



UNSPEAKABLE VIOLENCE

Remapping
U.S. and
Mexican
National
Imaginaries

NICOLE M. GUIDOTTI-HERNÁNDEZ

UNSPEAKABLE Violence

A book in the series

LATIN AMERICA OTHERWISE:
LANGUAGES, EMPIRES, NATIONS

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Violence



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To my parents and sister—
thank you for breaking the silence—
and the people whom I write about
in this book, for presenting an
opportunity to counter the silence.

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✱ About the Series

Latin America Otherwise: Languages, Empires, Nations is a critical series. It aims to explore the emergence and consequences of concepts used to define “Latin America” while at the same time exploring the broad interplay of political, economic, and cultural practices that have shaped Latin American worlds. Latin America, at the crossroads of competing imperial designs and local responses, has been construed as a geocultural and geopolitical entity since the nineteenth century. This series provides a starting point to redefine Latin America as a configuration of political, linguistic, cultural, and economic intersections that demands a continuous reappraisal of the role of the Americas in history, and of the ongoing process of globalization and the relocation of people and cultures that have characterized Latin America’s experience. Latin America Otherwise: Languages, Empires, Nations is a forum that confronts established geocultural constructions, rethinks area studies and disciplinary boundaries, assesses convictions of the academy and of public policy, and correspondingly demands that the practices through which we produce knowledge and understanding about and from Latin America be subject to rigorous and critical scrutiny.

Unspeakable Violence is an innovative and thoroughly researched book that takes us to archival material, finds it silent about subaltern history, and transitions us to a different articulation of Mexican and American Indian, Mexican American and Chicana/o subjectivities. While mindful of the foundational explorations of mestizaje offered by Anzaldúa and other scholars, Guidotti-Hernández deploys a meticulously historicized and theorized methodology that opens up a counter-nationalist argument against merely celebratory, romanticized visions of identity and resistance and begins to fill in the aporias ignored by the contradictions in a border history and border studies inattentive to Mexican and Mexican American complicity in instances of sexual and racial violence. As with other texts in this series, *Unspeakable Violence* gives voice to the “otherwise” in the Latin Americas: Mexicans, Mexican Americans, American Indians, and Chicana/os.

✱ A Note on Terminology

The terms I use to label persons or groups living in the past and present are as complex as the question of identity itself. In general I use the same terms as the historical documents I rely on in each chapter. In some cases the terminology is blurred, and I attempt to flesh out the meaning of identification by disputing the ways in which certain terms are used. The following are definitions of the identity labels I use in the text:

Chicano/a	A label that arose from the Mexican American civil rights movement during the 1960s to describe an individual who is politically active and aware of the importance of race and class differences
Indian	Term used by the U.S. government and newspapers to describe Natives of North America
<i>Indígena</i>	Mexican Indian
Indigenous	Describes aboriginal or tribal first peoples of the Americas
Latina/o	Term that arose in the late twentieth century to describe peoples of Latin America who have been colonized and dispersed throughout the Americas
Mestiza/o	A person of mixed Spanish, African, and Indian ancestry

Mexican/Mexicana/o	A person born and raised in Mexico in either the nineteenth century or the twentieth
Mexican American	A person of Mexican descent born in the United States, mostly used in the twentieth century
Mestizaje	Used to describe the process of racial and cultural mixing in the Americas as a result of contact with Spanish colonialism. Also an ideology developed by José Vasconcelos as a mode of Mexican nationalism that called for the whitening of the race, that is, breeding out the indigenous and African qualities of the Mexican race.
Native	A North American Indian
North American Indian	A member of any of the tribal peoples native to the continental United States
Texas-Mexican	Term Jovita González uses to describe nineteenth- and twentieth-century Mexicans who inhabited Texas
Transnational	Refers to the circuits of goods, people, capital, ideas, and policies between and among nations
U.S. Mexican/U.S. Mexicana/o	A Mexican in the United States in the nineteenth century who was born in the territories of Mexico prior to annexation of what is now the U.S. Southwest (Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, California) and who remained in the United States after annexation

✱ Acknowledgments

Violence touches all of our lives in some way, shape, or form. I see this book as the beginning of a dialogue rather than an end to a project. It involved years of archival work, tears, frustration, and joy. I am thankful it has become something better than what I imagined at its inception. This could not have happened without the support of many people, including those whose lives I narrate as part of this project's argument. I can only hope I have done justice to the fine-grained stories of so many and would like to express my respect to those whose impassioned histories form the core of this book.

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A portion of chapter 4 appeared in “National Appropriations: Yaqui Autonomy, the Centennial of the Mexican Revolution and the Bicentennial of the Mexican Nation.” *Latin Americanist* 55, issue 1 (March 2011): 69–92.

✱ Introduction

While visiting my parents for Christmas in 2007 I read *Via Magazine*, a publication of the California Automobile Association. Reading it when I am home is a kind of ritual. I always read it with a bit of nostalgia for California, the place I left behind. This issue of the magazine, for September/October 2007, was of particular interest. An article entitled “Downieville: A Former Mining Town in the Sierra Revels in Its Golden Years,” chronicled the heyday of this community of 325 people in the Tahoe National Forest. The article describes how the town maintains some of its vintage charm, including “19th century clapboard and brick buildings, narrow lanes and creaky wooden sidewalks, [where] the past feels closer than it does anywhere else in California.”¹ As he interviewed locals for the article, some of them in their nineties, the author, Christopher Hall, discovered that “it doesn’t take long to realize that folks in Downieville love stories.”² This love of stories in Downieville, the seat of Sierra County, was born with the influx of up to sixteen thousand prospectors who rushed to the area after gold was discovered in the Downie River in 1848–49. There are still rumors that someone unwittingly found a gold nugget in a pot used to cook river trout. Downieville is a town whose very genesis was tied to a fiercely competitive economic market, where in the mid-nineteenth century people were willing to do anything to strike it rich panning for gold.³ To this day, tourists can do as the article recommends and visit the Sierra Hardware store, located at 305 Main Street, where they can purchase gear to pan for gold. Yet hidden or buried in this article is the not-so-golden shadow history of Downieville. In a few short sentences Hall makes a cursory allusion to its almost unspeakable past: “You might be nursing a cold one under the watchful gaze of a stuffed bear head at the St. Charles Place Saloon where you overhear two locals debating whether Juanita deserved to get lynched. It may take you a while to figure out . . . the events in question took place more than 150 years ago, not last week. . . . Next to the county courthouse, in a grove of trees you’ll come across a restored 1885 gallows. It hasn’t

been used since the year it was built, and then only once. And well, that's another story."⁴

