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Women Weaving the Dream of the Revolution in the American Continent

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in

Ethnic Studies

by

Sandra Angeleri

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2006

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2006

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all the Wayuu, Latin American and U.S. ethnic women.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Women Weaving the Dream of the Revolution in the American Continent

by

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Doctor of Philosophy in Ethnic Studies

University of California, San Diego, 2006

Professor Robert Alvarez, Co-Chair

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The U.S. third world women's movement proposes the Chicana new *mestiza* identity as a methodology of (post) modern social movements. García Canclini differentiates modern national identities from transnational citizens' identifications emerging from hybrid cultures' (post) modern consumption of cultural products. Drawing on the contributions and limitations of these two proposals, the dissertation examines the contrast between a masculinist and a womanist articulation of politics of *mestiza* community making in the Americas. This strategy bears relevance to the meaning of women's agency within the relationships between production and (re) production while providing visibility to the significance of sexuality politics if one wants to qualitatively change the notion and the practice of democracy. In the first part of this dissertation I examine the Mexican Revolution's politics of *mestizaje* through the study of anthropologist Manuel Gamio's inscription of the new Mexico. I introduce the Mexican Revolution politics of *mestizaje* as historical references both of Sandoval and García Canclini's *mestizaje* and hybridity frameworks, which

these authors see as the methodological instruments of/for (post) modern social movements. In the second part of the dissertation, I conceive the framework that bridges the *mestizaje* that the Mexican Revolution consolidated and that the U.S.-led. Pan-American project supported. I examine *mestizaje* politics as a common feature of Latin American politics of community making. At the middle of the twentieth century, when indigenist Pan-Americanism was projected to the entire continent, Venezuela consolidated the modern institutionalisation of its state and the oil production character of the nation. *Mestizaje* is again the center of this process of community making and is deeply related to the land that produces the resources of the nation state. After providing this historical and conceptual information about Venezuela, the third and last part of the dissertation focuses on the Venezuelan Wayuu Indigenous Women's movement. The study of this concrete social movement introduces new questions and answers on contemporary ethnic and women's politics in the Americas. These questions and answers re-introduce the importance of evaluating the political and epistemological consequences of sexuality and racial politics within social movements which become concrete revolutionary political projects. By studying the Wayuu indigenous women social movement within the Bolivarian Revolution's domestic as well as sub-continental community re-making efforts, the dissertation's objective is to provide evidence of the importance of sexuality politics within contemporary neo-decolonizing hemispheric political efforts.

1. Introduction

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another.
Karl Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party”, p. 481.¹

Identity based on homogeneous experiences has historically supported collective mobilizations for justice as well as serving as the justification for governmental politics. Old and new social movements that struggled for state power or for concrete community solutions have generally mobilized through discourses of class, identity, and citizenship. Drawing on the correspondence paradigm, which posits that conscious representatives can mediate between the working class, the nation and the state, class and national liberation movements have attempted to invert (while often mirroring) the logic of bourgeois states and colonial powers.

Through the citizen-subject identity, new social movements have expressed collectivities’ attempts to disrupt a development narrative in order to include their own specific group inside the redistribution of resources made by political institutions. By mobilizing through collective identities that separate them from others, identity-based new social movements achieved benefits yet found themselves weakened and entrapped by local resistance frameworks engulfing their aspirations for justice. Social movements struggle with how to avoid the reproduction of the established ways of power against which they fight, and how to construct new paradigms of democracy.

¹ Karl Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party” *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Robert C. Tucker, ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978).

This dissertation evaluates the contributions that antiracist movements offer if one wants to advance, qualitatively, new ways of understanding and constructing democracy and social justice.

The cultural logic of global capital has subverted the representational paradigm. The logic of identity, which was usually thought of as a vital precondition for collective struggle within old and new social movements, has now become a problem for aggrieved groups. Difference, which was usually thought of as the cause of the weakness of oppositional groups, now constitutes a potential strength for building powerful alliances against globalization. In addition, groups constituted by diversely positioned subjects embody a new way of enacting democracy when they look for equality while still accepting and honoring differences.

Within the contexts of late capitalism in the global north and south alike, mechanical ways of understanding connections become hypervisible and disparaged, while modern dreams for a transparent representation become the nightmares of post-modern cultural politics. The narrative structures of transnational activism promote simultaneous local and global identification strategies that disrupt the previous senses of whole, homogenous, and discrete identities while provoking coalition politics between differentially positioned oppositional groups. A common interest in a multipolar world against U.S. led neoliberal globalization guide to unthinkable alliances among South American and European social movements and nation states. A neo-colonial landscape evokes the colonial times that shaped the scenario when two centuries ago the Spanish Empire's confrontation with the British and emergent U.S. world powers opened up a favorable space for South American states' independence from Spain. At present, colonialism and national liberation frameworks have reappeared under new historical contexts, and concrete study reveals previously

unimaginable links between the Latino/a American, *mestiza* American and contemporary South American identifying strategies.

Social movements, which speak for aggrieved sectors of society, apply collective action frames to their negotiations with political institutions for what might otherwise be felt as personal problems. Yet the "identity" logics of past struggles based on the solidarities of sameness, the anti-colonial nationalism that sought to turn colonized nationals into "universal" citizen subjects, the Marxism that sought to unite differentiated workers into the "universal" working class, and the "romance" of the essentialist Black, Chicano, or female subject as a step toward feminist and anti-racist unity, now seem inadequate sources of opposition to the ways in which power is actually wielded in the world. Class, race and gender have different meanings in different countries and continents. Aggrieved groups in metropolitan countries may be oppressors of people on the periphery, as becomes evident in the case of Venezuela.

The pressure to accommodate the world to capital by imposing a uniform and universal set of political procedures and social identities only brings to the surface old and new differences, antagonisms, and inequalities. New identities emerge simultaneously in local, national, and transnational sites. The necessity of responding to standardization generates the performance of new forms of difference. The seeming eclipse of the nation state and nationalism does not lessen the active functions of the state in regulating the new order, while the hegemony of transnational politics promotes and provokes old and new forms of national identities, which produce dynamic and multiple heterogeneous groupings.

In "the Americas," responses to globalization by social movements generate new forms of "organizational learning" in the course of struggle. This learning often emphasizes encounters and fluidities or affiliations and identifications rather than

permanent and concrete coalitions or alliances. The production and proliferation of "new particulars" open spaces for the convergence of differently sited groups opposed to globalization. Two problems that emerge from this pattern are: 1) the reliance on learning from mobilization requires permanent, continuous, and ongoing mobilizations and encounters, but group members may merely want to have immediate grievances met and often knew each other only through the hegemonic global media, and 2) how can these diverse social movements profit from the dynamics of difference, its ideological and epistemological suppleness, without creating new universals?

During the past two decades, women's and ethnic movements have organized across the continent along identity lines that previously were not recognized either domestically or internationally. Ethnic populations have affirmed a Pan-American identity overlapping local ethnicity. Women have developed gender policies through regional networks that transcend national boundaries. Identity has become a mobilizing resource constructed by social movements through a discursive logic that simultaneously introduces identity as the articulating axis while affirming the politics of difference. In this sense, ethnic and women's movements, which have been understood usually as struggles for inclusion, have raised political and epistemological challenges that make visible qualitative emergent changes to the paradigm of western democracy.

Transnational ethnic and women's identity networks express this approach for struggling for equality through the politics of difference. This dissertation approaches the history of *mestizaje* from a womanist research perspective. The preference for studying the character of *mestizaje*, in its biological, political and epistemological senses, responds to the interest in shaping a framework capable of including colonial and neo-colonial relations within "the Americas" to see how transnational ethnic and

women movements are attempting to create new cognitive tools for thinking and deepening democratic practices.

Differing conceptions of gender and ethnicity play an instrumental role in the relationship between social movements, nation states and global order on the American Continent. The international community's discourse surrounding ethnic and women's rights -- much of which is based on the universal civil subject, sees national and communal ways of living as fundamental barriers to globalization. For my purposes this raises three questions: 1) How does globalization affect transnational ethnic social movements? 2) How can third world trans-national organizing help to actualize identity and social movements' theories centered on the nation-state? 3) Finally, how can one understand the Wayuu women's movement within the frameworks of contemporary multiple eruptions of nationalisms?

I argue that the flesh that *mestizaje* evokes for Chicana feminists, acquires a great positive relevance when the commodity logic of finance capital and its segmentation of the global market has blurred the perception of corporeality. I also argue, however, that it is necessary to make visible that Chicana feminism seems oblivious to the different chronological and spatial connotations that *mestizaje* evokes in the Americas, reproducing U.S. America hegemony in the hemisphere.

By studying the history of *mestizaje*, which is a key metaphor used by feminist anti-racist social movements in the U.S., my dissertation explores the limits of the social and epistemological organizational principles of identity politics within the context of modernization, developmental nation state projects, and late capitalism in "the Americas."² How does contemporary globalization both enable and inhibit us

² I write "the Americas," to emphasize that I did not see authors writing "the Europes," "the Asias," or "the Africas." Continents are not homogenous territories, but the case of the American Continent and its "Americas" denotation are emblematic examples of the naturalization of hegemonic discourses. Once I have explained my point, I will not continue using quotation marks within my dissertation.

in imagining alternative ways of power? What social and epistemological alternatives do hemispheric struggles waged by individuals and groups with dissimilar histories and roles in the global economy open? How can the (post) modern sense of the compression of time and space contribute to the process of knowing and analyzing the institutionalization of knowledge?

The dissertation's emphasis on the (re) production framework re-articulates the meaning of identity while connecting gendering and racializing to the subject that classifies. Systems of classification define objects, create identities, and relate them to one another, often regulating relationships among them. In the case of human beings, classifications recognize peoples as objects of specific classes. Membership, rules of inclusion/exclusion, and rules of transformation are the key elements that dynamically define a class. In analytical terms, vocabulary and syntaxes could be said to define a class. The case of the copula, as the element defining the logic of the sexual relation is the point of departure of this dissertation. By articulating the logic and the rhetorical functions of the copula, I focus on the potential contributions of women's transnational social movements for constructing an alternative paradigm to the logics of identity and democracy in opposition to the classifying agency of intellectual men.

Analytical and rhetorical classificatory systems are not politically neutral and cannot be separated from a system of order and power and from the subjectivity that constructs the classification. It can also be said that the forms through which subjects/objects are ordered by cultural classifications as well as the principles that govern any social order are crucial for creating, consolidating and reproducing power relations. By examining the gender differences and sexual politics informing classificatory systems and structures of domination, it is possible to understand how race works within processes of identity formation.

Power constructs identities through gendering and racializing, rendering visible the processes of classifying. Examining the forms through which domination is accepted and used by actors within a culturally informed system helps us see how power works. This dissertation studies how classificatory systems of class, race, and gender cross each other in the Americas. It argues that the study of race is necessary to understand the production of social class classifications in the continent, and that sexual politics produce gender classifications that constitute the articulation axis for understanding the reproduction of the domination classificatory system as a whole.³

The U.S. third world women's movement promotes "*mestizaje*" as a mobilizing identity against racism that blurs the very concept of identity. This shift from fixation to fluidity supplements the (post) modern emphasis on reproduction while displacing modern emphasis on production.⁴ Modernization in Europe and America rests on the concepts of "universal subjects" and "citizenship" for constructing its legitimating as well as legal equalizing discursive orders. At the same time, when theorists emphasize difference, they usually focus on shifts from an ancien regime to modernity. Within the Americas, modernization, which negates the existence of diverse co-simultaneous modernities, has increasingly reproduced human beings' economical and social concrete distance, even though multiple ways of living

³ See Stuart Hall's article "Signification, Representation, Ideology: Althusser and the Post-Structuralist Debates," in *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, (Volume 2, Number 2, June: 1985), pp. 91-114. The author does an excellent analysis of Althusser's contribution for understanding how the State is a contradictory formation that "condenses very different social practices and transforms them into the operation of rule and domination over particular classes and other social groups." However, Stuart Hall also provides evidence that the decline of the correspondence paradigm does not necessary express "the notion essential to discourse theory – that nothing really connects with anything else." Paralleling Stuart Hall's ideas on the role of the State's apparatuses for reproducing class domination, this dissertation emphasizes the role of gender classifications for the reproduction (by 'fusion,' if one wants to use Hall's words) of domination.

⁴ I use the visually disturbing (post) modern writing in order to emphasize contemporary consciousness on modernity's cognitive universalizing voice.

coexist in the continent. What Néstor García Canclini names “hybrid cultural consumption” in Latin America emphasizes consumption within contemporary political economy.⁵ People who belong to nation states in the Americas, states which use different racializing and gendering classificatory systems, struggle against the economic and social differences that the equalizing discourses of modernization deny, drawing on the universalized and universalizing political tool of the “citizen-subject.” But citizen-subjects do not exist in limbo. Nation-states constitute frameworks within which citizen-subjects practically differentiate themselves within domestic as well international contexts through class, gender and race, although legally equalized through the condition of citizen.

Within this integrative discourse of modernization, in order to achieve the substantive social and economic equality explicit in the modern and modernizing liberal model of citizenship, human beings need to be subjects of a nation-state in order to have the right to struggle, as citizens, for their rights. This framework constitutes, per se, a homogenizing instrument. It is a pre-condition that ironically leads peoples who struggle for their rights to reproduce the source of their unequal differentiation. Drawing on this political procedure, transnational social movements, which struggle against neoliberal globalization, like any resistance act, are trapped within the mobilizing dilemma of confronting the specificity that they are also interested in conserving. Contemporary U.S. and South American social movements confront a critical obstacle. Drawing on the mobilization of citizens of different nation states, they search to construct and share a de-colonizing social movement in

⁵ Néstor García Canclini, *Ciudadanos y Consumidores. Conflictos multiculturales de la globalización*, (México: Grijalbo, 1995); “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1999); “Gramsci con Bourdieu: hegemonía, consumo y nuevas formas de organización popular,” in *Revista Nueva Sociedad* No. 71 (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 1985), pp.74-84; *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2002); *Las culturas populares en el capitalismo* (Bogotá: Ed. Nueva Imagen, 1982).

order to struggle against neo-liberal globalization. How can differentially positioned social movements looking for progressive social change be successful in accomplishing their tasks?

From a perspective that privileges women's material and symbolic reproductive power, my dissertation connects men and women's politics of community making and state building in Latin America to the re-ordering of race throughout the hemisphere. It shapes a conversation between Chela Sandoval and Ernesto García Canclini.⁶ “*Mestizaje*,” “hybridity,” and “love,” are the authors’ key concepts that led to my hypothesis on the necessity to take into account the logic, and especially the politics, of the sexual relation for constructing de-colonizing social movements. I argue that by evoking the body, “mestizaje” and “love” approach closer to the difficulty of imagining a common identity capable of constructing a transnational social movement against neo-liberal globalization. But I also argue, following Chantal Mouffe, that politics needs to be reintroduced within (post) modern proposals.⁷ Coalition politics between differentially positioned and oppositional groups is the question at stake. How to construct a class of differentially positioned subjects? Roland Barthes’s notion of eroticized rhetoric bridges my use of Sandoval and García Canclini. According to Barthes, the true erotic, that he names “Platonic,” requires an integrative way of knowing, which needs to be un-interested. This “synoptic” knowing has as its main discourse “the dialogue between the teacher and the disciple who are unified by inspired love. To think *in community*, this could be the slogan of dialectic. The rhetoric is a dialogue of love.”⁸

⁶ Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the oppressed*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

⁷ Chantal Mouffe, “Por una política de la identidad nómada,” in *Debate Feminista*, (Octubre: 1996).

⁸ Roland Barthes, *La aventura semiológica*, (Barcelona: Piados, 1990), pp. 92-93. In this text, Barthes criticized the eroticized dialecticians, which he also calls the “divisional rhetoric,” drawing on the concessions that the respondent (the *alumnus*) makes to the marked system proposed by the teacher.

Women in general, and specifically third world ethnic women have different experiences and interests. Women's politics of identity require social movements to construct transnational alliances while embodying the democratic practice of negotiating differences through the institutions of the nation state in order to pursue equality. Nation and ethnic building stories have a long experience in relation to the politics of community within the context of social movements and nation states. By focusing on women and ethnic/racial social movements, it is possible to see the connections between modern (and modernizing) discourses on national civil society with patriarchal violence and war. This interpretive shift refuses an evolutionary view of the emergence of modernity, but rather sees hegemonic modernity as the result of contingent historical conditions. At the same time, acknowledging the historicity of modernity gives ontological status to diverse emancipation theories of social change, a cognitive premise that leads to reflection on the differences between U.S. third world and South American women's movements.

The contemporary emphasis within the international community (financiers, transnational corporations, and non-government organizations) on civil society and modernization as the key mechanisms of progressive social change promises to end injustice and inequality through a restoring modernization centered in the growth of the private sector and the strengthening of civil society. This approach assumes that differences of gender and race will gradually disappear as people increasingly come to see themselves as interchangeable liberal political subjects and autonomous market actors. Political struggle under these conditions becomes reduced to struggles for the right to have rights (legal and human). Yet, just as race and gender continued to structure ideology and power in the age of nationalism, the transnational era's power

"The Platonic rhetoric implies two interlocutors, and that one of them concedes: this is the condition of the movement."

relations remain permeated by structural and ideological forces that continue to promise universal inclusion while practicing new and expanding forms of differential exclusion. Under these conditions, to examine the experiences of anti-racist feminisms reveals important impediments to the ideological legitimacy of the new world order emerging from the hegemony of transnational capital -- a utopian trace capable of opening new angles to social movements looking for advances in democratic practices.

My dissertation aims to provide a self-reflexive account of the limitations and possibilities of new hemispheric social orderings brought into being through clashes between globalization and transnational ethnic women's social movements. I examine how classificatory systems of human bodies enumerate and establish race and class as objects through the symbolic and biological power of reproduction of women. I also examine the ways in which these classificatory systems of human bodies divide, contrast, regroup and categorize as interactive systems of discrimination and repression. However, this dissertation emphasizes that these biological and cultural systems cannot be separated from the nation-states' discourses, especially from those that define the national projects of modernization.

Modernization, developmental perspectives, and neo-liberal globalization through their economics, politics, institutions, and discourses, have played a significant role in provoking and promoting social movements, even while many of those movements portray these concepts as their enemy. In order to identify both the limits and the promise of the Marxist hope for the ever-expanding union of workers, the point of departure of my argument draws on Chicanas' new *mestiza* identity. By applying it to different contexts where *mestizaje* has a relevant role in forging alternative communities, I examine the contributions and limitations of the methodology that Sandoval proposes -- mobilizing the *mestiza* identity of contemporary ethnic and

women's social movements to promote counter-globalization decolonization for the Americas.

In the Americas, "*mestizaje*" and "miscegenation" can be understood as constant foundational concepts. They have also served as variable notions used to construct identities and otherness. In effect, the *mestiza* identity was constructed for the Southern part of the Americas when the fears of identity dissolution led European colonizers to map the "New World" as a female cannibalizing space. Since those generative ages, the terms hybrid, mulatto and miscegenation have denoted to the modern universal subject the otherness of the indigenous African, Asian, and European mixed bodies of the Americas. The term "*mestizaje*" evoked the offspring of incompatible species unable to reproduce. But "*mestizaje*" can be signified as a mistaken racial mixture and identity only when the reproduction of hegemonic sameness is at stake. In biological and cultural terms, this deduction highlights women's bodies' power for reproducing hegemony and sameness or proliferating uncontrolled difference.

In the north (where significantly the expression "*mestizaje*" does not exist in common parlance), the Anglo Saxon identity constituted the reference point for a binary segregating ethnicity model. In the south (where significantly the expression "affirmative action" does not exist), after the independence wars, the elites embraced a continental *Latinidad* while promoting the creation of national communities based on a popular *mestizaje*. In Brazil, the elite's *Latinidad* emphasized the "mulata," in the Caribbean the "tropical woman," and in the Andean region it emphasized the "indígena" condition of the "national subject". In this dissertation, I examine the reciprocal influences between the North American segregation and the Latin American *mestizaje* systems of racialization. International civil society's concept of

citizenship pretends to be a neutral framework for maintaining horizontal relationships between the nation states of the Americas.

However, by comparing the meaning of “*mestizaje*” within the southern and the northern racialization systems, a comparison which the idea of universal citizenship erases, the significance of race becomes visible for vertically inscribing national as well as international structures of power. The comparison also introduces interesting contemporary questions on the cannibalizing framework that the specific South America (post) modernity enacts.

In order to frame a conversation between contemporary U.S. third world and South American social movements, this dissertation draws on Sandoval and García Canclini’s tropes of “*mestizaje*” and “hybridity” for mapping an alternative story of transnational movements’ globalizing efforts for social change in the Americas. The foundational concepts of “*mestizaje*” and “hybridity,” are metaphors that García Canclini, Sandoval, as well as many other analysts use for describing contemporary counter-globalization social movements’ re-articulations.⁹ I examine the complicated situation of indigenous women who struggle for de-colonizing their societies while simultaneously working for the emergence of ethnic-based de-colonized communities. My objective is to examine how gendering affects the race- and ethnic-based mobilizing identities of decolonizing social movements. I argue that feminist epistemological insights are crucial for evaluating the perils and promise of transnational social movements for constructing a notion and a practice of democracy which draws on articulating differences instead of similarities.

⁹ See, for example, Chantal Mouffe, “Por una política de la identidad nómada,” in *Debate Feminista*, (Octubre: 1996) p. 9. This author states that “No sólo no hay identidades ‘naturales’ u ‘originales’ – dado que toda identidad es el resultado de un proceso de constitución—sino que ese proceso en si debe considerarse como un movimiento permanente de mestizaje. De hecho, la identidad se construye a partir de una multiplicidad de interacciones y esto no ocurre dentro de un espacio cuyos contornos podrían ser delimitados.”

At present, when globalization challenges the modernist space/time continuum, and when some (post) modernisms celebrate global neo-colonizing hybridity, the feminist Chicana movement proposes the projection of the *mestiza* identity for mobilizing and combining multiple and different local movements against globalization. Sandoval proposes the radical use of the mestiza identity for forging a decolonizing globalization in order to combine third world social movements of the United States and Europe. Chicanas' theorization on the experiences of U.S. women of color leads Sandoval to point out that radical mestizaje could overturn hegemony. According to this author, mestiza identity has emerged as a differential consciousness that would enable (post) modern social movements of the third world but in the first world of the Americas and Europe to construct alliances on the basis of diversity within these (post) modern spaces.

Through this dissertation, I argue that the epistemological engulfment of (post) modernism within the limits of Europe and U.S.-America leads Sandoval to a significant political mistake. The erasure of the roles available to people of the third world that do not share the first world space in her model suggests a U.S. ethnocentric perspective that undermines the author while making her blind to the relationship of the intrinsic articulation between U.S. ethnic and South American (post) modern inclusion/exclusion.

By projecting Sandoval's theory and methodology of the oppressed onto García Canclini's reflections on Latin American hybrid cultural consumption, this dissertation evaluates whether third world Chicanas/os, Latinas/os and Latin American neo-liberation and indigenous movements could find in "the new mestiza identity" an epistemological and political axis for building a transnational decolonizing third world identity in the Americas. I extend and make more complex García Canclini's question on "which are, in the nineties, Latin American strategies

for entering and exiting from modernity?” and Sandoval’s “apparatus for forging twenty-first century modes of decolonizing globalization.” In my dissertation, a feminist perspective supplements García Canclini, who emphasizes the relevance of cultural consumption while re-introducing the trope of *mestizaje* through consumption for explaining how South American shifts between cultural modernism and social modernization are related to U.S. (post) modernism.

At the same time, I reflect on the consequences that a “consumption” framework has in present-times, when García Canclini’s consumption perspective reinforces the already dramatic effects of contemporary technological changes. In fact, the homogenizing normativity of late capitalism emphasizes individuals’ alienation from the personal links that relate them to community (re) producing. García Canclini rejects the “unfinished transition” perspective often applied to South America. He proposes that an “inter-classes *mestizaje*” has generated multi-temporal “hybrid formations” which he understands as the result of utopian commitments for social transformation of a continental elite uncomfortable positioned between structural conflicts in the domestic order and dependence in the international sphere.

In this dissertation, García Canclini’s hybridity and cultural consumption supplement U.S. third world feminism, which stemming from the experiences of the 1960s-1990s U.S. social movements, developed an historical consciousness and political identity capable of shaping transcultural coalitions among differences. Love for differences constitutes the learning identity of the (post) modern rhetoric and mode of knowledge of the *mestiza* identity. This *mestiza* politics of identification understands identity politics as self-consciousness that is learning the dynamics of identifications.

According to Sandoval, U.S. third world feminism embeds both modern and (post) modern subjectivities, and this modern/(post) modern duality would position

U.S. third world feminism in a privileged site. For Sandoval, U.S. women of color encapsulate modern universalism and (post) modern difference, a privileged identity capable of solving the despair of the fragmented first world subject while embedding a coalition identity of U.S. third world subjects.

My interpretation refutes an evolutionary view of the emergence of modernity, but rather sees modernity as the result of contingent historical conditions. Acknowledging the historicity of modernity gives ontological status to emancipation theory and efforts for social change from the south and the north, from diverse experiences and theories at both the collective and the individual level. I study the place of women and race for the contemporary reshaping of the Americas through Chela Sandoval and García Canclini's hybridity. Barthes' insights provides a bridge in order to understand (post) modern social movements' theory of mestizaje and hybridity as a language "in trance" of composition. This dissertation provides a self-reflexive account of the limitations and possibilities of the "new mestiza identity," of new hemispheric social movements.

A struggle for the role of gendering within new ways of classifying is at issue. To study the cultural politics of women's social movements, which simultaneously are ethnic, national and transnational, opens a generative space for understanding the contemporary re-setting of the social. To integrate particularities into a new concept of citizenship seems to be the paradox of these new mobilizing identifications. Comparative analysis is a requirement for understanding hemispheric global re-ordering. This enables the additional examination of how theoretical understandings of universalizing discourses that emerge from globalization and nation states articulate with particular practices of local social movements. It may be important to note that the process of "universalizing" is an attempt to dominate or exercise control through the illusion of "universality" which negates particularity and difference.

Contemporary globalization has played a significant role in promoting transnational organizing while many of those same movements portray globalization itself as their enemy. How does contemporary globalization both enable and inhibit us in imagining alternative forms of power? How do we create new identifications, which blur the identity logic of the referential paradigm without replicating the negotiating and appropriating practices of capital? How can local/global activists of South American and U.S. third world social movements construct a shared space?

To create new ontologies of identifications and to relate them to an open totality where multiplicity and difference blur the identity logic of the referential paradigm without replicating the negotiation practices of capital seems to be necessary for escaping from the cannibalizing cultural logic of global capital. Drawing on women's reproduction power, I hope to illuminate the productivity of epistemological feminist insights for social movements. Sandoval's "oppositional differential consciousness" proposes a method for "activists for a new decolonizing global terrain."

Sandoval's proposal is explicitly talking to North/North counter-globalization social movements. Sandoval looks to unify activists that are "similarly positioned citizen-subjects within and across national borders." The third world Chicana feminism lays out a set of questions that concern the formation of the women of color political identity in the U.S. as well as the transnational implication of this affirmation. This historical formation and political identity is articulated through third world alliances based on a consciousness of international capitalist divisions of labor.

The role of Mexican indigenous women within the indigenist and mestizaje politics of the Mexican Revolution and the Wayuu Women Network of Venezuela within the Bolivarian Revolution bridge the third world Chicana feminism and South

American feminisms. Political strategies and forms of resistance expose simultaneous forms of oppression and struggle at the local, national and transnational levels.

García Canclini, on the other hand, emphasizes the current relevance of cultural consumption and re-introduces the trope of *mestizaje* through the market to explain South American shifts between cultural modernism and social modernization. Rejecting the “unfinished transition” perspective, and proposing that an “inter-classes *mestizaje*” has generated multi-temporal “hybrid formations,” García Canclini proposes to transit from national identities to a Latin American space, which includes Latino/as living in South America, in the United States and in Europe.

By supplementing Sandoval’s linear conception of *mestizaje* to García Canclini’s masculinist view of hybridity in my dissertation, the indigenous women’s experiences displace their location from a peripheral theorizing position to a crucial cognitive site capable of providing fertile responses to the problems posed by neo-global fascist/democracy. A generative narrative on the opportunities that globalization has opened to social movements emerges by contrasting production-based masculinist conceptions to indigenous women’s (re) production-based experiences of nation making. By critically integrating Sandoval’s map on the five modes of oppositional consciousness (equal rights, revolutionary, supremacist, separatist and differential forms) of the *mestiza* citizen-subjects to García Canclini’s redefinition of consumption as a space, which reproduces differences and social distinction, a generative angle for reflecting the possibilities of a Pan-American decolonizing identity emerges. Drawing on Chicanas’ new *mestiza* identity and García Canclini’s hybrid cultures of consumer citizen subjects, I examine the centrality of sexuality politics for new social movements and revolutionary states’ community formation decolonizing politics ‘from within modern and (post) modern contexts.

From a perspective that privileges women's place for the reproduction of the national citizen-subject, the birth of the mestiza nation in modern Mexico connects to (post) modern community making and state building in Venezuela and to the Wayuu society as well. By focusing on women's and ethnic/racial social movements, links emerge between contemporary modern (and modernizing) discourses on national civil society and the violence of scientific and literature writing.

The role of women within the *indigenista* and *mestizaje* politics of post-revolutionary Mexico constitutes a historical point of departure of the argument of this dissertation. By analyzing Pan-American *indigenismo* within the context of anthropologist Manuel Gamio's life, I connect *mestizaje* and community building to South American male intellectuals' subject-formation. I relate the life of Manuel Gamio, a Mexican anthropologist known as the father of Pan-American *indigenismo*, to the post-revolutionary politics of *mestizaje*. *Indigenismo* and national community building have been profoundly articulated through the politics of nationalist *mestizaje* into the imagination of the nation. This strategy becomes visible in my study of Gamio's *indigenismo* as well as in the study of Rómulo Gallegos, the first universal-vote elected president of Venezuela.

However, during the last twenty years, ethnic social movements have shifted from a nation-state-centric ascription of *indigenismo* to self-consciously Indian-centered perspectives. They have succeeded in restructuring the old national state-led *indigenistas* institutions. How have the Wayuu women of Venezuela benefited from emergent schemes of power in the Americas while promoting Wayuu, ethnic, and national community building within the New Global Order? Supplementing critical historiography work on The Mexican Revolution and the Venezuelan modern nation state construction with the ethnographic research that I have done since 1997 with Wayuu women leaders, I trace the history of an endogenous Latin American centered

history of the politics of mestiza identity within modernizing, developmental and (post) modern contexts.

At the end of my work, I examine the experiences of the Wayuu women grassroots movement when working together for bettering the living conditions of their society. While making a general depiction of the global dimension of *indigenismo* and of a modern indigenous Wayuu ethnic social movement, I focus mainly on the relevance of women's roles and sexuality politics within progressive social movements and national states' cultural politics. The imagined community of the nation acquires a corporeal and gendered reality when examined from a womanist research site that offers a space for escaping from the cannibalizing logic of late capitalism.

To summarize, by critically applying Sandoval's methodology of the oppressed and supplementing her proposal with García Canclini's insights on South American hybridity, this dissertation examines Mexican sexuality politics at the beginning of the twentieth century, when the Mexican Revolution defined the *mestizo* subject as the national citizen of the in-formation nation state. It takes into account how, during the decade of the seventies, the Chicano movement re-articulated the Mexican state-led *mestizaje* while struggling against the racial system of the United States, a mimicking turn that would provide Chicanas and Chicanos access to cultural and political visibility and power. It also examines the Venezuelan indigenous women's movement within the context of the revolutionary government which configured a new *mestizo* nationalist and Pan American project in opposition to neo-liberal globalization. The U.S. third world women's movement proposes the Chicana new *mestiza* identity as a methodology of (post) modern social movements. García Canclini differentiates modern national identities from transnational citizen identifications emerging from hybrid cultures' (post) modern consumption of

transnational products. Drawing on the contributions and limitations of these two proposals, the dissertation examines the contrast between a masculinist and a womanist articulation of *mestizaje* in the Americas. This strategy bears relevance to the meaning of women's agency within the erased relationships between production and (re) production both at the biological and the symbolic order. This analytical and political operation constitutes an indirect strategy for providing visibility to the significance of sexuality politics if one wants to qualitatively change the notion and the practice of democracy.

In order to achieve this general goal, in the first part of this dissertation I examine the Mexican Revolution politics of *mestizaje* through the study of anthropologist Manuel Gamio's inscription of the new Mexico to be born after the Revolution. I introduce the Mexican Revolution politics of *mestizaje* as historical references both of Sandoval and García Canclini *mestizaje* and hybridity frameworks, which these authors see as the methodological instruments of/for (post) modern social movements.

In the second part of the dissertation, I conceptualize the framework that bridges the biological and cultural *mestizaje* that the Mexican Revolution consolidated and that the U.S. Pan-American project supported. I examine *mestizaje* politics, as a common feature of Latin American nation states' politics of nation making. At the middle of the twentieth century, when indigenist Pan-Americanism was projected to the entire continent, Venezuela consolidated the modern institutionalization of its state and the oil production character of the nation that this state created. *Mestizaje* is again the center of this process of nation state making and is deeply related to the land that produces the resources of the nation state.

After providing this historical and conceptual information about Venezuela, the third and last part of the dissertation focuses on the Venezuelan Wayuu

Indigenous Women movement. The study of this concrete social movement introduces new questions and answers on contemporary politics of ethnic rights in Venezuela and Latin American. These questions and answers re-introduce the importance of evaluating the political and epistemological consequences of sexuality and racial politics within social movements which became concrete revolutionary political projects. By studying the Wayuu indigenous women social movement within the Bolivarian Revolution's domestic as well as sub-continental community re-making efforts, the dissertation's objective is to provide evidence of the importance of sexuality politics within contemporary neo-decolonizing social and political efforts.

II. Manliness and State-led National *Mestizaje*

INTRODUCTION

But you Communists would introduce community of women, screams the whole bourgeoisie in chorus.

The bourgeois sees in his wife a mere instrument of production. He hears that instruments of production are to be exploited in common, and naturally, can come to no other conclusion than that the lot of being common to all will likewise fall to the women.

He has not even a suspicion that the real point aimed at is to do away with the status of women as mere instruments of production.

Karl Marx, "Manifesto of the Communist Party," p. 488.

For anthropologist Manuel Gamio, Indians caused Mexico's modernizing recursive failures. If modernity, he argues, depends on proportion of Indian blood and on geographical location, and if geographical latitude can not be changed, a government committed in constructing a modern nation-state at the beginning of the twentieth century must intervene in order to diminishing Indianness within the population. Like Gamio, other Mexican intellectuals were also committed toward the country's modernization and the making of a new nation state. Indianness was the feature to eliminate, and *indigenismo* and *mestizaje* were supplementary tools for mexicanizing the Indians.

In order to create this new Mexico, Mexican intellectuals informed, with their knowledge, the revolutionary government's welfare policies, which they focused on indigenous populations. They name this political administration "*indigenismo*," and its instrument, "*mestizaje*," while looking for the Indians' incorporation into the information nation state. Making the Mexican woman the (re) producing body of this national process of homogenization implied the physical and cultural disappearance

of the Indian population and their transformation into Mexican mestizo subject-citizens. This process of national *mestizaje* was understood as a modernization prerequisite and it has constituted one of the hegemonic discourses on the democratizing features of the Mexican Revolution.

The first part of the dissertation aims to establish a feminist ideological reading of anthropologist Gamio's *indigenismo*, "the father of Latin American scientific anthropology," while also rooting *indigenismo* in the concrete historical circumstances from which modern *mestizaje* emerged in Mexico. I introduce women's bodies within the story of the formation of the post revolution national State. A feminist shift re-shapes men's sacrifice-centered universalizing narratives of nationalism and draws on women's reproduction.¹ I am interested in *indigenista* anthropologists' *mestizaje* as part of the politics of the Mexican Revolution, which was an in-formation nation state stemming from a successful popular social movement.² I also emphasize the Pan-American dimension of Manuel Gamio, an anthropologist

¹ I am referring to two exceptional texts: Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983), and Claudio Lomnitz's *Deep Mexico, silent Mexico: an anthropology of nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001). In my opinion, the controversial dialogue between these two texts requires a feminist perspective in order to provide a more complete picture, which will add corporeality to the "imagined" character of the community, a shift that will tell a different story. As I already said in the general introduction, this dissertation aims to claim a stake on women's reproduction centrality within politics of community making of social movements, nation states and global orders.

² "*Mestizaje*" is the signifier of what many consider a racial and/or ethnic ontological condition (that of being "mestizo") a condition often ascribed to individuals, groups, and national cultures whose essentialized "*mestiza* identity" is drawn from the notion of Indian and European miscegenation. By *race*, I mean a sociopolitical construction, in specific and cultural contexts, of human difference and identity that draws on selected phenotypical and other biological features. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981).

who crystallized Mexican and Pan-American fictions on *mestizaje* at the end of the 1940s.

