations there has been a struggle with the traditional and/or autonomous authority for participation in the application of justice and for reconstitution of rights in a way that includes the specific rights of indigenous women.

Another problem, which has been addressed since the eighties but has gained more strength in local or state organizations of indigenous women, is that of health problems and violence from a gender perspective. This struggle also includes rights: the social right to health; reproductive rights; and the right to a life free of violence. The reflection and awareness that these problems are another manifestation of social marginalization and ethnic and gender discrimination strengthened organizational processes in different states. In Guerrero, Puebla, Oaxaca, and Chiapas, for example, indigenous women and civilian agencies that work closely with them, supported with small donations, are operating self-managed "health houses" whose objectives are to reduce maternal mortality, improve pregnant women's health, educate them about their rights, prevent and eradicate violence against women, develop public awareness efforts, with women, men, youth, and community authorities, and create networks of midwives and health promoters.

The impact of these processes is multiple: At the organizational level, their own promoters and networks that are being created in some regions support the indigenous women's movement. The construction of a discourse and practice that combines social, ethnic, and gender perspectives in the health field inevitably has led to a critique of the public institutions and a demand that they respect their rights, including a respect for their reproductive decisions and establishment of an intercultural dialogue that recognizes their conceptions of health and illness, maternity, and the knowledge of midwives and healers and indigenous organizations as partners. In this sense, the struggle for health is simultaneously a process where the indigenous woman as citizen is constructed. Indigenous women's demands for health not only point to the relationship with the state and its agencies but are also indicative of gendered cultural changes in their communities and their families, where women are attempting to change their subordinate status and reduce the violence that sometimes results in death for women (Espinosa 2009c).

It is worth noting that the productive projects and savings and loan groups that started in the eighties have continued and grown. At the beginning of the new century, new struggles by peasant women emerged, with ecologists protecting their forests, those that organize around the use and care of rivers and water protesting against pollution, and those who are starting agroecology. We cannot include in detail the range of experiences and struggles that are shaping peasant and indigenous women, but the experiences of the last decades are reflected in many of the discourses and practices of these movements. They have begun to incorporate the processes of internal democratization and participation of women as a prerequisite for organizational consolidation.

In Conclusion: Challenges and Achievements of Peasant Women's Movements

Despite the long and intense journey that peasant and indigenous women have traveled and the processes of change that their social participation created, there is still an unfathomable gap for indigenous and peasant women where gender inequality persists in land tenure and access to natural resources, lack of recognition for agricultural and domestic work, restricted access to credit and development programs, less pay for work, the marginalization of many in behind-the-scenes work, and the invisibility of their role in feeding people and the food culture.

While indigenous and peasant women's participation in family and community decisions is growing, inequities in gender, class, and ethnic identity persist in official institutions, villages, and homes, in the public and private sectors, and within peasant and indigenous movements. For example, the intense mobilization in 2001 to defend the Cocopa Law helped grow the movement called "The Countryside Does Not Tolerate It Anymore" (MCNAM). In 2003, MCNAM brought together a dozen of the largest peasant organizations, some of them with origins in the struggles of the seventies and eighties, such as the CNPA and UNORCA and other more recent organizations, including some central committees of the former state party (the Institutional Revolutionary Party), now in opposition to the incumbent National Action Party.

Beyond the course and outcome of the movement, which generated strong debate within the MCNAM, it is interesting to note that despite the experience and maturity of the processes of peasant and indigenous women, their organizations were marginalized, with little involvement in the direction and negotiation of the National Agreement for the Countryside signed by peasant organizations and the government.

The "Campaign Without Corn There Is No Country," which included peasant organizations and civilian agencies working in the countryside, shows another side of the same problem. While it involves a great number of women, gender issues and claims were rendered irrelevant in the Campaign. The organizational advances and the reflections and perspectives of gender that peasant and indigenous women have been developing for decades are not always reflected in the daily spaces or in mixed organizations.