A reader of this passage might think it comes from a historical document rather than a magazine designed to promote tourism in California. The gallows erected in 1885 to hang convicted people for the crimes they committed in this gold rush community are "another story," as is the lynching of Juanita in 1851 (she is variously referred to in sources as Josefa). These two details are the foundation for basic questions raised in this book. There is something exceedingly disturbing about Josefa/Juanita appearing in a tourist magazine. The banality of evil, the cursory reference to her lynching in the magazine juxtapose death and tourism as the picturesque that renders it minor, grotesque, and yet traumatic. The outrage I experienced at seeing this woman held up as an article of touristic interest is indescribable. Over the past ten years I have collected countless one-sentence references to Downieville and Juanita's lynching because they make me angry. And there is great reason to be angry: through these references the juxtaposition of death, tourism, and lynching becomes quotidian and yet spectacular. These fragments, these utterances seem almost unspeakable; that is, people allude to the event but rarely, if ever, flesh out the details. I call these references utterances because they do something, they posit something, and thus they imply action.⁵ Strangely, these utterances are about the flesh, about violence that culminated in the brutal destruction of a woman's body at a time when California's statehood was new and precarious in the 1850s, but they suspend further investigation, preventing the reader from engaging with these narratives of violence on a deeper level.

Such barely noteworthy references to Juanita's lynching can be skipped over, forgotten, or seen as local color, as they typically are; or the lack of detail in their strategic repetition may be understood as a way of instructing us to forget. Precisely because these cursory references say nothing and say everything, I wanted to know why Juanita (Josefa?), a Mexican woman living in the mining town on the banks of the Yuba and Downie rivers, met her brutal, torturous death over their waters. These few lines from an article written for tourists are typical of the way Juanita's lynching has been reported over time and space. There is something grotesque about the fact that the lynching of a woman appears in a tourism article. The grotesqueness of lynching as tourism in these cursory lines evokes the ways in which violence occurred situationally and further how U.S. Mexicanas (female subjects) were and continue to be conceived of in relationship to national history, citizenship, and racialized, sexualized violence.⁶

Josefa/Juanita's story, or lack thereof, said something to me through these

shadow utterances that populated the texts I read about California, about the gold rush, about Chicana/o historiography. Josefa/Juanita as a historical subject disappears in these one-line utterances, and all we are left with is fragments of what her life was like. We don't know why she was lynched, how much she suffered when she was hanged, what happened to her body, how she understood her citizenship, how many people were involved in the lynching, or what it meant to be the first Mexican woman lynched in California after statehood. While some might argue that lynching was a common form of punishment in the wild West,⁷ what is different and crucial about this one is that women were rarely lynched, and those who were usually were women of color.⁸ Given my academic training, I was most concerned with how Josefa/Juanita's racial, gender, and sexual identities played a role in how and why she was lynched and in how the event is narrated.

In this book I investigate the history behind moments such as this one, by arguing that violence is an ongoing social process of differentiation for racialized, sexualized, gendered subjects in the U.S. borderlands in the nineteenth century and early twentieth. I explore the stories of four distinct episodes of borderlands violence: Josefa/Juanita's lynching in 1851, the Camp Grant Indian massacre of 1871, anthropological erasures of racialized and sexualized violence in South Texas in the nineteenth century and early twentieth, and the Yaqui Indian wars of 1880–1910. These diverse events in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands (California, Arizona, Texas, Sonora, and Chihuahua) reveal how regionally situated Aravaipa, Pinal, and Lipan Apache, Anglo emigrants, Chicana/os, Comanche, Mexicans, Papago, Yaqui, U.S. Mexicana/os (that is, Mexicans in the nineteenth century who were geopolitically relocated to the United States as a result of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo), and their varied relationships to colonialism provide a narrative of systematic patterns of violence as social transformation. Not all Mexicans, Indians, and Anglos are considered equal in this text. Regional identities, government policies, and economic conditions, understood as both U.S. and Mexican colonial residues, drastically affected how one's citizenship, or lack thereof and racial positioning as Anglo, Mexican, or Indian were perceived. Racial positioning, gender, and class alliances were fragile and shifted according to need and economic conditions. Some categories of identity seem to have been more fixed than others.

This book is not a narrative of resistance. The story I tell is not a happy one, yet there is a graciousness to the intervention I'm trying to make. I take up my case studies because they have been or easily could be part of a resistance narrative, the very thing I cautiously try not to reproduce. Hence, I make three basic arguments that unseat and question resistance narratives: first, there is a

disjuncture between the celebratory narratives of *mestizaje* (social, racial, and cultural hybridity as a formation of the Spanish colonial collision with Indians in the Americas) and hybridity that compose Mexican, Chicana/o, and other nationalisms and the literally unspeakable violence that characterized the borderlands in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth. Second, violence is and was the one factor that determined how racial positioning, gender, and class alliances played themselves out in contests over citizenship and resources. Third, the formalistic reporting of these events follows a similar pattern of using repetition as a way of denying violence as a foundation of national history, making these events unspeakable.

The materials I work with convey a sense of immediacy about dealings with dissident populations. As Ranajit Guha, a historian of peasant revolts in India, has shown, official statements are often written either concurrently with or soon after an event. Further, participants in the broad sense, either as actors or as interested onlookers, often wrote accounts.⁹ Most important, Guha argues that because the accounts were written after an event as a means of containing an insurgency in the moment of its elaboration, they ultimately produce a prose of counterinsurgency, the desire to stop such uprisings, both discursively and physically. Following Guha's observations, my analysis of what is posited in the contemporary eyewitness reports, military correspondence, and presidential edicts track (critical) glances backward to these discrete moments of violence in the borderlands and the counterinsurgent discourses produced by operative hegemonies. Guha calls this the "intersection of colonialism and historiography," where a doubled sense of movement is "linked at the same time to a system of power and the particular manner of its representation."¹⁰ Drawing attention to the mediated nature of the production of every text, Guha calls attention to the blind spots induced by calling such sources neutral. At some level, the government documents, literature, *testimonios*, and letters in my study presuppose a neutrality that registers silence about some events and complete disclosure of others. In masking culpability for violent acts committed against particular populations in the borderlands that are motivated by racial, sexual, or gender difference, such documents (like the discourse of counterinsurgency) reveal other patterns, elementary repetitions of practice that establish a concrete narrative index in which a document, as Guha reminds us, serves as "more than a mere register of happenings [to] help inscribe it into meaning."¹¹ Given that these documents were written to shut down insurgency, they both advocate violence as a response to that insurgency and function to silence that violence.