I will begin by introducing a definition of “*indigenismo*” that provides visibility to anthropologist Gamio’s understanding of this concept. The incorporation of the concrete time and space to which Gamio’s Pan-American domestic and hemispheric governmental project belonged is necessary to understand his life as well as the effects of his seminal anthropology until present times. The specific perspective on *indigenismo* that this dissertation enacts raises the need to reflect on the limits and contributions of anti-racist mobilizations. Why is it so difficult to avoid the re-institutionalization of a new type of racial discrimination to those progressive social movements, like the Mexican Revolution, which emerge from revolutionary processes that struggle against colonial racializations?³ At the middle of the twentieth century, Manuel Gamio, the man whose life I chose to reflect on these difficulties, stated the following words in 1948 as a spokesman of the Inter-American Indigenist Institute (III):

The countries of Latin America already guarded their native groups before the Policy of the Good Neighbor arose. For example, Brazil with its "Serviço de Proteção aos Indians", which was established at the beginning of this century, and Mexico, where centuries ago, the Sahagun, the Casas, the Gante who did magna indianista work, provide evidence of this statement. Nevertheless, it is during the Good Neighbor Policy period when Inter-American Indigenista

³ While “*indigenismo*” can be translated into English as “Nativism,” this dissertation draws on the multiple meanings that the term acquires on its users’ voices. However, I provide this first instrumental definition in order to facilitate the reader’s life. “In a general sense, it could be said that after the Mexican Revolution “*indigenismo*” “was charged with the task of forging Mexican citizenship both by “indigenizing” modernity and by modernizing the Indians, thus uniting all Mexicans in one mestizo national community. In Mexico, this is what was called *indigenismo*.” Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 231. However, it is also important to notice, that “it is during the Good Neighbor Policy period when Inter-American *Indigenista* consciousness begins to bloom for the first time...” as the above quote points out.

consciousness begins to bloom for the first time. The yearnings of the native population that breathes from Alaska to Patagonia were traced in Montevideo and Lima. There these principles were eventually incorporated to the ideas and redemption formulae that integrated the Final Act of the First Inter-American Indigenista Congress of Pátzcuaro, in 1940, which gave origin to the Inter-American Indigenista Institute and to the Indigenous National Institutes.⁴

In the 1940s, Alaska and Patagonia were the spatial limits of inter-American *indigenismo*. The Spaniard Sahagun and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Good Neighbor Policy were the temporal limits of the project, and the plan of Simón Bolívar's 1826 Pan-American Congress, without the presence of the U.S., had been its most remarkable nineteenth century expression.⁵ For Gamio, the author of the transcribed

⁴ Manuel Gamio, "La Política del Buen Vecino y sus Consecuencias en el Mundo Indígena," ("The Good Neighbor Policy and its Consequences on the Indigenous World") in *Consideraciones sobre el Problema Indígena*, (México: III, 1948), pp. 122-124.

⁵See <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ho/time/id/17341.htm> : Good Neighbor Policy. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt took office determined to improve relations with the nations of Central and South America. Under his leadership the United States emphasized cooperation and trade rather than military force to maintain stability in the hemisphere. In his inaugural address on March 4, 1933, Roosevelt stated: "In the field of world policy I would dedicate this nation to the policy of the good neighbor--the neighbor who resolutely respects himself and, because he does so, respects the rights of others." Roosevelt's Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, participated in the Montevideo Conference of December 1933, where he backed a declaration favored by most nations of the Western Hemisphere: "No state has the right to intervene in the internal or external affairs of another". In December Roosevelt stated, "The definite policy of the United States from now on is one opposed to armed intervention." In 1934 at Roosevelt's direction the 1903 treaty with Cuba (based on the Platt amendment) that gave the United States the right to intervene to preserve internal stability or independence was abrogated. Although domestic economic problems and World War II diverted attention from the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt's Good Neighbor policy represented an attempt to distance the United States from earlier interventionist policies, such as the Roosevelt Corollary and military interventions in the region during the 1910s and 1920s. See Jorge Villegas and José Yunis, "La intervención extranjera," in *La Guerra de los mil días*, (Bogotá: Carlos Valencia eds, 1977), pp. 117-127. It is necessary to take into account that the U.S. intervention, which in 1902 led to Panamá secession from Colombia and the creation of a new independent (from Colombia) state finished in the sale of the French concession for constructing the channel to the U.S. Since 1846 the U.S. has been involved in the wars of the region in order to achieve those lands that would allow the pass from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Villegas and Yunis' text provides evidence on Maracaibo and La Guajira region deep engagement with the Colombian civil war that ended in the secession of Panamá and its protection by the U.S marines of any attempt to recapture the territory by the Colombian state. The Venezuelan President Cipriano Castro funded an army and a navy invasion that entered in the Colombia Guajira through Riohacha in 1900. At the same time, Nicaragua also supported the invasion of Colombia by Nicaraguan forces. According to these authors, Latin American countries' interventions in Colombia were led by the idea of remaking La Gran

quote, “our native groups” are objects that belong to nation states.⁶ While historically there have been different projects to integrate the indigenous populations both to the national and continental territories within a unified hemispheric space, Inter-American indigenismo’s relevance draws on the political power stemming from the transformation of a social movement into an institution that was part of the American States Organization.⁷ The latter is a hemispheric instance, which has embodied and

Colombia, meaning unifying again the Bolivarian project: Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador while adding Nicaragua to a Pan-American project without the interference of the U.S. These authors also state that in the case of Nicaragua, the main interest was to provoke the continuation of the war in order to interrupt the construction of the channel of Panamá and to obtain that the United States, instead of France, would construct the inter-oceanic channel through its territory. Regarding Venezuela, according to the journal *Herald*: “There are many reasons to believe that Cipriano Castro has entered in a conspiracy with the presidents of Ecuador and Nicaragua and the revolutionary chiefs of Colombia, all of them moved by the purpose of unifying 4 countries in one confederation, with Bogotá as the capital. It is well known in the diplomatic circles of Bogotá, Caracas and Quito that during an entire year, President Castro has been conspiring and that he has given powerful and frequent support to the Colombian revolutionaries, with an absolute disrespect of any principle of neutrality and even more, of decency. Behind this theatrical apparatus of the union of the four republics in one government, it is a finance plan. The Venezuelan president, Castro, wants that he and his partners could obtain the possession of the Panamá Channel and of all the routes of the channel, which is a huge business of multiple benefits. Signature: An European Diplomatic.” Cited by Villegas and Yunis, *La Guerra de los Mil Días*, pp. 119-120.

⁷ For information from Organization American States see, <http://www.oas.org>. The principles that embody the OAS grew out of a history of regional cooperation dating back to the 19th century. The OAS’ history web page says, “In 1826, Simón Bolívar convened the Congress of Panama with the idea of creating an association of states in the hemisphere.” These ambiguous foundational times have multiple expressions. In the case of indigenismo and of the region of La Guajira, which are two related central themes of the dissertation, it is important to take into account that from a Colombian perspective, the story of the creation of the Republic of Panama, a territory limiting with the Colombian and Venezuelan Wayuu region of La Guajira, has a specific meaning. According to Jorge Villegas and José Yunis, The U.S. ambition on the possession of the territory that the independent (from Colombia) Republic of Panamá would occupy, drew on the vital interests that the ownership of the channel represented for U.S. expansionist policies. Colombia had given the concession to a French company, which has not been able of finishing the works, and that decided the sale of the concession to the U.S. In fact, since 1846 and the agreement Bidlack-Mallarino, the U.S. assumed the role of guaranteeing to Colombia the sovereignty of Panamá. Drawing on this treat, the U.S. marines have landed on the Panamá Isthmus many times, some times drawing on their own decisions, and others, drawing on the petition of the Colombian government. During the Colombian civil war of the thousand days, U.S. marines of the war boat “Iowa” landed on Panamá “in order to maintain the social order.” This landing was not originated by the solicitude of the Colombian government. However, some days after this event, the Colombian president, Marroquín, ordered his ambassador in Washington to make the official solicitude, and this step opened the negotiations for trespassing the French concessions for the construction of the channel to the U.S. As Antonio José Restrepo, agent of the revolution against the Colombian conservative government in the U.S. declared: “And if the final result of the present

embodies the Americas' specific arena for the international legitimating of modern and democratic national states in the continent. Manuel Gamio and the III were crucial for the creation of the Inter-American modern racialization through the *mestiza* and *indigenista* identification both within post-revolution Mexico and the post-WWII Americas States Organization. However, contemporary indigenous populations of the Americas appropriated the *indigenista* discourse and practices, and at present turned over this adscription identification.⁸ South American nation states

war is favorable to the liberals, without any doubt we will take possession of these properties –the channel—in 1904, and sell it to the U.S.” This agreement with the Colombian insurgent liberals allowed the U.S. to avoid the Colombian armies' confrontation in the region of the channel, and on September 22nd 1902 the U.S. navy tenant, Thomas C. MacLean, landed in Panamá, while the Vice-Admiral, Syllas Casey, who replaced MacLean assumed de facto power. Two months later, Colombian armies signed the peace treatment in the U.S. Navy Ship, The Wisconsin. The war of the one thousand days (1898-1903) closed the Colombian civil wars cycle of the nineteenth century, and its more negative consequence was the trespassing of Panamá by the U.S. through the discourse of the creation of a new “independent” republic. On September 14, 1903, the U.S. recognized the Independent Republic of Panamá and stated that their army would oppose any military action embarked by Colombia in order to recuperate the isthmus. In 1948, the Inter-American Indigenous Institute (III) changed the perspective that we find at the beginning of the century, when Pan-Americanism passed through the secession of Panamá from Colombia and the creation of a new Republic. However, two Pan-American projects have always been alive. One of them encapsulates the potential tutelage of the U.S., and a second one is in confrontation to U.S. domination of the hemisphere. At-present times, in opposition to previous indigenista policies, the last issue of the OAS web page points out: “The Value of Cultural Diversity: We reaffirm that the cultural diversity that characterizes our region is a source of great richness for our societies and that respect for and value of our diversity contribute to social and economic dynamism and are positive factors in the promotion of good governance, social cohesion, human development, human rights, and peaceful coexistence in the Hemisphere.”—Declaration of Cartagena de Indias (First Inter-American Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Highest Appropriate Authorities, June 2002) These new statements coincide with South American nation states political changes in relation to indigenous populations that shows a shift from indigenismo to ethnic rights politics. The general objective of the dissertation is to reflect on the meaning of mestizaje politics within these changes over the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century, both under domestic and hemispheric contexts.

⁸ I draw on Michael Omi and Howard Winant's concepts of racial formation and racial project. See Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986). While these authors study the U.S. racial formation, I use their categories while also being very conscious of the contradictions of a hemispheric racial formation that overlaps the Iberian racial formation. Specificities of time and space need to be taken into account. However, I find particularly useful the categories of “racial formation” and “racial project” in order to study contemporary indigenous movements Pan-Americanism and national states reconfiguration of national identities under contemporary neo-colonizing global contexts, a process that also affects U.S.' re-configuration of its domestic racial formation.

also have had a complex relationship with Pan-Americanism. In present times, this conflictive relationship is visible through the confrontation between U.S. led NAFTA and TFAA, and some Latin American and Caribbean nation states' efforts for creating a community of nations looking for an integration model closer to the European process than to the U.S. led neo-liberal integration of the hemisphere.

“To protect and guard” the indigenous groups through the Inter-American Indigenist and the National Indigenist institutes constitute indigenistas' magna oeuvre. This Inter-American *indigenista* project acquired relevance after WWII, when the retirement of British presence from South America made the United States the strongest pole of domination and hegemony in the hemisphere, and the Americas States Organization framed the politics for the next years through the Cold War lens. But the modern global references to hemispheric time and space of Gamio's above-mentioned quote are not the only reasons for my selection of his words. The author's precision in establishing that in the 1930's “for the first time began to flourish an inter-American *indigenista* consciousness,” which was eventually institutionalized in 1940 called my attention. Manuel Gamio's words made me inquiry in the particular circumstances that merged national and inter-American *indigenista* consciousness. To whose latent violence was the scientific imagination of *indigenistas*' consciousness responding? Why were inter-American and domestic (including the U.S.) *indigenismos* institutionalized in the 1940's? Which were the menaces that lead the Americas' nation states to create Inter-American *indigenismo*? What did Inter-American *indigenismo* produce? I argue that *indigenista* Inter-Americanism,

institutions and anthropologists constructed the base of a US-led hemispheric racial project. Mestizo natives and indigenous populations of Latin American national states are two supplementary dimensions for constructing an ethnic Latino America in opposition to “Anglo America.” *Indigenismo* integrates the mestizaje model of South America through to the segregation racial model of the United States through the Organization of American States. As Gamio said in 1944, “the more pure source of *Americaness*, the more vigorous link that relates men of this continent with the land where they live is the indigenous man, the one who breaths from Alaska to Patagonia.”⁹ I will provide evidence that Inter-American *indigenismo* was a hegemonic institutional discourse which used the power of applied science in order to shape and make invisible a hierarchical continental racial order.

Manuel Gamio, the anthropologist on which this first part of the dissertation focuses and who is the author of the aforementioned quote, always related *indigenismo* to international politics.¹⁰ *Indigenista* anthropologist Juan Comas’ definition of “*indigenismo*” is also particularly relevant to highlight Gamio’s hemispheric project. Comas was Gamio’s academic partner during their active scholastic life. He stated that *indigenistas*’ aim was to transform Indians peoples of the Americas into “ active production and consumption factors.” García Canclini, an Argentinean anthropologist residing in Mexico, addresses Latin American

⁹ Gamio, “Sugestiones para después de la Guerra,” speech that he pronounced in the Day of the Indian, 19 of April of 1944. *Consideraciones sobre el problema indígena*, (México: III, 1966) p. 119.

¹⁰ For a French perspective on Manuel Gamio’s international *indigenismo*, see Christophe Giudicelli, “L’Europe dans le discours indénitaire Mexicain: Manuel Gamio, Forjando Patria.” Giudicelli reflects on Manuel Gamio’s re-articulation of the European presence within the Mexican Revolution. This is an aspect that I tangentially address in this dissertation. Strict operative reasons lead to narrow my study on the Americas space. In <http://www.sigu7.jussieu.fr/hsal/hsal96/cg96.html>

contemporary processes for “entering and exiting from modernity” through the link between consumption and citizenship. Comas’ words directly introduced the anthropological “cultural-material” perspective in order to incorporate the indigenous populations as national citizens. National production and consumption, which during the first half of the century still drew on the national market for embodying the elite’s modernizing dream, constituted the legitimating order behind the construction of the national as well as hemispheric order of citizenship during the greater part of the twentieth century. Comas’ words provide visibility to Mexico’s circumstances when the discourse of national mestizaje crystallized while bridging the racial ordering of the hemisphere.¹¹ Comas, who was born in Spain, also adds the direct Iberian presence within the already complicated inter-American landscape that Gamio named in his definition of *indigenismo* when mentioning both “nuestros grupos autóctonos” and president Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s “Good Neighbor” regional policy. Latin American racial and cultural identification, as well as its recognition as a modern region, is a crossroad relationship that also involved Spain, France and the United States, up to that point and to the present.

During the nineteenth century, many Latin American intellectuals and politicians saw in the United States the socio-political archetype to imitate by the un-united Latin American states. In 1852, Juan Bautista Alberdi stated in his *Bases* his

¹¹ I use the visually disturbing (post) modern writing in order to emphasize contemporary consciousness on modernity’s cognitive universalizing voice.

desire that education would produce “the Hispanic-American Yankee.”¹² And in 1883, his compatriota Domingo Faustino Sarmiento said in *Argirópolis*: “Achieve the United States. Become us the America, like the sea is to the Ocean. Become the United States.”¹³ Anthropological scientific production of non-European populations provided Latin American elites faith in the possibility of modernization through plans that always implied “order” and “progress” for the “pre-modern” indigenous, mulattos and mestiza population. Many Latin American intellectuals admired the technological and industrial progress of the U.S., the vitality of its commerce and of its economic life, its administrative efficiency. They admired its governments’ continuity and its capacity for avoiding civil wars. These intellectuals often argued that the U.S. War of Secession resulted in a positive experience inasmuch as it became a useful instrument in re-establishing a definite consolidation of U.S. national unity. Domestic anarchy and *caudillismo*,¹⁴ coups d’état and military insurgencies, which were frequent at the South of the Río Bravo, were (for them) almost impossible to happen in the United States. According to this narrative, in the United States, scientific knowledge supported the efficiency of the economy and generated wealth and democracy.

Latin American intellectuals and politicians believed in this representation, which became the dream of elites always wondering on the reasons of the differences

¹² Juan B. Alberdi, “5 bases y puntos de partida para la organización de la República, *Obras Selectas*, Vol. 10 in “Las doctrinas sociológicas de Alberdi,” José Ingenieros, *Obras Completas*, (Buenos Aires: El Océano 1961) Vol. 6, p. 190.

¹³ Juan Faustino Sarmiento, *Argirópolis*, (Buenos Aires: Leviatán 1997)

¹⁴ As an contingent point it seems interesting to bear in mind that until present times Chile’s positivist national shield’s inscription states “or with the reason or with the blood.”

between North and South America. Drawing on the Darwinist perspectives of modern science, they believed that Spanish and Portuguese nations were European inferior cultures whose colonization negatively marked Latin America. They also attributed these differences to Latin American mestiza condition, as well as to the presence of blacks and indigenous populations. However, the elites' identification with Spain does not follow a mechanic rejection either-or incorporation pattern. Power relations with modern U.S.-America were also at issue. In 1959, seeking to transcend the limitation that according to him the indigenous population represented, the Spanish anthropologist Comas still said that *indigenismo* was:

[A] social movement worried about the difficult and precarious material and spiritual situation in which the natives of the Americas (called "Indian" or "Amerindian") are, and which aspires to obtain their improvement in both aspects until incorporating them into the citizen life of the country in which they reside, elevating their socioeconomic and cultural level and turning them, therefore, in active factors of production and consumption.¹⁵

¹⁵ [u]n movimiento social preocupado por la difícil y precaria situación material y espiritual en que se encuentran los indígenas de las Américas (llamados "indios" o "amerindios") y que aspira a lograr su mejoramiento en ambos aspectos hasta incorporarlos a la vida ciudadana del país en que residen, elevando su nivel socioeconómico y cultural y convirtiéndolos, por tanto, en activos factores de producción y consumo." III, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*, p.23. An additional reason for quoting Comas as well as Gamio for introducing the concept of *indigenismo* stems from observing the travels that their applied anthropology made along the Americas, and especially how Venezuelan indigenous peoples and indigenista and non-indigenista intellectuals have differentially reconfigured Mexican initial *indigenismo*. To go ahead introducing the term, I point out that *indigenismo* has been an administrative branch of Mexican revolutionary policies. In 1940, the Inter America Conference on Indian Life institutionalized *indigenismo* in the Americas. In the conference, *indigenismo* was defined as a theoretical and practical corporative activity of nation-states and of the academic centers that drawing on the progressive integration and assimilation of the Indians to national societies will implement welfare policies for the solution of the "indigenous problem." III, *Inter American Conference on Indian Life*, p. 4. See David Vela, *Orientación y Recomendaciones del Primer Congreso Indigenista Interamericano*, (Ciudad de Guatemala: Publicaciones del Comité Organizador del IV Congreso Indigenista Interamericano 1959)

Figure 1: Manuel Gamio



Source: Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, "La arqueología y la identidad nacional," México, El Tiempo No. 33 noviembre / diciembre 1999.

Gamio was deeply instrumental in Comas' immigration to Mexico, and both had collaborated through their lives with the *indigenista* Inter-American project. Gamio's view on this political refugee (not an immigrant) of the Spanish Civil War is particularly revealing when compared to Gamio's ideas on demographics that, according to him, required the immediate promotion of male South European immigration and the refuse of Anglo immigrants who, according to him, did not show any inclination to miscegenation. In addition, other Spanish refugees in Mexico had a significant impact on the emergence of the publishing industry at times when literacy

and reading were crucial for imagining the modernizing national project.¹⁶ Gamio said about Comas,

Dr Juan Comas is a man of impeccable Spanish origin and a good Mexican by naturalization. In effect, during the last twelve years, when to a large extent he dedicated to collaborate in the continental *indigenista* work, he contributed much to appease the blind and loose passions that the discussion of these antagonistic criteria produces. For him, like for all those that work in the Inter-American Indigenista Institute and in its affiliated National Institutes, the true *indigenismo*, it is not so significant the untimely and systematic search of past Indian-Hispanic events, tasks to him entrusted to the historian. He is rather worried for studying and knowing the contemporary Indian, trying to satisfy with knowledge his necessities and legitimate aspirations and to defend him from the calumnies, abuses and extortions of which he has constantly been a victim.¹⁷

I argue that gendering and racializing are intertwined central phenomena of identity politics both of in-formation nation-states and of social movements. By studying the Mexican woman's role within the *mestizo* project of the revolutionary in-

¹⁶ Publishing constituted *Indigenistas'* priority, as their congresses' resolutions provide evidence. The obvious subsequent question to this Pan-American policy refers to the potential audience for their texts. Education on Spanish language and the construction of the *mestizo* nation became significant tools of a project related to an age when national markets marked the limits of non-hegemonic nation states' modernization. Women incarnate again key research sites for understanding the many *patrias* of Latin American revolutions under the age of nationalism, as the case of Chilean Gabriela Mistral, who was invited by Jose Vasconcelos in order to collaborate with his educational plans, provides evidence. Gabriela Mistral abandoned Mexico as well as Vasconcelos' project. She wrote a revealing text titled "La Extranjera," where her female and lesbian voice attempts to make a point on the difficulty that "proletarian internationalism" implied for women from other nations. In <http://amediavoz.com/mistralORO.htm#LA%20EXTRANJERA>

¹⁷ Dr. Juan Comas, intachable español de origen y buen mexicano por naturalización; en efecto, durante los últimos doce años, que en gran parte dedicó a colaborar en la obra indigenista continental, mucho ha contribuido a aplacar las ciegas y desatadas pasiones que la discusión de dichos criterios antagónicos trae consigo. Para él, como para todos los que laboran en el Instituto Indigenista Interamericano y en los Institutos Nacionales que le son afiliados, al verdadero indigenismo no le preocupa tanto la extemporánea y sistemática búsqueda de pretéritos sucesos indohispánicos, tarea encomendada al historiador, como el estudiar y conocer al indio contemporáneo, tratando de satisfacer con conocimiento de causa sus necesidades y sus legítimas aspiraciones y defenderlo de las calumnias, abusos y extorsiones de que ha sido y es constante víctima. Manuel Gamio, "Prólogo," p. x, in Juan Comas, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*, (México: Ediciones del Instituto Indigenista Interamericano) 1953. In order to have more extended information on Comas and Gamio personal relations, see Juan Comas, *Antología de Manuel Gamio*, (México: III 1975), pp. V-VIII; and Ángeles González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una Lucha sin Final*, (México : Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1987), pp. 154-157.

formation state, I hope to illuminate how community is articulated in relation to race and to sexuality within the context of a successful revolution that began as a popular revolt against the Regime of Porfirio Diaz.¹⁸ What kinds of admittance into modernity do these articulations entail, with what implications? It examines the reproductive role of women within *indigenismo* and mestizaje politics of the post-revolutionary Mexican State.¹⁹ By relating Latin American and Mexican indigenismo with anthropologist Manuel Gamio's life, *mestizaje* connects community building to Latin American male intellectuals' subject-formation. It relates the life of Manuel Gamio, a Mexican anthropologist known as the father of Mexican scientific anthropology and Latin American *indigenismo*, to the post-revolutionary politics of *mestizaje*.²⁰ This perspective will uncover the political implications that teleological and state-centric explanations on the Mexican Revolution have had when informing Mexico's politics of *mestizo* nationalism. I first examine the main narratives on the Mexican Revolution focusing my attention on the historical references of the revolution's pre-modern and bloody mobilizations marking this popular social movement. Secondly, I relate anthropologist Manuel Gamio's life to his racial-gender

¹⁸ My explicit use of the expression "the Mexican woman's role" draws on the examination of Gamio's classification of Mexican women that I develop in the next chapter.

¹⁹ I discuss a certain form of *indigenismo*, *indigenismo* of state. Since the colonial period there has existed different *indigenismos*, some of them as part of the ruling class and intellectual spheres. See Gonzalo Rubio Orbe, "Políticas y Estrategias en el Indigenismo de América," in *Anuario Indigenista*, Vol. XXXVI, (México: Instituto Interamericano Indigenista 1976), pp. 23-26, and Luis Villoro, *Los Grandes Momentos del Indigenismo en México*, (México: Comex, [1950] 1996)

²⁰ During the germinal moments of this central idea of my project I draw on Carole Pateman, "The Fraternal Social Contract" in *The Disorder of Women* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989), pp. 53-57, and on Rey Chow, "The Politics of Admittance: Female Sexual Agency, Miscegenation and the Formation of Community in Frantz Fanon," in Vol. 1, No. 1, (*UFS Review*: 1995), pp. 5-26.

classification of Mexican women. In the last part, I examine Gamio's anthropology within the context of Mexican state-led *indigenismo* and mestizaje. At the end of the examination of anthropologist Gamio's life, my feminist research focus will provide evidence of how the politics of sexuality have informed the racializing politics of the modern mestizo Mexico yet to be born. In doing so, I also open a space for introducing Sandoval's proposal of mestizaje as a method of U.S. and European (post) modern social movements' community formation. U.S. ethnic populations' voices are crucial, while not infallible, in order to deconstruct the American dream myth. As a Latin American woman writing for a committee of a U.S. ethnic studies dissertation, I hope to put in contact different American mestizaje myths, and by doing so to promote a space for constructing a counter-globalization movement drawing on the experiences of differentially racialized populations along the Americas.

A. Inscribing the Mexican Revolution

What is *productive labor* and what is not, a point very much disputed back and forth since Adam Smith made this distinction, has t emerge from the direction of the various aspects of capital itself. *Productive labor* is only that which produces capital. Is it not crazy, asks e.g. ... Mr. Senior, that the piano maker is a *productive worker*, but not the piano player, although obviously the piano would be absurd without the piano player? But this is exactly the case. The piano maker reproduces capital the pianist only exchanges his labor for revenue. But doesn't the pianist produce music and satisfy our musical ear, does he not even to a certain extent produce the latter? He does indeed: his labor produces something; but that does not make it *productive labor* in the *economic sense*; no more than the labor of the mad man who produces delusions is productive.
Karl Marx, *Grundrisse*, p. 305. Emphasis in original.¹

Introduction

At the beginning of the 1920's, when a coalition of revolutionary leaders became the novel authorities of the state, a new Mexico was said to be born.² Historians have usually conceived this new Mexico as the consequence of the success of the first popular movement of the twentieth century, which emerged as the result of the breaking down of Porfirio Díaz's Regime (1876-1910).³ The revolutionary new

¹ Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1973).

² The chapter, as well as the entire dissertation re-formulates the research question of my MA thesis on how to construct counter globalization spaces on the shoulders of local struggles. The chapter is therefore deeply engaged in debating, among other convergent issues, the naturalized concept of "leadership" and its relationship to new social movements' organizational culture and new ways of conceiving power and democracy. A feminist research site is my point of departure for uncovering the pre political violence behind and beyond the inscription of the civil society. Feminist as well as new social movement theory, which I examine in the second part of the dissertation, informs this specific starting point of the project.

³ For developing how historiography has more than often represented The Mexican Revolution I use the work of those authors that I understand as the most universally recognized sources for studying both in Mexico, Latin America and the United States this historical event. Francois-Xavier Guerra, *Del Antiguo Régimen a la Revolución* (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1988), "needs" to be quoted by any historian who desires to be acknowledged within the academy as seriously working with twentieth century Mexico. John Hart's *The Revolutionary Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California

state reformed and reconfigured the Porfirian racial, ethnic and national order while identifying as *mestizo* the communitarian peasants, who would be part of the corporate group of the state apparatus. Indigenist welfare policies and practices mediated and promoted the national project of The Revolution, at the same time that the nation-building myth of *mestizaje* drew on the creation of equal *mestizo* peasant citizens of a corporative state.⁴

Mestizaje affirms race mixture. It also maintains white superiority through the discourse of whitening, which identifies whiteness with progress and modernity and Indianness and blackness with inferiority and backwardness.⁵ Post revolutionary politics of *mestizaje* became a nationalist myth representing people as members of an

Press, 1987) is also usually present in university courses on Mexico as well as Alan Knight and his text *The Mexican Revolution* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986). Roger D. Hansen in *The Politics of the Mexican Revolution* (Baltimore: Joe Hopkins Press 1971) explicitly aims to solve the theoretical challenges of the Mexican Revolution through a comparative perspective that will enable “to explain the emergence of modern economic growth in Mexico in much broader context.” P. xi. El Partido de la *Revolución Institucionalizada*, by Luis Javier Garrido, *El partido de la Revolución institucionalizada: medio siglo de poder político en México: la formación del nuevo estado, 1928-1945*, México: SEP: CONAFE, 1986); *The Labyrinth of Solitude* by Octavio Paz (New York: Grove Press, (1961), 1985), and Pablo González Casanova, *La Democracia en México* (México: FCE 1965), and multiple works of Henrique and Pablo Casanova constitute the representative Mexican sources that I chose for the discussion on the role of historiography within masculinist inscriptions of the nation. Gamio and indigenistas constitute the source for examining the role of the science of anthropology within masculinist conceptions of community making. I understand social science bibliography as modern cultural artifacts; therefore, they are fictional texts that that are not in opposition to the events presented in the narration. I rather attempt to comprehend the basic conditions of their (re) production.

⁴ I understand both national identity and race as social constructs, defined by a fluid and changing history. Like ethnicity, they are negotiated phenomena. Drawing on Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States, From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), I focus my work on the structural dimensions and the ideological elements of racial hegemony involving struggles over meaning and identity.

⁵ In the context of this dissertation, which draws on male anthropologist Gamio’s seminal role, *mestizaje* implies the erasure of black population of South American. I am aware of the consequences of this delimitation, which many recent dissertations on the topic have profoundly and correctly criticized.

However, as I stated in the general introduction of the dissertation, I work with “*mestizaje*” as a foundational trope that (post)modern authors have retook in order to develop counter-globalization spaces.

imagined *mestiza* community, which at the same time subjectivized Mexican men and women in quite specific and differentiated racialized and gendered ways.⁶ Gamio's *indigenismo* draws on social whitening as the main tool that would enable both Mexican Indians and the revolutionary nation state to become modern. Benedict Anderson's successful "imagined communities" metaphor correctly provides relevance to one aspect --the "imagined" one-- of the process of community and nation making. However, this positive point can be understood as a weakness if one takes into account how it erases sexualized bodies from the imagined framework of the nation. By introducing a feminist perspective, the process of nation making acquires corporeality, while women's biological and cultural reproductive power confronts intellectual men's inscriptions.

In 1986, Ángeles González Gamio wrote Manuel Gamio's biography. *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle* is the title of this granddaughter's book on her grandfather's "quixotic struggle" for achieving "a better life for the indigenous peoples of Mexico."⁷ When mentioning the difficulties that she confronted when writing this biography, González Gamio points out that "the always difficult task of penetrating a human being's life" becomes still more difficult when the objective is to write a family member's biography. "I confess that my adoration for my grandfather

⁶ Jorge Hernández Díaz, *Los Chatinos, Etnicidad y Organización Social* (Oaxaca: Comunicación Social, Difusión Institucional, 1992), p. 12: "A pesar de las contradicciones de la política colonial, la población de Nueva España reflejaba el impacto de dos fenómenos: la miscibilidad racial y la asimilación cultural: dos procesos singulares que fueron fundidos en el término mestizaje."

⁷ Ángeles González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, (México; UNAM, 1987), p. 21. Observe González Gamio's "quixotic" reference to the paradigmatic novel of *Don Quijote*, by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra as well as the authorial role that González Gamio assigns to his grandfather in relation to Mexican indigenous population.

makes a difficult task still more difficult to fairly narrate a biography.”⁸ Adolescent Ángeles’ memories of her beloved grandfather’s “adventures in the jungle and archeological ancestral ruins” coincided with the human being she uncovered and represented many years later, when she became an adult author.⁹

Why did Manuel Gamio, a middle class intellectual man of Spanish descent, devote his entire life to write about Mexican and Latin American Indian populations and to struggle endlessly “for redeeming their living conditions?”¹⁰ In 1906, when he was twenty-three years old, Gamio began to be engaged with indigenous peoples. Until the moment of his death in 1960, he has been a scholar associated with the corporate government of the Revolution as well as with the U.S. institutions related to the discipline of applied anthropology, particularly in the area of Mexican immigrants. He lived as an organic intellectual of the post-revolutionary government, yet he never participated in the social movement of the Mexican Revolution. He served as an assistant in the Mexican National Museum (1907-1911), second, as a functionary in the General Inspection of the Archeological Monuments in the Education Ministry (1913-1916), and third, as an inspector in the Agricultural and Mines Ministries (1917-1924), leading to his master achievement, as the president of

⁸ The use by González Gamio of the writer’s confession parallels the use by Gamio of the same epistemological and political strategy in his anthropological writings. As Bourdieu states, biography and anthropology are homologous inscribing *modus operandi*. In addition, also observe González Gamio’s masculinist voice for expressing her “confession,” a discursive practice that would require specific insights in order to uncover women’s ventriloquist strategies for talking about the patria.

⁹ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, p. 15.

¹⁰ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, p. 11

the Interamerican Indigenist Institute (1942-1960).¹¹ “Since he returned from Columbia University in 1913, Gamio had always predicated that it was necessary to create departments of anthropology in all the countries of the Americas.”¹² He was the president of the Mexican delegation at the II Scientific Pan-American Conference in Washington, when in January of 1915 he argued for the foundation of Bureaus of Anthropology throughout the Americas. Gamio asked this Congress for creating anthropological institutes as indispensable tools “for fixing the different nationalities of the Americas,” a requirement which will guarantee the construction of “powerful nation-states” as well as an “efficient Pan-Americanism.”¹³ For Gamio, the lack of “integral anthropological studies,” and governments’ subsequent lack of correct information, was the cause of the “abnormal evolution” of almost all Latin American countries.¹⁴ Therefore, for Gamio it was “axiomatic that anthropological knowledge is basic for good government performance,” while the population constituted “the raw material with which and for which any government rules.”¹⁵

¹¹ For more information on Gamio’s university studies; administrative state positions; committees, and scientific societies, see González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, pp. 211-213.

¹² González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, p. 48

¹³ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 19, and Manuel Gamio, *El Gobierno, la Población, el Territorio* (México: Departamento de Talleres Gráficos de la Secretaria de Fomento 1917), p. 3.

¹⁴ In 1903 Mexico, Nicholas Leon began to teach physical anthropology and ethnology. In 1910, under the auspice of the governments of Mexico, Prussia and France, and of the universities of Columbia, Harvard and Pennsylvania, the National School of Archeology and Ethnology of the Americas was founded. Franz Boas and Eduardo Seler went from the United States to Mexico to create the Department, and these anthropologists established the frameworks of what eventually became the indigenist anthropology. www.inah.gob.mx/cnan/htme/cnan0030 p.7.

¹⁵ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 15.

Pan-American *Indigenismo*

The term internationalism denotes a federation of nations. How, then, could Mexico and other many countries of Indo-Ibera America become members of such federation if yet they do not constitute true nationalities? Today, like for the last twenty years, since we initiated this nationalist campaign, we believe that it is urgent: To balance the economic situation, elevating the proletarian masses' level, to intensify the miscegenation, in order to complete the racial homogenization; to replace the deficient cultural characteristics of those masses, by those of modern civilization, using, naturally, those that display positive values; to unify the language, teaching Spanish to those who only speak indigenous languages.

Gamio, *Hacia un nuevo México*, p. 4 .

Anthropological knowledge was conceived as something that could help the revolutionary leaders in forging a modern national state.¹⁶ Drawing on the nation-state centric construction that identified the great majority of the population of Mexico as “Indians” and “mestizos,” anthropological knowledge of the majority of the population became “*indigenismo*.”¹⁷ *Indigenismo*, previously designated as a “social movement” by Juan Comas and Gamio, became an institution that sought to improve the material as well spiritual aspects of the Indians living conditions. Its

¹⁶ Moisés Sáenz, Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán and Manuel Gamio are the three main Mexican anthropologists of these years. Moisés Sáenz shifted Gamio's idea of *mestizaje* by suggesting the integration rather than the incorporation of the indigenous population. For him it was important that indigenous people should be also integrated by taking into account their own political identities. Luis Villoro, *Los Grandes Momentos del Indigenismo en México* (México: Comes. [1950] 1996).

¹⁷ The use of the terms “Indians” and “indigenous” constitute a problem. I am aware of the impossibility of a satisfactory representation, however I use the terms “Indian” or “Indianness” to denote the native populations who do not enter within *indigenistas*' modernizing framework. In this sense, within Gamio's *indigenista* hierarchical construction of cultures, indigenous and some mestizos belong to the same framework. Indians and other mestizos, on the contrary, are those that *indigenistas* attempt to subject through to the nation state. The entire hierarchical system depends of the distance of an individual or a group in relationship to the modern European man. The race categorization overlaps the ethnic and the national one.

objective was “to incorporate the Indian populations to the citizen life of the country,” while at the same time seeking to convert them in “active production and consumption factors.”¹⁸ *Indigenismo* was thought as the tool par excellence for informing the revolutionary government in order to enable it to disrupt the “infernal circle” of failure of post-colonial Mexico developmental policies.¹⁹ In 1915, the scientists participating in the Second Pan-American Congress in Washington unanimously approved Gamio’s proposal on the establishment of institutes for studying the indigenous populations throughout the Americas. The application of anthropological studies as a support to demographic politics formed part of the new scientific and educational tendencies.

Gamio proposed an anthropology Institute to be created in every country of North, Central and South America for the scientific study of population problems and advice the measures necessary to solve them. Yet the Interamerican Indigenist Institute (III) was not founded until 1940 in Patzcuaro, Mexico, under Lázaro

¹⁸ Juan Comas, Prólogo de Manuel Gamio, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*, (México, Instituto Indigenista Interamericano, 1953) p. 17. An additional reason for quoting Comas as well as Gamio stems from observing the travels that their applied anthropology made along the Americas, and especially how Venezuelan indigenous peoples and indigenista and non-indigenista intellectuals have differentially reconfigured initial indigenismo. To go ahead introducing the term, I temporarily point out that indigenismo has been an administrative branch of Mexican revolutionary policies. In 1940, the Inter America Conference on Indian Life institutionalized indigenismo in the Americas. In the conference, indigenismo was defined as a theoretical and practical activity of nation-states and academic centers that will implement welfare policies for the solution of the “indigenous problem” based on the progressive integration and assimilation of the Indians to national societies. III, *Inter American Conference on Indian Life*, Final act of the First Inter-American Conference (Pátzcuaro, State of Michoacán, Mexico, April 14-24, 1940: Washington, D.C.: U. S. Office of Indian Affairs S. Office of Indian Affairs, 1941) p. 4.

¹⁹ I borrowed the expression “infernal shame” from Rey Chow who uses it in post-colonial black men’s contexts while referring to Frantz Fanon’s words on the black woman supplements Chow, “The Politics of Admittance: Female Sexual Agency, Miscegenation and the Formation of Community in Frantz Fanon,” in *UFS Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1995, pp. 5-26.