In recent decades, the lives of peasant women, the construction of their identities, their experiences and political and gender projects, are undergoing profound changes. This is due in part to structural adjustment policies and a business perspective that is both ethnocentric and sexist. Understandings of development from this perspective deny the cultures and worldview

of indigenous and peasant women and, above all, deny the burden of women's work and responsibilities. However, small gaps have opened for the development of their abilities. Conversely, the rural agrarian, productive, and democratic movements have fought against ethnic discrimination and for political and territorial rights in resistance to the hegemonic project. For many years women in these movements have played a secondary role, but these movements have also been a school for political education and a space to construct themselves as social actors. They are raising their voices and advocating for a new social imaginary. Lastly, while there has been contact with feminist discourse and collaborations with civil organizations that support peasant and indigenous women, they have configured their own feminist discourse.

The neoliberal economic and political context poses great challenges for the survival of peasant and indigenous communities. However, the political experience of the past decades has influenced indigenous and peasant women to develop their own strategies to confront this civilizing project that excludes them, along with their communities. From the edges of mixed indigenous and peasant movements and from the fringes of the feminist movement, indigenous and peasant women's practices and theorizing about gender inequality or exclusion, ethnicity and class, and their creative ways of imagining alternative modernities began to surface.¹⁶

The experience and thought of the peasant and indigenous women is questioning ethnocentric visions of academic and political feminism in Mexico and its difficulty in understanding evidence that subordination and gender inequality are not isolated, but intersect with ethnic exclusion, class, race, and religion, and the like. These issues require a rethinking of the concept of gender as a multidimensional category. It is time to recognize that there are multiple ways to articulate identities and gender projects within the constellation of actors and movements of a diverse and unequal Mexico. The contributions of indigenous and peasant women speak to the need to build a feminism that recognizes the plurality of the subject "Women" in the Mexican context.

References

- Acuña Rodarte, Blanca Olivia. 2000. "Caminando con la luna. Mujeres cafetaleras de la Mixteca Alta." Master's thesis in Rural Development, UAM-Xochimilco, Mexico.
- Alemán Mundo, Silvia, Emma Zapata Martelo, Pilar Alberti Manzanares, and Marta Mercado. 1999. "La participación de las mujeres indígenas en pequeñas empresas de Chilapa de Álvarez, Guerrero." In *Género, sustentabilidad y cambio*