As the anthropologist Fernando Coronil argues, violence is not random;

it is “wielded in the idiom of a society’s distinctive history” and therefore produces a logic of disclosure or repression.¹² Methodologically speaking, as Coronil attests, the borderlands communities I analyze have their own specific social context in the production of violence as social practice and must be considered within a transnational framework. Each incident reveals the whole history of violence embedded in the context of the borderlands, most notably through the utterance of that which is almost unspeakable. Both Joseph Roach in *Cities of the Dead* and Diana Taylor in *The Archive and the Repertoire* have argued that selective memory requires public acts of forgetting in order to blur obvious discontinuities, misalliances, and ruptures or to exaggerate them, which mystifies the past in expressive behavior and transmits cultural identity and memory.¹³ I tweak their readings of the utterance a bit, arguing that if we read the utterance as the unspeakable, then we are presented with fragments of the very things selective memory bans from individual and national consciousness, the historical traces that are clearly there but not allowed to be heard, seen, or experienced. Roach further argues that the unspeakable may be officially forgotten but that memory retains its consequences: “The unspeakable cannot be forever rendered inexpressible: the most persistent mode of forgetting is memory imperfectly deferred.”¹⁴ So it is this sense of deferral that is a series of actions—more precisely defined as memories—that activate the unspeakable. The utterance is reference to that which cannot be spoken fully. Even as the unspeakable nature of violence denies a particular set of histories, it must acknowledge them in order to banish them from memory. My book weaves together the profound meaning found in the unspeakable and the utterance, reminding us that violence forms the foundations of national histories and subjectivity that are often elided.

VIOLENCE, NATIONALISM, AND CITIZENSHIP

Utterances materialize, hail, and deny violence all at once. It is the unspeakable qualities of material and representational violence that are posited in the utterance. I further propose that the utterance and representational violence echo each other as material and historical cognates. Representational violence in fictional texts and journalistic accounts, as in the case of Josefa/Juanita’s lynching, echo material violence by repeating the details of an event by effacing her as a subject. At the same time, historical texts echo representational violence in the sense that they also have their own mediated nature in how narratives of violence are told. As the various readings of Josefa/Juanita’s lynching unfold, we see the layers of mediation and bias in texts that are read as factual history. Much larger state-sponsored histories of violence in the

U.S.–Mexico borderlands provide the perfect case-study for contemplating, within a transnational context, the movement of goods, people, ideas, capital, and policies between and among nations. I use such terms as *racialized*, *sexualized*, and *gendered subjects* throughout the book to indicate how social processes and social constructions of race, sexuality, and gender inform the citizenship of individuals and communities in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands. As racialized, sexualized, and gendered individuals were and are deprived of control of their bodies through acts of violence, they are also denied access to land, resources, and civil rights. At the same time, those whom we now call people of color in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands were not exclusively victims but often enacted violence upon other racialized, gendered subjects in the name of the state. This is where I make a critical intervention into celebratory discourses about *mestizaje*, hybridity, and nationalism within the context of Chicano, Latino, and American studies, by teasing out the nuances of how and why multiethnic communities enacted violence against each other. Few scholars are willing to talk about these questions because they pose a direct challenge to nationalist ideologies that celebrate the cultural heritage of Mexico and, in particular, of its indigenous roots.¹⁵ Examining how far people will go to obey national authority, even to the point of inflicting death on another, is part of my project. I also trace how seeing (visual representation) and hearing (discursive representation) challenge claims of not knowing and claims to ignorance, claims on which the success of nationalism depends.¹⁶ In some ways my work is about correcting historiographies, nationalist tracts, and popular lore that have left us with a series of obscured and shortened narratives in which minor descriptions of violated bodies are proof of an unspeakable act. In other words, my book theorizes how and why these unspeakable acts might announce their own disappearance and how those unspeakable acts utter the project of nation formation.

What I have been describing thus far, in regard to Josefa/Juanita's narrative of lynching and other enactments of physical violence in the borderlands, is the erasure of the physical pain these historical subjects felt firsthand, posited in an abbreviated utterance or in complete silence, which leads to a secondary effect of violence as social practice. Elaine Scarry argues that there is an "inaccessible reality of physical pain . . . to anyone not immediately experiencing it."¹⁷ What is lost is the ability to fully understand the physical and psychic pain violence causes individuals and communities. While there is something irretrievable about the experiences of the people who emerge as subjects in the historical record strictly because they are somehow implicated in acts of violence, a kind of social residue polices the behaviors of those who come into

contact with that violence through hearing about it, witnessing it, experiencing it, or reading about it. This process highlights the disciplined body in relationship to the nation-state because law, confinement, and punishment inform citizenship.¹⁸ I argue that tracking these processes as they are represented in the historical record and in Chicana/o, Mexican, and U.S. national imaginaries requires that citizen-subjects be theorized in relation to power, pain, and domination.

Then there is another effect, one in which violence manifests itself in the social residues that are sedimented as trauma. Trauma manifests itself in people's behavior, in both the physical body and the psyche. Some who have experienced oppressive treatment do not live to tell their stories. For those who do, the ways violence leaves its traces have been most clearly documented in the numerous accounts of Holocaust survivors, memoirs of sexual abuse survivors, and blues songs that testify to the African American experience of lynching.¹⁹ Violence in any context remains as a social trace in our histories; it affects how we behave, and this is why it is so often an unspoken, underlying social current. Judith Herman argues, "Psychological trauma is an affliction of powerlessness."²⁰ Writing about trauma is both a formalistic narrative practice and a way to mourn for past violence in order to counteract the sense of powerlessness that histories of colonization evoke. Rereading this archive is a means of responding to atrocities that are often unspeakable. Images of violence against the gendered and racialized body—whether in the form of rape, physical torture, or political disenfranchisement—demonstrate that these forces are normalized, enraging, and extraordinary all at the same time. In attempting to imagine "real" violence and how it was and is experienced by a collective of individuals who are explicit products of histories of colonization, my readings theorize that the pain and suffering that result from violence against the body and the subject are integral to the production of subjectivities. To illuminate the prevailing ideas of domination, violence must be read as both a subject of representation and a historical factor.