Cárdenas' presidency (1934-1940). This was a period when the international pre-war landscape fueled many other U.S.-led Pan-American projects in order to re-map the borders of the Americas. While the resolution for the foundation of the institute was approved in 1940, it became a corporeal institute only in 1942.²⁰ The Pan American international agreement established that,

The incorporation and integration of native groups to their respective nationalities is jeopardized, among other equally significant factors, by the economic exploitation that, precisely under the protection of discriminatory “racialization,” victimizes in much greater degree the native population than the working masses in general.²¹

A new stage in Mexican *indigenismo* began with the foundation of the III, which was constituted as a state-led network for integrating the indigenous peoples to the nation-states, as well as the nation-states of the Americas among themselves. The institute

[is] an organ destined, among other functions, to “collect, order and distribute” information referring to studies, legislation, administration, etc., related to the indigenous problem; as well as to “begin, direct and to coordinate scientific researches and surveys that have immediate application to the solution of the indigenous problems.”²²

²⁰ Comas, *Relaciones Inter-raciales en América Latina: 1940-1960*, (México, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1961) p. 13: “En 1940 se celebró en Pátzcuaro, México, el I Congreso Indigenista Interamericano, cuyos antecedentes se encuentran en los acuerdos tomados por la VII Conferencia Internacional de los Estados Americanos (Montevideo, 1933), el VII Congreso Científico Americano (México, 1935), la I Conferencia Continental de Educación (México, 1937) y la VIII Conferencia Internacional de los Estados Americanos (Lima, 1938). De dicho I Congreso surgió la creación del Instituto Indigenista Interamericano como organismo especializado de la OEA (1941) y la reunión de posteriores Congresos Indigenistas Interamericanos en Cuzco, Perú (1949), La Paz, Bolivia (1954) y Guatemala (1959)” Related to the concrete information regarding Pan-American indigenismo, Juan Comas offers an extended and quite impressive bibliography of 1940-1960 texts on Latin American interracial relations.

²¹ Comas, *Relaciones Inter-raciales en América Latina: 1940-1960*, p. 13, “[I]a incorporación e integración de los grupos aborígenes a sus respectivas nacionalidades se encuentra obstaculizada – entre otros factores igualmente importantes- por la explotación económica de que son víctimas aquellos, en mucho mayor grado que las masas obreras en general, precisamente al amparo de prejuicios discriminatorios de índole ‘racial’.”

²² Gamio, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*, p. 60. “ [es] un órgano destinado, entre otras funciones, a ‘colectar, ordenar y distribuir’ informaciones referentes a estudios, legislación, administración, etc.,

In this sense, it is relevant to uncover the racializing agenda of this Inter-American project as well to identify how intellectual men positioned themselves as enlightened Latin American subjects. In Patzcuaro delegates represented 19 countries, and the governments of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Cuba, Peru, Panama, Paraguay, Honduras, United States, El Salvador, and Mexico signed a resolution promoting the foundation of national indigenist institutes affiliated to the Interamerican Indigenist Institute (III). In 1942, six countries were already members, and in 1954 a total of 15 states constituted the III, while Cuba, Haiti, Chile and Uruguay did not become part of the indigenist Inter- American state-led network. In 1942, after the un-expected death of anthropologist Moisés Sáenz, the first chairman of the institute, Gamio became its president.²³

In 1946, at the end of his III first presidential period, his colleagues named Gamio “the Indigenista who represents our era,” and “the continental symbol of scientific indigenismo.” Within these celebrations, John Collier, former commissioner for Indigenous Affairs in the United States and member of the III board, posited that “in the administrative and political fields” there have been few men who have surpassed the work of Dr. Manuel Gamio. He added “no one has ever been equal to

relacionadas con el problema indígena; así como también a ‘iniciar, dirigir y coordinar investigaciones y encuestas científicas que tengan aplicación inmediata a la solución de los problemas indígenas.’ In the international meetings of Montevideo in 1933 and Lima, in 1938, the participant States recommended the celebration of an Indigenista Continental Congress. The meeting took eventually place in Patzcuaro, Michoacan, in 1940. In 1942, the Institute began its work, and when Gamio became its director he received funds from Mexican president general Manuel Avila Camacho and established the venue of the institute in an ambitious space. See *Boletín Indigenista*, v. II, No. 2, (México: III 1942), p. 9.

²³ To trace the Interamerican, national and U.S. matrix of the project, see Gamio, “Los futuros Institutos Indigenistas Nacionales,” in *Consideraciones sobre el Problema Indígena*, pp. 60-63.

Manuel Gamio's versatility in terms of concentration and application," a divine feature that "he sustained all along his life with spirit of science and justice."²⁴ Re-elected in 1948 and 1954, Gamio left the leadership of the Inter-American Institute when he died in 1960.²⁵ Many contemporaneous academics shared Gamio's thoughts and recognized the values of this "sage." They saw in Gamio a peer specialized in Indigenous matters in a country where "the masses" were Indians. "But among his many qualities, the most admired in Dr. Gamio, is his passionate lucidity as a researcher." This quality draws on "the love he feels for the indigenous groups inhabiting our territory and whom he has endlessly fought to incorporate to the harmonious life of the forces of progress of the nation."²⁶ When Henrique González Casanova articulated these words in 1955, Manuel Gamio was 73 years old.

An Inter-American union of nationalities has always supplemented Gamio's deepest desires for forging a strong and great Mexican *mestiza* nation, a point that *indigenista* anthropologists have also constantly addressed through variable

²⁴ John Collier, "Prólogo," p. XII, in Gamio, *Consideraciones sobre el Problema Indígena*. There is a contradiction related to Collier and Gamio's positions within the III board that I still need to research. It seems that both were president for two years (1942-1944) or that Collier was the President and Gamio the Director. For an American Indian perspective of this period, see "Documents" in Chapter 12, "Efforts at Reform, 1928-1941," pp. 383-418 in Albert L. Hurtado and Peter Iverion, *Major Problems in American Indian History* (Boston, New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, Second Edition 2001). These articles frame a controversy that parallels Gamio's ambiguous anti-racism. These articles are: "Lewis Meriam Summarizes the Problems Facing American Indians, 1928," "The Indian Reorganization Act (Wheeler-Howard Act), 1934," Rupert Costo (Cahuilla) Condemns the Indian New Deal, 1986," Ben Reifel (Brule Lakota) Praises the Legacy of John Collier, 1986," John R. Finger, "The Eastern Cherokees and the New Deal," D'Arcy McNicle (Salish-Kutnai), "The Indian New Deal as Mirror of the Future." Mexican Indigenista institute saved in a CD version Gamio-Collier correspondence, and it is possible to buy it through Internet by the amount of 40 U.S.\$.

²⁵ Comas, *La vida y la obra de Manuel Gamio*, (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Dirección General de Publicaciones, 1956), p. 31.

²⁶ Henrique González Casanova, *Estudios Antropológicos publicados en homenaje del Doctor Gamio*, (México: Dirección General de Publicaciones 1956), p. VII.

contexts.²⁷ As a Mexican man of Spanish descent and as an anthropologist validated by the U.S. academy who worked all his life for domestic and international *indigenista* administrations, Gamio considered himself an equal to modern European and American men. But he also understood that Mexico's modernizing failure projected on him a flawed modern subjectivity.²⁸ Under this perspective, Gamio's identification with the welfare *indigenista* politics of Mexican nationalism and with

²⁷ See Gamio, "Las Patrias y las Nacionalidades de la América Latina," "Patrias y nacionalidades," and "México país representativo de la América Latina," in *Forjando Patria*. See "Nacionalismo e Internacionalismo," in *Hacia un México Nuevo*. See, Comas, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*.

²⁸ Gamio, *Hacia un nuevo México*, p. 4: "La investigación progresiva y el continuo contacto con instituciones e intelectuales mexicanos y extranjeros, de ideología avanzada, nos hace ir con las novísimas corrientes del pensamiento actual; somos y seguiremos siendo internacionalistas convencidos, sobre todo cuando vemos más allá de nuestras fronteras. En cambio, en nuestro carácter de compatriotas, de hermanos de diez millones de seres que se debaten en la civilización indígena retrasada de varios siglos, pensamos de otra manera, somos nacionalistas. ... Descendemos hasta aquellos mexicanos parias, vivimos su vida y penetramos en su alma, a fin de conocer los medios propios para ayudarlos a reincorporarse, lenta, pero efectivamente, hasta que lleguen a ser elementos sociales comparables a los que constituyen poblaciones de países aptos para formar una federación internacional." Gamio, *Hacia un nuevo México*, p. 5 "El término internacionalismo connota una federación de naciones. Cómo, pues, México y otros muchos países de la América Indo-Ibera podrían formar parte de tal federación si todavía no constituyen verdaderas nacionalidades? Hoy, como hace veinte años, que iniciamos esta campaña nacionalista, creemos que es de urgencia: equilibrar la situación económica, elevando la de las masas proletarias; intensificar el mestizaje, a fin de consumir la homogeneización racial; substituir las deficientes características culturales de esas masas, por las de la civilización moderna, utilizando, naturalmente aquellas que presenten valores positivos; unificar el idioma, enseñando castellano a quienes sólo hablan idiomas indígenas."

Gamio, *Hacia un nuevo México*, p. 4: "Progressive investigation and continuous contact with Mexican and foreign institutions and intellectuals, of progressive ideology, make us go with the latest currents of present thought; we are and we will continue being faithful internationalist, mainly when we see beyond our borders. However, our compatriot nature, of being brothers of ten million beings who struggle in the centuries delayed Indian civilization, we think in a different way, we are nationalistic. ... We descend until those Mexican pariahs, we live their life and we penetrate their souls, in order to know the proper means to help them to reincorporate, slowly but efficiently, until they get to be social elements comparable to those which constitute the populations of countries which are apt to form an international federation." Gamio, *Hacia un nuevo México*, p. 4: "The term internationalism denotes a federation of nations. How, then, could Mexico and other many countries of Indo-Ibera America become members of such federation if yet they do not constitute true nationalities? Today, like for the last twenty years, since we initiated this nationalist campaign, we believe that it is urgent: To balance the economic situation, elevating the proletarian masses' level, to intensify the miscegenation, in order to complete the racial homogenization; to replace the deficient cultural characteristics of those masses, by those of modern civilization, using, naturally, those that display positive values; to unify the language, teaching Spanish to those who only speak indigenous languages."

Boasian applied anthropology indicates that for him, his commitment for making a new Mexico is entirely intertwined with his modern selfhood and with internationalism. It is his scientific initiative toward the salvation of the “millions of Mexican indigenous living as pariahs” that would introduce him as a Mexican man equal to other modern men who belong to the most developed nations of the world.²⁹ Significantly, the post-colonial failure for modernizing Mexico operates in the sense to invalidate his recognition as a modern man. The mediation of scientific universal knowledge becomes for Gamio the tool to be recognized as a modern male anthropologist capable of correctly informing the politics of post revolutionary Mexico, as well as to be recognized and admitted within the modern universal brotherhood of knowledge. Gamio’s leading idea in *Forjando Patria (Forging Patria, 1916)* coincides with another question introduced by post-revolutionary Mexican leaders: How can Mexico become a great and recognized nation-state within the international community of modern states?

A feminist research site reformulates Gamio’s seminal question. How is it that González Gamio’s “grandfather’s adventure tales” came to be recognized as

²⁹ Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán and Ricardo Pozas Arciniega. *Instituciones Indígenas en el México actual*. (México: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, [1954] 1981). In terms of colonial numbers, the III states that neither the predominant whites neither the black population represented more than the 2 per cent of Mexico total numbers. The 1910 census classifies as white 20%, indigenous 37% and mestizos 43%. “But the Revolution which began in 1910 created the conditions and proper attitudes necessary for keeping an accelerated rhythm of the mestizaje process.” In 1940 only 15% of the population was considered indigenous. “The indigenous masses, which along the colony always constituted the majority group, were reduced to a manifested minority.” Pp. 18-21. *Indigenistas* were obsessed with Indians’ numbers. Almost any publication both of the III and of the INI comes over and over with the same subject as well as with indigenistas’ disquisitions on how to increase mestizaje in Latin America, which would facilitate a balanced economical, political, and cultural modernization. While indigenistas mentioning the differences between Latin American countries in terms of black, indigenous, mestizo and European populations, they focused their work on what they labeled “the indigenous” problem.

indispensable scientific knowledge about other Mexican women and men, who in this case were named “Indians,” “indigenous” and “mestizos?” In 1948, the III named Gamio the “father of scientific indigenismo.”³⁰ However, if he is the scientific father, who is or are the mothers? In other words, what are the power relationships behind the shift from a grandfather storyteller to a scientific mediator of Mexico’s mestizaje politics? In examining the historical context of Gamio’s life, rather than summarizing historians’ representations of the facts contemporary to him, I will relate historical inscriptions about the politics of nation making, a perspective that will uncover the epistemological and political connections between violence, patriarchal power, civil society and the male intellectual’s commitment to universalizing ways of knowing.

Social movement versus State-centric representations of the Mexican Revolution

Present radicalism, can get to be greater, much greater, if its transformation is provoked; it is necessary to consider the Revolution as a natural, entirely natural event; it is necessary to march with her and not against her. To oppose obstacles to its race is as much as insisting on immobilizing the sea or darkening the day.
Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 17.³¹

Why did independent Mexico not achieve postcolonial utopian promises?

Many narratives on the Mexican Revolution follow similar strategies by positing that Mexico’s main problem in its modernizing recursive failure was its indigenous population’s traditional and pre-modern ways of living. Sociological perspectives look for "preconditions" stemming from a linear history. They define the Mexican Revolution as a social movement composed by a new elite emerged from the tensions

³⁰ III, *Consideraciones sobre el problema indígena*, p. vii.

³¹ “El radicalismo actual, puede llegar a ser mayor, mucho mayor, si se provoca su transformación; hay que considerar a la Revolución, como un acontecimiento natural, enteramente natural; hay que marchar con ella y no contra ella. Oponer obstáculos a su carrera, es tanto como empeñarse en inmovilizar el mar o oscurecer el día.” Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria* (México: Porrúa Hermanos, 1916), p.17.

created by Porfirian modernization's conflictive relationships with "traditional pre-modern" Indians who struggled for recuperating their old ways of living. This interpretation argued that traditional society's clash with modernization resulted in social discontent and mobilization. Linear interpretations added that in order to be successful, modernization would require destroying previous societies, a notion that García Canclini's insights on the hybridity of Mexican cultures show to be false.

This modern short-term perspective views the Mexican Revolution as a "mad moment" of social mobilization. This kind of associationalism assumes a phase model that interprets social movements as steps in a linear model of development. The first stage would create the pre-modern Indian identity as the pre-condition of the Mexican Revolution. The second stage would focus on insurgent actions by new mestizos as too ambitious and by Indians as nostalgic. The third stage would be the revolutionary leaders' achievement of state power and reconfiguration of the nation. Within the last scenario, the post revolutionary leaders' reformist politics both at the domestic and at the international level, as well as their corruption or cooptation by the demonized state, appear as the causes of Mexican recursive failures. If the revolutionary leaders would had been capable of doing things well and correctly representing the classes that constitute the Mexican nation state, then social mobilization would have finished, and Mexico would have become as modern as the United States. At the end of the story, armed participation would become political representation and mobilization would be institutionalized. There would not be any more reasons promoting Indians' insurgencies; and in the long term, social and economic democracy would follow the stabilization of the national citizens' political representation.

At least two elements destabilize this narrative. The first is the economic success and the social and political failure of modernization (Porfirio Díaz's and the Revolution's) as indicated by economic data and by words which signal that the economy can go well but that the people still lived badly.³² The second element destabilizing this narrative is the undemocratic nature of the post revolutionary period. If the post revolutionary period represents the popular Mexican Revolutionary movement, why would Mexican "Indians" and "mestizos," who were those who sacrificed themselves when struggling against the army of Porfirio Díaz, freely accept being excluded from the benefits of modernization while docilely accepting the restrictions imposed on them by corporate political representation? A different narrative would state that during The Revolution, mobilization provided to the Mexican population the social experiences necessary for constructing social networks and cognitive identities for learning how to struggle. To achieve modernization's promises of equality would have been the goal of the movement. On this basis, by introducing into the national narrative the "burden of the indigenous populations' pre-modern cultures" and making them responsible of the failures of the national state modernization, *indigenistas* gave shape to a crucial epistemological and political resource. Mexican Indianness became a discourse justifying producers and consumers' endless differentiation from modern citizen subjectivity. The conflictive way of embodying modernization by the Latin American elite described by García Canclini would stem from the haunting presence of those that Comas names as

³² See Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*.

“active producer and consumer factors” seeking the promised equality of modernization. A clash of interpretations is at issue. Latin American elites would pretend to believe, and maybe did believe, in the possibility of a progressively more democratic face of modernization, while emphasizing the influence of hierarchical international power relations to justify their limited domestic democracy. At the same time, a circular argument attributing a “pre-modern” condition to the population subordinates Latin American countries within the international order. The introduction of U.S. ethnic voices within this narrative opens up a productive space for disrupting this naturalization of a linear progress toward modernity that the neutral universal citizen embodies. To comprehend the organizational function of racialization within the U.S. and the hemisphere could enable us to understand racial and gender exclusions from the progressive face of modernization, a contradiction that neither liberal nor Marxist perspectives introduce into the debate.

Drawing on the assumption that race and ethnic differences are connected to a hierarchy of beings, political scientists and sociologists often see the popular Mexican Revolutionary movement as the larva of the modern state, and Indians as the larva of new mestizo Mexicans. These assumptions reify the state and essentialize identities, while hiding the connections of male intellectual processes of subject formation as well as veiling their epistemological/political role within the bureaucratic reproduction of the state. In fact, the seminal male research question on failed modernization functions as an implicit assumption containing predetermined answers. This research question connects Porfirian modernizing economic initiatives with the Mexican Revolution and the ruling classes’ claim for a strong state. According to this

framework, it was necessary to transform the order of violence and the learning processes that the armed participation in The Revolution promoted within the Indians into a political representational system for the citizenry. The state would control the Indian population, and the Indians would freely become the peasant citizens (not the proletarians) of the revolutionary Mexico.

The Indian population is represented as the main obstacle against Mexico becoming a modern nation state as well as the cause of the government's inability to either defend its international frontiers or control its domestic population, as Gamio argued. As a result of this discourse, the military leaders, always in disposition of sacrificing themselves as fathers of the Mexican brotherhood for the survival and reproduction of the nation, required an efficient nation-state-centric political system that would ironically be the indispensable instrument for the birth of the new democratic Mexico. At the same time, *mestizaje* and *indigenismo* became the eugenic welfare tools for both national subject-formation and national community making of the Revolution's successful social movement enacting a modernizing progressive project. The conditions of inclusion within the modern nation state and the differentiation between leaders and the led population are the points at issue if one wants to reflect on the challenges that women and indigenous movements represent for traditional paradigms of democracy.

By representing the activities of Indian populations as the bloody expressions of uncontrolled rural mobilizations, post revolutionary historiography hides and naturalizes the violence behind the political fact that transformed the "mad moment" of social mobilization that contributed to the success of The Revolution. A second

step of this argument points out the need of the nation state's institutions for guaranteeing political representation in opposition to armed participation.³³ In other words, the revolutionary violence became the state force, while hegemonic social science inscriptions made invisible the violence behind the social and individual fiction of the liberal contract among homogeneous mestizo citizens. Within a period of fifteen years (1910-1925), "the country endured untold destruction. A sign indicative of the level of violence is the fact that between 1910 and 1921 the population of Mexico actually fell from 15.2 million to about 14.5 million."³⁴ More importantly, this narrative constructs indigenous peoples and women as pre political social movements, and subsequently erases the violence behind the processes of writing history, institutionalizing the revolutionary movement, and constructing the civil society. Within this perspective, the basic limitation of Mexico becoming modern would be the proportionally greater number of Indians in relation to the minor proportion of Spanish origin. Additionally, the increasing *mestizo* population conflicted with the old regime, which denied them social mobility while opening up

³³ Knight in *The Mexican Revolution* reproduces this perspective. The metaphors as well as the explicit logic of his work focus on the military avatars of the war and how the political forces underlying the Revolutionary armed conflicts integrate their heterogeneous energy through the institutional channels of the Partido Institucional de la Revolución (PRI). Knight observes that through the war dynamic the local armed conflicts reached a spatial national dimension. He also states that during the first years of the Revolution, the local rural armies –whose elements had been alternatively labeled as Indians, mestizos, bandidos, peasants, farmers, ejidatarios, landowners, and many other denominations—mainly fought against the modernization-privatization of the land. Once the rural popular forces destroyed the Porfirian power, the main difficulty for the leaders lay in the control, both of other local powers, and of the rural populations that have already experienced the political empowerment acquired through the armed confrontations. A long and bloody period of armed struggles expressed a transitional formation between a traditional and a modern political system. The positivist transformation of "social forces" into "political power" is a different angle for understanding the same point.

³⁴ Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, p. 29.

economical opportunities. Looking for admittance and recognition within what he names “the ultramodern world,” anthropologist Manuel Gamio goes through the entire country and hemisphere quantitatively and qualitatively measuring and recording populations and territories.

The magic words mediating between the Indian and *mestizo* population of Mexico and these post revolutionary intellectuals were “scientific knowledge.” In the belief that scientific knowledge was the necessary requirement for an efficient post revolutionary government, Gamio struggled for the “redemption” of Mexican and Latin American Indians and their transformation into modern (subaltern) mestizo citizens capable of supporting the nation’s integration into the modern global world of the first half of the century.

Gamio divorced himself from what he understood were the “extreme political struggles” of The Revolution. In this sense, he can be compared to many other middle class men working as state functionaries and deeply engaged with the revolutionary aims of redeeming the indigenous and forming citizens. Among the many interpretations done by progressive Latin American intellectuals, I selected García Canclini’s explanations of this commitment for “the people.”³⁵ García Canclini understands Latin American social and cultural hybridity to stem from a supposed split between modernization and modernism. The utopian commitments for social transformation of the continental elite, characterized by tensions between structural conflicts in the domestic order and dependency at the international sphere, have led to

³⁵ García Canclini, *Culturas Híbridas*, p. 74.

these hybrid formations.³⁶ García Canclini explicitly proposes to set a framework for understanding the historical and cultural specificity of Latin America. His perspective embeds once again the notion that the western experience is the universal modernity, and that the European historical sequence is the normal pattern with which it is necessary to compare other experiences. Although García Canclini expresses his rejection to read Latin American modernity “as the differed and deficient echo of central countries,”³⁷ his way of approaching the characterization of Latin American cultures provides an example of these western-centric assumptions characterizing modernism:

If modernism is not the expression of socio economical modernization, but the mode that the elites created for taking into account the intersection of the different historical modalities, and attempted to elaborate with them a global project, which are Latin American temporalities? And which contradictions does their crossing generate? The Pluralist perspective, which accepts fragmentation and combination among tradition, modernity and post modernity is indispensable in order to consider Latin American conjuncture at

³⁶ For Aihwa Ong, the definition of “transnationality” is: “*Trans* denotes both moving through space or across lines, as well as changing the nature of something. Besides suggesting new relations between nation-states and capital, *transnationality* also alludes to the *transversal*, the *transactional*, the *translational*, and the *transgressive* aspects of contemporary behavior and imagination that are incited, enabled, and regulated by changing logics of states and capitalism.” For the author “globalization” refers to contemporary new corporate strategies while “transnationalism” –or the condition of cultural interconnectedness and mobility across space-- refers to the cultural specificities of global process. See *Flexible Citizenship. The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham and London: Duke University Press 1999), p. 4. While acknowledging the cultural turn of late capitalism, this chapter of the dissertation provides relevance to the global dimension of Mexico’s many modernization projects. I also construct my project on Carole Pateman’s argument that points out that women’s capacity to give birth and men’s epistemological and political creation of the civil society are homologous. Rey Chow critiques post-colonial intellectual men’s commitments to modern epistemologies on the basis of their recognition and admittance recognition efforts. Reading García Canclini and Touraine through Pateman and Chow’s feminist perspective shapes the research site of this chapter. Gamio’s anthropological crystallization of mestizaje starts the argument of the dissertation. Articulating García Canclini’s notion of mestizaje to Touraine’s argument on Latin American populism it is possible to begin to shape a productive framework for studying transnational social movements of the Americas, the general objective of this dissertation.

³⁷ Perry Anderson, “Modernity and Revolution,” in *New Left Review*, No. 14, (March-April 1984) cited by García Canclini, in *Culturas Híbridas*, p. 69.

the end of the century. This is the way for proving how do the four defining features or movements of modernity: emancipation, expansion, renovation and democratization have deployed in Latin America. The problem does not lay in the fact that we did not achieve modernization; it rather lays in the contradictory and unequal way that articulated these movements.³⁸

In García Canclini's words, it seems to be assumed that there is an historical time, which is normal and universal and that would be the European one. This perspective understands modernization as a universal, as the pure referential model that draws on the European experience. In opposition to this model or comparative standard, modernization processes of Latin America are "contradictory" and "uneven" stemming from the intersection of different historical times (European times?).

This critique of the hegemony of European patterns for examining historical processes belonging to other spaces provides evidence of the relevance of scientific knowledge for naturalizing social relations. It proceeds from the notion that the features of the modern society are the spontaneous and natural expressions of the historical development of societies. Two supplementary naturalizing strategies construct the Revolutionary state's politics on *mestizaje* and *indigenismo*: A state-centric perspective on social mobilizations overlapping a developmental narrative on cultures. Historiography often represents Porfirio Díaz (1876-1910) as a prisoner of

³⁸ "Si el modernismo no es la expresión de la modernización socioeconómica, sino el modo en que las élites se hacen cargo de la intersección de diferentes modalidades históricas y tratan de elaborar con ellas un proyecto global, cuáles son las temporalidades en América Latina y qué contradicciones genera su cruce? La perspectiva Pluralista, que acepta la fragmentación y las combinaciones entre tradición, modernidad y postmodernidad, es indispensable para considerar la coyuntura latinoamericana de fin de siglo. Así se comprueba cómo se desarrollaron en nuestro continente los cuatro rasgos o movimientos definitorios de la modernidad: emancipación, expansión, renovación y democratización. Todos se han manifestado en América Latina. El problema no reside en que no nos hayamos modernizado, sino en la forma contradictoria y desigual en que estos componentes se han venido articulando." García Canclini, *Culturas Híbridas*, p. 330.

the success of his own modernizing politics, and anthropological discourses conceive Mexico's Indian populations to be the cause of the failure of the modernizing dreams of the post colonial country.³⁹ The convergence of these two narratives makes of Mexico a fertile scenario for the proliferation of recursive and un-controlled rural mobilizations. Indeed, both historiography and anthropology coincide in seeing the centralizing and unifying force of the state as the *Deus ex-machina* that will suppress endless uprisings by Indians while making of Mexico a homogeneous modern mestizo country.

The success of the armed indigenous mobilization co-constitutes the new Mexico to be made, and a unified *mestiza* nation becomes the pre-condition for creating an efficient modernizing state in formation. But how can the indigenous people, who are made responsible for both Mexico's modernizing failure and The Mexican Revolution's success, become part of the new *mestiza* nation to be constructed? By emphasizing the violence and marking the ethnicity of the Indians and *mestizos*, modern historiography does more than to follow Hobbes' narrative on the necessity of a state of law in order to control human beings' natural state of war. Historians' emphasis on the threats stemming from the articulation of diversity and

³⁹ Guerra is one of the best well-known historians of the Mexican Revolution. The framework of his text *Del Antiguo Régimen a la Revolución* makes him focus on Mexico's differences between the theoretical liberal model and Mexican political practices. Guerra writes that the main challenge, addressed by every historian interested in the foundation of the Mexican nation, is the representation of Mexican local events through universal patterns of knowledge. Guerra's historiography states that during Porfirio Díaz regime (1876-1910), political power was concentrated in the hands of the elite of old generals and old technocrat politicians. The regime, based on repression as well as on consensus has given Mexico a generation of un-precedent peace. Over the years, he argues, this administration saw the first attempts to give a more secure institutional base to preserve modernization and economic progress. Political and social discontents, which had never died during the long years of Porfirian peace, especially at the local and regional levels, became a popular revolution, and during the years 1908-1910 Mexico witnessed a radical change.

ethnicity struggling against Porfirio Díaz's ancien regime leads to the logical construction of a *mestiza* nation as a pre-condition for the construction of post revolutionary modern Mexico.

Two additional modern narratives explain the insurgence against Porfirio Díaz. The Mexican Revolution simultaneously "responded directly to the demands inherent in the Indian revolt of 1911" and the drive for mobility attendant to the "*mestizo* revolt of 1910."⁴⁰ The magic of this narrative connecting state production to national reproduction will immediately disappear once a feminist perspective introduces sexual politics and women's agency within the forging of the new patria to be born. The violence enacted against women and Indian populations becomes visible behind these inscriptions that connect modern historiography and *indigenista* anthropology to state intellectuals and their investment in the universalizing patterns of both modern politics and knowledge.

The mediation of the national state constitutes a requirement for the practice of mercantile exchange among formally equal citizen-subjects within reigning models of modern political theory. In the Mexican case, this assumption explains why the

⁴⁰ Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, p. 177. This is a very interesting modern text on the Mexican Revolution. It provides significant information and valuable arguments. Some of its limits stem from its ideological framework, which draws on the author's convictions and on Mexican intellectuals' confessions on the Indian roots of Mexican national identity. Hansen quotes Samuel Ramos, Octavio Paz, Oscar Lewis among many sources. The core of his argument stems from "Adler's theory on resentment," a framework that Hansen projects into indigenous and mestizo populations. To illustrate with one example Hansen's ideas on Mexican mestizo population: "The mestizo's life is devoted to the affirmation of his own individuality at the cost of others." (...) "It was from this vast mestizo segment of Mexicans that those individuals appeared who led the struggles to organize labor unions and agrarian leagues during the 1910s and 1920s. Viewed in historical perspective, this new leadership, itself rooted in the subject political culture, had an opportunity to begin a process of breaking the barriers to political participation in Mexico. However, these leaders proved incapable of doing so because they, too, were willing or unwilling victims of Mexico's political heritage." pp. 194-196.

revolutionary state promoted the transformation of a heterogeneous indigenous social movement into a mestiza homogeneous nation-state through mestizaje and *indigenista* politics. These words would correspond to a narrative of a third-world country's nationalism in formation. At the end of the nineteenth century, a new elite emerged from Porfirio Díaz's successful economic modernization that was opposed to the old ruling classes composed mainly of generals and political technocrats. This narrative illustrates that by 1908-1909, multiple uprisings coincided against Díaz. The country experienced a great change and multiple waves of oppositional movements expanded nationwide.⁴¹ The regime could no longer sustain the unstable balance of its centralized political system. A national crisis took place when the Porfirian elite failed to agree on who should succeed the aging Díaz.⁴² The struggle for political supremacy first emerged in mestizos from Ciudad de México. Other regions that were becoming prosperous rose up against the regime, and the

⁴¹ Knight posits in *The Mexican Revolution*, p. 177 that the rebel movement began in the closing months of 1910 "in the wake of the Anti-Re-elections campaign, the fraudulent elections, and Madero's call to arms." The insurrection developed in areas where Maderista organizers had not anticipated a great success: the mountain districts of western Chihuahua and Durango, and the Laguna country on the Durango/Coahuila borders. In Knight's opinion, the rural strategy was not a calculated option, and when the Porfirian government failed in repressing the local insurrections, although the old order tried a conciliation, "it was too little and too late."

⁴² Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico*, p. 73. By the end of 1914 the structures of Porfirian Mexico were subverted, and a new political elite of lower social origins and younger than the Porfirian one begun to govern Mexico. "Rivalries between segments of the provincial and local elites were tooted in Mexico's vast geographic, economic, cultural, and political diversity," thus dozens of local revolutionary movements took place elsewhere. Like Guerra, Hart places land at the heart of The Mexican Revolution. In doing so he could have lent visibility to Indians' presence, but indigenous people appear in Hart's text as an epi-phenomenon. This historian argues that in Mexico, in the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century, Porfirian modernization created divisive forces that fought in order to obtain diverse social interests. Hart identifies three major social groups: The urban and emergent industrial workers, the provincial elites and the *pequeña burguesía*, and what he has named as "the rural classes." In Hart's view, the latter is a heterogeneous formation not clearly delimited. For this author, what he calls "the emergent working class" becomes an ally of the *pequeña burguesía* and of regional elites that, since Independence, had increased their competition with the metropolitan elites.

modernizing policy which attacked corporate property and the Indians' way of life. The rebellion of urban *mestizos* who sought to increase their political participation expanded to rural Mexican Indians. The Indian communities reacted against aggressive modernization's intrusions within their societies. In effect, the Porfirian period between 1877 and 1911 shows a slow but sustained growth. These years witnessed the spread of commercial agricultural production for domestic and foreign markets, the increase of factory production in the face of the demise of the craftsman, growing export diversification, and the importation of goods in ever-increasing proportions. While population grew at an annual rate of 1.4 percent over the period, the corresponding rate for gross domestic product was approximately 2.7 percent.⁴³

This post-colonial historiography repeats that in 1908, during the political crisis, the rural inhabitants engaged in multiple local bloody rebellions. Mexico was the third largest sugar producer in the world, and the state of Morelos produced over a third of the country's sugar. According to Guerra, in 1909, Morelos was going to elect a new governor. This election fueled the pueblos' older discontents originating from their loss of community lands. Their discontent with the increasing concentration of land ownership of the hacienda system and the political exclusion from the Porfirian Regime led them to search for greater mobility within the state.

When the new governor of Morelos achieved his victory by military methods, many opposition leaders came to the forefront. Among those were Francisco Madero and Emiliano Zapata. Madero, a son of one of the richest families of the northeastern

⁴³ Fernando Rosenzweig, "El desarrollo económico de México de 1877 a 1911," in *El Trimestre económico*, 32 (Julio-Septiembre 1965), pp. 405-412.

region of the country, declared himself the president of Mexico. Madero's *Plan of San Luis de Potosí* promised the restitution of the old corporate lands to the pueblos. According to many historians, this convinced Zapata, a landowner with social and political roots in the state of Morelos, to integrate Maderos's revolution with the aspirations of millions of Indians and mestizos.⁴⁴

According to this narrative, the Díaz regime's failure to crush the localized revolts in the north allowed the rebellion to expand throughout the republic.

"Rivalries among segments of the provincial and local elites were rooted in Mexico's vast geographic, economic, cultural and political diversity" and dozens of local revolutionary movements took place elsewhere.⁴⁵ On August 1914, the new army of rebels occupied Ciudad de México, and by the end of the year Porfirian Mexico was subverted by a shift in the political elite who constituted the new State in 1917. The

⁴⁴ See Knight, *The Mexican Revolution*. This historian of the Mexican Revolution, states that the rebel movement began in the closing months of 1910 "in the wake of the anti-re-election campaign, the fraudulent elections, and Madero's call to arms." By Knight's account, the rural strategy was not a calculated option of the rebel movement, which earlier had established "a typical contrast between agrarian upheavals and industrial peace." For this author, the insurrection developed in areas where the Maderista organizers had not anticipated a great success: The mountain districts of western Chihuahua and Durango, and the Laguna country on the Durango/Coahuila borders. P. 177 and ss.

⁴⁵ Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico*, p. 73. See also Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, pp. 11-40 and 146-156. The author states that Porfirio Díaz's administration integrated the Mexican economy in an internal and an external sense. Between 1877 and 1910 the value of Mexican exports rose by more than 600 percent in real terms. Foreign investment constituted 66 cents of every dollar invested. At the same time, under the combined influence of market and policy factors, the "industrial sector" emerged in Mexico. The limits of this market-oriented economy came from the difficulty in providing employment opportunities for a slowly growing population. In addition, real wages fell by as much as 75 percent over the 1810-1910 period, and Mexican authors of the time stated "Mexican people were moving toward death by starvation." Mexico in 1910 was still 80 percent rural. Permanent resident labor force (debt bondage and forced labor) was employed at the end of the century in rural Mexico. At one extreme, close to 90 percent of Mexico's rural families held no land, and approximately 85 percent of the country's Indian communities had lost all their holdings. Many of the Indians were tied to hacienda through the debt bondage system, and the hacendados owned over half of the nation's territory. At the same time, over the first two decades of Porfirio Díaz's rule, a new mestizo elite took its place beside the old Creole aristocracy.

Constitution of 1917 considered the government an active force bringing about national economic and social changes, and its article 27 gave the Mexican State the ownership of all lands (and subsequently of the oil) and waters, and it established the maximum size of private landholdings.

In the 1930's, President Lázaro Cárdenas' administration had definitely reconciled and institutionalized the great number of local mobilizations of the countryside, while channeling their energies through the organization of the National Revolutionary Party. The party and union sectors delimited political participation within the nation-state: Workers, peasants, and popular/military. The party's peasant sector comprised the absolute majority of the rural population, and while each sector had one vote, the unified vote of the popular and military sectors granted the state's control of the peasants and worker sectors.⁴⁶ During Lázaro Cárdenas' presidential period (1934-1940), *indigenismo* understood the living conditions of the indigenous peoples as a result of socioeconomic factors and not cultural characteristics. Social class entered directly within the indigenistas' debate. In Cárdenas words:

The causes of isolation and economic depression were the geographic conditions and the political systems created by oppressive regimes. The native's unity was shaped upon Indians' common condition of oppressed

⁴⁶ Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Revolution*. According to this author, the social goals of the 1917 Mexican constitution were revived between 1934 and 1949, during the administration of President Lázaro Cardenas. The land reform increased the Ejido proportion of total Mexican cropland from 13 per cent to 47 percent, and over 800.000 families re-appropriated their lands, pp. 71-95. According to this author, the National Revolutionary Party became the official channel through which the new landowners and workers participated politically. By doing so, the party institutionalized and reconciled different national interests. For Hansen here lies the basis that can be fairly assessed as "a one hundred and eighty degree change in the development of the Mexican Revolution. The revolutionary party became a front of popular organizations that agreed on not to participate in electoral activities outside the party institution. This new political model reinforced an inequitable pattern of income distribution, and between 1940 and the early 1960's the rich became richer and the poor poorer.

class, which destined them to subsist in the hardest agricultural workings, by (...), and everywhere where cheap labor served as the companies' exploitation base rather than in skin color and external forms of political organization or artistic manifestations.⁴⁷

Particularly during Cardenas' administration (1934-1940), the revolutionary leaders drew on the idea of forging a socialist patria marked by the Ejido model of collective land property and a democratic relation between the leaders and the groups that were to be led to modernization. The Revolution sought to develop the economy, legislate, and implement a welfare state, while the modernizing and developmental project identified the indigenous peoples as pre-political.