- social en el México rural*, coordinated by Verónica Vázquez García. Colegio de Posgraduados en Ciencias Agrícolas: México City, Mexico.
- Alonso, Patricia, Carlota Botey, Marcos Luzanilla, and J. Ignacio Mancilla. 2000. "Alamos y sus mujeres. Historia de un proceso organizativo." In *Tiempo de crisis, tiempo de mujeres*, edited by Josefina Aranda, Carlota Botey, and Rosario Robles. Universidad Autónoma Benito Juárez de Oaxaca, México.
- Bartra, Armando. 1985. *Los herederos de Zapata. Movimientos campesinos posrevolucionarios en México*. México, ERA: México City, Mexico.
- Brysk Alison. 2000. *From Tribal Village to Global Village: Indian Rights and International Relations in Latin America*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Espinosa Damián, Gisela. 1993. "Feminismo y movimientos de mujeres: encuentros y desencuentros", en *Revista El Cotidiano*, No. 53, Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, unidad Azcapotzalco, México City, Mexico.
- . 2009a. "Mujeres rurales y crisis alimentaria", presentation in the Seventh Congress of AMER (Mexican Association of Rural Studies), San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico.
- . 2009b. *Cuatro vertientes del feminismo en México. Diversidad de rutas y cruce de caminos*. UAM-Xochimilco, México.
- . 2009c. "Mujeres indígenas y salud. Experiencias autogestivas en Guerrero, Oaxaca y Chiapas." Unpublished manuscript. Inédito.
- Gall Olivia, and R. Aída Hernández Castillo. 2004. "La Historia Silenciada. Las Mujeres Indígenas en las Rebeliones Coloniales y Poscoloniales." In *Voces Disidentes. Debates Contemporáneos en los Estudios de Género*, coordinated by Sara Elena Pérez Gil and Patricia Ravelo. CIESAS, Porrúa, México City, Mexico.
- Garza Caligaris, Anna María. 2002. *Género, interlegalidad y conflicto en San Pedro Chenalhó*. Programa de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias sobre Mesoamérica y el Sureste. UNAM: Instituto de Estudios Indígenas de la UNACH, México City, Mexico.
- Gil Tébar, Pilar. 1991. *Caminando con un sólo Corazón: Las Mujeres Indígenas de Chiapas*. Estudios sobre la Mujer. Editorial Atenea: México City, Mexico.
- Gutiérrez, Castañeda, Griselda. 2002. *Perspectiva de género: cruce de caminos y nuevas claves interpretativas. Ensayos sobre feminismo, política y filosofía*. PUEG, UNAM and Miguel Ángel Porrúa, Grupo Editorial, México City, Mexico.
- Hernández Castillo, Rosalva Aída, ed. 2008. *Etnografías e Historias de Resistencia. Mujeres Indígenas, Procesos Organizativos y Nuevas Identidades Políticas*. Publicaciones de la Casa Chata, CIESAS/PUEG-UNAM, México City, Mexico.
- Hernández Castillo, Rosalva Aída. 2007. "Movilidades Transfronterizas, Identidades Transnacionales: Nuevos Cruces de Fronteras entre los Indígenas Mames Mexicanos." In *Identidades y Movilidades en México y Colombia*, edited by Margarita Chavez. Bogota: Universidad Autónoma de Colombia.
- . 1998. "Indígenas y Religiosas en Chiapas: ¿Una Nueva Teología India desde las Mujeres?" *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 35(137): 32–55.
- . 2004. "Indigenous Law and Identity Politics in Mexico" *Political and Legal Anthropology Review (PoLAR)* 24(2): 90–109.
- Hernández Castillo, Rosalva Aída, and Liliana Suárez Navaz. 2004. "Las fronteras y la panacea del desarrollo en México y España." en *Revista Liminar Estudios Sociales y Humanísticos del Centro de Estudios Superiores de México y Centroamérica CESMECA-UNICAH* Year II Vol. 2 No. June 2004.
- . 1998. *La Otra Palabra: Mujeres y Violencia en Chiapas. Antes y Después de Acteul*. CIESAS/COLEM/CIAM, México City, Mexico.
- López Bárcenas, Francisco. 2004. "Los systems indígenas de cargo en la Mixteca." In *La fuerza de la costumbre: Sistema de cargos en la Mixteca oaxaqueña*, edited by Abigail Hernández Núñez and Francisco López Bárcenas, 9–28. Vol. 8 of *Derechos Indígenas*. Mexico: Centro de Orientación y Asesoría a Pueblos Indígenas.
- Lovera, Sara, and Nellys Palomo. 1999. *Las Alzadas*. México D.F., Centro de Información de la Mujer, A.C./Convergencia Socialista, Agrupación Política Nacional. México City, Mexico.
- Magallón, Carmen. 1988. "La participación de las mujeres en las organizaciones campesinas: algunas limitaciones." In *Las mujeres en el campo*, compiled by Jose-fina Aranda. Oaxaca: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociológicas.
- Marcos, Subcommander. 1994. "El Primer Levantamiento: Marzo 1993." *La Jor-nada*, January 30.
- Marcos, Sylvia. 1997. "Mujeres indígenas: Notas sobre un feminismo naciente." *Cuadernos Feministas* 1(2).
- Martínez Borrego, Estela. 1991. *Organización de productores y movimiento campesino*. Siglo XXI-UNAM. México City, Mexico.
- Mejía María, and Sarmiento Sergio. 1987. *La lucha indígena: un reto a la ortodoxia*. Siglo XXI, México.
- Mejía Flores, Susana. 2008. "Los derechos de las mujeres nahuas de Cuetzalan. La construcción de un feminismo indígena desde la necesidad." In *Etnografías e Historias de Resistencia. Mujeres Indígenas, Procesos Organizativos y Nuevas Identidades Políticas*, edited by Rosalva Aída Hernández, 453–503. México City, Mexico: Publicaciones de la Casa Chata CIESAS/PUEG-UNAM.
- Mejía Susana, Cruz Martin Celestina, and Rodríguez Carlos. 2006. "Género y Justicia en comunidades nahuas de Cuetzalan. La experiencia de la Casa de la Mujer Indígena." Paper Presentation to the V Congress of the Latin American Network of Juridical Anthropology in Oaxtepec, Morelos, November 2006.
- Millán, Mátgara. 2008. "Nuevos espacios, nuevas actoras. Neozapatismo y su significado para las mujeres indígenas." In *Etnografías e Historias de Resistencia. Mujeres Indígenas, Procesos Organizativos y Nuevas Identidades Políticas*, edited by R. Aída Hernández. CIESAS-PUEG/UNAM, México City, Mexico.
- Mora Bayo, Mariana. 2008. "La descolonización de la política: La autonomía indígena zapatista frente a las lógicas de la gobernabilidad neoliberal y una guerra de baja intensidad." PhD diss. in Social Anthropology, University of Texas, Austin.
- Morales Bermúdez, Jesús. 1992. "El Congreso Indígena de Chiapas: Un Testimonio." In *Anuario 1991*, 241–371. Chiapas, Mexico: Del Instituto Chiapaneco de Cultura, Tuxtla Gutiérrez.