All of the histories I recount raise issues about how subjects in these spaces have attempted to enact their citizenship and maintain a sense of bodily and psychic integrity by contesting violations of their person. Citizenship plays a crucial role in the perpetration of violence precisely because national membership, rights, birthrights, and state and local practices were often determined situationally. Following Evelyn Nakano Glenn, I argue that citizenship is based on both universal and exclusionary notions of belonging to the nation-state, conditioning gendered, sexualized, and racialized subjects to police themselves and to understand that their existence is subject to policing

by the state.²¹ As Akhil Gupta argues, “Citizenship ought to be theorized as one of the multiple subject positions occupied by people as members of diversely spatialized, partially overlapping or non-overlapping collectivities.”²² While Gupta’s caveat on split and multiple affinities is an important one, one must remember that racialized, sexualized, and gendered subjects often are not viewed as full members of their respective communities or as full citizens of nations with rights and are more likely to be targets of physical, psychological, or discursive violence. Reconstructing various violent episodes, utilizing a transnational feminist methodology to account for the hegemonic rationales that make these atrocities unspeakable, I theorize the role of the nation-state (a legal and political entity) in forming national imaginaries (discursive formations) that perpetuate dominant narratives of national amnesia. Certainly, I am not alone in this endeavor, as such recent scholars as Leigh Payne, Ned Blackhawk, and Saidya Hartman, among others, have contemplated the role of violence and its repression in historical memory in the formation of nation-states. My project is unique, however, in that I consider how competing understandings of racial projects and models of exchange worked in tandem to produce proper subjects in the borderlands. Chicano nationalist and Chicana feminist scholarship have primarily and to a degree understandably posited Mexican racial and even gendered identification as a refuge from Anglo-American nationalist violence. My historical research demonstrates that this was not always the case, and accordingly I examine how nationalism and individuals collude in sanctioning forgotten violence in the borderlands.

Drawing on archival sources from the United States and Mexico, I further argue that the subjectivities of peoples are refashioned as their connection to space and their civil rights are denied. Mary Pat Brady has argued that space “is a highly social process that has an effect on the formation of subjectivity, identity, sociality, and physicality in myriad ways.”²³ Subjugated identities are produced through spatial configurations of power that literally turn a landscape against its inhabitants. The case of American Indians—and, I would add, that of Mexican Indians, the Yaqui population of Sonora in particular—illustrates space as a way of organizing power relations which, according to Ned Blackhawk, “have countered policies aimed at denying Indians access to land and resources.”²⁴

Through an analysis of space and violent processes of social differentiation, I attempt to gain access to the cultural politics of violence that developed through overlapping colonial systems of the U.S.–Mexico borderlands. When violence leaves its ineffaceable mark, it does not create merely a self–other relationship between violator and violated: rather everyone involved, specta-

tors, enactors of violence, and the recipients of violence, is differentiated through her or his role in these processes.²⁵ Violence is an underlying social process of differentiation for all involved. The experiencing and enacting of violence are processes that differentiate, and the ultimate form of differentiation is abjection. Julia Kristeva argues that “abjection of self would be the culminating form of that experience of the subject to which it is revealed that all its objects are based merely upon the inaugural loss that laid the foundations of its own being.”²⁶ It is this primary sense of loss, the aftereffects of violence, that creates a sentiment of abjection. The social process of extreme differentiation becomes the foundation for collective residues of violence. The loss is registered in the utterances that refer to differentiation, violence, and abjection. According to the American studies scholars David Eng and David Kazanjian, the utterances are what remain, melancholically materialized in the social, political, and cultural realms, perhaps creating a productive space for reinvigorated histories and politics embodied in loss.²⁷ While undoubtedly violence is a social process that distances the individual body from the sense of self, individual experiences are irretrievable and this only produces a greater sense of loss. However, a distinction must be made between individual abjection and collective responses to that abjection. I argue two points in relation to abjection, perhaps changing Kristeva’s definition. First, for dissident subjects in the borderlands, abjection is a normal state of being in terms of their individual relationship to the state. The moment of recognition of loss is perhaps most vividly articulated in acts of physical violence against the individual. If we examine violence on a case by case basis, the inability to control what is done to one’s body shows how state actors vigorously police individuals and represents the moment of differentiation in which violation is the marker of noncitizenship. The abject is the shadow figure that lingers in multiple national imaginaries, signaling an absence of citizenship formed through social processes of differentiation registered upon the bodies and in the psyches of the violated. In other words, in the nineteenth-century history of the U.S.–Mexico borderlands U.S., Mexican, and Chicano nationalism have uncannily relied on the abjection of certain specter bodies—from Josefa/Juanita’s body to the Yaqui Indian nation—for the consolidation of their narratives of loss and triumph, of national risk and consolidation.

At the collective level, how this abjection is or is not narrated shows that a great deal of national history is about selective memory and the prioritizing of particular information and events over others. I am not arguing that all the communities involved in these case studies of violence are organized around a collective abjection, but rather that reading these incidents as a collective

whole posits abjection as a precondition for registering the impact of violence. Herein lies the reason Josefa/Juanita's lynching gets only one sentence in the mass-market media article instead of a detailed treatment. The inability to articulate subjection, abjection, and the distinct types of violence (physical, psychic, discursive, and epistemic) is located at individual, communal, national, and transnational levels, evading the real reasons why violence "pushes the limits of the permissible."²⁸

In the context of Chicano studies, violence in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands in the nineteenth-century has been characterized as a conflict between Anglo and Mexican males over land and citizenship. While this perspective makes important contributions and revisionist corrections to the ways race and class are talked about in the Southwest, generations of scholars have been influenced by how such narratives track a singular idea of Mexican resistance to Anglo hegemony, as if that were the only kind of power struggle that existed.²⁹ It reflects the narrative emerging from the Chicano power movements of the 1960s, which articulates the Mexican and Mexican American subject fighting the voracious northern neighbor who is attempting to steal Mexican lands (although some scholars have argued that the cession of the Southwest to the United States was a reflection of the administrative disorder of the Mexican nation after independence).³⁰ Rather than ask the same questions again, I ask, Does the paradigm of resistance to Anglo hegemony always situate an oppositional relationship? or is there a more productive way to ask research questions that uncover the field's strengths? I think there is.

TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST FRAMEWORKS

Even as I critique the limitations of certain paradigms such as Chicano nationalism, which casts Chicano identity as indigenous and masculinist, I strive to retain the insights these paradigms have yielded in the past, specifically the worthwhile political project of conceiving of Chicana/o studies in a transnational framework. An early attempt at a transnational feminist turn is exemplified by the Mexicana/Chicana Women's History International Symposium held in Santa Monica, California, in March 1982, at which scholars and activists shared research and teaching expertise on the history of Mexican women. Their goal was to enact a "collaboration that underscores the benefits of international exchanges in Chicano studies and in the history of Mexican women on both sides of the border."³¹ Eight years later a Chicana graduate student from UCLA, Adelaida R. Del Castillo, a feminist organizer, edited and published an expanded version of the conference proceedings in the transnationally minded anthology *Between Borders: Essays on Mexicana/Chicana*

History.³² Del Castillo argues that the theoretical and conceptual framework of the book derives from the idea that “Chicana history is the history of Chicano and Mexicano people representative of a transnational labor force in the context of global capital accumulation,” and the scholarship it contains focuses on Mexicans on both sides of the U.S.–Mexico border.³³ Del Castillo’s anthology not only argues for the consideration of the movement of bodies and peoples through circuits of exchange and labor, but also foregrounds how gender and women’s studies have caused epistemological shifts in the study of Mexicana/os. The essays span the period from colonial California under Spanish rule to current debates in Chicana/Mexicana studies (as of 1990). But the distinguishing feature of the work is its publication of essays in Spanish and its focus on the history of the Partido Liberal Mexicano (PLM) during the Mexican Revolution, its exile communities, and the gendering of the revolution’s history, from which women have been written out. Del Castillo argues lucidly that “the proximity of the border and the adeptness with which a transborder traffic negotiates movement between the United States and Mexico has historically made possible a cross fertilization of political ideas and organizational activism.”³⁴ While the evidence Del Castillo relies upon comes from the early twentieth century, she nonetheless rejects a Chicano nationalist discourse in favor of a focus on the geographical, political, social, and racial convergences and divergences that PLM historiographies often missed by failing to analyze class and gender oppression. Del Castillo sought to represent a “broad topical diversity, scope, and consciousness on Mexican women’s history comprised of an unprecedented collection of interpretive essays and original research on the theory, method, and content of Chicana history,” written by an interesting cast of intellectual leaders in the field, including Juan Gómez-Quiñónez, Antonia Castañeda, Raquel Rubio-Goldsmith, Dennis Monroy, and Rosaura Sánchez. The contributors to the anthology pursue not a nationalist agenda but an explicitly transnationalist one.³⁵

Sánchez’s essay in the anthology, “The History of Chicanas: A Proposal for a Materialist Perspective,” critically outlines the kinds of transnational historiographic projects needed to expand the field:

Works tracing Chicana roots in Mexican history need not postulate direct links between us and La Malinche or Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. References to Aztec goddesses similarly prove absolutely nothing and in fact have been used to idealize the status of Aztec women in pre-Columbian society, both in creative and historical projects, despite documentation which points to the subordinate status of women in pre-Columbian society. In short, Chi-

cana historians need fewer myths and more historical analysis. In all cases, whatever the focus, references to women included in these histories should be accompanied by information on the class status of the historicized figures, for we are often provided information which pertains only to the ruling classes of Mexico.³⁶

Shunning the imaginary world and revisionist histories that make Chicanas/os the direct descendents of La Malinche or Coyolxauhqui, Sánchez provides a refreshing materialist model for writing transnational history, because her analytical focus rests not on the compulsory working-class subject, but on social class in general.³⁷ In her vision of transnationalized Chicana/o and Latina/o studies, Sánchez urges readers toward a Marxist feminism that acknowledges that sometimes the only extant historical records in both Mexico and the United States are those of upper-class Mexicans, and they say a great deal about power struggles through their discursive absences and presences. Sánchez sees this as an opening to move away from narrow nationalist mythologies toward an analysis of class struggle between and among those who make history.

In a nearly unprecedented move for its time, *Between Borders* consciously includes Mexicana and Chicana historical scholarship by men. J. Jorge Klor de Alva and Gómez-Quiñónez, as Latin Americanists turned Chicana/o studies scholars, demonstrate that it is possible to be a Chicano man and take seriously gender analysis beyond the United States and beyond women. The conclusions in Klor de Alva's essay "Chicana History and Historical Significance: Some Theoretical Considerations" point in a transnational direction. "With regard to Mexican women in the United States," he argues, "not only must they be studied with class and gender categories in mind, but with attention to critical historical variables of ethnicity, race, and international context. Therefore, no single conceptual framework will be able to fully capture the complexity of the Chicana past."³⁸ He calls for a multilayered, mixed methodology that takes into account international factors as well as issues of race, class, and gender as being central to any study of Mexican women in the United States (and, I would add, Mexican women in the borderlands). Gómez-Quiñónez's "Questions within Women's Historiography" relies on nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Mexico as the basis for his arguments about Mexicana, Chicana, and, more generally, women's history. "In Mexico as elsewhere, male chauvinism and sexism have existed in correspondence to the level of social, economic, and political development," he points out.³⁹ In discussing the social and gender stratification that affected the lives of

all participants in the Spanish conquest, Gómez-Quiñónez notes that “male domination has meant unequal distribution and exploitation along gender lines and the propagation of values and interpretations which sustain this disadvantage among Mexicans.”⁴⁰ Both Klor de Alva and Gómez-Quiñónez rearticulate the problem of masculinist constructs of history as a field, and both go beyond the United States to view Mexico as a central place from which to theorize problems in epistemology.

But the most overtly transnationalist move of *Between Borders* comes with the publication of several essays in Spanish by Mexican scholars who focus on Mexican women’s history in Mexico. The refusal to translate, as well as Carmen Castañeda-García’s “Fuentes para la historia de la mujer en los archivos de Guadalajara” the transnationalized study of Mexican women that Del Castillo proposes in the introduction. Castañeda-García invites readers to pursue historical research on Mexican women in Mexico as part of transnationalizing Chicana/o studies. Beginning her catalogue of archival sources in the eighteenth century and continuing through the mid-twentieth century, she illustrates the breadth and scope of the collection, which includes letters, notary records, and government documents. One of the most interesting and compelling portions of Castañeda-García’s essay is her presentation of a source from 1856 about Jalisco women’s relationship to religion. The source elucidated that working-class women’s lack of citizenship rights was so complete that the Mexican Congress passed legislation to further delimit the lower-class’s heathen, irreligious ways and focus on civilizing the most “ignorant portion of Mexican society” and their rights, who, it was assumed, did not respect moral principles.⁴¹ Most important, Castañeda-García reminds scholars how important it is to examine what the upper class was doing in the period immediately after the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo because they informed social norms about gender, religion, and propriety for the working classes. Her scholarly preoccupation is not simply with whether class divisions make certain women somehow less or more important to the national project, but rather with how these sources from Guadalajara can contribute to a transnational dialogue on Mexican women’s history.