Revolutionary leaders and *indigenistas*, this narrative argues, would promote the passage of the heterogeneous population from led group to leading group. Within this framework, the naturalization of revolutionary leaders' administration of the state-in-formation encapsulates the unequal power relations hidden behind discourses of leadership and intellectual illumination. To carry on this modernizing project, the revolutionary politics of national community formation represented a utopian and unifying force. In doing so, the anthropological discourses and practices of development defined the indigenous target population of the revolution, while failing to question the idea of modern development itself.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Lázaro Cárdenas, "El Programa de Emancipación del Indio es en Esencia el de la Emancipación del Proletariado," in *INI: 30 Años Después* (México: INI 1978), pp. 63-68. "Las causas del aislamiento y de la depresión económica eran las condiciones geográficas y los sistemas políticos que crearon regímenes de opresión. Por ello, la unidad del indígena, mas aun que en el color de la piel, y en las formas externas de la organización política o de las manifestaciones del arte, se advertía en su posición de clase oprimida, destinada a subsistir en las más duras labores agrícolas... y en todas partes donde el trabajo barato servía de base a las empresas de explotación."

⁴⁸ When introducing the Chicano and Chicana movement, some of whose groups question the idea of development, the dissertation will enter in a more direct dialogue with scholars who criticize traditional development studies, like Arturo Escobar.

At the end of the Mexican Revolution story, the great number of Indians' mobilizations that rose up against the government of Porfirio Díaz required a stronger and unifying state capable of making the modern nation necessary for achieving social justice. The civilized *mestizo* citizen of a civilizing modern national state substituted the state of war both of the Porfirian old generals and of the multiple rural movements. The victorious revolutionaries neutralized their own rebellious movement, transformed it into a national corporate ideology, and became the new governors of an efficient modern state. In the prologue to Francois-Xavier Guerra text, Francois Chevalier says,

A theoretical model of the difficult relationships between two different and totally alienated worlds; a modern State arisen from the Illustration and directed by a small minority of conscious citizens confronted to an enormous traditional or 'holist' society, inherited from the Ancient Regime –which we would add, is also colonial, constitutes the core of Guerra's work.⁴⁹

The tautological feature of this historiography recognizes the increase of mercantile production and exchanges promoted by Díaz's modernizing reforms as the causes of the Revolution's local mobilizations. While it legitimates the rural uprisings, it also demonizes the proliferation of uncontrolled social change while promoting the political mediation of the state administration to control the Mexican Revolution's state of war.⁵⁰ The national market is the central point of this

⁴⁹ Francois Chevalier, "Prólogo," p. 10 in Francois-Xavier Guerra, *Del Antiguo Régimen a la Revolución*.

⁵⁰ Hansen, in *The Politics of Mexican Revolution* posits that the National Revolutionary Party became the official channel through which the new landowners and workers participated politically, and that by so doing the party institutionalized and reconciled different national spaces. According to this author, the basis that can be assessed as a one hundred and eighty-degree change in the developmental model of the Mexican Revolution lies during the period of Cardenas' administration. The revolutionary party became a front of popular organization that agreed in not to participate in electoral activities outside the party institution. The peasantry's union has been an additional tool through which the state

modernizing narrative that understands that civilized practices of exchange between formally equal *mestizo* subjects as the state to succeed Indian people's pre-modern ways of living. This rhetoric reinforces the Mexican State's claim for civilizing the nation through the institutionalization of the same social movements that had given birth to the Mexican Revolution.

The presidential election of 1940 renewed the question of the security of the now institutionalized revolution. Through the consolidation of President Cardenas' reforms, the radical impulse of the revolution ended. The president's support of a moderate presidential candidate, Manuel Avila Camacho, was a political move in this direction. Those social forces that had been involved in the Mexican Revolution became institutionally dependent on state mechanisms of representation. The government controlled the many indigenous social movements and neutralized class struggles by institutionalizing a front of popular organizations that agreed not to participate in electoral activities outside the party.⁵¹ This precise moment, when a corporate system negates the Revolution's post-colonial modernizing dreams, marks the country again as a pre-modern nation that now is named as "a dependent" state. This inscription, characteristic of the post World War II period, coincides with Manuel Gamio's accomplishment in 1942 of his indigenista Inter-American project,

controlled the radical movements of the countryside. As a result, those social forces, which during the 20s and 30s were involved in the Mexican Revolution, became institutionally dependent on the state mechanisms for their political representation.

⁵¹ This strategy neutralized a rebellious movement and transformed it into a corporative nationalist ideology. According to Hansen in the *Politics of the Mexican Revolution*, the new developmental model reinforced an inequitable pattern of income distribution, and between 1940 and the early 1960s, the rich became richer and the poor, poorer.

toward which he had begun to struggle since 1916.⁵² This shift from a national to an international *indigenismo* repositions Gamio's desires for international recognition. In effect, during the decade of the 1940s, when Gamio became the Chairman of the III, the first impulse of the Revolution had produced a cycle of critiques. The government was accused of inefficiency and corruption. The failure of Mexico's domestic modernizing dreams as well as the international war context opened up favorable conditions for continental collaborations against the menaces of the war: a productive scenario for Gamio's Inter-American repositioning in the III.⁵³

The recursive breakdown of postcolonial insurgencies against imperialist powers became a key question for progressive intellectuals after the World War II. They imagined a third world nationalism that could be generalized to become the revolt of the world proletariat. In Mexico, the original state-centric question about the Porfirian modernizing failure that led to *indigenista* and *mestizaje* politics of the Revolution acquired a new framework. Questions about modernization's failures became post WWII development questions. Why did post-revolutionary Mexico not achieve its utopian promises of national development?

In Mexico, as well as throughout other Latin American countries, the theory of dependency reformulates the framework for understanding the modernizing failure

⁵² The documents of the Americanists' Congresses show the European constructions of America. The first Americanist Congress took place in Nancy, and since that very moment it becomes evident that the future constructions of the American Indian will be dominated by the European imaginary elaborated when industrial bourgeois dominated those societies. These were imperial constructions and many of these experts on the old America are dukes, counts or marquises, residuals of a class expelled from power in the European metropolis.

⁵³ See Gamio, "Sugestiones para después de la guerra," in *Consideraciones sobre el problema indígena*, pp. 119-124.

of third world countries. At the beginning of the century, imperial states generated modernization theory, and intellectuals of “traditional” societies, like Gamio, positioned themselves as the scientific mediators of the binary opposition between “tradition” and “modernity.” At the middle of the century, a new generation of intellectuals from Latin American states created the dependency theory, which argues that the traditional and the modern are not mutually exclusive, but mutually inclusive. Indeed, this perspective understands that tradition and modernization co-constitute each other.

I am not suggesting that the core/periphery paradigm of the dependency theory is immune to critique. Drawing on and reversing García Canclini, this dissertation does not displace either the modernization or the dependency interpretative paradigms. Focusing on ethnic women’s experiences, the dissertation holds in tension modernization and dependency theories. My dissertation incorporates these frameworks to a more complex *mestizaje* and hybridity (post) modern identities.

Gamio’s *indigenismo* will illuminate that the logic of modernization or of development may sequester the woman inside the nation. However, this analysis will also allow tracking the transnational movement of capital and labor, a point emphasized by the contemporary Latin American women’s movement. After all, the current acceleration of globalization does not entail a decentralization of capital. As Karl Marx predicted in his *Communist Manifesto*, expansion of capital produces a greater polarization. As Saskia Sassen states in *Globalization and its Discontents*, while capital flows more freely to more and more processing export zones, it is also

repatriated, with increasing profits, more quickly into fewer and fewer globalizing cities.⁵⁴

Octavio Paz and Pablo González Casanova can be understood as representative authors of this heterogeneous third world modernization narrative.⁵⁵ In 1961, in the *Labyrinth of Solitude*, Octavio Paz wrote that “[t]he minority of those Mexicans who are aware of their own selves do not make up a closed unchanging class. They are the only active group, in comparison with the Indian-Spanish inertia of the rest, and every day they are shaping the country more and more into their own image.”⁵⁶ The international community admitted this male author within its modern brotherhood by awarding him the Nobel Prize for literature in 1990. This additional recognition of this Latin American intellectual admitted him within the universal modern canon, a fact that eventually opens up again the initial research question of this dissertation that relates post-colonial men’s commitment to universal knowledge to ethnic women’s roles within the reproduction of the nation.

González Casanova, a respectful and influential historian who belongs to the academic and political Mexican endogamy, states that ethnic heterogeneity constitutes the basic limitation in Mexico becoming modern:

Feeling as we felt it, that we are co-responsible and participants of the great movement that began in 1910 and which, *time and time* again, fights to leave the *eternal return* (italics are mine) and to reach its goals, the main political

⁵⁴ See Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control; Globalization and its discontents: Essays on the mobility of people and money*. (New York: New York Press 1998), and *Contra geografías* (Buenos Aires: Traficantes de Sueños 2004).

⁵⁵ Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude* and González Casanova, *La Democracia en México*.

⁵⁶ Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, p. 12.

objective that we look for is to find a political action that would solve on time, civically, pacifically, the great national problems.⁵⁷

At the turn of the twentieth century, Paz and Casanova still saw Mexico's multicultural roots as a pre-modern heritage responsible for Mexico's development failure.⁵⁸ Drawing on dependency theory, Casanova points out that Mexico's domestic colonialism excludes Mexican Indians from the national society. Casanova draws on a chain of exploitation while placing the final burden of capitalist development in the rural periphery. He sees that modernization's effects in Mexico have polarized the country and made the already poor populations poorer.⁵⁹ Casanova and other intellectuals of dependency theory point out correctly that the aforementioned domestic description reproduces nationally what also happens internationally. The place of third world nations within the world capitalistic system

⁵⁷ González Casanova, *La Democracia en México*, p. 10. "Buscar así una acción política que resuelva a tiempo, cívica, pacíficamente, los grandes problemas nacionales es el principal objetivo político que buscamos, sintiéndonos como nos sentimos, corresponsables y partícipes del gran movimiento que se inició en 1910 y que, *una y otra vez*, lucha por salir *del eterno retorno* (Italics are mine) y alcanzar sus metas."

⁵⁸ "Herencia del pasado, el marginalismo, la sociedad plural y el colonialismo interno subsisten hoy en México bajo nuevas formas, no obstante tantos años de revolución, reformas, industrialización y desarrollo y configuran aún las características de la sociedad y la política nacional." Legacy of the past, marginalization, plural society and internal colonialism subsist today in Mexico under new forms, despite so many years of revolution, reforms, industrialization and development, and still constitute the characteristics of society and national policy." González Casanova, *La Democracia en México*, p. 72.

⁵⁹ Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Revolution*. Drawing on numerical data of the Comisión Económica para América Latina (CEPAL), this author leaves some interesting questions unanswered. For him, the Revolution created a new constitutional framework. Constitutional land reform and rights of labor articles founded the inclusive capabilities of the liberal side of the Mexican political system. For Hansen, the social goals expressed in the Constitution of 1917 were revived between 1934 and 1940, during Cárdenas' administration while the National Revolutionary Party institutionalized and reconciled "different national interests." The revolution was institutionalized, and through the party, the new government controlled the great social movement of the Mexican Revolution.

parallel the place of subordinated regions within domestic spaces.⁶⁰ If the same patterns of power relationships visible at the international level are also distinguishable on intra- and inter-regional levels within the boundaries of a single nation-state, then it will become indispensable to a revolutionary information-state to change the multiple orders of hierarchical power relationships simultaneously.

During the sixties, domestic and continental social movements complicated the landscape of the state-led Inter-American project, while coordinated national liberation struggles re-articulated the oppositional politics in South America. From their experiences within the U.S civil rights movement, women of color theorized the “new *mestiza* identity,” as a useful tool for third world (in the first) post-modern social movements. In Latin America, the role of *indigenista* anthropology, which was thought to inform the modernizing politics of the Revolution, was embodied in the third world intellectuals’ mediation, which looked for the achievement of modernization through national liberation movements. This turn from *indigenismo* to national liberation struggles integrates chronological historicism to spatial power relationships. An international third world re-mapping supplements previous historicist ways for evaluating contemporary processes of modernization in the Americas. Within this long and well-known story of Latin America’s failed modernizing dreams, successful social movements, which have become states, and nationalist ideologies that have become international solidarity have neither solved the modernizing nor the social justice initial utopian aims for forging a revolutionary

⁶⁰ For an U.S. review on dependency theory, see Ronald Chilcote, “Dependency: A Critical Synthesis of the Literature,” in Vol. 1, No. 1 (*Latin American Perspectives* 1974), pp. 5-29.

patria. At this point of the story, U.S. third world racialized population's experiences enter in the conversation by introducing a very strong critique of developmental and modernizing expectations of new social movements, as well as of nationalist revolutionary states. Anthropologist Garcia Canclini reframed the research question about modernizing failure and transformed it. "How to enter and exit from modernity?" Latin American indigenous social movements stayed in abeyance until the 1980s. During that decade, they took advantage of (post) modern politics, and at the beginning of the millennium, they strengthened their ethnic proposals within Latin American nation states' domestic and international reactions against neo-liberal globalization.

As I will show in the next chapter, first as a student, and afterward as a professional functionary of the state, anthropologist Manuel Gamio always worked and lived by and for the Mexican corporative state administration. It was difficult for him as well as for other members of his class to accomplish their male provider roles. The ruling classes of Latin American countries were highly worried about the viability of their respective nation states. Since seminal post revolution times until present days, Mexican middle class men found in the state's bureaucracy a safe place for reproducing the conditions for their own survival.⁶¹ In 1991, after more than thirty years of the anthropologist's death, the bureaucracy of the Bureau of Anthropology of

⁶¹ I thank my friend and colleague Cecilia Rivas for introducing me to Nicola Miller, *On the Shadow of the State*, (London; New York: Verso 1999)

the Agriculture Department still reported Manuel Gamio “as an active administrative employee of the department!”⁶²

In his book *Forjando Patria* (1916) as well as in his recompilation of essays *Hacia un Nuevo México* (1935), Gamio proposes that the Mexican Revolution must remake a new nation, and subsequently, new Mexicans.⁶³ In both texts, Gamio’s initial words express his desire for being recognized as a modern man by the international community of modern nations. This international community shares with the Mexican male middle class the idea that the Indian and *mestiza* condition of the Mexican population has impeded the modernization of the country. A new *mestizaje* must be born from the old Mexico. Furthermore, Gamio projects Mexico as an emblematic case for the territory that he names as “Indo-Ibera América community formation,” as his essays, editorials, and discourses illustrate.⁶⁴ Drawing on Gamio’s life, the following chapter examines Mexican *indigenistas*’ relationships with the revolutionary state in-formation. By integrating intellectuals’ subject formation to state-led sexuality and *mestizaje* politics I will illuminate the connection between the

⁶² Aurelio de los Reyes, *Manuel Gamio y el cine* (México: UNAM 1991), p. 6.

⁶³ See Comas, “La vida y la obra de Manuel Gamio,” in *Estudios Antropológicos publicados en homenaje al doctor Manuel Gamio*, (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, Sociedad Mexicana de Antropología), pp.17-26. See González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, Una lucha sin final*, (México: UNAM, 1987). Gamio wrote *Forjando Patria, Pro-Nacionalismo* (1916) that he dedicates to his father, when he began to get deeply involved in the Mexican state’s Post-Revolutionary policies during Carranza’s presidency. His second book, *Hacia un México Nuevo* unifies 28 essays that he wrote within President Lázaro Cárdenas presidential period, when Gamio again felt the same hopes that previously had led him to write *Forjando Patria* at the institutionalizing moments of the revolution.

⁶⁴ Indo-Ibero America will constitute the imagined community that will emerge from the colonial and post-independence “unbalanced *mestizaje*.” But Latin American social movements and progressive governments’ affiliation to Mexican revolutionary nationalism constitutes a more significant research question than Gamio’s expansionist perspective. The feminist genealogy of Latin American *mestizaje* that this dissertation does examines the potential contributions embedded in this foundational concept for contemporary social movements’ community formation in the Americas.

global dimension of male intellectuals' subject formation and women's ex-
communication from race and ethnicity-based identification politics

B. Becoming *Mestizo* Mexicans to Become Modern

The animal is immediately identical with its life-activity. It does not distinguish itself from it. It is *life-activity*. Man makes his life-activity itself the object of his will and of his consciousness. He has conscious life-activity. It is not a determination with which he directly merges. Conscious life-activity directly distinguishes man from animal life-activity. It is just because of this that he is a species being.

Or it is only because he is a species being that he is a Conscious Being, i.e., that his own life is an object for him. Only because of that is his activity free activity. Estranged labor reverses this relationship, so that it is just because man is a conscious being that he makes his life-activity, his *essential* being, a mere means to his *existence*.

Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844", p. 77.

Introduction

-“A new Mexico has to be born!” Manuel Gamio wrote in 1935. At that time, Mexican revolutionary leaders were engaged in constructing a *mestizo* modern nation by re-inscribing the revolutionary uprisings of the Indians and mestizos of the countryside and incorporating them within the peasants’ sector of the Revolutionary Party. Who were the subjects to be included within the revolutionary new nation? What were the differences between the Indians, the mestizo subject of the Porfirian regime and the new national subject to be born? Which strategies were to make these new Mexican subjects? More specifically, who defined the rules of inclusion/exclusion and (re)production within the new community? Drawing on a state-centric representation, which sees a unified *mestiza* nation as the pre-condition for revitalizing the modernizing project, the post revolutionary leaders focused their energies on transforming the Indians into mestizo citizens. At the same time this state-centric territory/population framework reinforced the new leaders’ engagement with a bureaucratic Mexican state-in-formation while uncovering the continuity

between the modernizing projects of Porfirian *científicos* and post revolution *indigenistas*.¹

These revolutionary leaders sought to construct a nation state free from Europe and safe from the United States. At the same time, by rooting the nation to be born on an indigenous past, they emphasized the differences between their modernization project and that of Porfirio Diaz. The many years of intense social mobilization during the Mexican Revolution became the national institutions of a corporate system. The nation drew on an Ejido-based system of collective landed property where women and men of the countryside were represented as proletarian rural classes.² Through these means, the revolutionary leaders sought to construct a powerful nation state within the competitive world of the period. Examination of these circumstances from an ethnic feminist research site will provide evidence of the conflictual relations between the revolutionary subject, his own ethnic/racial community, and the lingering effects of the pre revolution racializing orders of colonial and post-colonial domination. The *indigenistas* were committed at the very least to the construction of three groups: Indian, *mestizo* and European Mexicans.

¹ It is important to notice that these words describe a process from a macro national perspective. If one goes to the local levels, multiple combinations can be revealed. See, for example, “Estado federal y grupos de poder regionales frente al indigenismo, el mestizaje y el discurso multiculturalista: pasado y presente del racismo en México” by Olivia Gall in *Debate Feminista*, 12, Vol. 21, (México: 2001), p. 102. In this article, the author provides evidence on the differences that she perceives between indigenismo and mestizaje within national spaces in relation to regional areas. Gall compares the case of Chiapas to the national project. She points out that as well as in Guatemala, in Chiapas the term “mestizo” is not used, while the term “ladino” could not be assumed as homologous to “mestizo.”

² See Francisco Javier Rodríguez Gaza, “Sobre el pensamiento corporativista en el México de entreguerras,” in Marcos Toatiuh Aguila M. and Alberto Enríquez Perea (eds.), *Perspectivas sobre el Cardenismo. Ensayos sobre economía, trabajo, política y cultura en los años treinta*, (México: Universidad Autónoma de México 1996), pp. 295-327.

However, the persistent domination of one group over the other two means that any examination of the revolution's politics of nation formation must take into consideration Mexican women's power of (re) production of the nation. The *mestizo* Mexican citizen to be born would result from the marriage between a woman of color and a white male. Mexican Indian women are disposed to love white men, reported Gamio, establishing that civilizing *mestizaje* runs only in one direction and through two sexualized bodies. It is with a twin focus on Mexican women's sexuality, and on the double discourse of inclusion and exclusion of female sexuality within the revolutionary community to be born that I turn to the revolution's politics of *mestizaje* for forging the citizens of the patria.

The question here is not whether Gamio or the Revolution provided more or less satisfying answers about women's agency within the new community to be born. The Mexican Revolution constitutes a significant case precisely because the new Mexico explicitly aimed at revolutionizing the social bases of the country's national subject and its racializing politics. There is a shift from the stage of denial of Indianness and from previous understandings of *mestizaje* to the new *mestizo* citizen-subject. It is the combination of utopian and racializing politics that makes of post-revolutionary Mexico a worthy space for seeing the gender problems inherent to the conceptualizations of a community alternative to colonial forms. At the same time, the need to take "race" into account in the delimitation of the revolutionary nation introduces a debate on the significance of women in all masculinist conceptions of community formation. In this chapter, I introduce women's (re)productive power as a specific site for examining how to promote social movements' alternative ways for

community making. My objective is not to minimize the significance of Mexican Revolution nationalist *mestizaje*. It is rather to argue, first, the importance of considering female sexuality and sexual difference as primary issues in a discussion of community formation; and second, to show how, once introduced, female sexuality and sexual difference interrupt community formation with powerful interventions. Ultimately, in relation to the Mexican Revolution, my question is: How does female sexuality and sexual difference reconcile with community and identity politics of *mestizaje*? Are these mutually exclusive events?³ I present these questions as a point of departure to introduce the influence of the Mexican Revolution's modernizing *mestizaje* politics on Latin American states under conditions where the national market is the reference for achieving modernization. It is with a focus on female sexuality that I interrogate *indigenismo* and Gamio's subject formation in order to examine the problem of making and reproducing a new community in a revolutionary context.⁴

At the beginning of the twentieth century, state power was generally based on homogenous territories and populations of the national space, a perspective that, in

³ Carlton D. Floyd's dissertation (2002) at the Literature Department at UCSD, *Wish You Were Not Here: "modern" Responses to Mixed Bodies* studies James Baldwin and Toni Morrison's contestations of received notions of community. I thank Carlton Floyd for introducing me to Chow Rey's feminist critique of Franz Fanon's masculinist community formation politics.

⁴ Recently, the concept of identity has received a great deal of attention as Paul Gilroy, bell hooks, Mary Louis Pratt and Iris Marion Young, among many others, have noted. (Post) modernism has challenged modern essentialist and universalistic forms of identity as George Lipsitz points out in *American Studies in a moment of Danger*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001). As I stated on the introduction, Chicanas' new mestiza identity constitutes the starting point for evaluating the critical relationship between women and racial or ethnic community making. What I suggest is that it is necessary to find new words and new politics of strategic community making of/for (post) modern social movements. The mestiza identity U.S. women of color have opened up a productive space for debating on non-exclusionary politics of identity.

Gamio's words, was particularly true for "the new Mexico to be born."⁵ This country "had lost a great part of its territory since the northern population could not resist the 1847 U.S. invasion." As early as 1916, in his essay titled "El Gobierno, la Población, el Territorio," re-published in his book *Forjando Patria (Forging Patria)*, Gamio advocates for the creation of a governmental department of anthropology. "Scientific knowledge on the Mexican population and territory would lead to the success of the revolutionary government." In this article, the people and the territory are seen as co-constitutive parts of Mexican national power and resources. In this essay Gamio also states that it is only through scientific support that the revolutionary administration can construct a powerful national state capable of disrupting the recursive cycles of instability and poverty that have marked the country since its independence:

The material and intellectual future enlargement of the nation depends, in good part, on the population's conditions of development, the productivity and habitability of the territory and the efficiency of the Government. However, at all the times of our history, population's development was abnormal, productivity of territory was defective and government's management was deficient. Why then that fatal and continuous repetition if in some occasions the Government tried on good faith to make the population reach stages of improvement and progress? Numerous explanations could be adduced. But all of them, in principle, can be synthesized in a fundamental cause; ignorance on population and territory, and naturally, Government's efficiency is in direct reason to the knowledge that it has on its population and territory, all our past governments were inefficient.⁶

⁵ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 5.

⁶ Gamio, *El Gobierno, la Población, el Territorio* (México: Departamento de Talleres Gráficos de la Secretaría de Fomento, 1917), p. 3. "El futuro engrandecimiento material e intelectual de la Nación depende, en buena parte, de las condiciones de desarrollo de la población, de la productividad y habitabilidad del territorio y de la eficiencia del Gobierno. Ahora bien, en todas las épocas de nuestra historia, el desarrollo de la población fue anormal, la productividad del territorio defectuosa y la gestión del gobierno deficiente. Por qué esa fatal y continua repetición, si en algunas ocasiones el Gobierno procuró de buena fe hacer alcanzar a la población etapas de mejoramiento y progreso? Numerosas son las explicaciones que podrían aducirse, pero todas ellas, en principio, pueden sintetizarse en una causa fundamental: el desconocimiento de la población y el territorio, y como,

Gamio does not use the terms “*mestiza* nation” in a generic sense. He really meant that the formation of the new Mexican state would stem from the “creation of a *mestiza* nation resulting from a new fusion of the Indian, the *mestizo* and the white populations.” The blending of sociology with anthropological and ethnological knowledge was (for him) the logical consequences of this assumption. “The ethnodemographic statistics are of capital importance in countries where the population is heterogeneous in race, culture, language, nutrition system, etc.”⁷ Gamio’s new patria, the new Mexico, would derive from the government’s application of anthropological knowledge to create a new *mestizaje*. Applied anthropology supports the Revolution’s politics for civilizing the rebellious populations of the countryside and transforming them into citizen-subjects of the new Mexico. Gamio’s applied anthropology embodies Carole Pateman’s critique. This author understands male intellectual epistemological interventions paralleling women’s biological power of giving birth. In order for the revolution to produce a *mestizo* nation compatible with its modernization project, Gamio’s applied anthropology co-constituted the power of the state and the civil society, while hiding the original violence used on woman’s bodies by the patria brotherhood.⁸

naturalmente, la eficiencia del Gobierno está en razón directa del conocimiento que tenga de la población y del territorio, todos nuestros gobiernos pretéritos fueron ineficaces”.

⁷Gamio, “La Estadística étnico-demográfica es de capital importancia en países donde la población es heterogénea en raza, cultura, idioma, sistema de alimentación, etc.” *Forjando Patria*, p, 34.

⁸ Feminists, and particularly Carole Pateman have uncovered the pre-political force embodied within the gendered power relationships behind the process of foundation of the civil society, and the political implications of the inscription as pre-political of these formative moments of the nation-state. See Carole Pateman, “The Sexual Contract,” in *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*, (Cambridge: Blackwell 1989). Chow supplements Pateman, “The Politics of Admittance:

Examining this process of *mestiza* formation through a gender lens generates new questions and answers on the relations among welfare, *indigenismo*, *mestizaje*, and women. The hegemonic modernizing discourse constructing the nationalist project determined which men and women were encouraged or discouraged to have children or which immigration or emigration politics were promoted. Within this optic, *mestizaje*, immigration, and indigenist politics were racial and sexual politics that became crucial tools for Revolutionary Mexico's national community formation.⁹ In addition, Gamio's long commitment to the Indigenist Interamerican Institute (III) makes him an emblematic case. He initiated the chronological mapping of the foundational concept of modern *mestizaje*, which became the identifying feature common to Latin American nations in relation to the United States' essentialized American identification. Through this anthropological act Mestiza Latin America becomes part of the U.S. segregation ethnic model. The Interamerican Indigenist Institute was an institutional framework for this hemispheric racialization.

In order to evaluate the *mestizaje* identification politics of contemporary transnational social movements in the Americas and to assess the effectiveness of Venezuelan revolutionary nationalism reacting against global neo-colonization, I will begin by evaluating the racializing politics of post revolutionary Mexico through a gendered lens. The next section relates anthropologist Gamio's manliness (or male subject formation) to post revolutionary *mestizaje* and indigenist welfare politics.

Female Sexual Agency, Miscegenation and the Formation of Community in Frantz Fanon," in *UFS Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1995, pp. 5-26.

⁹ I do not approach Gamio's discourse on Mexican migrants. However, it is VERY interesting to notice the use that his interviewed subjects made of the word "Chicano" in 1922.

Forging the Mestiza Patria

Today it is revolutionary Mexican men's turn for grasping the mallet and girdling the forging apron
 In order to make emerge from the miraculous anvil the new fatherland where iron and bronze will
 become funded
 There is the iron... There is the bronze ... Slap, brothers
 For the great forging of America, the bronze and the iron of the virile races have slapped for centuries
 on the Andes' gigantic anvil
 Manuel Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 5

Indian and mestizo peoples constitute the objects of Gamio's applied anthropology. The scientific man becomes the authority defining the rules of production and reproduction for the new Mexican nation to be born.¹⁰ He firmly believed that "a strong and united population with a deep feeling of nationality" was the indispensable tool for making viable a modern Mexico within the competitive international community. He perceived that in the 1930s, a global movement confirming Darwin's "inevitable law of evolution" was shaking the world. "All those peoples and nations that will not fit into humanity's progress would fatally disappear without the scientific intervention of a good government."¹¹ Gamio always identified Mexico as well as himself within this developmental perspective through exceptionally evident masculinist assumptions. He incarnates an animist perspective that draws on the *mestiza* incorporation of both "the blood and the intellectual forces" of what he understood as a Latin American "aborted nation formation." Gamio explicitly states that women bridged the making of the actual *mestizaje*, an identity

¹⁰ Drawing on Charles Mills' critique of Positivism in his text *The Racial Contract*, (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997), I parallel community making to structuralism and (post) structuralism definition of grammar making. By articulating Pateman to Mills, I shaped the theoretical framework supporting my research on ethnic women's role and agency within politics of community making.

¹¹ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 4.

that resulted from the sexual alchemy between Spanish conquerors and indigenous women. Indeed he adds that the indigenous women will again provide the communicative bodies for making brotherhood's homogeneous new patrias of Mexico and Indo-America. In Gamio's 1916 words: "When Mexico would become a great nation, it would be thanks to the result of many causes, but the main one among them will consist of the strong, the virile and resistant race, that since today molds the feminine Mexican woman."¹²

In 1916 he saw in the Mexican woman's body the bridge for making the revolutionary patria by "molding the virile bronze and iron races" for creating a "functional *mestizaje*" that will displace the old and unbalanced *mestiza* population, which he considered the cause of the multiple Mexican Indian rebellions. In order for Mexico to become modern it was necessary to promote a more homogenous *mestizaje* that would enable civilization to become firmly incorporated in the nation. Gamio believed that the original *mestizaje* that resulted from indigenous women's bodies "satisfying Spanish men's biological needs resulted in a dysfunctional miscegenation." He asked, "Can we conceive as patrias and nations, countries whose population's two main elements are fundamentally different in all their aspects and ignore each other?"¹³ Gamio was in the best scientific company when he understood hybridity as the offspring of two species that are too incompatible (in biological and

¹² Gamio, "Nuestras Mujeres," *Forjando Patria*, p. 123.

¹³ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 3.

social terms) to produce offspring that are themselves able to reproduce.¹⁴ Gamio believed that a new *mestiza* identity would constitute the solution for Mexico, as well as Latin America's erroneous modern subjectivity. "The term internationalism denotes a federation of nations. How, therefore, could Mexico and many other countries of Indo-Ibero America be members of such a federation if they do not yet constitute true nationalities?"¹⁵ In 1935 Gamio still perceives that:

At present, like when twenty years ago we initiated this nationalist campaign, we think that it is of urgency to balance the economic situation, by the elevation of the proletarian masses; to intensify mestization, in order to complete the racial homogenization; to replace the deficient cultural characteristics of those masses by those of the modern civilization, using, naturally, those that display positive values; to unify the language, teaching Castilian to those who only speak one language.¹⁶

Within the international space, as a Mexican man of a Spanish descent and as an anthropologist validated by the U.S. academy, Gamio considers himself an equal of modern European and American men. Science's recognition of him as "the father of Mexican scientific anthropology" and of "Pan-American *Indigenismo*" introduces him within modern men's scientific brotherhood. Mexico's modernizing failure, which Gamio sees as stemming from the indigenous and mestizo populations,

¹⁴ See Lourdes Martínez-Echazabal, "Mestizaje and the Discourse of National/Cultural Identity in Latin America, 1845-1959" in *Latin American Perspectives*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Mayo de 1998. or a critique of the essentialist glorification of mulattoes that have fashioned Afro Latin America's national-cultural identity.

¹⁵ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 5.

¹⁶ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 5. "[h]oy, como hace veinte años, que iniciamos esta campaña nacionalista, creemos que es de urgencia: equilibrar la situación económica, elevando la de las masa proletarias; intensificar el mestizaje, a fin de consumir la homogeneización racial; sustituir las deficientes características culturales de esas masas, por las de la civilización moderna, utilizando, naturalmente aquellas que presenten valores positivos; unificar el idioma, enseñando castellano a quienes sólo hablan idiomas indígenas."

projects on him an erroneous modern identity. At the same time, Gamio's scientific confession of the indigenous roots of the Mexican nation opened up his admittance within the world of modern universality:

Progressive investigation and continuous contact with Mexican and foreign institutions and intellectuals, of progressive ideology, make us follow the latest currents of present thought; we are and we shall continue being committed internationalists, mainly when we see beyond our borders. However, drawing on our character of compatriots, of brothers, of ten million beings who debate within the indigenous civilization, which is several centuries delayed, we think differently, we are nationalist men. In order to learn the proper means that would help the indigenous' slow but firm re-incorporation, we descend to those Mexican pariahs, we live their life, and we penetrate their souls, until they would transform into social elements comparable to the populations of those countries which already are apt to form an international federation.¹⁷

Mestizaje, through the woman's body, will transform Mexican Indians and *mestizos* into the new *mestizo* citizens. The Revolution will create these new citizens drawing on the anthropologist's scientific mediation. *Indigenismo* and *mestizaje* will accomplish the necessary step for Gamio's recognition as a modern subject within the universal world of scientists. In order to be recognized and admitted as a Mexican modern man, anthropologist Gamio shared and reproduced the categories of applied anthropology that he believed would end Mexico's recursive modernizing failure. Within domestic space, he belongs to the Mexican brotherhood with which, in order

¹⁷ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 4. "La investigación progresiva y el continuo contacto con instituciones e intelectuales mexicanos y extranjeros, de ideología avanzada, nos hace ir con las novísimas corrientes del pensamiento actual; somos y seguiremos siendo internacionalistas convencidos, sobre todo cuando vemos más allá de nuestras fronteras. En cambio, en nuestro carácter de compatriotas, de hermanos, de diez millones de seres que se debaten en la civilización indígena retrasada de varios siglos, pensamos de otra manera, somos nacionalistas. ... Descendemos hasta aquellos mexicanos parias, vivimos su vida y penetramos en su alma, a fin de conocer los medios propios para ayudarlos a reincorporarse, lenta, pero efectivamente, hasta que lleguen a ser elementos sociales comparables a los que constituyen poblaciones de países aptos para formar una federación internacional."

to create the new Mexico, he shares sexual and conjugal rights to “our Mexican women.”¹⁸ As I will show in the following pages, within the new patria to be forged, all women will be mothers while only some of them will be wives. The reverse strategy of these politics implied that some men were brothers while others will be the infantilized sons or feminized men.

Becoming Mexican men thanks to Gamio’s women

Manuel Gamio was born in Mexico City in 1882. Lorenzo Gamio Echevarría, Manuel’s grandfather became the first Spanish American Gamio. In 1840, Lorenzo emigrated from Irurita, a small Navarra town, looking for “adventures in the New World.”¹⁹ Gamio’s peninsular relatives had always insisted on providing the necessary financial and educational support to their Latin American male descendants, and the first generation of Mexican Gamios maintained strong links with Europe. Trying to make short their son’s sojourn in Mexico, Lorenzo’s parents saved “the lands and properties that, according to customary Spanish heritage, corresponded to him.” However, the Spanish Gamios lost control of their Mexican grandchildren when Manuela, Lorenzo Gamio’s wife, decided to return permanently to Mexico after her husband passed away. Back in Mexico, she re-married her husband’s business partner, the person who had taken care of the Gamio family’s properties since Lorenzo’s death. When the news of Manuela’s marriage to Lorenzo’s ex-business partner arrived to Irurita, the Spanish Gamios attempted to make her return their grandson Gabriel to Navarra. He would become the administrator of all the family

¹⁸ “Our Mexican Women” is the title of one of the chapters of Gamio’s book, *Forjando Patria*, p. 126.

¹⁹ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 15.

business and they would also make him their legal heir. But Gabriel's life took a different road. Gabriel Gamio, who was to become anthropologist Manuel Gamio's father, was in France when in 1864 he heard about the French invasion of Mexico and he immediately returned to America. From therein, thanks to complex links between women's decisions, international invasions, and business, the Navarra Gamios became the Spanish Mexican Gamios.²⁰

It was increasingly hard for the Gamio men to reproduce in Mexico a life style homologous to the one of their Spanish peers. Manuel Gamio's father "had never provided evidence of being committed to hard working," and his father lost all the family fortune living a "strongly dissipate life," after Manuel Gamio's mother died when he was eight years old.

Don Gabriel, already without the brake of his wife, worsened his irascible character and squandered in eccentric expenses and bad businesses his own fortune and the one of his deceased wife. The children were taken care of by nannies while there resources lasted, and later by the sisters. They suffered the exaggerated jealousy of the father, who drove away all the suitors, causing all of them to remain unmarried, except the minor one who, once the father passed away and being already a mature woman, got married.²¹

By dedicating his first book, which he named *Forjando Patria* (*Forging Patria*) to his father in 1916, Gamio symbolically incorporated his dead father while

²⁰ See Lomnitz, op. cit. in order to capture how the Spanish and the Creole identity functioned in colonial and independent Mexico. To actualize this identification requires additional research work that this dissertation does not approach.