- Olivera, Mercedes, Magdalena Gómez, and Diana Damián Palencia. 2004. *Chiapas: Miradas de Mujer*. México City: Mexico: Tercera Prensa.
- Pérez Nasser, Ella. 1999. "El proceso de empoderamiento de mujeres indígenas organizadas desde una perspectiva de género." Master's thesis in Rural Development, UAM-Xochimilco, México.
- Rovira, Giomar. 1997. *Mujeres de Matz*. Editorial Era, México City, Mexico.
- Santana, María Eugenia. 2001. *Mujeres organizadas de la Diócesis de San Cristóbal de las Casas: de la lucha por la dignidad a la lucha por el empoderamiento*. Master's Thesis in Science, Natural Resources and Rural Development, El Colegio de la Frontera Sur, San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas.
- Serrano, Rosa Isela. 2000. "El ahorro y el préstamo ¿una alternativa para la organización de las mujeres de la AMMOR-UNORCA?" Master's thesis in Rural Development, UAM-Xochimilco, México.
- Terven Adriana. 2009. "Justicia Indígena en Tiempos Multiculturales. Hacia la Conformación de Proyectos Colectivos Propios: La experiencia Organizativa de Cuetzalán." PhD diss. in Social Anthropology, CIESAS, México, D.F.
- Tilley V. Q. 2002. "New Help or New Hegemony? The Transnational Indigenous Peoples' Movement and 'Being Indian' in El Salvador." *Latin American Studies* 34(3): 525-54.
- Vianey, Liliana. 2009. "Las mujeres de Tlahuittepec mixe, frente a la impartición de la justicia local y el uso del derecho internacional, 2000-2007." Bachelor's thesis in social anthropology, ENAH, México.

Notes

1. Land was the most general demand of the peasant movements in the 1970s, but it was not the only one. Other demands were made respecting wages and working conditions, protests against the state bureaucracy, and protests against the political imposition of ejido and communal leaders and mayors in the municipios (Bartra 1985).
2. For example, Garza and Toledo (2004, 196) refer to the Simojovel and Venustiano Carranz, Chiapas, in which the struggles for land were very violent. The authors say that the popular strategy consisted of putting women, old people, and children in charge of the defense of taken lands, under the assumption that because they were weak, violence would not be used against them.
3. The attendees came from CIDHAL (Communication Exchange and Human Development in Latin America AC), who had been offered financing to organize a meeting with Latin American women leaders. CIDHAL, some ecclesiastical-based communities, and the Popular Education Network—Women for Dialogue and Group and Family Education organized the meeting, trying to get women to attend from all the popular sectors (Espinosa 1993).
4. The CNPA integrated small-scale producers, day laborers, and those demanding land; UNORCA only worked with small-scale producers. In spite of this, both identified as "campesino" organizations. In both organizations, many of

these campesinos were indigenous and, in this way, the CNPA and UNORCA constituted a very important political antecedent to the movement that came much later.