Between Borders shows that transnationalism has been a viable methodology in Chicana/o studies for quite some time and that Chicana feminism is at the forefront of this movement in the field. Chicana feminist scholarship, as the anthology demonstrates, incorporates postcolonial theories of identity that deconstruct and challenge dominant racist, sexist, classist, and heterosexist paradigms to analyze how the effects of colonialism continue to thrive within U.S. borders in new and more complicated forms. Nevertheless, *Be-*

tween Borders relies on a discourse of mestizaje even as it promotes transnational methodologies.

Angie Chabram-Dernersesian similarly argues in “Chicana! Rican? No, ‘Chicana, Riqueña!’: Refashioning the Transnational Connection” that Chicano/a studies scholarship needs to make good on the claim of transnationality not just in theory but in practice. She marks how rigid nationalist frameworks police her everyday identity struggles as a Chicana-Riqueña. Chabram-Dernersesian chides the belief in authentic Chicana/o identities as she refuses to “engage in the business of putting on a ready-made identity the way nationalists did when they celebrated a glorious Aztec past with questionable relations to the present but neglected to map vital relations to contemporary indígenas or other local underrepresented ethnic groups.”⁴² She goes on to argue that today’s mestizaje is “the age-old political embodiment of the Mexican national who has traditionally occupied this central space and is the subject of contention by many indígenas for whom mestizaje means inequality, a concerted dilution of Indianness and partnership with the Mexican state.”⁴³ Chabram-Dernersesian suggests that evocations of the border and of mestizaje circulate an essentialist discourse, offering a native multiculturalism that is exclusive because of its ethnic absolutism.⁴⁴ It seems that the terms *border*, *borderlands*, and *mestizaje* come to stand in for or masquerade as a transnational methodology in Chicana/o studies. We should not dismantle these concepts, but rather consider a different set of questions and methodologies with which to answer them. Stepping out of a U.S. Chicano-based intellectual paradigm with its master narratives of mestizaje, the borderlands, and *lo indio/the Indian* would demonstrate that colonial aggressions are enacted by Chicana/os, Mexicano/as, and U.S. Mexicans as well. Chabram-Dernersesian writes, “Although we live in a period that prizes the multiplicity of identities and charts border crossings with borderless critics, [it is ironic that] there should be such a marked silence around the kinds of divergent ethnic pluralities that cross gender and classed subjects within the semantic orbit of Chicana/o.”⁴⁵ For Chabram-Dernersesian, the evocation of mestizaje and the border masks inequalities and is essentialist, identifying a single Chicano/a identity that equates with “the” indigenous (Aztec) to the exclusion of all else.

If one maps this transnational alternative theoretical and practical genealogy of the field, the book that most closely exemplifies the happy marriage of feminist critique and transnationalism is María Josefina Saldaña-Portillo’s *The Revolutionary Imagination in the Americas and the Age of Development*. In both content and scope, Saldaña-Portillo shows why transnational meth-

odologies matter and what they can produce when scholars expand the parameters of Chicana/o studies, Latina/o studies, and Latin American studies. Exploding multiple nationalisms as she critiques them, Saldaña-Portillo investigates the conjunctures and disjunctures between two narratives of progress—namely, development and revolution—that captured the imagination of three generations of nationalists in the Americas in the second half of the twentieth century.⁴⁶ The arguments for taking up the mantle of revolution often mirrored development discourse, the very things rebels sought to liberate themselves from in anti-imperialist struggles. With regard to liberationist struggles in the Americas, Saldaña-Portillo argues that “reading this convergence from the vantage point of postcolonial theory might interpret such revolutionary nationalism as derivative, predicated on a repetition, albeit with a difference, of Western development.”⁴⁷ What is most revolutionary (pun intended) about Saldaña-Portillo’s argument is that she utters something nobody wants to hear: that there are in fact mimetic similarities and collusions with power between Che Guevara’s coming to revolutionary consciousness or the Sandinista government in Nicaragua and first world think tanks that promulgate development strategies for the third world. Both Guevara, the embodiment of revolutionary discourse, and the International Monetary Fund render what Saldaña-Portillo calls “‘natural’ . . . normative concepts of growth, progress, and modernity.”⁴⁸ Both discourses, in their continuities and discontinuities between colonial categories of subjectivity and developmental categories of national citizenship, illustrate “how race is revitalized within the domain of cultural attitudes that must be overcome, how gender is allegorized within the domain of active and reactive nationalisms, and how hierarchies and exploitative relations of exchange in a global capitalist system are reorganized into normative levels of productivity that must be achieved.”⁴⁹ In all of these narratives of progress, the subject is rendered masculine, mobile, ethical, and an agent of his own transformation, regardless of his or her actual gender.

In addition, Saldaña-Portillo critiques the production of the subaltern and subaltern consciousness, which have become the intended beneficiaries of both development and revolutionary discourses in the Americas. Even as the epistemic production of the Sandinista National Liberation Front attempted to privilege proletarian and collective consciousness through state farms and cooperatives, it valued these ideas over those of the smallholding peasantry who made up the majority of Nicaragua’s rural population.⁵⁰ Avoiding the romance of revolution that is so often produced vis-à-vis liberationist struggles in Central and South America, Saldaña-Portillo stages a respectful cri-

tique of the vanguard politics that were originally aimed at helping the peasants, who should be the legitimate subjects of revolution. These small peasant producers later became counterrevolutionaries because their concerns were dismissed by the Sandinista party leadership and conflated their concerns with those of national identity that “necessitated commitment to the revolution, to a particular vision of modernization” and that read peasants and their consciousness as prerevolutionary.⁵¹ In the case of Nicaragua even the most well-intended discourse of revolution could and did primitivize the peasant majority of the country, an utterance nobody wants to hear as a critique of insurgent struggles in the Americas.

Saldaña-Portillo’s engagement with the Zapatista movement in Mexico is equally honest in that she shows the movement’s democratic and respectful politics without falling into the trap of treating the Zapatistas as unassailable or romanticizing the Central American revolutions of the 1970s and 1980s. What I appreciate about Saldaña-Portillo’s methodology is that it leaves no stone unturned; it reminds us “about the many tensions that exist among indigenous peasant groups in and around the Zapatista liberated zones and the Mexican army camps.”⁵² Admitting that there are tensions among indigenous groups because of language barriers not only saves one from constructing a romanticized, monolithic, universal Indian subject of revolution, but also provides an opportunity to understand the racial and ethnic differences that continue to be reformulated by postcolonial regimes of subjection and that a romanticized discourse of *mestizaje* ultimately masks. An honest appraisal of the Zapatista movement as a solidarity-based indigenous front built on a foundation of respect for difference makes the romance of *mestizaje* impossible to sustain.