²¹ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p.14 "Don Gabriel, ya sin el freno de la esposa, agudiza su carácter irascible y dilapida en gastos excéntricos y malos negocios la fortuna propia y la de su difunta mujer. Los hijos son atendidos por niñeras mientras hay recursos para ello, y después por las hermanas. Ellas padecen los celos exagerados del padre, quien les ahuyenta todos los pretendientes, haciendo que todas se quedaran solteras, excepto la menor que se casa ya madura una vez que el padre ha fallecido."

inscribing himself within the post revolutionary brotherhood. One year later, Manuel Gamio married doña Margarita Martínez.²² His father's death had been a "great sentimental and economical discharge." "Surely, his disappearance was one of the factors that allowed Gamio to contract marriage, although he continued supporting, in a lesser degree, his single sisters." For Gamio's wife, Margarita, in economical terms, things were not easy. "Luckily, when Margarita's mother passed away in 1917, he receives 64 houses in inheritance, which gave Gamio a small while permanent income."²³

Initiation rituals of a modern Mexican anthropologist

Manuel Gamio was from a middle class and not too prosperous family. When he finished his secondary studies, he vacillated between studying either Engineering, as his father wanted, or Law. "As a disciplined son," he enrolled himself in the Mines Department of the Mexican National University.²⁴ But he left his just initiated studies and went to work in Santo Domingo, on a family hacienda. His diverse

²² In order to make visible the endogamous nature of Mexican state's bureaucracy, I transcribe González Gamio's in *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*'s quote on the social review of Gamio's wedding. In order to make visible the endogamous nature of Mexican state's bureaucracy, I transcribe Angeles González social Gamio's quote on the review of Gamio's wedding. "Yesterday at six of afternoon, the marriage of Mr. Manuel Gamio took place, Archaeological Monument Chief inspector, with Miss Margarita Leon Ortiz. The act was celebrated in the residence of the fiancée, second street of London no. 25, being witnesses on the part of the fiancé, the Excmo. Sir Thomas Beaumont Holer, ordered of Businesses of the Great Britain; Sir Don Nicéforo Zambrano, General Treasurer of the Nation in representation of Mr. General of Division Don Pablo González, Head of the Body of the Eastern Army that at the moment is directing the campaign of Morelos; and the first captain Javier Gamio and Martínez. On the part of the fiancée, Dr. Don Francisco Leon Ortega and Fonseca, and Francisco Guerrero Valdés.

²³ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 55. Again the fortune marks the destiny of this liberal and progressive scientist when "luckily, although it sounds bad to say it, in 1933 a maternal aunt of Gamio passes away, and again he receives an heritage."

²⁴ Some of his actual schoolmates became expert collaborators in the anthropological activities that he led all along his administrative career. See Comas, *Antología*.

adventures during his residence in the Santo Domingo hacienda were those that he preferred to tell to his grandsons, says his granddaughter. Manuel Gamio's father bought the Santo Domingo rubber hacienda, which was located in the margins of the río Tonto, in the border region formed by the states of Veracruz, Puebla and Oaxaca "with the money that he received from selling his wife's remaining jewelry."

González Gamio, sees her great-grand-father as "a typical son of the Porfirian well situated classes," who bought these lands drawing on their belief that "gentlemen of good lineage always needed to own a hacienda, which might not be a good business, but would always provide prestige." In his father's hacienda, Manuel Gamio "enters in contact with the indigenous othered México that would always fascinate him." Once he realizes that it is worthless trying to make the hacienda profitable, he went about getting to know the people who lived around it." He lived there for around three years. "Naturally, drawing on our lack of experience, that agricultural exploitation failed." In addition, Gamio states that he learned the Náhuatl, language that almost "all our workers who came from the close Sierra de Puebla," speak.²⁵ Following anthropological traditions, Gamio worked all his life with a native informant, José Antonio, who translated for him the indigenous world. In 1906, Gamio wrote a short story narrating the circumstances whereby he came to know the man who eventually became a "determinant character of his life as an anthropologist."

Once, on the side of a river, an Indian rowed in the middle of the water while impassibly watching towards the horizon, without paying attention to the

²⁵ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p.21.

repeated voices whereupon I requested him to approach. I shot to the air my hunting rifle to call his attention, but he did not make any esteem. Then I directed some words to him in his language. Instantaneously he turned the canoe, came towards me and excused his disdainful silence; he said that he did not love those who spoke "Castile," meaning Spanish, because he had suffered mistreat and offenses when working with them but as I spoke the Indian language we would be friends.²⁶

Silence and distance were the responses of the Indian canoeing in the river to Gamio's voice in Spanish. Gamio transformed the Indian man's indifference into difference by shooting his hunting rifle in the air. Gamio's substituted the force of his gun for the power of his words, a gesture that while re-inscribing the violence of the power implicit in his arrogance successfully achieved the Indian man's transformation into his future informant. Náuhantal language and the river's water established the dialogue, which the Indian man intentionally had disrupted while silencing his voice. "Mistreatment and offenses when working to Spanish *hacendados*" led the canoeing man to respond with a "disdainful silence." But once the conversation opened up, "they would be friends." The nameless Indian's memories of bad treatments and offenses that he suffered when working "with" Spanish speakers were metaphorically transported by the river where the proud figure of the man transported himself. Suddenly, through the power of words this working Indian man's dignity, embodied in his negative response to talk to those who speak

²⁶ "Cierta día, estando a la vera de ese río, bogaba en medio de él un indio que erguido en una estrecha piragua siguió mirando impassible hacia el horizonte, sin atender a las repetidas voces con que le pedí que se acercara; disparé al aire mi rifle de caza para llamar la atención, pero no hizo aprecio. Entonces le dirigí algunas palabras en su idioma e instantáneamente viró la canoa, vino hacia mí y disculpó su desdenoso silencio; dijo que no quería a quienes hablaban "castilla" o sea español pues había sufrido maltrato y ofensas cuando trabajó con ellos pero como yo hablaba el idioma indio seríamos amigos." González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 22. In 1956, in a magazine of *El Nacional* Gamio wrote about this initial ritual when he became "seduced" by this other Mexico.

the Spanish language, became translated into friendship when Gamio contacted him through a generic Indian language.

González Gamio adds more details on Gamio's first contacts with his other world. She narrates that one of her grandfather's favorite stories referred to a trip that Gamio and José Antonio took which translated the indigenous world to Gamio.²⁷ A rainstorm led Gamio and José Antonio "to look for refuge in a dwelling where Gamio saw a small human figure in the stove, which horrified him." The Indians received them with great hospitality, but he suggests that he believed that a human being was victim of cannibal customs. After associating indigenous hospitality with cannibalistic customs, a reminiscent figure of male Europeans' fears of cannibalization by America's females, Gamio's granddaughter tells how Manuel Gamio introduces a surprising end to his story. "The human figure in the stove was a monkey, a very popular food in the region."²⁸ *Mestizaje* and cannibalism are twin foundational tropes of the Americas expressing male Europeans' fears of assimilation by the indigenous women. Indeed America has been represented as a female cannibal, the ghost haunting in Mexico. In addition, Indians' contiguity to the monkey reminds us again of Gamio's hierarchical scale of cultures where the modern European man was at the highest level and the Mexican Indian at an inferior level. Vegetable and zoological metaphors guide Gamio's scientific scripture, a rhetorical resource that since his first contact with his desired otherness, he began to use.

²⁷González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, pp. 23-24, and Gamio, *Vidas Dolientes* (México: Ediciones Botas, 1937).

²⁸ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 25.

Gamio's representations of indigenous peoples are always related to his anxieties as a European man who feels the "regressive" menace that contamination through Indigenous women's bodies represents. Gamio's distorted scientific knowledge served not only to portray Indianness but also to reveal Gamio's familiarity with those images that, while living in his father's hacienda, made of him an anthropologist. Gamio lived amongst families and peons "of Aztec ethnicity who resided in his family lands," for three years.²⁹ On his return to Ciudad de México, after his entrepreneurial failure in the rancho, Gamio achieved the position of editor in the Spanish section of *Modern Mexico*, an "attractive magazine" which publicized Mexico to tourists who came from the United States.³⁰ Gamio says that in his father's hacienda he entered in contact with the suffering Indian world. It seems that he also contacted his deep desires, his desires for his othered Mexico. Through his museum activity he translated and controlled the Indian population within the context of his domestic brotherhood, and through the magazine *Modern Mexico* to the international "ultra-modern" world. But in the rancho, "he entered in contact with more than a universe of injustices and misery." Close to the Rio Tonto, "he also discovers beauty, goodness, and force."³¹ To engulf the ritual feature of this initial period in which he contacted the indigenous othered world, in Santo Domingo "he

²⁹ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 27. As Gamio denounced in an article that he wrote for the bilingual journal *Modern Mexico*, published for a U.S. audience and for which he worked as a freelance journalist, at those times, "Mexican peasants worked without receiving any salary."

³⁰ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 28 "This short story was edited in 1937 in a novel volume titled *De Vidas Dolientes*."

³¹ Comas, *Antología*, p. 2.

made many friends, and according to what Gamio communicated to his male grandsons he had a romance with a beautiful indigenous woman.”³² This romance between the white man and the indigenous woman, who “graciously” responds to the anthropologist’s sexuality, marks the end of Gamio’s discovery stage of the othered Mexico. Gamio’s both anthropological and epistemological explorations of Mexican and Latin American Indians continued until he passed away in 1960.

Gamio penetrated these exotic jungles with monkeys and native dwellings, but especially with beautiful Indian women always erotically open to his power. In Santo Domingo he conceived a space that was new for him, not only a geographical but also a historical and symbolic locus, as Walter Mignolo points out with the concept of “territory:”

I employ the term ‘territory’ as a theoretical concept in order to talk about realities that manifest and are conceived differentially according to cultures. By “territory” I understand not only a geographic reality but also an historical and a symbolic one. This means that a territory is a geographical space organized according to the memory constructed by their native dwellings and delimited by the symbols that the community constructs in correspondence to the geographic space.³³

³² This reference to the “india bonita” will appear again in Gamio’s discourse of applied anthropology, as can be notice in his article “Nuestras Mujeres” in *Forjando Patria*, “El Naturismo indígena y el celibato” in *Hacia un México Nuevo*, or in *El Universal* journal article quoted by Amparo Ruiz in “La India Bonita: nación, raza y género en el México revolucionario” in *Debate Feminista*, Año 12, Oct. 2001, pp. 142-161.

³³ “Empleo ‘territorio’ como concepto teórico para hablar de realidades que se manifiestan y conciben distintamente según las culturas. Por ‘territorio’ entiendo no sólo una realidad geográfica sino también histórica y simbólica. Es decir, un territorio es un espacio geográfico organizado según la memoria construida por sus moradores y delimitado por los símbolos que la comunidad hace corresponder con el espacio geográfico. Walter Mignolo, “Teorías renacentistas de la escritura y la colonización de las lenguas nativas.” In *Actas del Primer Simposio de Filología Iberoamericana*, (Zaragoza: Libros Pórticos, 1990), p. 174.

In Gamio's words, the indigenous world that he met in his father's hacienda becomes a territory of conquest. Initially, the relationship that the potential Gamio "conqueror" and "conquered" indigenous established was a separation marked by the river and the silence of his future informant. Gamio's trip overlaps this encounter. The metaphor of the trip is always present in Gamio, while it acquires different meanings. In this case, transportation and communication constituted a material condition of modernization. But it is also a sign that summarizes his project: he is a Latin American male intellectual who imports rationality from his trips to the U.S. in order to implant it in the pre-modern Mexico. Traveling appears as a metaphor representing the will to link both worlds.

For Gamio, the indigenous world only contained human beings that could be studied like vegetables and animals. Gamio's gaze celebrates and orders the indigenous world whose history the anthropologist seeks to re-articulate. In this sense, Gamio's discourse of conquest does not arrive in an empty space but in an abnormal space which resulted from its previous encounters with Spanish men. Gamio's words reproduce the conquest, they reinvent Mexican Indians so that living in his father's hacienda he will geographically and symbolically dominate it. Under these circumstances, anthropologist Gamio becomes the representation of power. However, drawing on Said, through Gamio's representation of the indigenous populations it is possible to know Gamio's image.³⁴ His discourse on others becomes

³⁴ Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), pp. 1-9.

a trace of how Gamio self-constructs himself. In this sense, Hayden White refers to definition by a negation technique:

In times of socio-cultural stress, when the need for a positive self-definition asserts, it is always possible to say something like: "I may not know the precise content of my own felt humanity, but I am most certainly 'not' like that, and simply point to something in the landscape that is manifestly different from oneself. This might be called the technique of ostensive/self-definition by negation, and it is certainly much more generally practice in cultural polemic than any other form of definition."³⁵

In 1908, drawing on his experiences in the hacienda, Gamio obtained a position as an assistant history teacher in the National Museum of Mexico. While working in the museum, Gamio entered in contact with U.S. anthropologists who were conducting fieldwork in Mexico. According to his granddaughter, here Gamio lives the second encounter that determined his life. He met the American archeologist Zelia Nuttall who obtained a scholarship for him to attend the Columbia University in New York. Gamio's friend, Genaro García, the director of the museum, guaranteed him his job upon his eventual return from the United States. These defining encounters bridge Gamio's transition from his Mexican particularity to his scientific universality, and his private and personal desires for economic stability and modern recognition are now represented as the public truths of science and nation. Allegorical stories often embody this transition from the private to the public space. Gamio's anthropology can be read as a cultural artifact, a strategy that provides evidence of his masculine way of community making. Gamio's first encounter with the suffering Mexico, simultaneous to his romance with a beautiful indigenous woman, becomes

³⁵ Hayden White, *Tropics of discourse. Essays in cultural criticism*. (Baltimore and London: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978), pp. 151-152.

an allegory of the new nation. It is not difficult to see the meaning of Gamio's treatment of the indigenous man canoeing in the river. The future anthropologist menaced this Indian man by shooting his rifle in the air to establish his hegemonic role. Speaking in the Indian language established the hegemonic dialogue that the domination of the gun could not achieve. The anthropologist's use of a generic Indian language was the bridge for shaping the nation's linguistic unity, which drew on the indigenous man's incorporation to the anthropologist's nation as an informant. It also can be noticed easily that Gamio's approach to indigenous men and women's incorporation to the nation does not follow the same pattern. This difference begins to provide evidence of how the anthropologist defines the rules of inclusion and transformation within the new community, and who and how each one is admitted.

From 1909 until 1911, Gamio studied anthropology with Franz Boas at Columbia University.³⁶ When he returned to Mexico from the United States in 1911, he founded the Anthropology Bureau in the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Gamio was the Chair of the Anthropology Bureau from 1917 to 1924. He began a plan of study that, in its introduction states again, that the Mexican population was totally "unknown, heterogeneous, and abnormally developed." Gamio's rationality sees in the territories that he is anthropologically exploring a chaotic pluralism that needs to be eliminated and replaced by the unity of the new national order. He classifies Mexico into ten geographical regions whose population's "racial

³⁶ George W. Stoking, *Race, Culture and Evolution. Essays in the History of Anthropology*, New York: Free Press, 1968). This book has been a very helpful reference to the ideas of this part of the chapter regarding Gamio's links to Boas. Chapter 9, where Stocking suggests the reader to substitute "civilization" with "race" and to remake the reading of Franz Boas' ideas was especially useful as a starting point of the next section of the chapter.

characteristics, material and no-material cultural expressions, languages and dialects, economic situation, and physical and biological environment” he planned to study. The bureau’s next objective was the creation of the methodology that would increase the efficiency of the revolutionary organizations in charge of the development of the new nation, as well as Gamio’s representation as a civilizing hero. By providing the government with scientific information, the bureau “will prepare the ‘racial’ approach, cultural fusion, linguistic unification, and economic balance of the Mexican groups.”³⁷

However, this strategy would not lead to eliminate Mexico’s heterogeneity. Gamio appeals to the modern male community through the formation of a national consciousness connected by a common language. Indian men are feminized while represented with equal rights to which they would eventually have access once becoming modern. However, this would not produce the synthesis necessary for the re-foundation of the nation. That leads to a different strategy to be applied by his anthropology in relation to Mexican women. For Gamio, only through the implementation of a biological and cultural melting strategy, can the “multiple and different ethnic groups” frame a “coherent nationality and a defined and true motherland.”³⁸ Gamio finished only one of the ten regional studies. The final words of this unique report suggest that an *indigenista* approach to the welfare politics of the

³⁷ Gamio, “El programa de la Dirección de Antropología y las poblaciones regionales de la República,” in “Introducción, síntesis y conclusiones de la obra La población del valle de Teotihuacan, (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública, Dirección de Tall. Gráf. 1922), p. X.

³⁸ Gamio, “El programa de la Dirección de Antropología y las poblaciones regionales de la República,” in p. XII.

revolutionary government will lead to the Indians' transformation into mestizo citizens.³⁹

Mexican Women's Reproduction

It can be at least provisionally accepted, that the height of the cultural level of Mexican social groups is in inverse reason to the proportion of indigenous blood that the majorities of individuals that constitute these groups have. Also it can be signaled that, in general terms, the cultural degree that is observed in the rural groups is related to the their geographic latitude, or in other words that to more high latitude corresponds greater degree of culture.

Manuel Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México, (Towards a New Mexico)*, pp. 120-121, 1935

Gamio's discourse on the patria is a Janus-faced strategy representing the nationalist project as a melting pot where the old Indian roots constitute a positive trait to be shared by the new modern Mexico. It reaffirms the cultural values stemming from the depths of a presumed communal past. This nationalist rhetoric opens up a privileged space for evaluating, through the study of Latin American intellectuals' connections to women's power of reproduction, the political implications of gender and sexuality for revolutionary community making. At the critical moment of defining who becomes part and who will reproduce the new nation-state, while race and cultural features have been often mentioned, the physical presence of the women's bodies have been erased from the story. For the revolutionary brotherhood, women will always reproduce, voluntarily or un-

³⁹ The links of the North American anthropologist with Gamio and the Mexican anthropology are institutionalized in 1910 with the creation of the International School of American Archeology and Ethnography in Mexico. Eduardo Seler, Frantz Boas, George Engerrand, Alfred Tozzer, and finally Manuel Gamio were the successive chairs of the school. The University of Columbia, the international school of American archeology and ethnography: Frantz Boas, who was born in Prussia, creates the school under the sponsoring support of Prussia, France, México and United States in 1910. Boas became the perpetual secretary of the main board of the school.

volunteerly, the patria. The Mexican Revolution's definition of who will give birth to the new nation drew on notions of racialized cultural relations informing the nationalist project of the Revolution. Mexican women's capability of reproduction as a form of physical power seldom explicitly appears in any of the pictures of Mexican *mestizo* nationalism. In Gamio's science fiction narrative, Mexican women's reproductive power is always implicit. Mexican Indian women giving birth to the modern *mestizo* citizen is always explicit. Women's physical power constitutes the potentiality for a different *mestizaje*. In 1922 Gamio produced an ethnographic, archaeological, and historical study of the region which comprised Mexico, Hidalgo, Puebla, and Tlaxcala. The Valley of Teotihuacán was the only region where the study was accomplished. *La Población del Valle de Teotihuacán* attributes the poverty of the Indigenous population of the Valley to racial features. Gamio promotes international immigration in order to engender a new *mestizaje*:

In a population of 8,330 souls there are only 10 foreign residents. This fully explains the reason why the majority of the inhabitants still remain in the backward stage of Indigenous civilization, for there is no doubt that if a greater number of foreign immigrants were established in this region, modern civilization would gain a greater foothold and the number of mestizos would increase.⁴⁰

Using body measurements to racialize the inhabitants of Teotihuacán, he argued that modern improvement could only come out of miscegenation. Gamio emphatically defines the limits of Mexican women's sexuality, while ignoring female sexual agency from the race-based *mestizo* community to be born. The meanings of

⁴⁰ Gamio, *La población del valle de Teotihuacan*, p. XXV.

these gendered notions are related to basic anthropological structuralism, which identifies women as the brotherhood's gifts for the formation of the community or as facilitators of communication, while never considered as the initiators of communication. Gamio's eugenic constructions of Mexico's national reproduction concern much more than other *indigenistas'* physical politics. Specifically he focuses on the notions of the national population to be created. Within his applied anthropology, women's depiction is emblematic for understanding *mestizaje's* meaning within the politics of community formation in Revolutionary Mexico. Indeed, in Gamio's conception, Indianness becomes essentialized and biologized into notions of genealogical difference, which were at the heart of his fear of Mexico being overwhelmed by an un-balanced *mestizaje*.

Gamio's indigenist *mestizaje* was based on the assumption that the glory of Mexico's indigenous cultures lays entirely in the pre-colonial past. Differences in culture among the country's "small nations" or "families" were blocks jeopardizing the national unity. They represented a degeneration of pre-conquest customs. If this original *mestizaje* would proliferate and spontaneously continue reproducing, without assimilating into the "progressive" mainstream of the national *mestizo* culture, an enormous proportion of the Mexican population would be led to ever-declining levels of living and their eventual extinction. More importantly, *mestizaje* as it was before the Revolution, would constitute an abnormal fusion, which needed correction.

It must be considered the convenience of *mestizaje* to Mexico, not only from the ethnic point of view, but mainly to be able to establish a type of culture higher than the unsatisfactory one that at present most of the population displays. Although *mestizaje* can be obtained using education and other means, this task will be completed sooner if *mestizaje* is intensified. *Mestizaje*

will automatically bring an effective cultural progress, as the result of the elimination or substitution of Indians' delayed cultural characteristics⁴¹

In Gamio's *indigenismo*, the idea that the "fusion" of the "small nations," the "mestiza nation" and the European legacy would be accomplished through Mexican women's bodies, is a recurrent framework of his *indigenismo*:

Almost all the peoples of America are not yet nationally integrated. Such an unfavorable situation can be corrected by intensifying miscegenation and unifying the cultural standard of life, generalizing the use of a single language, improving the economic situation of the very poor masses, and multiplying the routes and vehicles of communication.⁴²

One of Gamio's seminal points can be found in his "thesis" on Mexican Indian women. His point of departure drew on his observation and classification of the Mexican woman as the most important resource for forging the new patria. Gamio believes in a scientific and fixed relationship between universal scales of cultures, which need to be in correspondence with the literacy level of the women of each culture. In Gamio's conception, according to his universalizing framework, the overwhelming proportion of indigenous illiterate Mexican women would require classification as "servant women," who he argues that "is born and lives for the

⁴¹Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 25, en "El desarrollo anormal de nuestra población," pp. 21-27. Debe tenerse en cuenta que el mestizaje conviene a México, no sólo desde el punto de vista étnico, sino principalmente para poder establecer un tipo de cultura más avanzado que el poco satisfactorio que hoy presenta la mayoría de la población y si bien esto puede conseguirse valiéndose de la educación y otros medios, esta tarea se consumará más pronto si se intensifica el mestizaje, pues éste traerá consigo automáticamente un efectivo progreso cultural, como resultado de la eliminación o sustitución de las características culturales retrasadas indígenas."

⁴² Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 36, en "Nuestra estructura social, el nacionalismo y la educación," pp. 31-52. "Casi todos los pueblos de América todavía no están nacionalmente integrados ... Tan desfavorable situación puede corregirse intensificando el mestizaje y unificando el nivel cultural de vida, generalizando el uso de un solo idioma, mejorando la situación económica de las masas paupérrimas y multiplicando las vías y vehículos de comunicación."

material work, pleasure or maternity,” while belonging to the “almost zoological order imposed by the circumstances.”⁴³ Nonetheless, “according to the cultural stage where our country is placed, there are less feminist and servant, and more feminine women than those that one could expect to be living in Mexico.”⁴⁴ A surprising interrogation leads Gamio to his fantastic construction of the Mexican women’s classification. “Feminist,” “servant”, and “feminine” women constitute his horizon on women, and reproduction is its articulating axis.

“Nuestras mujeres,” (“Our women”) the title of Gamio’s chapter on Mexican woman’s role for “forging the patria,” signals that identification for the Mexican woman is a matter of men’s belongings in order to create the new mestiza nation.⁴⁵ The Mexican woman is first of all an object for Mexican men (re)producing the patria. Within the global order of modernity, Mexican elite and middle class men constitute a (wronged) sovereign subject needing the recognition of European American men to reverse the effects of the recursive failure of preceding governments in modernizing the country. Indian and old *mestizo* men are depicted as the peasant objects of the revolutionary legislation or erased from the visible landscape. In this sense, Gamio is a public intellectual who achieves a meta-divine dimension: he is the ruler who guides the ruler. Gamio argued that “The ruler should have the sociologist

⁴³ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 14.

⁴⁴ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 126. “La tesis principal de este estudio, ya expuesta anteriormente, es que en México existen menos mujeres siervas y feministas y mas mujeres femeninas que las que debían de haber, dado el estado cultural, atribuido a nuestro país.”

⁴⁵ Gamio writes on Mexican women in the *Forjando Patria*’s chapter entitled “Nuestras Mujeres,” p. 119, and in *Hacia un Mexico Nuevo* in the chapters entitled “El tipo de belleza humana en la raza indígena” (169-173) y “El celibato y el naturismo indígena,” pp. 173-178.

as a guide,” but when one comes to see what he understands by “sociologist” in the Mexican case, his anthropological authorial site becomes evident.⁴⁶ On the other hand, Gamio’s *mestizaje* is also a nationalist tool for creating the image of a nation founded on the fusion of Mexico’s diverse population. Gamio recognizes that post revolutionary Mexican women, unlike Mexican men, are bridging bodies that will give birth to the new mestiza nation, if and only if, female sexual agency is excluded from the project.

As portrayed by Gamio, the Indian man is viewed as a feminized defeated victim of his geographical and cultural environment, whereas the Indian woman is viewed as an active subject of interracial sexual intercourse, or “sexual trade” as he called it.⁴⁷ Women are creatures of a masculine power fantasy, while Indianness is also a creation of modern man’s power fantasy. Both were created by western occidental discourse as “the other.” In order to acquire his own recognition as man within the modern brotherhood, Gamio emphasizes the distance between him and the other, being these others women or Indians. Feminization of Indian men became a tool for Gamio seeking his recognition as a modern Mexican man. The Indian man will be elevated to modernity and will become a *mestizo* through education and economic changes, but the Indian woman will not become modern as the result of the indigenist politics. They are introduced into the new nation through their condition of woman. By transforming them into the mothers of the new mestizo subject, a marked inclusion of Mexican women takes place, an inclusion that renders them objects for

⁴⁶ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 29.

⁴⁷ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 29.

men's recognition.⁴⁸ Women's role of reproducing culture becomes crucial for altering traditional habits of working, while Indian men becoming superfluous for the mestizo nationalist project, except as labor force.

The Student Gamio and U.S. women students

During the first years of the Mexican Revolution, from 1909 to 1911, Indians raised attacks against Porfirio Díaz's modernizing reforms which were destroying their communities. A new *mestizo* elite, that became rich thanks to the same economic policies leading the Indians to arms, also rebelled against the *Ancien Regime*. They looked for social and political mobility. During this period, Gamio studied anthropology (archeology and linguistics) at Columbia University. Here he consolidated his professional networks with his American colleagues.⁴⁹ His comments on these formative years in the field of anthropology also show that this period also marked Gamio in personal terms as well. He always remembered his student life, "a little bit bohemian and more liberal than Mexico's." The memories of this life, which "were especially attractive to him," revolve around American women. As a student at Columbia University, Gamio entered in contact with Barnard College

⁴⁸ Gamio wrote a theatre work titled "Tlahuicole en Teotihuacán" (1919) which was originally written as a movie scrip but that was afterward adapted in order to be represented in a theatre that Gamio named "on Nature," in Teotihuacán. In this epic, for saving the nation, indigenous princesses are gifts exchanged between Indians noble and warrior men. Aurelio de los Reyes, *Manuel Gamio y el Cine*, pp. 11-32. See also in this same text the photos of an indigenous woman giving birth on a stemming bath. The pictures belong to an ethnographic movie produced and directed by Gamio in 1918.

⁴⁹ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*. Drawing on these contacts, he became the director of the International School of American Archeology and Ethnography, while maintaining a fluent correspondence with his Chair, Franz Boas, as well as many other colleagues all along his life.

women.⁵⁰ His granddaughter, Ángeles González Gamio, wrote that he always reminisced with nostalgic affection about those years, especially the Barnard female students whose slogan, in Gamio's English words, was "To study hard and frolic fast."⁵¹

Gamio told his sons and grandsons that he "did his best to make these women accomplish their objective." These words sound like stereotypes of Latin American men's *machista* manliness. They need to be seriously taken into account as the efforts of a man who belongs to a post colonial nation state and who attempts to avoid the feminization that, paralleling Said's argument in relation to *Orientalism*, the ethnic construction of Latin America implied for elite Mexican men. By telling his sons and grandsons that he used to lend his clothes to these women, who dressed as men in order to enter the men's dorms at night, Gamio strategically positions himself as an equal of the "ultramodern" European-American man. He simultaneously reinforces his patriarchal figure within his family brotherhood, while simultaneously consolidating the image of his family as the model of social order, as his granddaughter's biography emphasizes more than thirty years after his death.

Mexican sons and grandsons probably admired this man's adventures with these American women in cosmopolitan New York. At the same time, by identifying the female Barnard students as feminists transgendering their feminine essence, Gamio

⁵⁰ Gonzalez Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 35. "Precisamente el año en que llega Gamio a la Universidad de Columbia, se anexa a la misma el Barnard College, una de las instituciones educativas para mujeres de mayor prestigio en los Estados Unidos y cuyas instalaciones quedan frente a las de Columbia. "The same year in which Gamio arrives at the University of Columbia, Barnard College, one of women's educative institutions of greater prestige in the United States and whose facilities are in front to those of Columbia became part of the Columbia university system."

⁵¹ In English in the original text of Gonzalez Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 38

denies them any possibility of recognition as women subjects.⁵² His confession about his adventures with the American women embodies Gamio's simultaneous admission into the cosmopolitan and the Mexican brotherhood. The Barnard students function as female objects for his entrance as an equal man within the modern American brotherhood.

To share dorms and women while becoming an anthropologist introduces him as a peer within the ultramodern world of New York in 1910. At the same time, Gamio's emphasis on these transgendering women, whom he identifies as "feminists," allows him to be recognized as a patriarchal figure by the younger men of his family brotherhood. At the end of the twentieth century, his granddaughter echoed these adventures and acknowledgments when she wrote in 1989 that in 1911, during the first years of the Revolution, the young Gamio "was excited about his return to Mexico." He "deeply desired to go back to his patria to apply his recently acquired knowledge and to participate within the revolutionary movement." However, he was also ambiguously "sad when thinking of the close end of this rich stage of his life." He will always reminisce about his student life in the U.S. with nostalgic feelings of affection.⁵³ Anthropology and women mediate Gamio's identification as a modern man, a pattern that he began to follow in his father's

⁵² A different reading of Gamio's classification could interpret his words as emphasizing American women's subjectivity. According to my beliefs and my argument on how the brotherhood functions within transnational frameworks of nation making, I am inclined to think that he is showing an ambiguity derived from his need of recognition by his American male peers.

⁵³ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, pp. 35-38.

hacienda and to which he will be loyal all his life while also integrating it into his complex understanding of cultures.

Gamio's classification of the Mexican women

Once Gamio focused on the woman's body as the object that will lead to Mexico's modernization, he enters the field of reproduction. In his 1935 article "On celibacy and indigenous naturism," Gamio's juxtaposition between Indian women and white women in relationship to marriage reveals a much more disturbing perspective on women in general. For Gamio, celibacy is a problem of the sexuality of the Mexican woman whose body builds the *mestiza* nation. Drawing on his experiences with American women in 1910 and on his knowledge of Indian and Spanish women, Gamio constructs his revealing classification of his universal scientific method that integrates past into present through genealogical lines. He depicts the women's landscape: "The feminist woman feels pleasure more as sport than as passion, lives maternity as an accessory activity that is not fundamental for her, possesses masculine tendencies and manifestations, and considers home a place for resting, subsistence, and office work."⁵⁴ Drawing on his 1910 experience with the students of Barnard College that he identifies as transgendering women, he affirms

⁵⁴ La mujer feminista posee un placer deportivo más que pasional, vive la maternidad como una actividad asesora, no fundamental, posee tendencias y manifestaciones masculinas, considera al hogar un sitio de reposo, subsistencia y gabinete de trabajo. Este tipo de mujer se originó y se ha propagado profusamente en los grandes centros de población como fruto lógico del ambiente social. (*Forjando Patria*, "Nuestras mujeres") The feminist woman has a sport pleasure more than a passion one. She lives maternity like a secondary, no- fundamental activity. She has masculine tendencies and manifestations, considers home a site for rest, subsistence and work. This type of woman originated and propagated profusely in the great centers of population as the logical fruit of this social atmosphere. (*Forjando Patria*, "Our women")

that reproduction does not constitute feminists' identity.⁵⁵ Maternity is the crucial element for Gamio's classification of women. It illuminates how Gamio articulates his system on Mexican women as well as his understanding of cultures.

A feminist perception on the reproduction of the patria through *mestizaje* and on the role of women's bodies within the nationalist process of forging the patria opens up significant questions and answers for conceptualizing brotherhood, *mestizaje*, and women. In addition, by examining the operative turn that he performs when placing himself as an *indigenista* anthropologist informing the welfare politics of the Mexican state, Gamio's transparent words on women also shape a key epistemological space. The author's need for recognition within the modern world leads him emphatically to confess Mexico's Indianness, while positioning himself as the scientific anthropologist mediating between the country's recursive modernizing failures and universal scientific knowledge. Drawing on Pateman's insights on intellectual men and the sexual contract, it can be said that his *indigenista* applied anthropology parallels at the theoretical level, women's physical power to reproduce and procreate.⁵⁶

Within Gamio's classification, "feminist" women and their sexual agency do not allow the synthesis that he considers necessary for the reproduction of a nationalist *mestizaje*. At the same time, feminist women's sexual agency would de-center the recognition of Gamio's subjectivity by the modern international

⁵⁵ For a study of the feminist movement in Mexico from approximately 1870 to 1940, see Anna Macías, *Against All Odds*. (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1982).

⁵⁶ Pateman, *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*.

brotherhood. Gamio does not recognize women's agency. His lack of imagination and reflexive epistemological power impedes him from perceiving women's subjectivity. Women can only be objects of his identification as a man. Subject women, like the Barnard College transgendering students or the feminist no-women of his classification, become men and subsequently, within his binary logic of sameness and difference, women who are sexual agents are monstrous creatures. If sexual agency and subject recognition belong only to men, to have sexual agency transforms a woman into a man, and for him, a sexually active woman who is a monstrous woman. He identifies women that enact sexual agency as men. He believes that a feminist woman "feels pleasure more as a sport than a passion."⁵⁷ By establishing that the sexual pleasure of feminist women's stems from sport he represents them as bodies without human dignity, while rejecting their recognition as subjects. Just in case that Gamio's conquest discourse for the re-foundation of the nation did not become evident, it could be useful to translate his words to contemporary frameworks and to point out that the anthropologist identifies lesbianism and monstrosity, and that he believes that feminist women are lesbians.

As "the logical fruit" of the urban environment, feminist women "originated and expanded" in those centers that the process of industrialization was creating as perverse and disturbing spaces."⁵⁸ Gamio follows the anthropological thought of his time that conceived the city as a degenerating space when he adds that the feminist woman is the result of modernization. In the evolution toward modernity, the "social

⁵⁷ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 127.

environment” of the big cities has a negative influence on women (as well as on the Indian population) and transforms her into a body without humanity.⁵⁹ His developmental approach to culture (that he understands intertwined to blood, “social alchemy,” in his own words) positions the indigenous populations as pre-modern communities conserving the “artistic and poetic” side of humankind, while perceiving a degenerative menace in the loss of Indigenous women’s femininity. This perspective on the degenerative aspects of modernization and on the poetics of indigenous cultures permeates Gamio’s nationalist *mestizaje*.

As a middle class man who worked for the Mexican government all his life, he insists in his negation of feminist women. He states that when male family members are unable to provide for a woman’s life, and she provides in economic terms for herself through “honest” ways, it would be a mistake to qualify her as a “feminist.” The modern woman perfectly fits with the anthropologist’s conception of womanhood. Gamio’s daughters embody his father’s conceptions on femininity. Margarita, the older, became an historian, Maria de los Ángeles became a dentist, and Gabriela studied to become a secretary. He admires those women who add to their feminine roles the “integrity” of the “sacrifice of the intense work of every day.”⁶⁰

⁵⁹ As an additional example of Gamio’s understanding of the degenerative effects of modernization: “Es de notarse que en cuanto los braceros campesinos-indígenas, cruzados o blancos- llegan a nuestras poblaciones en busca de trabajo, acompañados de sus familias, sus mujeres, originalmente femeninas, se tornan con frecuencia en siervas merced a cierta alquimia social, fruto de los atracones de civilización que con un criterio fatal se dan sus esposos, que antes eran ‘incultos,’ según las estadísticas oficiales.” Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 127.

⁶⁰ It would be VERY interesting to make a counterpoint between Lomnitz’s critique and Anderson’s introduction of men’s sacrifice within Latin American nationalism and a feminist perspective of motherhood’s sacrifice within the construction of the nation, a point where Chicanas’s intervention has been relevant.

Those men who do not understand the worth of the Mexican women and ascribe them to a modern “feminist movement” draw their classifying words “on jealousy and envy feelings”.⁶¹ He experienced how difficult it had become to the patriarchal representative of the family to provide for the brotherhood’s women. Therefore, for him, a woman can provide for herself through “honest instruments” only when the men of her family are unable to provide for her, an agency that ends producing men’s subjectivity. Thus, the “honest instruments” through which a woman can provide for herself without becoming a monstrous feminist depend on the brotherhood’s ability for sustaining the women of the family. Under these premises, production, which constitutes the feature transforming indigenous and *mestizo* men into erroneous subjects within the modern brotherhood, does not transform a woman into a subject. She depends on men’s limitations as male providers in order to be recognized as a substituting subjectivity. For Gamio, in the revolutionary moment of the re-foundation of the Mexican mestiza nation, Indian man’s sexuality is erased, while his productive role is privileged. Female sexuality, on the contrary, is a traumatic event because it poses the danger of a double transgression. What disturbs him the most is that feminist modern women, instead of staying in their traditional positions as “gifts,” as the conduits and vehicles that facilitate social relations and enable group identity, actually decide to give or not to give themselves. Additionally, in 1935

⁶¹Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 128: “Erróneamente, se califica de movimiento feminista, la tendencia que se ha venido intensificando en la mujer mexicana, de procurarse bienestar por sí misma y de manera honesta cuando no pueden suministrárselo sus familiares. Este modo de pensar, o mejor dicho, de no pensar, es característico de los mexicanos que todavía padecen celos cavernarios; la mujer mexicana, debe decirse muy alto, no pierde su índole femenina al transformarse en mecanógrafa, médica, abogada, dentista o dependienta: por el contrario, en esas mujeres debe alabarse que, además de permanecer femeninas, hayan tenido la entereza de afrontar el sacrificio que impone la intensa labor diaria.”