5. All together, the meetings were attended by members from the states of Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, Michoacán, Guanajuato, Puebla, Tabasco, Veracruz, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Guerrero, Sonora, Morelos, and Jalisco (Espinosa 2009b).
6. The Program for Education Health and Nutrition (Progresá), initiated by Ernesto Zedillo Ponce de León (1994-2000), provided continuity to the National Program of Solidarity (Pronasol), designed by Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994). Both focused on poverty and supported "social core-responsibility." The Progresá program was rebaptized as "Opportunities" during Mexico's President Vicente Fox's term (2000-2006). But it is similar to its predecessor, since both Progresá and Opportunities recognized the reproductive role of rural women and reinforced it with resources and action. Although in some cases the distribution of resources did not depend on a male partner's bettering women's position in the family and the community, still to be a part of this program overburdened women with work and meetings (the "core-responsibility" was regulated from above and required attendance at meetings, medical exams, participation in collective work projects, or serving as representatives at certain functions), strained the women's autonomy in decision making, and made it easier for men to ignore their domestic work. For a feminist analysis of the Opportunities program, see Mora Bayo 2008.
7. The Coordinator of Diocesan Women formed in February 1994, one month after the Zapatista uprising, when indigenous women representing almost 700 reflection groups linked to the Diocese of San Cristóbal met in that town in a show of strength. In these first meetings, they reflected on the challenges they faced as women in the new context of war, but they also were explicitly seeking to define evangelism from a women's perspective. In reading the Bible in the context of everyday life, indigenous women began to question the inequalities that they experienced not only as indigenous women and as peasants but also as just plain women. For a deeper analysis of this organizing process, see Gil Tébar 1991 and Santana 2001.
8. This cooperative was created in the mid-1970s, and by the mid-1990s it had grown to have roughly ten thousand members. The production and trading of corn and coffee have been central to the organization. The Tosepan have had a key role in the rural small-producers movement (Martínez Borrego, 1991).
9. It is necessary to emphasize that the reflections on gender dealt with many themes: gender inequality in a rural context, women in development (WID), gender and development (GAD), practical and strategic interests, empowerment, sexual and reproductive health, and violence against women.
10. There had been conflicts between the Crafts Commission, the advisors, and the leadership of Tosepan: Comments were made that "they didn't want us to continue to work with the advisors . . . Why were they going to get rid of them? Because the men said so?" (cited in Pérez Nasser 1999:7). Another issue was that the craftswomen received resources "and they were managing all of this;

we said . . . it's better that we have our own organization so we can do more projects" (ibid.).

11. Garza y Toledo say that the emerging academy in Chiapas had a hostile and suspicious attitude toward feminism. "The common perception was that it was a handful of radical protesters who had little to contribute to the knowledge of the legitimate struggles of the poor" (2004, 206), because the rural situation had hardly been touched by feminism.
12. Although some feminist journalists attempted to account for women's participation in these movements, academic papers published thus far have systematized this experience by silencing the voices of indigenous women. For example, on national indigenous and peasant movements, see Mejía and Sergio 1987. On the indigenous movement in Chiapas, see Morales Bermúdez 1992.
13. This participation in public spaces was in response to repression by both the state and their own colleagues and communities. For a discussion of other problems encountered in the organizational processes of indigenous women, see Magallón 1988.
14. That law was issued through the information arm of the EZLN "Mexican Alarm," distributed in various parts of Chiapas on January 1, 1994. The national and international press has reproduced it. For a description and detailed analysis of the Revolutionary Women's Law, see Rovira 1997 and Milán 2008.
15. The Cocopa initiative was taken up by President Fox in January 2001 and sent to Congress for discussion. On March 28, 2001, in a historic event for Mexico, representatives of the General Command of the EZLN rose to the podium of the Congress and supported the initiative of the Cocopa. On April 25 of the same year the Senate in full (including the senators "left" of the Democratic Revolution Party) passed an Indigenous law that substantially modified, in form and substance, the original initiative. A week later, the Chamber of Deputies, by a majority (this time opposed by the deputies of the PRD), affirmed the decision of the Senate. A comparison of the Cocopa law and the law passed, and an analysis of its limitations, can be found in López Bárcenas 2004 and Olivera, Gomez, and Damian 2004.
16. The reflections of indigenous women and their criticism of the exclusionary neoliberal project, ethnic essentialism, and ethnocentric feminism can be found in Lovera and Palomo 1999 and Sanchez 2001.