Finally, and most important for the argument of my book, Saldaña-Portillo suggests that uncritical Chicano nationalism produces romanticized images of a single Indian tribe that later became Chicanos, a system of representation that erases historically accurate indigenous subjectivities. Such nationalist narratives, grounded in biologically based terms of *mestizaje* and a national romance of a unified indigenous past, do not recognize Indians other than Aztecs as inhabitants of this continent, so that in such narratives, *mestizo* and therefore *Chicano* means *Indian*.⁵³ Saldaña-Portillo points out that in Chicano studies and Chicano nationalist histories of violence and capitalism, the only venerated Indians are the Aztecs of the past. I build on this argument but take it in a different direction in my examination of the historical record. Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century archival materials in Mexico and the United States show the complex social and power relationships regarding

indigenous communities in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands and proposing an alternative model to that which Chicano studies offers, one that is more relevant to its rich historical context.

THE RESISTANCE TO TRANSNATIONAL FEMINIST
METHODOLOGIES WITHIN CHICANO STUDIES

Even though Chicana feminist critical projects have “underscored the ‘back and forth’ movements of people and ideas within spaces that challenged our notions of discrete domains,” these calls in the field most often still go half answered.⁵⁴ Norma Alarcón, Sonia Saldívar-Hull, and Chabram-Dernersesian all sounded this transnational call in the late 1990s, but the transformation still seems to be on the verge of happening, not yet quite complete.⁵⁵

Some recent scholarship is highly problematic in that it gives a cursory nod to the transnational, once again using an invocation of the border and *mestizaje* to stand in for a concrete engagement with transnationalism. One of the main discourses used in studies of the Americas to articulate oppression and resistance is that of *mestizaje*, which was made famous by Gloria Anzaldúa’s now-canonical text *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (1987). Whereas Anzaldúa’s theory was specific to Chicana identity formation within the context of the geopolitics of the U.S.–Mexico borderlands, the new *mestiza* consciousness she proposes is often taken out of this context and applied to everything and anything that references racial and cultural mixture or borders. In “Miscegenation Now!,” a review of recent scholarship on *mestizaje*, Rafael Pérez-Torres argues that one of the problems with this concept is that scholars focus exclusively on how *mestizaje* “embodies possibility” and “the emancipatory potential of racial mixture.” What is often occluded or oversimplified is the “‘reality’ of race in the face of its constructed nature.” When racial mixture is evoked as the future, as the harmonizing of disparate identities, it ignores “the more pernicious and hierarchical impulses behind *mestizaje* in the Americas” and does not complicate the legacy of colonial violence or implicate Chicana/os in the production of racism.⁵⁶

In Chicano studies this discourse privileges *indigenismo*, or the Indian heritage of Mexicans and Chicanos, as part of a common identity that unites all Chicanos politically.⁵⁷ The recent string of books and articles celebrating the literal embodiment of *mestizaje* in the figure of the native or, more directly, the paradigm of Chicano/as as Indians, “run[s] the risk of representing the [mestizo] body as the realm of ‘the real,’” according to Pérez-Torres, superimposing a physical essence on ethnicity.⁵⁸ By privileging that “Indian essence,” *mestizaje* fetishizes a residual, abstract, dehistoricized Indian iden-

tity that obscures Mexican, Mexican Indian, and American Indian participation in genocide and violence against other American Indians and Mexicans in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands. When we situate these moments of violence in their complex historical matrices, we begin to understand the sexual and gendered dimensions of genocide, which rather than being subsumed under the celebratory gaze of *mestizaje* deserve to be theorized as transnational moments of violent cultural practices based in fundamental ideas about racial and gender inequality in multiple national contexts.

Ralph Rodriguez, Monika Kaup, José Aranda, and others have argued that we are in a postnationalist moment in Chicana/o studies.⁵⁹ Now, Alicia Gaspar de Alba says, “Chicano/a authors can explore the Chicano/a subject in . . . a historically specific ontological space in which Chicana/o identity has been attempting to redefine itself outside of the cultural logic of ‘el Movimiento’ and its rhetoric of nationalism, essentialism, and carnalismo . . . but now is also estranged from the cultural, linguistic, political, and sexual discourses that structured Chicano and Chicana identity at the time of the Chicano Civil Rights Movement.”⁶⁰ Yet the excessively recursive figure of “lo Indio/la India” manifests itself in other forms, signaling not a cultural retention but a Chicana/o indigenous reinvention that is not an uninterrupted historical formation.⁶¹

Kaup argues that “Chicana feminists have achieved this [postnationalist] decentered reconfiguration of their community by rewriting the two major Chicano plots found in male Chicano writing: the indigenous and the immigrant stories. In some cases—the exemplary text here is Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands*—the dismantling effect results from playing out these two plots against each other.”⁶² Even if the combining of indigenous and immigrant stories as one narrative thread in Chicana feminism manages to decenter hegemonic ideas of community, then neonationalism, much like violence, becomes that unspeakable thing that gets remapped as resistance. Neonationalism then becomes the structure of power in the field, shaping the intellectual production and maintaining a particular kind of control over what is venerated as authentically Chicano and what is ignored. Neonationalism is culturally understood as an unspoken ideology or idiom of resistance that most often is articulated as “mestizo equals Indian.” So even while scholars like Rodriguez, Kaup, Gaspar de Alba, and Aranda argue that el Movimiento has forged an estrangement from Chicana/o identities, they are talking about representations of the postnational rather than about how both systems of thought (that is, Anzaldúa’s *mestizaje* interpreted as Indian only and neonationalism) are based on resistive agency, a structure that represses and restricts what gets

talked about and valued. In the 1970s and 1980s it was gender that was rationalized away by cultural nationalism. Today, gender, for the most part, is included in the analytical framework, but what gets rationalized away now is any sort of critique of indigenismo that does not fit the cultural nationalist script of vindication of “the” Indian subject who is Chicana/o.