Gamio still points out that “within the groupings of indigenous race, celibacy does not exist, or its proportion is insignificant, whereas in the population of white race, its proportion is extremely high.”⁶² He observes “an overwhelming proportion of single female people in the urban centers where the white population predominates.” For him, “in the indigenous towns and *rancherías*, on the contrary, the single ones are so few that their existence is almost not perceived.” In Gamio’s opinion “those differences must stem from the essential naturist feature of the indigenous race, that is to say that follows with fidelity the dictations of nature, whereas the white race is with time more and more distant from the natural systems.”⁶³

The thousands of economic and social barriers that in the white race prevent marriage do not exist for the native, because puberty is the only indicator which wisely signals the time in which conjunction of sexes need to begin. All indigenous women enjoy the supreme gift of love, and can aspire to the glory of maternity.⁶⁴

Gamio complains about white women’s control of their bodies, and contrasts them with the mestiza, “a type of woman” in which “love” and “maternity” predominates and who is always at the sexual disposition of white men’s desires. He identifies a “great number of white women physically apt for maternity” and “ready to love,”

⁶² Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 174.

“Entre las agrupaciones de raza indígena, el celibato no existe, o su proporción es insignificante, en tanto que en la población de raza blanca, su proporción es exageradamente alta.” “La abrumadora proporción de célibes, principalmente de sexo femenino, que se observan en los centros urbanos, donde predomina la población blanca, en tanto que en los pueblos y *rancherías* indígenas, son tan contados, que casi no se percibe su existencia. En nuestra opinión esas diferencias son debidas a que la raza indígena es eminentemente naturista, es decir, sigue con fidelidad los dictados de la naturaleza, mientras que la raza blanca está cada vez más alejada de los sistemas naturales.”

⁶⁴Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 174. “Para el indígena no existen las mil barreras económicas y sociales que en la raza blanca obstaculizan el matrimonio, pues la pubertad es el único índice que señala sabiamente la época en que debe iniciarse la conjunción de los sexos. Toda mujer indígena goza del supremo don del amor, y puede aspirar a la gloria de la maternidad.”

living in urban spaces as de-humanized vegetables. They do not cooperate with the brotherhood's production of the new mestiza nation and chose to remain "miserably, ridiculously, ignominiously celibate while driven crazy for being satisfied in the legitimate desires of their thirsty entrails." Production and reproduction of the nation are semantic differences which imply different subjects, a simple observation with the potential for turning over modernization as well as developing discourses. When confronted by women's agency, scientific decorum does not mitigate Gamio's male fury. He wrote that "bitter resignation, fanaticism, hysteria, sexual perversion and prostitution, are the fatal results of the conventional and illogical system that civilization imposes on marriage."⁶⁵ He points out that in opposition to the attitude that modern people have in regards to marriage in the great cities of the country, economic concerns do not influence "the rate of marriage" of Indigenous women whose disposition for reproducing the new *mestizo* subject "is automatically and physiologically regulated."⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 175.

"Qué contraste en la raza blanca y en la mestiza, en que predomina este tipo! Gran número de mujeres aptas para la maternidad, y dispuestas al amor, vegetan, sin embargo, miserable, ridícula, ignominiosamente célibes y enloquecidas por ver satisfecho el legítimo deseo de sus entrañas sedientas." Amarga resignación, fanatismo, histerismo, perversión sexual y prostitución, son resultados fatales del convencional e ilógico sistema que la civilización impone al matrimonio." "Ya hemos indicado que el carácter de la situación económica en que viven los indígenas no influye en la nupcialidad, la cual está automática y fisiológicamente reglamentada. En cambio, en la población blanca de la Capital y grandes ciudades de la República, el factor económico es el principal obstáculo que se opone al matrimonio, y en seguida el prejuicio de clases." Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 175. "Such a contrasts in the white race and the mestiza, in which east type predominates! Great number of women apt for the maternity, and ready to the love, vegetates, nevertheless, miserable, ridiculous, ignominiously celibate and driven crazy to see satisfied legitimate desire with their thirsty entrails. Bitter resignation, fanaticism, hysteria, sexual perversion and prostitution, are fatal results of the conventional and illogical system that the civilization imposes to the marriage." "we have already indicated that the character of the economic situation in which the natives live does not influence in the marriage rate, which is automatically and physiologically regulated. However, in the white population of the Capital and great cities of the Republic, the economic factor is the main obstacle that is against the marriage."

The second type of Gamio's Mexican women is the "servant woman." "She is born and lives for the material work, pleasure or maternity." According to Gamio, in her case, these actions belong to the "almost zoological order imposed by the circumstances."⁶⁷ Again, Gamio's scientific beliefs on women reveal profound links between his manliness and his science. In its more general meaning, Gamio's developmental integration of biology and culture draws on a scale that in one extreme de-humanizes some people, which "vegetate" or belong to the "zoological order of life," while at the other extreme places the European space representing the most elevated expression of culture. Gamio classifies the servant woman at the bottom of his zoological/human scale. The essence of "servant woman" encapsulates "material work," --meaning that non-material work, like Gamio's, corresponds to the non-servant order of beings-- "pleasure" and "maternity." Gamio's classification is, in this case, a twofold narrative on white men's appropriation both of women sexuality and labor. He reconstructs the Mexican nation through control of female reproductive and labor power. However, the servant women are at an "almost zoological level," and the reproduction through her body of the new *mestiza* citizen requires the death of the Indian mother. Only with her death, control over new generations and the legitimate nuclear family, which Gamio's represented, could be established. But with the death of the Indian mother, Indian men are reduced to a condition of paralyzing infancy.

⁶⁷Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 104. "La mujer sierva "que nace y vive para la labor material, el placer o la maternidad, esfera de acción casi zoológica impuesta por las circunstancias y el medio." "The woman servant, who is born and lives for the material work, pleasure or maternity, almost zoological sphere of action imposed by circumstances and environment."

The anthropologist accomplishes a new form of human reproduction. He writes about a scientific male birthing that annuls the mother of the Indians.

Gamio also says that in terms of numbers “our indigenous women” constitute the largest group. He comes back to his initial argument on the specificity of Mexican women, whose illiteracy and Indianness, according to his scientific beliefs would be a great handicap for the re-foundation of the nation. However, he now contrasts Mexican *mestiza* women and men instead of *mestiza* and white women. “There are less servant women in Mexico than those that according to statistical numbers on illiteracy one expects to find.” “Our indigenous women, who constitute the larger group of women” are illiterate, “but in opposition to illiterate Indian men,” they conserve with great intensity and loyalty “a great heritage of habits, tendencies, and education,” which constitutes the legacy of pre-colonial women. Carole Pateman’s hypothesis in “The Sexual Contract” could not find a better confirmation. In the aforementioned citation, Gamio defines culture as literacy, indigenous men as not loyal to their Indianness and thus easily to be transformed into *mestizos*, and indigenous women’s bodies as substitutes for their lack of literacy by becoming bridging bodies for the new nation to be born. Gamio adds that “those indigenous women that before the Conquest belonged to primitive tribes and were already servants” will continue to be servants until the social environment changes.⁶⁸ When he states that Mexican women’s servitude depends more on “the grade of immorality of her family members” than on her own grade of literacy, race, and social class,

⁶⁸ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 27.

women are again depicted through the men of the patria. At this point in his essay, he adds two concrete examples to leave it clear that he understands that all women are men's objects. "The poor *tortillera* who receives from her drunken man two or three daily beatings as well as the arrogant lady whose husband is accustomed to penetrating her in the alcove with the lights of the dawn, with well loaded reasons and cocktails (also receives her beating dosis)."⁶⁹

The effect of the construction of women as sexuality and nothing more leaves no room for the indigenous woman to retain her membership among her racial/ethnic community. Indian women's essential disposition for "love" simultaneously constructs their also essential unrapability. He inverts women's rape, which in his discourse becomes men's biological need or Indian women's sexualization. The initial unbalanced *mestizaje*, which resulted from the violent conquest and colonial contexts, requires thus to be substituted by an harmonic new miscegenation which would draw on the Indian woman's "natural disposition for love." For Gamio "every indigenous woman enjoys with pleasure the supreme gift of love, and may aspire to the glory of maternity."⁷⁰ Gamio's metaphorical language enunciates his virile position, both in the sense of force and of hegemonic manliness. Within his classification of women, his ideas on the servitude of Mexican women supplement again the gender and racial limits of the redeeming base of revolutionary nationalism and emphasize the brotherhood behind the new Mexico to be born. The servant

⁶⁹Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 27. "Son igualmente siervas la infeliz tortillera que recibe de su empulcado hombre dos o tres palizas cotidianas y la activa dama cuyo esposo acostumbra penetrar en la alcoba a las luces del alba, bien cargado de razones y de cocktails."

⁷⁰ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*.

women's condition depends on men's subjectivity, a turn that again negates any agency to women. His inscription hides men's violence on women's bodies for the creation of the *mestiza* citizen. His classification incorporates the rapist violence behind the servile condition of indigenous women. By naming, in the above transcribed citation, "reasons" as the enforcing virility of the husband of the "arrogant lady," the epistemological violence of the author re-inscribes in all women's bodies the condition of sexual object necessary for the modern brotherhood. For Gamio, both violence and reason mark the woman's body through the family man's agency. In terms of the community formation that is based on the making of a new *mestizo* national subject, the admittance that Gamio gives to the Indian woman is solely based on sex and it means her ex-communication from the Indian community. Gamio identified the feminist woman as a monstrous no-woman, and he constructed a redundant framework while classifying her. At the same time, he classified the servant woman within a zoological scale. He identified the Indian woman as the traitor of her original ethnic community, while positioning her as the bridging body that will give birth to the new *mestizo* community.

For the third type of women, which constitutes "the hope of revolutionary Mexico," Gamio constructs an order of classification similar to the one that he constructed for the feminists, while reversing its meanings. "Feminine woman," is the redundant Gamio's double order of discourse for naming the "average woman,"

which distances herself from the two aforementioned types of monstrous women, the servant and the feminist.⁷¹

When Mexico will be a great nation, many will be the causes of this grandeur, but the main cause will consist on the strong, virile and resistant race, that since today the Mexican feminine woman molds. A woman, which with so wise and deep instinct creates the family and becomes the hope of the race, at the same time that makes bloom and expands in her dreaming soul the idealistic footpaths which lead humanity towards the well-being of the spirit, constitutes the supreme woman, the Woman par excellence. The Mexican feminine woman is like this. It is the feminine woman that will lead Mexico to modernization, and feminine women are the great majority of indigenous women.⁷²

At the end of this argument, Gamio introduces indigenous women's privileged gift, their loyalty and transparent fidelity to the men they love. Men's control over women's sexual agency becomes political control while paralleling the transition from the virile war to the hegemonic self-reflective modern subjectivity. Gamio points out that there are two reasons, which not surprisingly reinforce his repositioning as a modern subject equal to his European- American references. First, he states that it is unfair to classify Mexico as "non cultivated" for the only fact that its civilization does not correspond to the European or the U.S. one. Secondly, he

⁷¹Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 119. La "**mujer femenina**" –denominación que Gamio sabe que encierra redundancia, pero que prefiere usar por oportuna en su poder expresivo- es la mujer **intermedia**, igualmente alejada de los dos tipos anteriores, esta es la mujer ideal, la **preferida** generalmente por que constituye el **factor primordial para producir el desarrollo armónico** y el **bienestar material e intelectual del individuo y de la especie.**" (Bold in the original version)

⁷² Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 132. She is the "ideal woman." She is usually "the favorite" and "constitutes the basic factor for producing the harmonic development, material and intellectual welfare of the individual and the species." "Cuando México sea una gran nación, lo deberá a muchas causas, pero la principal habrá de consistir en la fuerte, viril y resistente raza, que desde hoy moldea la mujer femenina mexicana." "Una mujer que con tan sabio y hondo instinto crea la familia y se constituye en esperanza de la raza, al mismo tiempo que hace florecer y ensancharse de continuo en su alma soñadora, los senderos idealistas que conducen a la humanidad hacia el bienestar del espíritu, es la mujer suprema, la Mujer por excelencia. Así es la mujer femenina mexicana."

understands that the unexpected numbers of feminine women within the Mexican population draw on the legacy that the Mexican woman has received from both the Aztec and the Spanish woman. “In effect, the contemporary Mexican woman comes from two other women: the Renaissance Spanish and the Aztec Indigenous women.”

⁷³ As it happens with colonial discourses, Gamio’s nationalist creations construct the people who live in the Mexican nation state not to be the original people. The actual *mestizos* are, for him, degenerate descendants of ancient civilizations. Within this context, the legacy of the noble Aztec woman embedded in contemporary Mexican women corresponds, for Gamio, to the indigenous part, which would be transmitted by Indian women to the new mestizo. At the same time, Gamio erases from the national brotherhood the Indian men who are excluded as reproductive subjects while recognized as “factors of production and consumption.” Aztec warriors have been defeated and subsequently silenced, and the new Mexico to be born will displace them after Gamio’s anthropological intervention. Digestion metaphors again lead Gamio to Europeans’ fears of cannibalization, and he understands that “indigenous men have degenerated due to the indigestion of culture that represented the sudden contact with the modern culture.” “What in synthesis makes our feminine woman exceptional, is her innate aptitude to connect, to harmonically and fruitfully refund together, what is antagonistic, what exclude each other, or that coexists in parallel

⁷³ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 132 “It was not heard to be speaking then to Luisas, Mercedes or Elenas, nor Sinforosas, Petronilas or Atenodoras. The name that today we call Christian was given to the woman generally taking it from nature, with which a group of those sweet brown virgins became a living égloga: “Precious jewelry,” “small bird that overcomes the flight,” “crystalline and quiet bellwether” “Run away wind,” “perfumed flower” ... were current names in those times.”

lines, but almost never does converge.”⁷⁴ For Gamio, the positive legacy of the nature of “feminine Mexican women” will introduce into the new mestiza nation those absent while necessary aspects that the actual “unbalanced Mexican community did not have.” This explains why his classification creates the bridging essence of Mexican womanhood as the necessary requirement for Mexico becoming a modern nation state. “She simultaneously lives near the Earth and the Sky, in the natural and the artificial thing, with the matter and a soul.” The conquest and the character of Spaniard domination motivated Mexico’s unfavorable *mestizaje*: economic unevenness between the social classes, heterogeneity of races that constitute the population, difference of languages and divergence or antagonism of cultural tendencies. These obstacles jeopardize for him: “national unification” and the “incarnation of a mother country.” Gamio’s classification of Mexican women gives the predominant impression that Mexican women are alike. In spite of the differences in pigmentation, cultural stage and social class that Gamio inscribes among monstrous feminists, indigenous servants, and feminine women of Aztec and Spanish heritage, they all share a common trait. They embody the implicit desire of sexual contact with white men in order to create the modern national subject. In an account that ultimately minimizes if not effaces race difference between Mexican women, Gamio portrays women’s sexuality as characterized by an active desire, which non-paradoxically transforms them into sexual objects of the modern male subject.

⁷⁴ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 133.

Figure 2: Mestizaje



Source: http://www.almeriware.net/almediam/opinion/opinion_010.htm, Victor Cordoba Herrero, "Algo mas que palabras, aceptando al otro." The author of the article does not make any reference to the author of the painting, that's why it does not appear in this figure.

This is the effect of the construction of a female sexual agency that is fixed, entirely predictable, and already understood. Most crucially, this construction, because it admits women as sexuality and nothing more, leaves no room for a woman to retain her membership among her own racial/ethnic group of the community. In

terms of the community formation of the Revolution's new Mexico, which is based on the mestizo subjectivity, the admittance that Gamio gives to the Indian, mestiza or white woman is solely based on sex. At the same time, sexual agency of the Mexican woman signifies her inevitable expulsion from the new mestizo community. Taking into account Gamio's struggle for modern acceptance, which is premised on the universalizing pre-modern/modern narrative, Gamio's classification of the women is marked by their non-differentiation of the paradoxical quality of universality.

C. Inscribing the New *Mestiza Patria* through Science

[C]apital absorbs labor into itself, as though its body were by love possessed.
Karl Marx, *The Grundrisse*, p. 704

Introduction

Lomnitz's book, *Deep Mexico Silent Mexico*, is an influential work on Mexican nationalism. The author is a brilliant Latin American scholar working in the U.S. academy.¹ In his book's first article, "Nationalism as a Practical System: Benedict Anderson's Theory of Nationalism from the Vantage Point of Spanish America," Lomnitz criticizes Anderson's central thesis.² Contesting Anderson's analysis on Latin American nationalism, which according to the latter author anteceded European nationalism, Lomnitz develops an alternative perspective. He points out that Anderson's definition of nation and nationalism does "not always correspond to historical usage." He argues that Anderson's "emphasis on horizontal *comradely* covers only certain aspects of nationalism (cursive are mine)" which ignores "the fact that nationalism always involves articulating discourses of *fraternity* with hierarchical relationships, a fact that allows for the formulation of different kinds of national imaginaries (cursive are mine)." In addition, for Lomnitz, "*sacrifice* appears as a consequence of the national communitarian imagining, when it is most

¹ Claudio Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico: an anthropology of nationalism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001)

² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983)

often the result of the subject's position in a web of relationships, some of which are characterized by coercion, while others have a moral appeal that is not directly that of nationalism (cursive are mine)."³

Lomnitz's main argument draws on a historical perspective, which, according to him, provides evidence that nationalism lays on the production and deployment of transnational politics. He shows how in Spain the construction of the nation began with the appropriation of the church. He adds that under the Iberian empire, "race," indicated that a person's ancestors were Old Christians. "Race" signaled a "historical tie to the faith, a sign that gave to its owners control over the bureaucratic apparatus of both church and state." At the same time, Lomnitz argues that since the sixteenth century Spaniard administration constructed a people tied to an American territory that were committed to both colonial expansion and the defense of the Empire against other European powers. Most significantly, Lomnitz points out that "Anderson's ideas concerning the necessity of cultural relativism as a precondition for nationalism are incorrect," and subsequently, he states that Anderson's "theoretical emphasis on the centrality of language over race in nationalism can also be questioned." More specifically in the case of Spain, "racial identity" is used in the sense of "bloodline," Lomnitz adds, and it "was coupled with linguistic identity for the formation of an opposition between "Spaniards" and "Indians."⁴ The author develops both historical and theoretically frameworks for understanding Mexican nationalism and national

³ Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 11.

⁴ Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 33.

identity “as a process that began with colonization.”⁵ After examining the cultural geography of Mexican national space, Lomnitz concludes his argument saying that “centrality” and “marginality” are the metaphors allowing the articulation of distinct fractions of communities across the national space.

Examining the Mexican Revolution’s re-articulation of nationality, Lomnitz points out that this national project reevaluated previous racial politics of the country and that the “mestizo” became “quintessentially national” while displacing “the racist ideas of social Darwinism.” In addition to this claim, Lomnitz believes that “these two ruptures were complementary and went hand in hand.”⁶ He immediately introduces Manuel Gamio’s *indigenismo* within this argument, and he says that:

The most important figure in the battle against pseudoscientific racism was Manuel Gamio, who is frequently considered the “father” of Mexican anthropology because of his role in the construction of Revolutionary nationalism. Gamio relied on the authority of his teacher, Franz Boas, in claiming both the equality of all races and the validity of all cultures. Based on this, Gamio developed an *indigenismo* that dignified Mexican Indian features and blood, thereby paving the way for the mestizo to emerge as the protagonist of national history.⁷

Lomnitz identifies the sexual politics of the ideologists of Mexican nationalism (that for him were Luis Cabrera, Andrés Molina Enríquez, and Manuel Gamio) and points out that the *mestizo* would be “the product of a Spanish father and an indigenous mother.” For him, “this very particular formula had a two fold importance.” In the first place, he argues, “it made the Spanish Conquest the origin of

⁵Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. xx.

⁶Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 52.

⁷Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 52-53.

the national race and culture,” and secondly, the European father and the Indian mother “fit well with the formulation of a nationalism that was at once modernizing and protectionist.”⁸ Why does Lomnitz as well as the contemporaneous and contemporary international academy of anthropologists celebrate Gamio? And why is it that I understand that Gamio’s *indigenista* work is the quintessential expression of Eurocentric and patriarchal power?

I argue that Gamio’s narrative of phallic regeneracy is assured by the control of Indian women, and the idea of the maternal is fissured by race in order to give birth to a new balanced *mestizaje*. If Lomnitz ignores female while emphasizing male sacrifice, Gamio seems to suggest that the modern Mexico can be redeemed through the self-sacrifice of Indian women. This anthropological narrative appears in Gamio’s ethnographic mapping of Mexico where the eye of the camera represents Indian women as absent, Indian men as feminized, Indian families as in decadency and the armed forces of the information nation state in total control of Indianness.

In this chapter, I provide evidence of the productivity of a gendered epistemology that can be useful to de-colonize knowledge and propose alternative ways for understanding and constructing a counter globalization movement in the Americas. I begin my argument citing the text from the invitation for the World Sociology Congress that took place in Montreal in July and August of 1998 which states that Euro centrism and colonialism are like onions with multiple skins. In different historical moments of Latin American critical social thought some of these

⁸Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 53.

skins were uncovered. With time, it has always been possible to recognize new veils that hide that were not identified by previous critiques. At present, neo-liberalism attempts to become the common logic of contemporary societies, however, the expansion of communications that globalization promotes also opens up spaces for learning how to formulate theoretical and political alternatives to liberal modernization.

In my opinion, scientific thought's most efficient achievement has been the naturalization of social relations; a notion promoting liberal modernization as the spontaneous and natural expression of the historical development of societies. Modern thought's capacity for presenting its narrative as the most advanced and normal form of human experience is deeply related to the history of anthropology. My examination of the racial politics of the Revolution draws on articulating Gamio's masculinist perspective for making the *mestiza* nation within the liberal modernization emphasis of production, a perspective that erases "reproduction." This starting point produces a generative space for understanding how science works for naturalizing liberal modernization social relationships by science's inscription of Mexico's Indianness. I also examine Gamio's capacity for making successive separations of the "real" Mexican world, a strategy that allows him to construct his anthropological dominion in opposition to the Indian experience of the world, while in the last part of the chapter I examine the way through which Mexican *indigenismo* articulates the organization of power. The conjunction of these three dimensions show how anthropology's solid scientific order on cultures and races naturalizes the

reproduction of modern epistemological and political powers by emphasizing modern production and erasing women's reproductive power.

Revolutionary politics of racialization?

It must be considered the convenience of *mestizaje* to Mexico, not only from the ethnic point of view, but mainly to be able to establish a type of culture higher than the unsatisfactory one that at present most of the population displays. Although *mestizaje* can be obtained using education and other means, this task will be completed sooner if *mestizaje* is intensified. *Mestizaje* will automatically bring an effective cultural progress, as the result of the elimination or substitution of Indians' delayed cultural characteristics.

Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 25.

Modernity and scientific/cosmic vision go together. In Gamio's case, this starting point is reinforced by his scientific expertise in the domain of anthropology, which was defined as "the science of man." This epistemological power positions him (meaning the anthropologist who is the scientific explorer) at the center of the foundational knowledge done by and about the nuevo México to be born. However, one of the problems with this cognitive strategy is the contact among different ways of living. The scientific discipline of anthropology solves this paradox. It projects the universality that it produces and that it imports from a unique patriarchal god. Gamio explores, through the biological and cultural paradigms, particular and non-modern societies, and through this political and cognitive strategy, he represents himself as "omniscient" and "omnipresent."

In order to understand the natural laws determining the history of Mexico, which were responsible for the country's recursive modernizing failures, at the beginning of the twentieth century, anthropologists investigated, compared and contrasted the peoples inhabiting the various regions of national territory. Invested by

the power of science, Gamio was a main figure for the construction of the foundational myth of the new *mestiza* nation. However, in spite of his intentions and although he draws his project on an anti-racism framework, Gamio introduced a kind of racist ontology in apparent contradiction with his explicit antiracist commitment and his support for the new *mestiza* Revolution, which is usually understood in its cultural dimensions. Did *mestizaje* represent a new racism? Was *mestizaje* a biological or a cultural strategy of the Revolution's nationalism?

Gamio, who believed that modern mental attributes would be the effect of adapting Europeans' bodies' to Mexican natural environment and material conditions, used the concept of "*mestizo*" in order to connect these three aspects (minds, bodies and natural environment), which according to him, were crucial for Mexicans achieving modernity. Which were and are the political implications of forging a Revolutionary *mestizo* nation, a race-based politics of nation making? Anthropologists' original concept of "race" was an epistemological strategy attempting to establish an order of knowledge capable of capturing the ontological universality of man. In order to achieve this goal, western intellectuals invented the concept of "biological race," which operated by connecting bodies to modern consciousness. Gamio's evolutionism organized the rationality of *indigenismo*. According to him, Mexican diversity was the result of the progressive and slow action of the environment, which performed specifically according to the human body at issue. He stated that Mexican Indian bodies were perfectly adapted to the country's natural geography while European immigrants' bodies requiring a transitional period in order to adapt to the new environment.

But the modernizing project of the Mexican post Revolution drew on the transformation of the population. During the first decades of the twentieth century, Mexican, as well as many other Latin American countries national viability was one of the greatest political anxieties. In 1929 Gamio travels to Japan to the Third Conference of Pacific Affairs in Kyoto. This country attracts Gamio who sees in Japan the evidence of the success of a non-European state's intense modernization. "Seventy years ago, Japanese civilization" was very distant from its actual modernization. "Mexico, on the contrary, since colonial times was the first American country in terms of civilization." For Gamio, a miracle takes place when a sociologist's eyes "observes the marvelous development that Japan experienced." His western reason leaves space for a fantastic experience. "It is an event that can be qualified as exceptional and even unique."⁹ For Gamio, the more significant factors that produced "Japan's accelerated and magnificent progress" were the racial and cultural internal cohesion of its society, which would structure its political and national borders with homogeneity and social unity.¹⁰

In Mexico, Gamio argues, "nature" signaled the "logical method" that would homogenize "our population." If it was not possible to change the environment, and if it was not possible to follow the extermination model that led to the U.S. modernizing

⁹Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 212.

¹⁰ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 217 "La Evolución social en México y el Japón." "Después de veinte siglos de acomodamientos y fusiones étnico-culturales, y de incesantes revoluciones intestinas, el pueblo japonés era, cuando se incorporó a la civilización occidental (1863), una enorme y compacta estructura social cuyos componentes estaban identificados y unidos entre sí por comunes lazos étnicos, sociales, culturales, lingüísticos, económicos, etc., y presentaban las mismas aspiraciones, tendencias y necesidades. En resumen, las actividades convergentes y disciplinadas de esos armónicos elementos sociales, habían constituido ya una nacionalidad fuerte y perfectamente definida, una patria grande y poderosa."

success, Gamio's reason inscribes the nuevo México through women's bodies by increasing European men-Indian woman *mestizaje*. However, he believes that a natural process would change too slowly the traits specific to Indians. The nation's actual un-balanced *mestizaje* would certainly continue if inter "race" marriages did not occur. Here Gamio reproduces modern men's beliefs which inscribe that only those individuals belonging to the same or closely related races produce prolific offspring. Gamio felt that "miscegenation" meant that interbreeding among individuals of distant races would produce degenerate offspring physically and mentally inferior to both parents' "races." To control women's sexual agency was indispensable to give birth to the new *mestizo*, as Gamio's classification of Mexican women stipulated. In the past, uncontrolled *mestizaje* gave birth to the actual unbalanced *mestizaje*, but in the future a new *mestizaje* will give birth to a nuevo México.

Gamio dedicated his life "to effectuate *mestizaje* or blend between whites and Indians," on the one side, and on the other side, "to harmonically fuse with western civilization, those characteristics of the degenerate Indian culture." For Gamio *mestizaje* is the privileged strategy for producing the new Revolutionary nation. However, the Mexican Revolution fueled Gamio's anxieties on Mexican Indians' capacity for resisting and reversing modernity. This specter haunted him and led him to state that in Mexico it was impossible to act like Japan, and "to spontaneously wait

for the population's homogenization." He proposes that "precipitating *mestizaje*" was the best manner for unifying Mexican population.¹¹

Mexican Indians' adaptation to the environment of the national territory was understood as profoundly influencing the destiny of the country. The degree of "Indianness" became the privileged concept to be used in the classification of the various human groups inhabiting Mexico. This anthropological construct displaced the focus on physical traits, and introduced a cultural terminology, which drawing on the authority of science, enabled political interventions explicitly implemented for disappearing the Indian "race," while representing it as redeeming generous acts of *indigenistas*. Gamio re-configured initial modern anthropology's connection of the brain by intervening into "sexual selection" what would otherwise be the result of Darwinist "natural selection." "Fecundity," and "miscegenation" informed the scientific welfare politics which would be necessary to create the new *mestizo*. These *mestizos* would form a new nation embodying both the organic and cultural structures of Aztecs and Europeans who would better adapt to the Mexican environment.

Gamio introduced an evolutionary perspective through the concept of "culture." European beings, like him, were the modern and universal references in relation to which he qualitatively and quantitatively measured Indian cultures. The anthropologist pretended to demystify racialized representations of the Indians that he associated with biological racism. The introduction of a historical scale of cultures in order to compare Mexican populations erases race from Gamio's anthropological re-

¹¹ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, p. 220.

codification while making invisible its incorporation within the new paradigm. In order to hierarchically organize specific human manifestations within a universal framework, which places Europeanness as the reference of humankind's progress, he related Indians' physical traits to culture, which now embodies time and language within its hierarchical and scientific classifications of human civilizations. This antiracist turn enacted one of the tramps that led progressive governments and anthropologists' racial politics to reproduce racial social hierarchies in order to produce modernization. After this cognitive shift, racializing belonged to the dominion of feelings or ethics. In addition, those who accepted it as a political category intervene only to evaluate the accuracy of its use, a strategy that ultimately reinforces the use of racializing frameworks.

To identify how the relation between the rationality of his science and his depiction of Indian's irrationality informs his fictional *indigenismo* it is worth to understand the significance of Gamio's crystallization of *mestizaje*. Gamio laid out his "scientific" organizational principles when Indians' participation in the Revolution threatened Mexican modern men. Gamio's scientific authority for inscribing the new nation was homologous to Mexican Indian men's participation in the Revolution. But Mexican women's power to reproduce (or not) the new "mestizo required controlling female sexual agency."¹² This danger for the Mexican modern project coincides precisely with the moment in which the fictional aspect of Gamio's anthropology enters in the social imagination of the nation, and post Revolution

¹² I project Carole Pateman's interpretation of patriarchy, epistemology, and political power to Gamio's re-racializing indigenismo. Carole Pateman, *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*. (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1989).

indigenista consciousness becomes a crucial part of the state politics of nation making. Gamio informs the Revolution's welfare politics on Indian populations in order to promote the creation of the new *mestizos* who represent modern Mexican men's hope for disrupting the cyclical repetitions of Revolutionary processes. Through cultural *mestizaje* (and women's bodies) the nation would cannibalize Mexican Indianness. In this way, fraternity (to say it in Lomnitz's words) would maintain modern European supremacy.¹³

Gamio's science sought to reverse the current process that he understood as "unbalanced *mestizaje*." For him, communication through language, instead of inheritance through blood, transmitted cultural traits.¹⁴ The evolutionary approach still remained there, although race had strategically been erased and smuggled into his evolutionary conception of cultures. Now race was erased from direct discourses and cultural stages were inherited through language, familiar, kinship, and national ties.¹⁵ According to Gamio's anthropological criteria, Spanish roots could easily be erased due to the environment's geographical threats that the Mexican territory imposed on the new waves of European immigrants.

Gamio's applied anthropology positions himself as a scientific modern man within the legitimating international arena, a strategy contesting the instability of Mexico. The greater his insistence in the presence of Mexico's Indianness jeopardizing modernization, the greater the difficulty that this intellectual Mexican

¹³ See Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*.

¹⁴ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*.

¹⁵ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*.

man confronts in order to make a great modern nation, and the greater the sacrifice of his “endless struggle for the redemption of the Indians.”¹⁶ For Gamio and other Post Revolutionary men, the conceptualization of the new nation is inseparable from their awareness of the tensions stemming from their Mexican identification. As an anthropologist, as a state organic intellectual, and as a man Gamio and other *indigenistas* always talk to hegemonic modernity as Mexican men looking for European modern men’s recognition.

Gamio’s fictional science empowered post Revolution politics of nation making by overlapping Europe and the concept of civilization, and civilization and science, while positioning himself as the father creator of scientific anthropology. Modern science and control of nature have always been intimately connected. Nation states drew on production and consumption, and equal citizens were the key pieces in legitimating the fiction of equal exchange. In Gamio’s time it was understood that while natural sciences searched to dominate nature, social sciences searched to control social change. Anthropology’s relationships to both natural and social sciences made it a privileged discipline. Its self-reflective method legitimated the co-constitution of territorial and epistemological explorations. The scientific authority of the anthropologist identifies the researcher as well as his other. By informing governmental politics, Gamio’s applied anthropology encapsulated the highest stage of human development. Anthropologists would make intelligible the incomprehensible, incompressible Latin American *mestizaje*. Classifying and

¹⁶ Gonzalez Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, an Endless Struggle*, p. 15.

ordering women becomes an epistemological strategy for promoting modern production that required the political control of women's power of reproduction.

Identifying himself as a Mexican white man of Spanish descendant, he believed that the colonizers' original miscegenation had forged unviable nations. Post-colonial Mexico had been marked by an unbalanced mestizaje that made it impossible for modern men (like him) to modernize the country. Gamio re-articulated anthropological constructions of "racial types," which associated the biological brain traits to mental functions with a social class framework, and stated that Mexican "middle class is the source of intellectual activities, of proper leader brains."¹⁷ At the same time, in order to be acknowledged as modern, Gamio needed European and European American equals' recognition. Like other Mexican men who immigrated into the country, he shares Spanish colonial culture. He has the paradoxical need of being recognized by the modern European brotherhood in order to be admitted by the civilized world with which he totally identified as a white middle class Mexican man.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when productive capital was hegemonic, the un-intended effect of liberal reforms led to the Indians' rural Revolution and to the *mestizo* enriched segment of Mexican society against Porfirio Díaz's regime. After the long years of the Revolution, the great depression of the thirties, and the effects of the U.S. interventions in the country in order to minimize the land reform, the oil nationalization and workers organizing, the growth of the economy decreased. The Mexican economy did not offer many opportunities for men

¹⁷Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 28.

like Gamio. After his failed experience as a *hacendado* in his father's lands, he became a public intellectual and lived as an *indigenista* bureaucrat. This survival strategy embeds a circular reinforcement of the Revolution's apparatus that Gamio's scripture potentialized.¹⁸

Strong international competition stressed postcolonial states at the beginning of the twentieth century. National markets defined the viability of nation states while Mexico's Indian insurgency against the effects of Porfirian modernization made difficult modern Mexico's emergence. Gamio's personal resources as well as his modern identification depended on Mexico's success in modernizing itself. An international federation of nation states would constitute the "ultra-modern" stage of humanity that Gamio foresees for mankind. But at the same time, Gamio formulates this pragmatic question: "How could Mexico and many other countries of Indo-Ibera America be part of such a federation if they do not yet constitute real nationalities?"¹⁹ These words appeared in Gamio's book, *Forjando Patria*, in 1916 as well as in his 1935 new book *Hacia un Mexico Nuevo*, which insists on making the new Mexican patria as a tool for entering within the international federation of ultra-modern states.²⁰ He firmly believed that the country would never be admitted within the international community unless Mexican indigenous populations would blend into the Mexican Europeans and construct a new *mestiza* nation built on the social, racial, cultural and linguistic integration of Mexico.

¹⁸ I borrow these words from Miller's text, *At the Shade of the State*.

¹⁹ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 4.

²⁰ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 5.

Gamio projected his evolutionary narrative of cultures to the international space where nation states also competed within an increasingly market oriented world. Following Darwinist patterns, he believed in a chain linking nation states' modernizing success to national elite men's successes. Gamio re-codified Darwinism by creating an evolutionary narrative on world nation state cultures.²¹ However, his conception of culture is very peculiar: Women vitalize the new mestiza nation by integrating the spiritual and the material aspects of different ways of living. Gamio understood the world's advance toward universality as the last and greatest stage of manhood. He explicitly draws on women's reproductive power for achieving this end. However, while his narrative represents himself as the abnegated sacrificial anthropologist he was really sacrificing Mexican women, a well-known and repeated pattern for setting the social order after the consolidation of the foundational myth of the defeat of the Amazons. At the same time, in order to prepare Mexico for the world that he foresees "without borders," the Revolution needed to homogenize the multiple cultures of the country. These assumptions led Gamio to embed a nationalist discourse relating the state's demographics to eugenics.²²

²¹ Lourdes Martínez-Echazabal in "Mestizaje and the Discourse of National/cultural Identity in Latin America," 1845-1859, in *Latin American Perspectives*, (Vol. 25, No 3, Mayo 1988), pp. 21-42. "Instrumental in forging mulatto fictions—that is, an array of works, both fictional and non fictional, epistemological grounded in the various scientific theories of race prevalent from the 1840's to the 1910s—where a group of literati, social scientists, and politicians who, under the influence of Spencer positivism, polygenism, evolutionary theory, philosophical liberalism, and eugenics reflected on interracial mixing while strengthening the controversial position of the mestizo and the mulatto in Latin American consciousness. Their writings crystallized the configuration of contemporary racism in Latin America," p. 24.

²² Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, pp. 4-19.

Gamio privileged the study of national territory and population. His anthropological approach would provide the government with an explanation of the mechanisms by which any individual could inherit her/his parent's learned traits.²³ Thus, Mexican pre-modern/modern evolution could be consciously aided. His applied anthropology aimed to transform that which he defined as the "abnormal" population of those Latin American countries that did not increase their numbers in the same proportion as Argentina, Canada or North America. He understands that "bio-geographic" factors influence national demographics, and that "latitude" determines the biological development of countries like Argentina or the U.S. whose climate "is analogous" to the European one.²⁴

To his modern speculations on the incidence of climate on populations, he adds other challenges for the national unity. He believes that obstacles imposed by the geographical territory would make still more difficult the centralization of modern Mexico. He comments on the limitations of the agricultural and cattle production, which according to him attracted the European population to southern Latin American regions. Gamio's insistence for controlling Indians and *mestizos'* bodies by changing their nutritional habits coincides with his dehumanizing metaphorical language often naming them as "vegetables." He was known as an obsessed anthropologist promoting the consumption of "soybeans'," at the same time highly interested in measuring the "organic economy" of indigenous and mestizo workers.