3

The Rebel Girls of the Other Campaign

The EZLN and Teenage Activism in Mexico City

Jessica K. Taft

The girl with the light-brown dreadlocks and braces thought for only a few moments before settling on a pseudonym. "Ramona," she says, "for the Zapatista Comandante Ramona." "Okay, great," I replied, "I'll call you 'Ramona' when I write about you." This young Ramona was 19, and in her last year of high school, when I met her. She and several of her peers had just started a new Zapatista collective, called *El Carracol*, within their Mexico City school, and Ramona, like her chosen namesake, was clearly at the center of the group. She had been part of the Frente Zapatista for several years before forming her school collective, and she worked hard to bring that experience to her peers without becoming a "leader" or "expert." With a deep commitment to equality and nonhierarchical organization, Ramona was a frequent facilitator during discussions and planning meetings, as well as a consistent voice for participatory democracy, humility, and careful listening, all of which she saw as central to Zapatismo.

Ramona is one of many self-identified teenage Zapatistas in Mexico City. The Zapatista movement informs her political practice in countless ways. And, in addition to explicitly Zapatista-identified teens like Ramona, other young activists in the city also draw on Zapatista ideas, practices, and beliefs in their political struggles and social movement organizations. They reference Zapatista sayings, wear Zapatista T-shirts, and speak of being inspired by the Zapatista struggle. In this chapter I consider how high school-aged girl activists in Mexico City relate to Zapatismo, and I

References

- Esteve, Gustavo, and Madhu Suri Prakash. 1998. *Grassroots Post-Modernism: Remaking the Soil of Cultures*. London: Zed Books.
- Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri. 2000. *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Naples, Nancy A. 2001. "The Challenges and Possibilities of Transnational Feminist Praxis." In *Women's Activism and Globalization: Linking Local Struggles and Transnational Politics*, edited by M. Desai and N. A. Naples. New York: Routledge.
- Sassen, Saskia. 1998. *Globalization and Its Discontents: Essays on the New Mobility of People and Money*. New York: New York Press.
- Kara Z. Dellacioppa** is an associate professor of sociology at California State University–Dominguez Hills. Her book *This Bridge Called Zapatismo* was published by Lexington Books in 2009.
- André C. Drainville** is a professor of sociology at Laval University, Canada. He has been writing on forms of resistances to world orders for almost twenty years. His latest academic book will be published later this year in the "Rethinking Globalizations" series by Routledge. It is titled *A History of World Order and Resistance: The Making and Unmaking of Global Subjects*. He has also published two novels, the most recent of which is called *Anxious Moments Before the Next Big Event* (Skrev Press, 2007).
- Gisela Espinosa Damián** is a professor and researcher at the Autonomous University Metropolitana, Xochimilco Unit, Mexico City, Mexico. She has conducted several studies on the struggles of rural, indigenous, and urban lower-class women. Her latest books include *Four Roads of Feminism in Mexico: Diversity of Routes and Crossings (Cuatro vertientes del feminismo en México: diversidad de rutas y cruce de Caminos)*, and *Guerrero Coordinator of Indigenous Women's Coordinating Council: Building equity and Citizenship (La Coordinadora Guerrerense de Mujeres Indígenas: Construyendo la equidad y la ciudadanía)*, the latter having been coordinated with two indigenous leaders, Martha Sánchez Néstor and Libni Diricio Chautla Iracema.
- Melissa N. Govea** is a graduate of Chapman University with a master's degree in sociology from California State University–Fullerton. She attributes her lifelong passion for social justice and women's rights to having been raised by a strong feminist mother whose constant encouragement to stand up for her beliefs led her to pursue a path as both an activist and a scholar. She lives in Southern California, where she fills her free time with hiking, cooking, and experimenting with her Holga camera.
- Aída Hernández Castillo** earned her doctorate in anthropology from Stanford University in 1996. She is currently a professor and senior researcher at CIESAS, the Center for Research and Advanced Studies in Social