This postnationalist reading of *Indian*, detailed in *Borderlands/La Frontera*, reappropriates (misreads?) Vasconcelos’s *la raza cósmica* from the 1920s: Anzaldúa theorized a Chicana/o ideological claim to self-determination, dignity, and civil rights through mestizaje instead of reading Vasconcelos for the eugenicist that he was. This move is a response to an aggrieved sense of being wronged.⁶³ Yet the reclamation of the mestiza/o sharpens the focus on the revolutionary content of any political project that uncritically celebrates this mestiza/o heritage, with a particular focus on an essentialized, dehistoricized indigenous past, most closely paralleled by a “neonationalist” discourse. The common reading of Anzaldúa as taking up the mantle of mestizaje as a theory of Chicana/o liberation in some ways denies the violence, both physical and epistemic, that occurs when the essentialized Indian—who cannot pass for mestizo or cannot celebrate a mestiza/o cultural heritage and is in fact Indian in the eyes of the U.S. and Mexican nations—is eliminated from the conversation. Further, Afro-mestizos and blacks in general form another silent part of racist thought and politics of exclusion in Chicana/o, Mexicana/o, and U.S. national imaginaries. Even though Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands/La Frontera* makes a concerted effort to discuss blackness as part of the mestizaje paradigm, we will see these multiple imaginaries gain force by obviating people of African descent. The tremendous feminist influence of *Borderlands/La Frontera* cannot be denied; however, my point is to demonstrate that the politics that center around celebrating or reclaiming mestizaje are highly problematic because of what they elide from the colonial past and nationalist present, especially when Anzaldúa’s strategic invocation of the mestiza is unequivocally read as Indian only. One reason mestizaje is so appealing as a discourse is that it deconstructs the totalizing nature of things, cultures, and bodies, liberating Mexicans and Chicanos from the shameful past that has figured them as second-class citizens, a position articulated today as indigenous.⁶⁴ Thus, even in this presumably postnationalist Chicana/o culture we have entered, a chain of equivalence still persists: if Chicano, then Mexican; if Mexican, then mestizo; if mestizo, then indigenous; if indigenous, then resistant. So by celebrating mestizaje as a kind of neo-Chicano/a nationalism—an analysis that includes gender constructs but focuses mostly on indigenismo—Chicano cultural studies too often systematically forgets the history of violence embedded in its

uncritical narratives of so-called resistance based on homophobic, essentialist, indigenous neonationalisms in an Anglo/Mexican binary. Thus decontextualized evocations of mestizaje, indigenismo, and nationalism eclipse historical moments of violence, meaning, and specificity, just as their complexity is denied because they exclusively address a quasi-proletarian subject.

Further, I examine Mexican ideas about citizenship, nation, and Indians in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth as the *selective* acknowledgments of mestizaje as a strength of the Mexican character. The Mexican documents represent their own kind of selective memory. Mestizaje and positive representations of Indians in Mexico are convenient arguments for nationalism and rarely anything more. One need look only at the daily protests of Oaxacan indigenous communities at el Monumento de la Madre in Mexico City from 2008–2010 to find evidence of the disparity between the convenient Indian of the Mexican national past and the living Indians who must protest in order to be recognized as citizens of their nation. Local, state, and national policy most often disavows Indians and their relationship to Mexico.

For example, Mexican Indian policy dissolved the slightest possibilities of political alliances between Indians and Mexicans in Chihuahua, where the Indian policy of 1849 was still in effect in 1886, demonstrating that the state's position on Indian exclusion did not change for almost half a century and remained exceedingly violent. Félix Francisco Maceyra, the governor of Chihuahua, wrote to Porfirio Díaz in 1886, "You will see that it is a matter of accord in the United States Senate as a decree made in the year 1849 which provides prizes for every Indian killed in action or [made a] prisoner of war. This decree has not been abolished and it has been made to wage the war with some advantage on Indian savages."⁶⁵ Díaz responded, "I accept the decree of 1849 as a necessary evil, unless we can find another type of compensation with the same results."⁶⁶ The fact that Indian policy had not changed in Chihuahua in thirty years suggests that vigilante violence was standard practice when dealing with supposed savages who broke the law. Maceyra's and Díaz's acceptance of the bounty killing of Indians as a necessary evil tells us two things. First, beheading, torture, and maltreatment of alleged Indian offenders were rewarded with monetary compensation, and cadavers served as the proof of captured criminals. Second, both the U.S. and Mexican states had contracted their labor of killing Indians for monetary compensation to private parties, thus further deregulating Indian policy and making it a matter handled on a case by case basis, outside of the law. People must have literally made a living by bringing in Indian cadavers (which had its own problems because "Mexican" and "Indian" cadavers were not always easily distinguishable) to the Chi-

huahuan government, thereby conveying a message much like that contained in Andrew Jackson's policy that the only good Indian is a dead Indian—a dead Indian that is clearly not a Mexican or a Mexican citizen. Rather, each Indian cadaver represented what needed to be eradicated to transform Mexico into a modern nation and especially to make its borders safe for capitalism and foreign investment in relationship to U.S. Indian policy.

Furthermore, the same Indian policy can be linked to early twentieth-century, state-sponsored counterinsurgency practice against the Yaquis in the borderlands that is part and parcel of a larger history of empire. Thomas A. Bass has argued that the tactics of counterinsurgency involve “a dominant power forcing its will on a subject people [and] . . . involves a mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations.”⁶⁷ Bass refers to the current U.S. intervention in Iraq and offers a way of thinking about the treatment of rebels through a kind of historical continuity. Bass's words on counterinsurgency are directly reflected in Mexican governmental documents from the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth because counterinsurgency was a necessary part of the project of nationhood and the project of Mexico imagining itself as an empire. Mexican governmental documents on the Yaqui Indian wars demonstrate a range of offensive, defensive, and stabilizing operations but in the service of nations imagining themselves, however directly and indirectly, as empires.

The desire to stabilize economic productivity in northern Mexican states like Sonora in the late nineteenth century shows how Díaz's vision of Mexico was one of an empire that dominated its indigenous populations. The vision of Mexico as empire is articulated most concretely in the speeches and biographies of Mexican army generals who directed the counterinsurgency campaigns against the Yaqui in 1880–1910. But even those messages were mixed. *Lo indio* was invoked as *Lo Azteca*, the precolonial Mexican indigenous, not the contemporary one present within the context of the Yaqui Indian wars. After a decisive victory over Yaqui scouts and the killing of the Yaqui chief Tetabiate at Bacatete in 1901, the government declared the wars over.⁶⁸ Gen. Bernardo Reyes, the governor of Nuevo Leon in 1885–1900 and secretary of war in 1901–3, wrote the following treatise in his autobiography evoking the Aztec past as part of Mexican national military glory. Reyes calls on the imperial Aztec past to illuminate the Mexican national present and domination over Yaquis at the battle at Bacatete:

This race is the Aztec race, and one sees it written down in the Anahuac, on a space covered with lakes and trees; one sees it fighting with the towns-