²³ In 1935 Gamio refers to the recently founded "Consejo de Educación Superior e Investigación Científica" for supplying the government with the correct information on the country population.

²⁴ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 12

He proposed to use the “method of blood groups” in order to study what he called “the mystery of the organic economy” of the Indians. According to him, the Indians had greater capacity for working with reduced nutrition in comparison to the higher demands of food of the Europeans and their scarcer efficiency for physical labor. He believed “that it was of great significance to investigate if basal metabolism definitively provides differentiated racial characteristics.”²⁵ Nonetheless, all his arguments about the increase in the national population were subordinated to his preoccupation for solving the “medicine and hygiene” problems that would transform Mexico into “the ideal land of promises for the immigrant masses.”²⁶

He stated that the positive traits of Indians, old *mestizos*, and modern Europeans could be blended into the new *mestizo* through women’s bodies, and “automatically” pass cultural improvement to the new generations. Thus a functional *mestizaje* would create the new Mexico. Here Gamio draws on subtexts inherent in “civilization.” Like his contemporaries, Gamio believed that European modern intelligence was the highest, final evolutionary stage of the “advancement of civilization.” His conception of culture inscribes a tautological order that posits cultural egalitarianism as unscientific, and “scientific culture” as the reference of “modern civilization.” Gamio codifies the concept of “racial type” that modern anthropology invented in order to classify the intellectual characteristics of “our population.” The organizational principle of his hierarchical classification substitutes

²⁵ Gamio, “Evolución demográfica de los pueblos indo-ibéros,” pp. 9-27 in Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 16. See also Lucio Mendieta Núñez, *Valor Económico y Social de las Razas Indígenas de México*, (México: DAPP, 1938).

²⁶ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 13.

the term “race” for “culture.” In my opinion, this strategy of erasing “race” and incorporating it to a historical perspective of cultures led to the uncritical male anthropologists’ readings of his epistemology, which a feminist perspective uncovers.

He classifies Mexican “intellectual features.” His language avoids the use of biological term “brain” while relating the specificity of the rural and urban spaces to those mental features that according to him differentiates modern men from beings who belong to the zoological and vegetable scale. By erasing the term “race” from his science, Gamio increases the power of his inscriptions while accomplishing the political end of hierarchically racializing human beings, a crucial step in order to legitimate the “pre political” violence hidden behind the civil society strategy. He claims that “scientific or modern cultures, which correspond to the majority of the urban population” constitute a first type of “intellectual features.” “Popular, folkloric or archaic cultures that are referential of rural and indigenous populations and of a minority of the urban peoples” constitute the second group.²⁷ What are rural Indians and *mestizos*? Within Gamio’s classification they do not embody the proper intellectual features that would identify human beings. Articulating Gamio’s classification of “our Mexican women” to this second classification on “the intellectual features of our population” provides evidence of how Gamio draws on the concept of “racial type” for setting the basis of Mexican scientific anthropology and of *indigenistas*’ politics of national (and Latin American) *mestizaje* as well.

²⁷ Gamio, “Las etapas evolutivas de la cultura humana en México,” in *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 40.

For Gamio “the forced racial contact, far from being eugenic, produced a mestizaje which slowly emerged with defects.” This abnormal, original *mestizaje*, Gamio argues, would explain, “Why in Guatemala, Peru, Mexico and other countries the indigenous race is still there in a proportion that oscillates between the 40% and 70%.” And most importantly, this Indian group has generated “a passive resistance” to adopt the western civilization.²⁸ Gamio fixes his attention on what he wished to transform, while he seemed much less attentive to Indians’ living conditions than to asserting the scientific justification of his right to intervene in the present in order to avoid the reproduction of the past.

The Scientific Father of Indigenistas’ Patria

In 1935, *indigenismo* was a state intervention that it was believed would lead to the improvement of the living conditions of the Indians. The final objective was to make Mexico attractive to “the masses of immigrants” that according to Gamio will transform the old *mestizaje* into a new one compatible with the modernizing goals of the Revolution. Gamio identified himself as a Mexican scientific and modern man. By their scientific diagnosis of the Indians, *indigenistas* would transform “popular or folkloric or outdated cultures,” which “differentiate rural and indigenous cultures from the urban minority” onto a stage that would facilitate the emergence of *mestizo* Mexicans. Deeply ambivalent about Indian’s virtues, for him it was necessary and

²⁸ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México* p. 28.

possible to cultivate through a scientific education what he argued were the primitive forces of the ethnic groups. Europeans' weakness derived from their emigration. Their displacement from their original territories and introduction into the Mexican environment needed a re-vitalizing force in order to balance the forces of disintegration promoted by the new circumstances. But more important for the information modern nation state was the argument that Indians and old *mestizos* were degenerated populations who were figured as a malady and contagion for the national body politic that could be countered by miscegenation.

The definition of who was Indian and who was *mestizo* was a concern of the anthropologist and of the country. For Gamio, the linguistic census was not the proper tool inasmuch as it did not illustrate the proportion of Indian culture within the *mestizo* group or the individual. Indeed Gamio began to look for ways to neutralize Indianness, while simultaneously revitalize Mexico. The civilizing power of superior races would remake Indians and Mestizos, and nuevos Mexicanos would have the vitality to shape both the domestic and international tasks for becoming modern. Gamio's *mestizaje* solved the social conflicts that initiated the Mexican Revolution by blending the racial and ethnic differences. Under these discursive circumstances, scientific knowledge constitutes an indispensable political instrument for the making of the new country and neutralizing the social movement stemming from the unaccomplished promises of modernization.

Indeed Manuel Gamio never really wanted a nuevo México to be born. The new Mexico was to have some old and some new characteristics. The makeup of this change is just what was at stake. As a respected anthropologist linked to the national

administration, he had every reason to uphold the institutionalization of the Revolution. He wanted to stop Mexico's state of war. But his objective also was to control the reproduction of Mexican Indians. Modern Mexico would eliminate Indianness through their assimilation. In addition, he believed that Indians' insurgency was always latent as a result of the nation's modernizing attack on their "traditional" communities. On the other hand, he wanted Mexico to be a homogenous nation as the pre-condition for becoming a powerful state.

The transformation of the rebellion of the heterogeneous and amorphous countryside into patriotism, was one of the ways the Revolutionary leaders addressed the institutionalization of the social movement that placed them in office. The political instability of Mexico was represented as a result of its ethnic heterogeneity and of the degeneration stemming from the sudden contact with modernity. Revolutionary *indigenismo* would "cure" Mexico's degeneration.²⁹

"When a large and rich in natural resources country, as is Mexico, is inhabited by a population very out of proportion reduced, and this population does not increase numerically, in an appreciable and continuous way, but sometimes stays stationary, and even diminishes, this country is socially sick."³⁰ Gamio's social and sexual alchemy followed an almost biomechanical model. For him, population growth

²⁹ To expand a view on the use of the disease as metaphor, see Susan Sontag, *Illness as Metaphor*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1977). I am aware of the scholar possibilities that Gamio's anthropology offers on this regard. However, I do not enter (now) into this aspect of his work.

³⁰ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, p. 21 "Cuando un país extenso y rico en recursos naturales, como es México, está habitado por una población desproporcionadamente reducida, y esta población no aumenta numéricamente, de modo apreciable y continuo, sino que en ocasiones permanece estacionaria, y aun disminuye, este país esta socialmente enfermo."

implied national health, and national health was indispensable for competing within the ultra-modern emergent world. Indian peoples impeded the growth of the national population thus their assimilation was a pre-condition for Mexico's modernization.

Civilization was seen as the great states' unquestioned attribute, and Europe and the United States were the example to follow and the threat to fear.³¹ Post-colonial Mexican identifications oscillate within a U.S.-European-Indo-America triangle. Gamio interpreted the scarce growth of national population as a sickness that was originated by indigenous and *mestizo* peoples' incompatibility for reproducing the body of the nation vis-a-vis Mexicans of European descent. Scientific and state bureaucracy would intervene through welfare politics for creating the social conditions that would enable a healthy growth. The future seemed bleak unless a way could be found to reverse the destructive trends of history. Building a new and powerful enough country to withstand the disintegrating domestic tendencies, as well as the threat that the modern global world represented for un-prepared national states was organic intellectuals' sacrificial foundational act.

The construction of a great modern Mexico was understood as a vital objective. Nation states expanded as the consequences of civilization, and the viability of Mexico was challenged by the presence of a great and menacing state at the northern frontiers. A great Mexican state was a matter of survival, at the domestic and at the international level. Indeed, that was precisely the point. Gamio was worried

³¹ See Milton Gordon, *Assimilation in American life: the role of race, religion, and national origins*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 80, for the study of intermarriage and ethnicity within the U.S. context. This author states that intermarriage is the ultimate form of assimilation, the step by which a minority group finally loses its distinct ethnic identity and is obliterated in a mass of homogeneous and dominant Anglo-American culture.

about the viability of the nation state at the domestic level. The rural forces that menaced Mexico during the unstable and uncontrolled years of the Revolution were the first threat to eliminate, while at the international level, the expansionist presence of the United States complicated the landscape. If cultural characteristics of Indians were the basis of Mexico's actual problems, ethnicity is the center of the debate. As a social scientist he sees ethnicity as culture, while meaning "racial type" when he writes "culture." Gamio sees intermarriage in the context of acculturation, while joining in the widespread miscegenation and civilization discourse to remake Mexico.³²

Mexican and Inter-American *Indigenismo* became the leading institutions for Indians' assimilation through acculturation and mestizaje. *Indigenismo* was a one-way process of giving up Indian culture through Indian women's bodies. At this point, the welfare nature of the post Revolution state includes racial and gender politics that seek to modernize the country while attempting to avoid the repetition of Porfirio Diaz's menacing experience. The Indian population was not erased, while it was culturally and biologically incorporated to the Mexican citizen, who in Vasconcelos' words "was sort of colored."

³² Gamio, *Algunas consideraciones sobre la salubridad y la demografía en México*. Contribución de la Secretaría de gobernación ala Conferencia inter-americana de higiene rural. (México, D.A.P.P., 1939). Paul R. Spickard in *Mixed Blood, Intermarriage and Ethnic Identity in Twentieth Century America*. Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), p. 5 mentions two viewpoints regarding the issue by the turn of the twentieth century in the United States, just the time when Gamio was studying in the Columbia University. One, "drawing on the Anglo-Saxon racialism that flourished in the latter nineteenth century, said either "Americanize" non-Anglos –force them to give up distinctive cultural traits, or remove them. The other, called for continued social and marital mixing, to make America a vast, homogeneous melting pot."

Science became the miraculous word for giving birth to post Revolutionary Mexico. The new leaders continued the Porfirian modernization project, however the Revolution masked this continuity. Post Revolutionary leaders were looking for stopping Mexico's sources of social mobilization provoked by the country's industrialization while re-enforcing the national state within the competitive conditions of the time.

The aborted nations of the Indians that for Gamio caused post-colonial Mexico's failure needed to be named and organized in order to classify and transform them into modern mestizos. Indeed, Gamio's science performed as confinement of the reproduction of Indianness, as part of the state's task of organizing the rebellious Mexico that Porfirio Díaz's administration could not exclude and that post Revolution will now incorporate.

Indianness embodied a haunting ghost in the reappearance of the force of the Revolution, and scientific classification was a crucial instrument of this pre-political seclusion previous to the Revolutionary new social contract.³³ In the article "La investigación de los grupos indígenas mexicanos,"³⁴ Gamio subdivides all these anthropological items in identical classificatory lines. He diligently enumerates 50

³³ Gamio, [Mexico. Dirección de Antropología](#). *Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*. México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919).

³⁴ Gamio, "La investigación de los grupos indígenas mexicanos," in *Hacia un México Nuevo*, pp.144-145. The research leading to Indians' knowledge was shaped according to the following pattern: "Denomination or name of the group; general geographic distribution; 1910 and 1930 official census; language and linguistic group; Ethnic biological characteristics; cultural characteristics."

groups.³⁵ Once Gamio named the Indians, the Indians could be assimilated. Women are erased from the ethnographic mapping. Gamio constructs a single while fragmented view of Mexican Indianness, and his photographic presentation directly involves the reader in actively participating in the labor of identification of the map. Above all, his strategy organizes the viewer's perspective and denies the Indians any choice for alternative representations.

Modern Mexican history seems to arise from the absent women of Indian men represented as male individuals of multiple communities who appear without any control of their social reproduction, a feminized and infantilized narrative which naturalizes uneven relations of power while promoting the erasure of the invisible eye of the anthropologist behind the camera.³⁶

³⁵ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo* pp. 146-158. Gamio produced many broad landscapes on the many indigenous groups living in Mexico. These patterned ethnological descriptions always return to the same unitary principle of the anthropological discourse on indigenous populations, see Gamio, in *Hacia un México Nuevo*, pp. 103-111, "Los varios mercados mexicanos." "Mercados y consumidores, el mercado urbano, el mercado primitivo, los mercados intermedios."

³⁶ Gamio, [Mexico. Dirección de antropología](#). La población del valle de Teotihuacán; representativa de las que habitan las regiones rurales del distrito federal y de los estados de Hidalgo, Puebla, México y Tlaxcala. (México: Dirección de talleres gráficos, 1922) Series [Poblaciones regionales de la República mexicana](#) .

Figure 3: Fragmented Indian Patrias: Indígena Huasteco



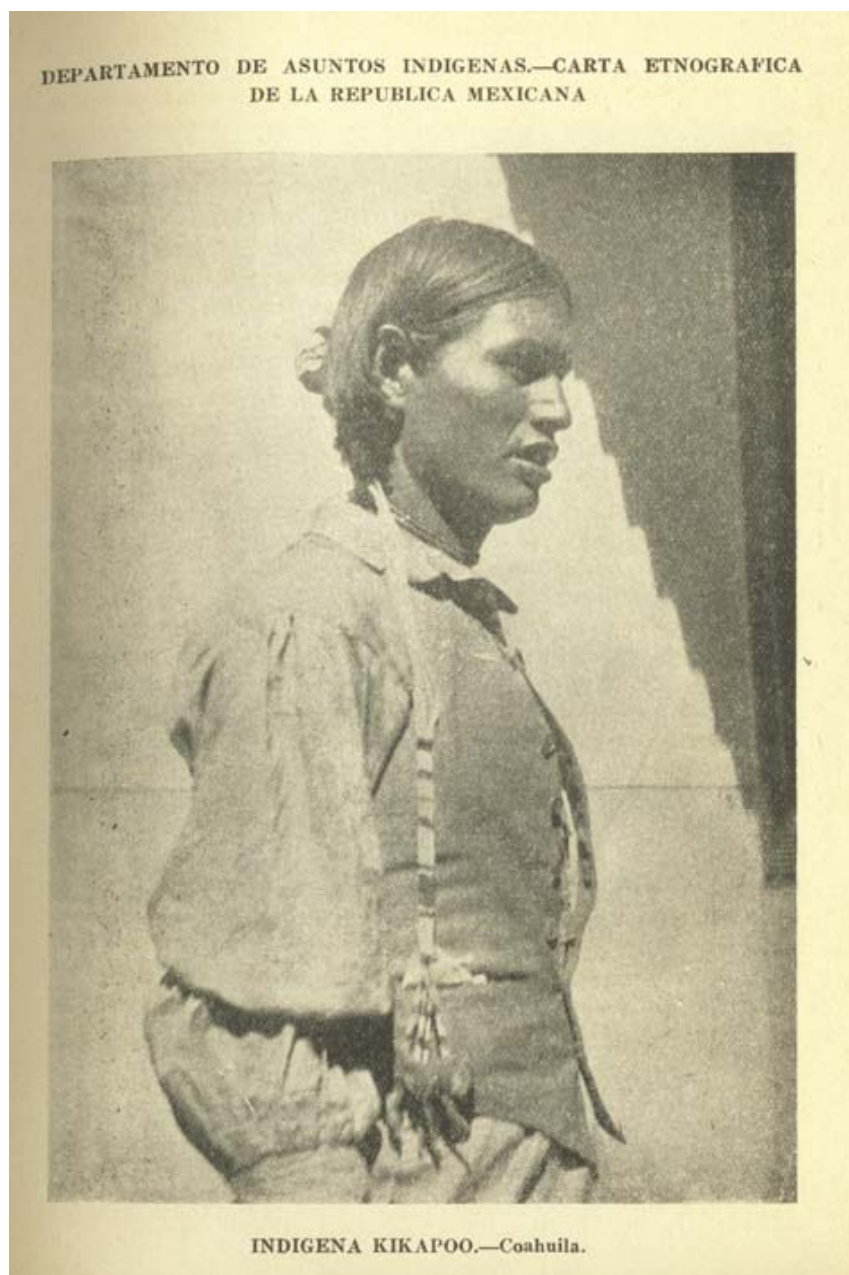
Source: Manuel Gamio, "El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. X.

Figure 4: Fragmented Indian Patrias: Indígenas Huicholes



Source: Manuel Gamio, “El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XI.

Figure 5: Indígena Kikapoo



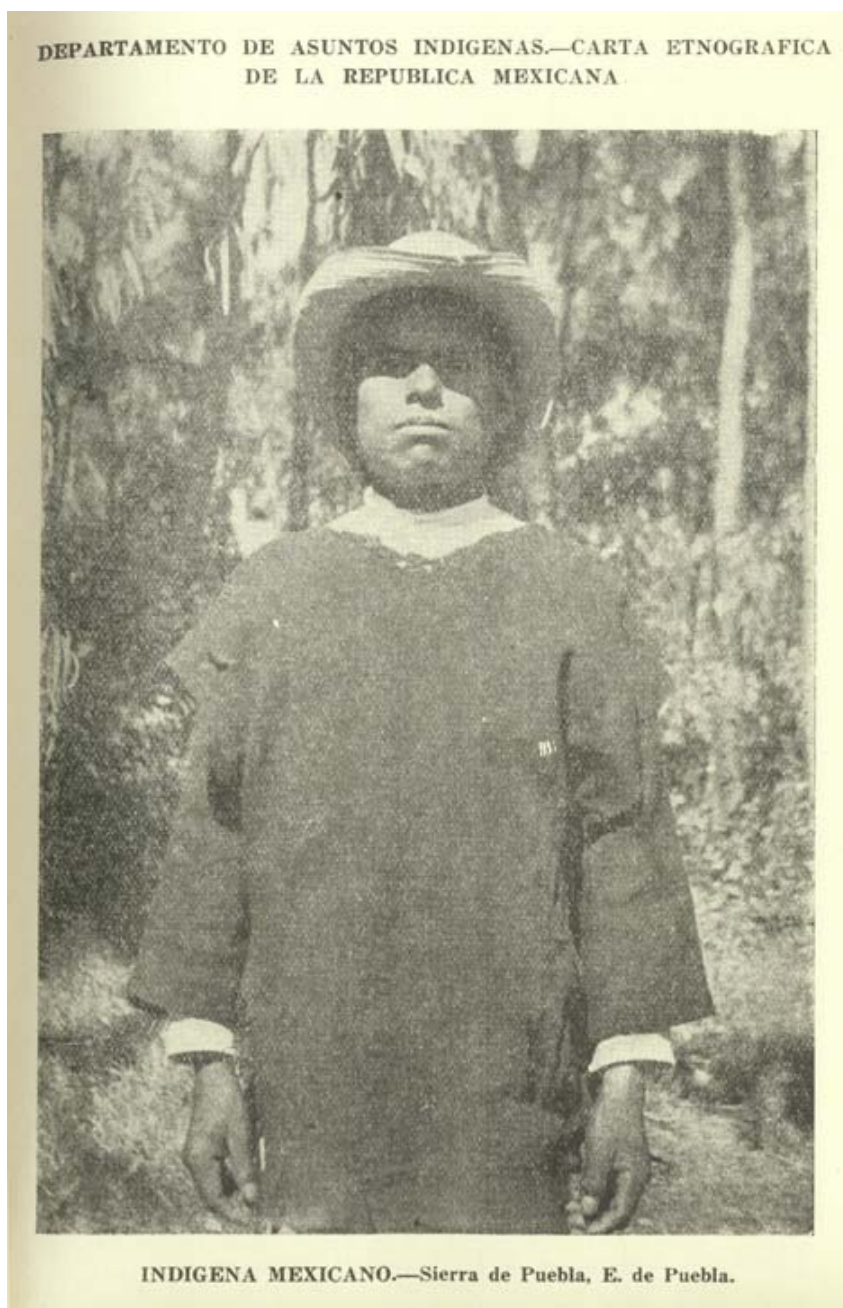
Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XIII.

Figure 6: Indígena Mayo



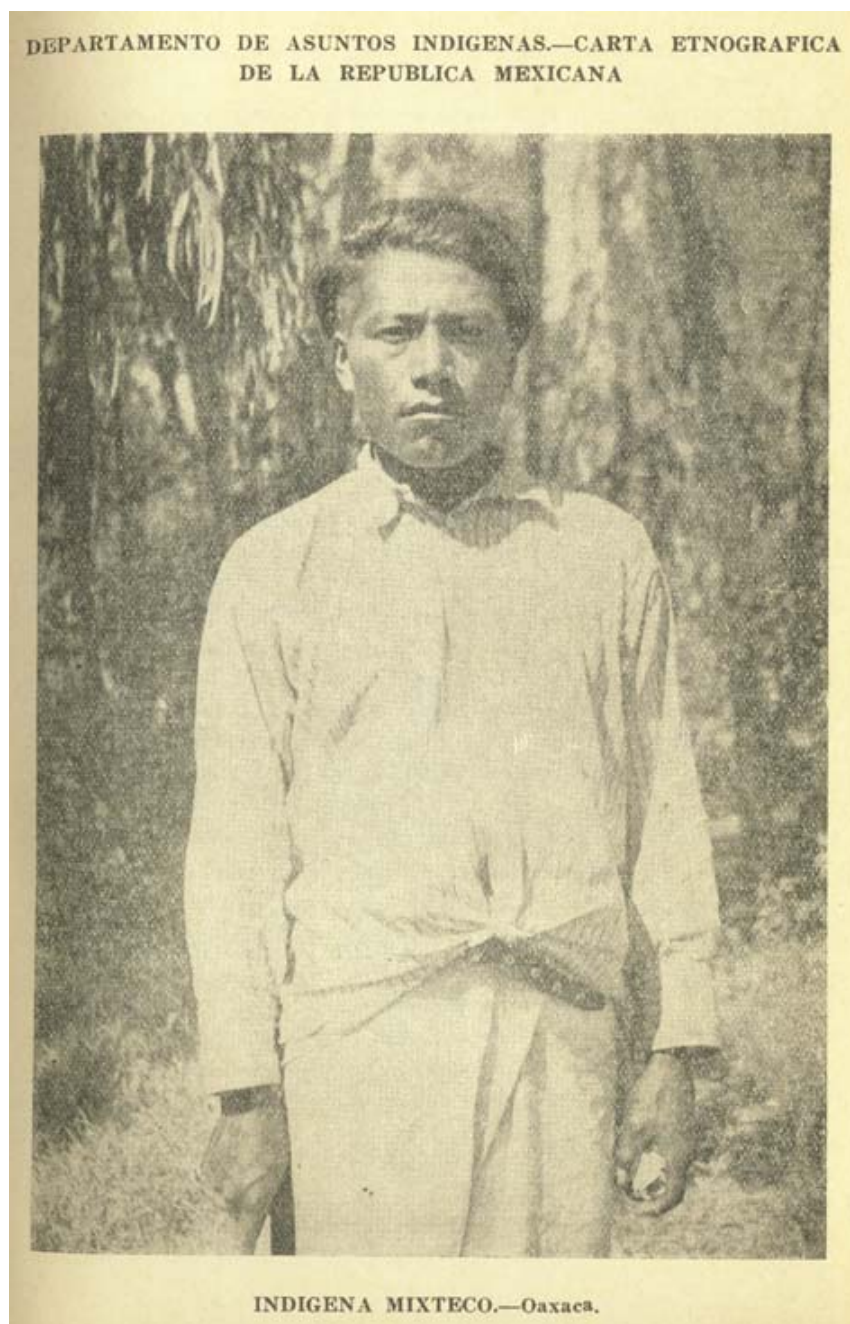
Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XV.

Figure 7: Indígena Sierra de Puebla



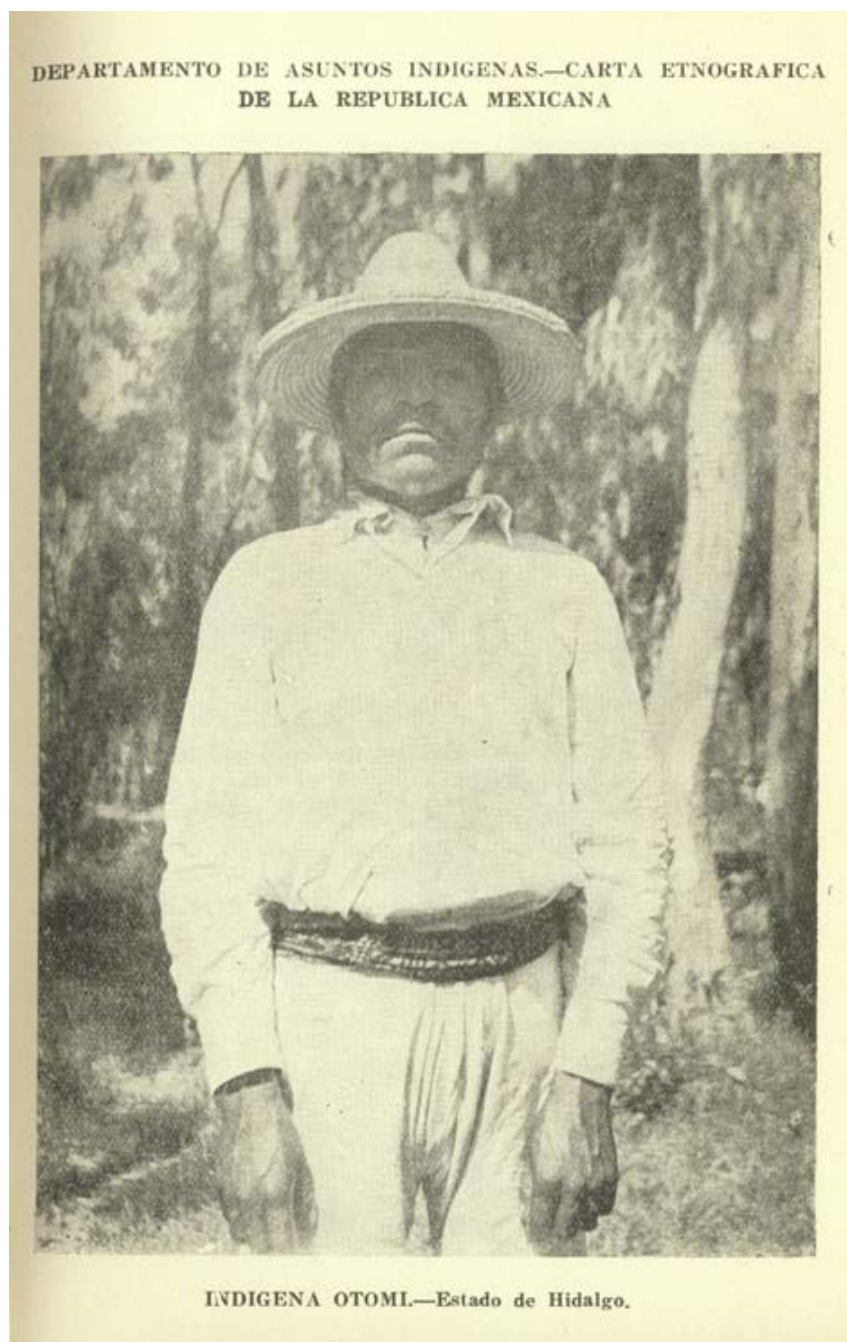
Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XVI.

Figure 8: Carta Etnografica



Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XVII.

Figure 9: Carta Etnografica 2



Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XVIII.

Figure 10: Indígena Otomi



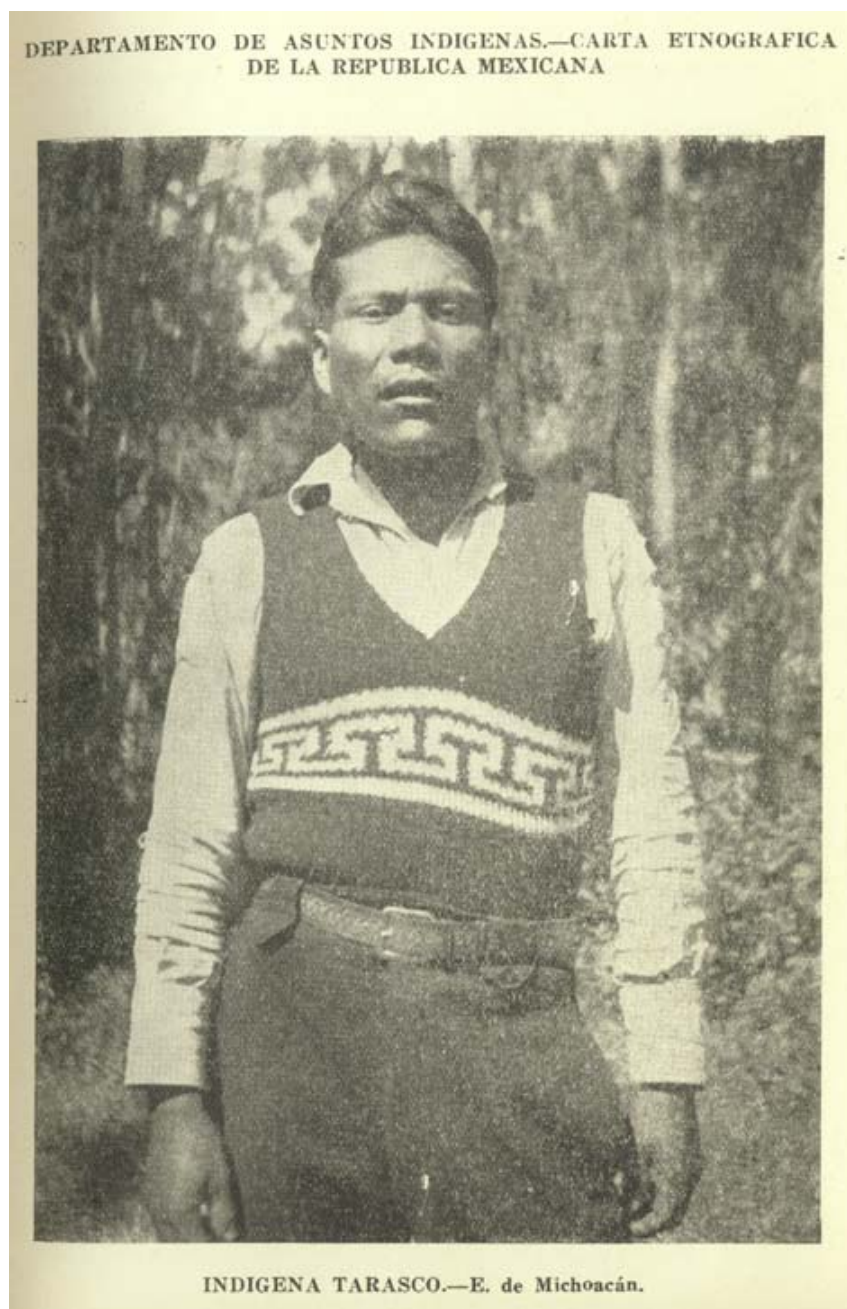
Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XIX.

Figure 11: Familia Tarahumara



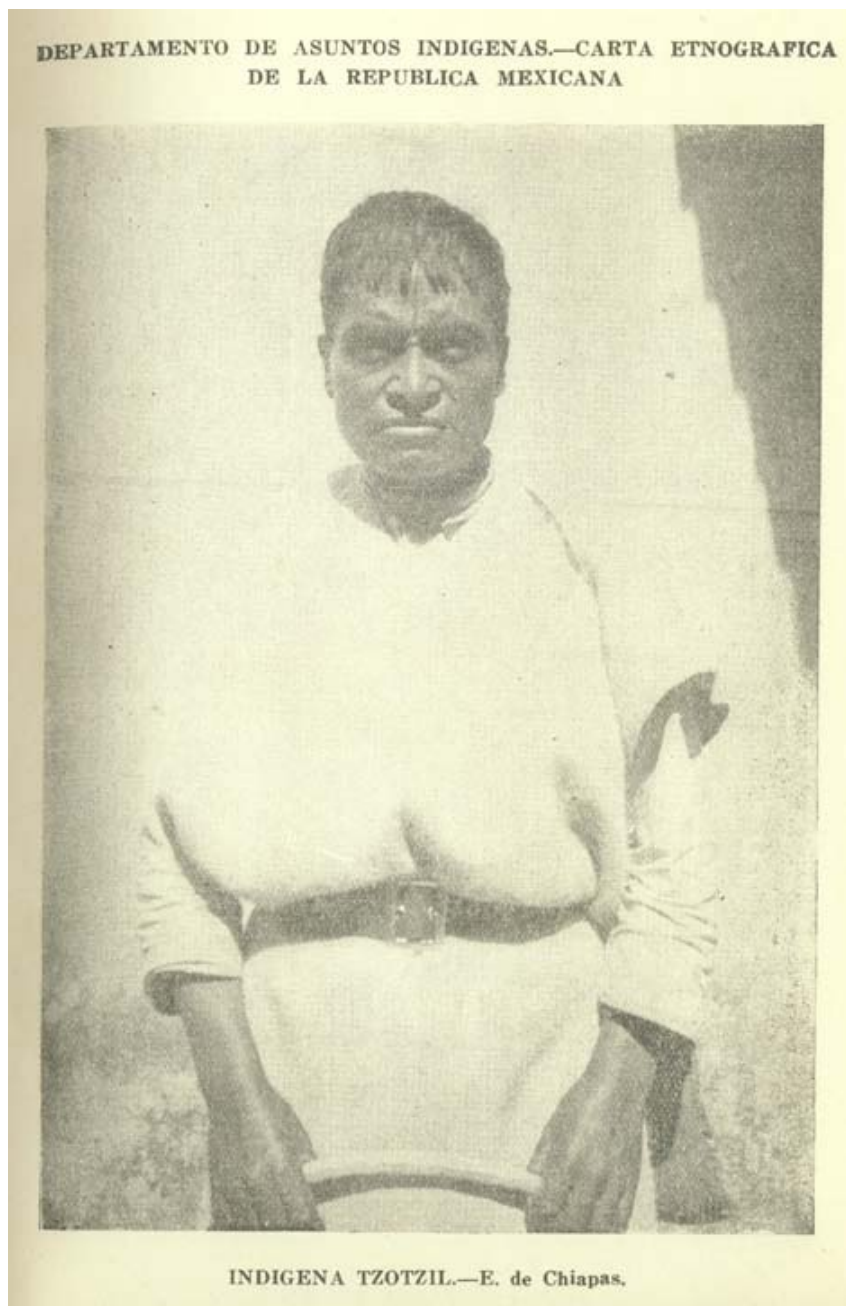
Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república* (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XX.

Figure 12: Indígena Tarasco



Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p. XXII.

Figure 13: Indígena Tzotzil



Source: Manuel Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919), p.XXIV.

The basis of Gamio's scientific approach of governmentality is the comparative method, which, as it also happens with the market space from a logical and historical point of view, requires the homologation of who is going to be compared, i.e. the creation of equal citizens and free workers. As a Mexican man aspiring to be recognized as equal by the cosmopolitan, ultramodern world, Gamio's modernity was challenged both by the persistence of the Indians and their urban degeneration which stemmed from the sudden contacts with modernity. Indians would never diminish their proportion within the national population if the patterns of national reproduction were not changed. In addition, Indian migration to the urban centers was displacing indigenous women's mestizaje disposability.

The Revolution also provided Gamio with the enthusiastic energy to organize and civilize his world. He wanted to stop the reproduction of what he understood as a sickness impeding the reproduction of a healthy population for a powerful nation state. He explored every corner of the country and of the mind and body of the Indians. Gamio is the authorial voice that identified the aborted racial groups as those who did not fit into his references. The groups that he studied could never emerge by themselves and with their own forces from the zoological and vegetating stages where the anthropologist placed them. According to Gamio, the indigenous needed to be redeemed by those middle class intellectuals who, themselves, needed the educational and political institutions to provide for their families, which differentiated them from the Indians.

Gamio's reflectivity could not be efficient through a transparent articulation, and it is inverted. Instead of becoming evident that the bureaucratic institutions are

necessary for middle class males to survive, these institutions appear as the generous acts of the magnificent men who work endlessly for the redemption of the Indians. It was necessary to implement a classification process transforming these populations into citizens. Class identity, education and good manners, and fixed jobs and houses were the organizational principles of Gamio's ethnological reports.³⁷

In Gamio, as well as in the other anthropologists informing the *indigenista* politics of the Revolutionary state, the figure of the organizer establishes a self-centric project on how the world needs to be. As Gamio explicitly states, positioning himself as the scientific author allows him to establish similarities, differences, and hierarchies, which would enable the elaboration of the political strategies for the Indians' disappearance or miscegenation.³⁸ This classificatory operation returns always to the point of departure that produced the epistemological and political classifications. He is the anthropologist man. The combination of multiplication and comparison allows the discourse to always come back to the Indian as the inversion in opposition to Gamio, the modern man. Gamio's *indigenismo* works through this strategy when in his ethnographic mapping he names the Mexican indigenous groups one after the other. This way of mapping is one of the political *modus operandi* of Gamio's epistemology. But it is more than this. He classifies the Indian population according to his organizational principles. At the same time, by stating that the anthropologist belongs to mankind's highest cultural level, which would correspond

³⁷ Aurelio de los Reyes, *Manuel Gamio y el cine*, (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de Humanidades, 1991)

³⁸ Gamio, *El Programa de la Dirección de Antropología para el estudio y mejoramiento de las poblaciones regionales de la república*, (México: Secretaría de Agricultura y Fomento, 1919)

to the level of written science generating general and universal knowledge, Gamio inscribes modern science's hegemony on illiterate people's bodies.³⁹

Gamio's fantastic thought places the anthropologist at the divine center of his world.⁴⁰ The author writes the Indians' differences while constructing the impossibility of assimilation of the Indians' world. This tautological onto-logic transforms these differences in a pretext for explaining the repeated interventions of the author. The project of his ethnological narrative becomes evident through the organization of his multiple reports. Each description begins with a succinct summary of the specificity of each group and its environment; but suddenly this narrative ends and the meta-narrative deploys itself. The scientific discourse explains that although the miserable conditions that are around them, these Indians still live. The real logic of Gamio's narrative is to tell those who are not Indians how to subjectify them. Descriptions of the "ethnological" elements are there to give a sense of authenticity. Gamio's description of his archeological work in Teotihuacán published in 1922 illustrates his methodological bias.