Anthropology, in Mexico City. She has worked extensively on exploring ethnic identities in Chiapas as well as the political organization of rural and indigenous women in Mexico and Guatemala. She is the author of *Histories and Stories from Chiapas: Border Identities in Southern Mexico* (University of Texas Press 2001), published also in Spanish as *La Otra Frontera: Identidades Múltiples en el Chiapas Postcolonial* (2001) and is coeditor of *Dissident Women. Gender and Cultural Politics in Chiapas* (University of Texas Press 2006); *Etnografías e Historias de Resistencias. Mujeres Indígenas Resistencia Cotidiana y Organización Colectiva* (CIESAS-PUEG/UNAM 2010); *El Estado y los indígenas en tiempos del PAN: neoindigenismo, identidad y legalidad* (Porrúa 2004); *Mayan Lives, Mayan Utopias: the Indigenous Peoples of Chiapas and the Zapatista Rebellion* (Rowman & Littlefield 2003); and *The Other Word: Women and Violence in Chiapas Before and After Acteal* (IWGIA 2001).

Oscar Marquez is currently finishing his master's degree in Latin American studies. He plans on pursuing a doctorate in an interdisciplinary field, with a focus on social movements and cultural production. His thesis topic is the dialogical relationship between indigenous identity formation and the social movements for immigrant rights in Arizona. He is a first-generation college student of parents from Jalisco and Zacatecas. He is actively involved in various autonomous projects that revolve around Zapatismo or cultural production. He is also a DJ and a radio show host for an online and pirate radio station.

Jennifer Rogers is an assistant professor of sociology at Long Island University–CW Post. She received her Ph.D. in sociology from the University of California–Santa Barbara (UCSB). Her areas of research include intersections of race, class, and gender; environment and technology; and globalization. Her dissertation analyzes maize in Mexico, free trade, bioengineering, gender, and indigenous cultures. As a postdoctoral scholar at the Center for Nanotechnology in Society at UCSB from 2008 to 2010, she studied public perceptions of nanotechnology and gender.

Jessica Taft teaches sociology at Davidson College. She received her Ph.D. from UC Santa Barbara.

Michelle Téllez teaches for the women's studies program and the masters program in social justice and human rights at the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, Arizona State University. Her forthcoming (2012) book with University of Texas Press is titled *Gender, Citizenship, Land and the State: The Struggle for Autonomy at the U.S.–Mexico Border*.

Her writing and research projects seek to uncover the stories of transnational community formation, cross-border labor organizing, migration, and identity, as evidenced in her publications. She also volunteers and serves on the board at the Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice.

Clare Weber is a sociologist and an associate professor at California State University–Dominguez Hills. She serves as chapter vice president of the Dominguez Hills California Faculty Association. She is also a member of Educators for Immigrant Rights and a member of the editorial collective of the journal *Latin American Perspectives*. She uses community-based and participatory research methodologies. She is the author of *Visions of Solidarity: U.S. Peace Activists in Nicaragua from War to Women's Activism and Globalization*, published by Lexington Books in 2006. She is currently working on a community-based research project with a Mexican immigrant women's community organization in Southern California. The work is examining community efforts to end violence and address issues of environmental and social justice.