³⁹ Gamio, *Hacia un Nuevo México*, pp. 40-41. "Nuestra estructura social, el nacionalismo, y la educación," pp. 31-52." Están incorporados a la cultura intelectual de tipo científico aquellos individuos cuyo conocimiento sobre sí mismos y sobre el mundo que los rodea es, en términos generales, de índole científica ... y actúan en la vida de acuerdo a los informes que les suministra el material impreso, el cual penetra en sus mil tentáculos en todos los rincones y en todos los cerebros y da a conocer a cada quién, de acuerdo con sus dotes de preparación y receptividad, las experiencias del pasado, los hechos del presente y las posibilidades del futuro."

⁴⁰ See Clifford Geertz, *Works and Lives: The Anthropologist as Author*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988).

The report on the Valley of Teotihuacán constituted the key work for Gamio's prestige and recognition within the U.S. academy.⁴¹ This work follows the same sequence of ethnological descriptions for many groups, and this repetition looks to articulate all these groups that are named and whose existence he captures in order to negate their agency. For contemporaneous anthropologists it was not easy to the criticize Gamio's scientific examining of Mexican Indians, which sought to inform the welfare politics of the Revolution, while a current ethnic studies perspective makes visible the limitations of Gamio's *indigenismo*. However, the classificatory efforts of both the state and science led to Mexican Indians' transformation into indigenous citizen-subjects, a turn that also embodies their racial subjectivation. Gamio's scientific strategy allows the continued existence of the rhetoric of otherness, and on this basis, publications of the Interamerican Indigenista Institute, which draw on Gamio's seminal model, produced a prolific body of work.

For Gamio the scientific method, which marks the modern man, does not take into account "exclusive and isolated personal experiences." It rather takes into account a great number of observations and confirmations.⁴² Concrete studies on Indians needed to take into account: "regional bio-geographic environment, historical

⁴¹ Gamio, "El programa de la dirección de Antropología y las poblaciones regionales de la República," in *Introducción. La población del valle de Teotihuacán*, I, pp. X-XII.

⁴² Gamio, *Exposición de la Dirección de Antropología sobre La Población del Valle de Teotihuacán, representativa de las que habitan la Mesa Central, sus antecedentes históricos, su estado actual y medios de mejorarla física, intelectual y económicamente*, (México: A. Botas, 1921), p. 16.

evolution, bio-typology, economic situation, and cultural development.”⁴³ Gamio’s faith in the method of science led him to state that,

in all the countries, and particularly where the population is constituted by indigenous elements, it is socially transcendent that hygiene, medicine trade, professional responsibility of doctors, and other factors that go together toward making the biological development better, need to be controlled by scientific criteria.

And Gamio added that a great number of countries have provided dictatorial power to the authorities in charge of administrating public health.”⁴⁴ Gamio applies his universal research methodology, which integrates the evaluation of the legacy, environment, and time of fixation of the cultural traits for scientifically studying Indianness in order to avoid its reproduction. As a state-led project of community formation, trustful statistics were indispensable to determine the needs of a people and to subsequently improve their living conditions.⁴⁵ Gamio’s narrative, paralleling Mexican women reproduction, mediated between the two worlds, which due to the violence of the conquest did not have an efficient mestizaje. His anthropological inscriptions translate the historical violence into the representational order of the political system, while erasing the historicity of the civil society.

⁴³ Gamio, *Exposición de la Dirección de Antropología sobre La Población del Valle de Teotihuacán, representativa de las que habitan la Mesa Central, sus antecedentes históricos, su estado actual y medios de mejorarla física, intelectual y económicamente*, p. 40.

⁴⁴ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 17.

⁴⁵ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, p. 31. “Para el éxito de cualquier gobierno que realmente quiera hacer obra eficiente y de nacionalismo, es indispensable que por todos los medios posibles sea fomentada la adquisición de datos estadísticos correctos, a fin de que la población sea conocida, no solo cuantitativa, sino también cualitativamente.” “The needs of a people can not be determined, nor therefore it is possible to try to accomplish their improvement without knowing its statistics” “In order to achieve the success of any government who really loves to make an efficient and nationalist work, it is indispensable to promote through all possible means the statistical acquisition of the correct data, so that the population is well-known, not only in quantitative, but also in qualitative terms.”

Gamio stated that the truth of Mexican cultural specificity in relationship to Europeanness was revealed by anthropological science. It was the continuity of organic features determining a people's intellectual and moral characteristic, which was permanent although not eternal. Inheritance and continuity in time distinguished "racial characteristics" from circumstantial and artificial distinctions, such as language, political organization, producing habits. Gamio subdivides all of these anthropological items into identical classificatory lines. Gamio diligently enumerates 50 groups within this scheme.⁴⁶ The examination of Mexican Indian cultures would produce the specificity of Mexican peoples whose bodies reflect various degrees of distance from the European universal reference.

Institutionalization of *Indigenismo*: Gamio's *indigenismo* within Mexican nationalism

Inspired by that reference [Gamio refers to the Japanese experience], we suggested to accelerate the formation of miscegenation, as the best way to try to unify the Mexican population. The convergence of the following two procedures will soon lead to such result: First, to elevate the numerical proportion of the white group, until they have at least equal the numbers as the indigena, bringing for this end, millions of European immigrants, properly selected, lacking racial prejudices and adaptable to our climatic conditions. Secondly, to effectively elevate by simultaneous scientific and practical methods, the economic, social, cultural, etc. level of native peoples, in order that the indígenas can mix with the white immigrants and with the already existing same race groups, because if the white population increases its population numbers and the Indian remain in the miserable conditions that, during centuries, have characterized him, there will not be any mixture, being still in, but in more alarming proportions, the urgent and serious problem of the social heterogeneity. Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, pp. 220-221.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, pp. 146-158.

⁴⁷ Gamio, *Hacia un México Nuevo*, pp. 220-221. Inspirados en esa alusión, sugerimos que se precipite la formación del mestizaje, como mejor medio de procurar la unificación de la población mexicana. Los dos siguientes procedimientos de tendencias convergentes, pronto conducirán a tal resultado: 1o elevar la proporción numérica del grupo blanco, hasta que igualen siquiera las cifras del indigena, trayendo para ello millones de inmigrantes europeos, convenientemente seleccionados, desprovistos de prejuicios raciales y adaptables a nuestras condiciones climatéricas. 2o Elevar efectivamente por métodos científicos y prácticos, a la vez, el nivel económico, social, cultural, etc., del indígena, a fin de que pueda mezclarse con el inmigrante blanco y con los grupos ya existentes de la misma raza, pues si aumenta la población blanca y el indio permanece en las miserables condiciones que durante siglos lo

Mexican national elites, as defined by Porfirio Díaz's pre-industrial relations of production, saw the affirmation of progress undermined by insurgencies and social discontent stemming from the same industrialization that seduced them. Before the Mexican Revolution, Indianness haunted the *criolla* nation. Indians were poor populations whose members were considered as not belonging to the *criolla* nation. The Indians of the Revolution were different: if they still represented barbarism, they now belonged to the nation, and with time they would become *mestizo* national subjects. Gamio and Revolutionary Mexico perceived Indians as pre-modern populations who threatened both Porfirio Díaz's and Revolution's modernizing projects. The Revolution continued the modernization of the country, changed the national subject, and incorporated the Indian population to the *mestiza* nation while enacting reforms to benefit the poorer sectors of the population. The Porfirian regime enforced Indians' erasure from the nation by a repressing process that led to the insurgency of the Revolution of 1910. On the contrary, Mexican Revolutionary leaders, once victorious, would turn to Indianness inclusion through mestizaje, welfare policies and land and political reforms.

The specter that is haunting Gamio and Revolutionary Mexico stems from the Indians' rebellion against Porfirio Díaz's modernization. The Revolution's inclusion through *indigenismo* and *mestizaje* promoted the transformation of the Indians into indigenous *mestizo* citizens of a corporate apparatus of a modern (but not liberal) nation state. At the same time, the narrative on the political need of a homogenous

han caracterizado, no habrá mezcla, quedando en pie, pero en proporciones más alarmantes, el urgente y serio problema de la heterogeneidad social de nuestra población.

mestiza nation as a prerequisite of modernization rests on two premises: 1) cultural opposition (and discursive connection) between Indianness and the modern Mexico that the Revolution would make, and 2) hierarchical relationships between traditional Indians and modern Europeans. Within this scheme, Mexican modern men's participation in the creation of the new nation was through epistemology, as constituted by Gamio, through politics, as constituted by Revolutionary leaders, or through the arms of the Revolution. Indians and *mestizos* who participated in the battlefields would now participated through the administrative processes that legitimate their corporate representation. Mexican women's biological and symbolic power for reproducing the nation was subsumed within the Revolution's politics of nation making. They became sexual and racialized bodies connecting the heterogeneous old Mexico to the new mestizo Mexico. The crucial question is: why would women and Indians freely accept a subordinate place within the political order of the civil society that the Revolution created?

Land reform, education, and peasants and urban workers' participation in the apparatus of the state through the unified party were three important political instruments for the Revolution's politics of mestiza nation making. At the same time, the party, unions, missions, and plans of the state welfare politics created a specific political culture. These institutions delimited the administrative procedures that the population needed to follow in order to pass from the stage of military participation, which according to positivist perspectives corresponded to pre-industrialized societies, to the modern stage of participation through political parties, which would correspond to modern societies. By transforming distinct Indians cultures into broadly

defined indigenous populations, Gamio's *indigenismo* coincided with the Revolution leaders efforts for creating the new mestizo Mexico. Both Gamio's *mestizaje* and the Revolution's politics nationalized and incorporated the Indians and *mestizos'* local spaces simultaneously into the nation and into the state. But this strategy also incorporated Gamio and *indigenistas* into bureaucratic apparatuses. Indian separate identities were denied from the modern nation, while their presence provided an historical narrative to the Revolution's nationalism. This strategy for constructing a *mestizo* nation had additional consequences.

As I already mentioned, Manuel Gamio is considered the "father" of Mexican scientific anthropology and of Inter American *indigenismo*. Analyzing his applied anthropology from a feminist perspective emerged an interpretation of *mestizo* nationalism that opens up a new angle for studying Latin American social movements and governmentality. Latin American protectionist nationalism has usually been studied through the lens of a battle between liberalism and the forces of the free market confronting populist governments, or through the lens of the cooption of corrupted national elites by imperialist powers. Garcia Canclini's quote at the beginning of this chapter exemplifies how difficult it is for social scientist to interpret Latin American modernization through categories shaped by European-centric modern social sciences. The examination of the Mexican Revolutionary politics of *mestizaje* supports the argument that the re-introduction of "race" through a feminist perspective opens up a very fertile angle for studying Latin American post-colonial nationalisms, the theme that I continue studying in the following chapters.

Gamio's applied anthropology produced, simultaneously, the modern Mexican *mestizo* and the modern nation, however the coalition of Revolutionary leaders did not construct the modern nation state through linear means. The men who fought for Independence from Spain and the Mexican Revolution became founding fathers of la patria. They shared the goal of constructing new modern nations, while they did not coincide on the national subject of their projects.⁴⁸ As already mentioned, Claudio Lomnitz argues that "the placement of the mestizo as a central personage has a history that began with independence, but the Revolution broke ties with two doctrines that had inhibited the adoption of the mestizo as the national race. On the one hand, Juarez' classical liberalism was complemented with a protectionist state that was willing to take special measures and dispositions for specific national groups such as Indians, peasants, and workers. On the other hand, the racist ideas of social Darwinism were overturned."⁴⁹ This first part of my dissertation aimed to provide evidence that although these two ruptures are understood as complementary and that they went hand in hand, they hide at least half of the story. Mexican women are represented neither in this narrative nor in the political organization of the Revolution. In fact, despite Mexican women's efforts for acquiring the right to vote since the Porfiriato, they only won their battle for political equality after WWII. Only on December 31, 1946 did they officially receive the municipal vote. Seven years

⁴⁸See Enrique Florescano, *Memory, Myth, and Time in Mexico*, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), pp. 184-231. "As early as the eighteenth century writers such as Francisco Clavijero began to use images of the Indian past to inform criollo nationalism, but that these images were an appropriation of this past for a new criollo country.

⁴⁹Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 52.

later, on December 31, 1953, after the Catholic Church and the State negotiated a *modus vivendi* that firmly left political control in hands of the Partido de la Revolución Institucionalizada (PRI), they were granted complete suffrage, in 1958 Mexican women voted for the first time in a presidential election.⁵⁰

Mexican women's positions as mothers within the *mestizo* nation provided a starting point for analyzing models of nationality tied to *mestizaje*. The complicated and exclusionary rationality that a feminist perspective uncovers within these modernizing, protectionist and populist politics, is the point at issue in this section.

The politically imagined community of the post Revolution simultaneously marks a continuation and a new moment of Mexican nationalism history.⁵¹ Jose Maria Luis Mora pointed out that "Indians were small and degenerated remains of the old Mexican population." This assumption made him conclude that it was indispensable to enact a project leading, within the century, to the complete fusion between whites and Indians, and to the subsequent complete extinction of the Indian race.⁵² Mora and Gamio belong to the same brotherhood. While Mora is named "the

⁵⁰ Shirlene Ann Soto, *The Mexican Woman: a Study of her Participation in the Revolution, 1910-1940*, p. 291 (1977, dissertation). See also Sarah Anne Buck's 2002 dissertation up-dating Soto's work.

⁵¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 5-7. I found a confusing use of racializing terms within U.S. bibliography on Latin American. According to my understanding, the Independence project drew on the Creole population discontents with the Empire's privileges for the Peninsular peoples living in Provinces. Their insurgence led to their disappearance and the mestizo subject became the national subject. A different expression of the clash between two different classificatory systems corresponds then to the racialization of Latin American nationalities within the U.S. ethnicity system as well as the racial re-configuration that is taking place in the Hemisphere under global contexts which emphasize transnational connections.

⁵² Mora in Florescano, *Memory, Myth, and Time in Mexico*. Mora's nationalism is represented as it sought to homogenize the collective beliefs and to create in the population a kinship feeling that, among other manifestations, would magically conceive the state as both the mother and the father of the extended Mexican family.

father of Mexican liberal thought,” Gamio is named “the father of Mexican and Latin American scientific anthropology.”⁵³

Mexican liberals had suppressed in 1856 the communal property of the lands, and since that moment it became more difficult for Indians’ communities to survive within the national society.⁵⁴ This was a direct attack over the resources, customs and community practices of the indigenous pueblos. Later, the Porfirian nationalist ideology opened up to the ideas of land and *mestizos* as the Indo-Hispanic identification of what is Mexican.⁵⁵ Gamio’s *indigenismo* reproduced the story, still alive at present, by Claudio Lomnitz who states that,

Mestizo nationalism thus implicitly supported the creation of a protectionist and modernizing state. It was to be a modernizing state because the mestizo, like his European father, had a propensity for action, for history. It was protectionist because the mestizo sought to protect his maternal legacy from exploitation by Europeans, who felt no loyalty whatsoever to the land or to the Indian, and whom Molina Enriquez saw as the dominant class that needed to be assimilated or pushed out.⁵⁶

At the same time, within Mexico’s immigration plans of the nineteenth century, the land appropriated by liberals’ reform from the indigenous population had been offered by the Porfirian administration to the illusion of a European immigration

⁵³ See Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, London: Pluto Press, 2002, pp.104-113, and Bruce Kapferer, *Legends of People, Myths of State*, (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1988), pp. 1-8, and 33-48. See also Partha Chatterje, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World, A Derivative Discourse?* (Tokyo: Zed Books for the United Nations University, 1986), p. 83.

⁵⁴ The 1917 Revolution’s constitution states that all the land of Mexico belongs to the nation. It defined the land an inalienable possession that can be bought and sold but the state can always require its devolution if there is a public reason that justifies this claim.

⁵⁵ During the Díaz’s years, the attack over the remaining communal lands had been accelerated. Both a new mestizo elite and the old and new Creole aristocrats had despoiled the indigenous population of their land and livelihood. Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, p. 152.

⁵⁶ Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 54.

that never arrived. Since the 1910s Gamio insisted in opening the doors of the country to European immigration. For him, Mexican Indian men's incorporation into the new modern nation drew on their productive and political roles while women's incorporation within the nation drew on their reproductive role. To transform current Mexican population into a new *mestizaje* would have made Mexican women attractive to European men. In 1935 Gamio states that it is not possible to wait for the spontaneous reproduction of a new *mestizo* population. He argued that it was necessary to immediately open the doors to European immigrants to avoid reproducing Mexico's unbalanced *mestizaje*.⁵⁷

For four decades (from the 1910s to the 1950s) assimilation has been the core of Mexican *indigenismo*. At the beginning of the Post Revolutionary period, which constitutes the formative period most marked by Gamio's anthropology, almost half of the Mexican population was identified as Indian people who spoke an Indian language. The imperative was to incorporate this great number of indigenous population to the national community, "to Mexicanize" the Indians, as it was said.⁵⁸ This process of Mexicanization had different strategies. Language and education became the focus of a great debate within the *indigenista* brotherhood.⁵⁸ The point at issue was the significance of Spanish speaking for differentiating Indians from *mestizos*. During this formative period of *indigenismo*, Gamio stated that sensitivity

⁵⁷ Gamio's applied anthropology on Mexican immigrants returning to Mexico confirms and extends the thesis of this chapter.

⁵⁸ See Gonzalo Rubio U., "La antropología social y la preparación de los maestros," in E. Ruiz, *Estudios Antropológicos publicados en homenaje al doctor Manuel Gamio*, (México: UNAM, 1956) pp. 457-472.

to racial and cultural differences and diversity was necessary in order to secure the assimilation of indigenous people into a national *mestizo* society. But in Gamio's view, in order to eliminate racial and cultural prejudices of the selected European immigration, which according to him the state needed to promote, *indigenista* welfare policies would transform indigenous and mestizo population into more "mestizable" peoples.

After the long years of upheaval that seriously disrupted the country, the 1917 constitution was the legal order embedding new modernizing hopes. Those who saw the Indians as the great problem of Mexico grounded their optimism in civilization, and in *indigenismo*. Whether the indigenous were conceived as racially or culturally distinct, and whether the result of *indigenismo* was the complete assimilation, incorporation or acculturation of the Indian populations into the dominant mestizo nation to be created was an element of debate.⁵⁹ All Revolutionary *indigenistas* stood together, however, in favor of modernization and against Porfirio Diaz, whose failure, according to them stemmed from an erroneous conception of the nation, a premise that led them to state that it was impossible to negate the Indians in Mexico. Drawing on this view, they re-evaluated the indigenous roots within a new *mestiza* community while promoting different and specific strategies for the assimilation of the Indigenous population within the modern nation that they would produce.

⁵⁹ Gamio, *Forjando Patria*, pp. 14-15. Gamio oscillated between the poles of complete or selected incorporation. His references to Mexico's "gran familia" underlined the fact that the ultimate goal of anthropological studies was incorporating Mexico's indigenous peoples into the national life and increasing their own sense of national identity.

Why did the Revolution change Porfirio Diaz's racializing model?

Indigenistas saw Indian and European modern cultures in oppositional and hierarchical relations, while avoiding an explicit invocation to race difference. However, the Revolution's narrative of the nation, which drew on the linear traditional-modern framework, celebrated *mestizaje* as evidence of their effort for promoting class and cultural equality. The birth of the nuevo México required *indigenistas'* scientific eugenic supervision to avoid the proliferation of Indianness, which would result from the spontaneous reproduction of current Mexican population. To plan a demographic change was the point at issue. *Indigenistas* mediated the social distance between Spanish speaking and non-Spanish speaking Mexicans. They legitimated their project on their sense of justice while supporting the Revolutionary reforms that benefited the rural populations through the state's protection of Indians slavery. As Claudio Lomnitz argues "the relations of production that it fostered were equally problematic from the point of view of the consolidation of the public sphere."⁶⁰ But the *indigenistas'* strategic objective was the homogenization and the disappearance of Indianness as a political requirement for the construction of the new modern Mexico.

In some cases, Post Revolutionary leaders constructed Indians as bodies to work while at the same time blaming on them Mexico's modernizing failure. For President Plutarco Elías Calles (1928-1930) "the salvation of Mexico lay in improving the national racial stock through the encouragement of European

⁶⁰ Lomnitz, *Deep Mexico, Silent Mexico*, p. 77

immigration.” “Who will till the soil if we educate the Indians,” argued Elías Calles, “if we do not rid ourselves of them, we must leave them in their present state, saving those who are physical and intellectual superiors.”⁶¹ In 1924, Manuel Gamio was vice-Minister of Education of President Plutarco Elías Calles. Elías Calles’ administration asked Gamio’s renouncement due to the anthropologist’s public disagreements regarding financial managements.⁶² For a decade thereafter (1925-1935) a wide-ranging program of rural education and modernization was carried out in rural Mexico. This reformist perspective ignored local differences while focusing on incorporating all of Mexico’s Indian groups as “rural population” into the national material culture.

Education constituted the proper tool for Mexicanizing the Indigenous rural people and the school became the instrument of indigenist nationalism.⁶³ Since the 1920s, the rural schools and the “casas del pueblo” had “the mission” of suppressing the linguistic and cultural differences between Indians and the national Spanish-

⁶¹ José Vasconcelos quotes Presidente Elías Calles in *The Latin-American Basis of Mexican Civilization*, Aspects of Mexican civilization, lectures on the Harris foundation 1926, by José Vasconcelos and Manuel Gamio. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1926), p. 88.

⁶² Comas, *Estudios Antropológicos publicados en homenaje al Dr. Manuel Gamio*, p.6. After initially receiving support from the Revolutionary government, Gamio’s plan for a national school of anthropology fell victim to financial and political struggles, only to regain prominence with the ascendance of Lázaro Cárdenas in the 1930s, and the creation of the III in 1940. 1940 also represented the moment in which the nationalist qualities in Mexican Indigenismo began to give way to a more internationalist social scientific perspective. Whereas in the 1910s anthropological work in Mexico focused in modernizing Mexican Indians, after 1940 anthropological knowledge was systematized and regularized by its Pan-American horizon.

⁶³ Within the education strategy of the Revolution, women as educators acquired a legitimate place within the nation. See Emma Pérez, “Feminism-in-Nationalism: third Space Feminism in Yucatán’s Socialist Revolution,” in *The Decolonial Imaginary: writing Chicanas into history* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 55-73.

speaking subjects.⁶⁴ In 1925, when Manuel Gamio left the country and went to the U.S., Moisés Sáenz, the sub-Secretary of Public Education, implemented numerous programs to incorporate Indigenous Mexicans to the national community. In this period, some scholars, particularly Carlos Basauri, used the term “spiritual culture” in opposition to Gamio’s interpretation in terms of “popular culture.” Behind these different narratives appeared a new conception stating that indigenous groups which in Gamio’s words were represented as “primitive,” had a low level of “material culture,” a turn anticipating the Revolution’s commitment with the class framework.⁶⁵ Vasconcelos was the main representative of this perspective. He viewed all rural people as essentially part of one culture while using the term “campesino” interchangeable with the term “indigenous.” For him, education in modern social practices would facilitate the same modern values and nationalist consciousness in all rural peoples.⁶⁶

Vasconcelos became Minister of Education in 1921. His administration sent teachers who spoke only Spanish to the indigenous regions drawing on the thought that it was indispensable to provide all rural families with certain basic elements of the national culture. “The founders of the United States were fortunate in not finding in this territory a very large Indian population, and so it was easy for them to push the

⁶⁴ Other indigenist institutions: Departamento de la Incorporación India (1926), Casa del Estudiante Indio (1926), Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas (1946) which were run by the Ministry of Education.

⁶⁵ See Carlos Basauri, *La población indígena de México, etnografía*, (México: Secretaría de educación pública, 1940), pp. 42-43.

⁶⁶ For the Secretaría de Educación Pública the term “Indian” was an economic description. See Secretaría de Educación Pública, *Las Misiones Culturales: 1932-1933*, (México: SEP, 1933) p. 10.

Indian back. But the importation of the Negro has brought to this nation, as we all know, a harder problem than any known before.” The “strict avoidance of matrimonial relations with the colored race” could finally solve the “tremendous problem involved in the coexistence of two races in the United States.” Vasconcelos argues that “you cannot destroy a race,” and that in the case of Mexico “there is nothing left for us to do, but to follow the Spanish tradition of eliminating the prejudice of color, the prejudice of race in all of our social procedures.” One of the justifications of the Revolution’s *mestizaje* racial politics lies in Vasconcelos’ crucial argument that “it is impossible to destroy a race,” and that “no matter what our theoretical opinions might be, we have to start from the fact that the mestizo is the predominating element in Mexico.”⁶⁷ Indians’ insurgencies haunt these premises, and Indian women’s rapability became its conclusions.

However, the administrative visible effects of this race-based politics of the in-formation Revolutionary state were the hundreds of rural schools, which became laboratories for experimentation in socioeconomic change.⁶⁸ Rural teachers were to

⁶⁷ José Vasconcelos, “The Latin-American Basis of Mexican Civilization,” in José Vasconcelos and Manuel Gamio, in *The Latin-American Basis of Mexican Civilization*, p. 88.

⁶⁸ The Chilean Gabriela Mistral, first Latin American Nobel price in literature (1945) went to Mexico to participate in these educative programs. Vasconcelos invited her and from 1922 to 1924 she was an active member of his team. She was in charge of preparing a textbook that she wrote and title “Lecturas clásicas para mujeres.” She also collaborated with the text “Lecturas clásicas para niños.” In November 1924 she left the country before her contract finished. In the prologue of her book for Mexican women, “Palabras de la extranjera” (“Words by the Foreign Woman”) she responds to those who jeopardized her work with Vasconcelos’ program drawing on their exclusivist nationalism that made her see the limits of an “Hispanic American citizenship.” She also wrote in her diary a page eventually published in 1991 that she titled “Motivos de vida,” (“Life’s motivations”) where Gabriela Mistral expands her view on the nationalist obstacles that she found in Mexico. President Miguel Alemán donated her 100 hectáreas in Sonora that she exchanged for 40 hectáreas in Veracruz. She could not become the legal proprietor of these lands because Mexican Constitution establishes that foreign citizens can not buy lands close to the coast. In 1950 she went to live to California and she died in the U.S. Her experience provides an additional angle of the exclusion of lesbian women from

serve for national community ends, and they were assisted in their task by mobile cultural missions containing teams of specialists in the community development fields; doctors, nurses, veterinarians, home economics, carpenters, musicians and others.⁶⁹ For these missions, culture meant economic development.⁷⁰ During this period it was also established the program, “La Casa del Estudiante Indígena.” Young Indians from a variety of regions would become members of the national culture and would then return to their communities to continue the work of education.⁷¹

Gamio’s assimilation project did not fit perfectly with Vasconcelos. As told by Gamio’s granddaughter, his request for support to open craft workshops for Indians provoked the following response from Vasconcelos: “Look Manuel, I’ll give whatever you want for archaeology, but not for those Indians.”⁷² Compared with Gamio, far more political support was shown by the Mexican state towards the ideas promulgated by Vasconcelos in the early 1920s. Since 1924, when in transition from the Obregón (1924-1928) to Calles (1928-1930) Presidency, the government’s support for Gamio’s work in Oaxaca was suspended. Gamio found it impossible to

nation-based communities. For a brief introduction to this episode of her life, see Gabriel Cano, “Gabriela Mistral: la dura lección de que existen patrias,” in Gabriela Cano, “Gabriela Mistral: la dura lección de que existen patrias,” in *Debate Feminista*, Año 12, Octubre 2001, pp. 133-139.

⁶⁹ Cynthia H. de Alcántara, *Anthropological Perspectives on rural Mexico*, (London; Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984) p. 14. These practices will re-appear in the Bolivarian process that I examine in Part III.

⁷⁰ Missions’ teachers were gave special education classes in specific fields, primarily centered around the introduction of modern economic and scientific knowledge into the everyday lives of rural people. *Las Misiones Culturales: 1932-1933*, p. 8-10.

⁷¹ III, *La Casa del Estudiante Indígena: 16 meses de labor en un experimento psicológico colectivo con indios*, (México: Secretaría de Educación Pública feb. de 1926-jun. de 1927) p. 128. See also <http://www.jornada.unam.mx/1999/jun99/990615/oja-escuela.html>

⁷² Gamio, letter of 29 June 1942, cited in González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, p. 131.

secure state funding for his project. In 1942, when he was the chair of the Indigenista Interamerican Institute he wrote a letter to Boas. He lamented that since 1925 he has been working without real enthusiasm. “Although I have done responsible jobs which were quite well paid, I have been unable to devote myself fully to the studies of society that have given me so much satisfaction.”⁷³ In the transnational order, Gamio and Vasconcelos coincided in the mestizo project on a Latin American scale. Nonetheless, for both these intellectuals the cosmic racial mixing was not the actual mestizo of Spanish, indigenous and African races that had already taken place in the continent, but rather an eugenic re-fusion of these peoples, from which the new mestiza race will be born.

Other Mexicans were in opposition to the assimilation trend and advocated for the assertive recognition of the Indian cultural heritage of Mexico. Molina Enríquez raised hard critiques against Vasconcelos and his followers. “I say that the amelioration of the Indians must take place on the basis of their own ideas. The whites are neither infallible nor do they have a superior culture.”⁷⁴ Molina Enríquez promoted radical changes in the territorial property in order to unite the “social body.” His emphasis on the distribution of property came from his conviction that the identity of human groups is based on the possession of a specific territory. For him, the “deeper the roots that a social group has in the territory that they occupy, the stronger is that nation.” He promoted the re-distribution of the gran hacienda into the

⁷³ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, p. 131.

⁷⁴ Cited by Ruiz Q, *Estudios Antropológicos publicados en homenaje al doctor Manuel Gamio*, p. 479.

small and medium properties of land.”⁷⁵ Each indigenous locality, Molina Enríquez argued, was a special and autonomous patria, and the greater obstacle for the formation of the new mestizo national community that the Mexican Revolution would produce was the existence of the great territorial property, which impeded the integration of the nation.

The presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) represented a major turning point in Revolutionary politics. He was the first president that gave a relevant role to the indigenist policies. At the same time, during his presidency “mestizaje” became a “detail” instead of Mexican nationalism’s main strategy for making the mestiza patria. He pointed out that “while statesmen and legislators of other countries try to integrate their nationalities displacing racial groups and artificially establishing the use of only one language” he would promote the “formation of a strong nationality, without injuring the ethnic interests” of the diverse groups of “our native population.” He explicitly refers to the state mestizaje politics. “The formation of *mestizaje* should freely follow the rules of the sociological conditions. *Mestizaje* pass to the category of detail and the state leaves the formation of mestizaje to the free game of the sociological conditions. Now the institutions of the state, mainly the school, provide a uniform sense of life and help the individual and the collectivity in the satisfaction of their needs.”⁷⁶

⁷⁵ Andrés Molina Enríquez, *Los grandes problemas nacionales*, (México: Impr. de A. Carranza e hijos, 1909) pp. 192-195.

⁷⁶ Raúl Noriega, Sub-director of *El Nacional*, in “Lázaro Cárdenas,” “México pospone cualquier plan de colonización,” en *El Problema Indígena en México*, (México: Departamento de Asuntos Indígenas, 1940), p. 5. “Mientras estadistas y legisladores de otros países pretenden integrar sus nacionalidades desplazando grupos raciales y estatuyendo artificialmente el uso de una sola lengua, sin detenerse en

Lombardo Toledano, who in the 1920s had been a union leader, saw *indigenismo* primarily in terms of class rather than race difference.⁷⁷ Lombardo Toledano and Lázaro Cárdenas paid serious attention to indigenous issues, especially during the period when the Revolutionary leaders' priority was to unify peasant organizations into the National Confederation of Peasants founded in 1938.⁷⁸ For both Revolutionary leaders, the living conditions of indigenous peoples were due to socioeconomic factors (anthropologists named them "material culture") and not to their race or cultural difference. The exploitation and emancipation of the indigenous population were connected to the emancipation of the popular sectors. Geographic conditions and political systems created by oppression regimes caused economic isolation and depression. For Cárdenas, "color of the skin, art manifestations or political organization" was not the Indians' structural principles. Therefore, Cárdenas argued, "indigenous peoples' unity was recognized in their position as an oppressed class destined to subsist by doing the hardest agricultural works" and were always found everywhere as "cheap labor serving as a base for exploitative industries." Cárdenas erased race and ethnicity from the political discourse of the state and

los medios de ejecución de su plan de predominio, México anuncia, por boca de su más alto representante, el Presidente Lázaro Cárdenas, la formación de una nacionalidad fuerte, sin lesionar los intereses étnicos de los diversos grupos de nuestra población aborígen, permitiendo el desarrollo de sus capacidades constructivas y creadoras, y dejando al libre juego de las condiciones sociológicas la formación del mestizaje, que pasa ahora a la categoría de detalle, cuando las instituciones del Estado, principalmente la escuela, crean en todo el país un sentido uniforme de vida y auxilian al individuo y a la colectividad en la satisfacción de sus necesidades."

⁷⁷ This position has an institutional history and constitutes the origin of United Nations 169 article on indigenous populations. Mexico was the first Latin American country which signed this article.

⁷⁸ He supported a program for teaching Indian languages.

established the Revolution's class based framework.⁷⁹ In addition, while Cárdenas supported the work of *indigenista* anthropologists, he also often made public that *indigenismo* should serve the nationalist ends of making the Indian a more integral member of the Mexican national community, and that the work of these anthropologists should not challenge the primacy of the nation state. By framing the debate in social class terms and projecting this perspective into a corporate political system it was possible for his administration to avoid the problems that ethnic pluralism would have posed to the nation state's unity. He stated that the Indian was "a member of a social class taking part in the collective task of production."⁸⁰

Vicente Lombardo Toledano, the Revolutionary labor leader wanted to organize Mexico through Indian republics based on linguistic considerations, instead of a state-centric political organization. Toledano affirmed that the Revolution "has had only demagogic aspects, exalting nationalism and arriving at nothing better than folklore." "We have coined a magic phrase: 'incorporate the Indian to civilization.'"⁸¹

This union leader thought that the roots of livelihood problems in the Mexican

⁷⁹ Lázaro Cárdenas, in Comas, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*, p. 63. "Las causas del aislamiento y de la depresión económica eran las condiciones geográficas y los sistemas políticos que crearon regímenes de opresión. Por ello, la unidad indígena, mas aun que el color de la piel, y las formas externas de la organización política o de las manifestaciones del arte, se advertía en su posición de clase oprimida destinada a subsistir en las mas duras labores agrícolas, y en todas partes donde el trabajo barato servía de base a las empresas de explotación."

⁸⁰ Lázaro Cárdenas, *Address to the Primer Congreso Indigenista Interamericano*, (Pátzcuaro: Talleres Gráficos Mex., 1940), p. 1.

⁸¹ Lombardo Toledano, "Como Resolvió el Régimen Soviético el Problema de las Nacionalidades Oprimidas," in Vicente Lombardo Toledano and Víctor Manuel Villaseñor, *Un Viaje al Mundo del Porvenir* (México, 1936). It is important to observe that Lombardo Toledano argued the fascist feature of the Plan Sexenal of Lázaro Cárdenas in 1933. However, Lombardo Toledano changed his mind and began to work on Cárdenas basis looking to establish social in Mexico. Cf. Francisco Rodríguez, pp.351-352.

countryside lay in unjust economic relations rather than in “traditional” systems of belief, and stated that local cultures should be respected and preserved. He insisted that land, credit, and technical assistance were indispensable prerequisites for bettering the quality of life of the rural population.⁸² For him, the Ejido communal lands that the Revolution constitutional reform promoted should be done on the lands that the re-appropriation of capitalist holdings would provide. “A rural proletariat will achieve a new form of community self-government designed to increase local decision-making authority at the same time that these new local communities will be integrated to the nation state through a hierarchical organization of regional and national groups.⁸³ In synthesis, he made three suggestions; political re-districting to allow homogeneous indigenous groups to control the political life of their regions, absolute autonomy for Indian regions, promotion of Indian languages, and promotion of industrialization in these areas.⁸⁴ However, Lombardo Toledano’s project was

⁸² H. de Alcántara, *Anthropological Perspectives on rural Mexico*: They changed their mind when it became clear, in the course of the 1930s, that only a strong and united Mexican nation could deal successfully with the international pressures unleashed by Cárdenas’ support of agrarian reform and the petroleum industry re-appropriation. Lombardo Toledano labor leadership played a decisive role, within the Confederation of Mexican Workers, in molding the policy of the national government toward the working class, both urban and rural. It was this revolutionary tendency who provided the kind of grassroots organization of the rural proletariat on the large foreign landholdings of the richest agricultural areas of the country required to support agrarian reform during the 1930s.

⁸³ See Lombardo Toledano, “Como Resolvió el Régimen Soviético el Problema de las Nacionalidades Oprimidas,” in Vicente Lombardo Toledano and Víctor Manuel Villaseñor, *Un Viaje al Mundo del Porvenir* (México, 1936). H. de Alcántara, *Anthropological Perspectives on rural Mexico*: “Saénz was more aware than many other contemporaries of the positive aspects of indigenous populations. His essays contain many references to elements of culture, which should be respected by the larger society, indigenous government being one of the most important. Such a concern was to receive considerable political support during the presidency of Lázaro Cárdenas, from 1934 to 1940. The anthropologist Moisés Saénz proposed to “incorporate civilization to the Indians.” There was no other solution “than to take the civilization of the white man, which in our case is some what colored, to the Indian, and let him through assimilation transform it into what will be the Mexican version.”

⁸⁴ Lombardo Toledano, *Un Viaje al Mundo del Porvenir*, pp. 97-120.

criticized drawing on the impediments that Indians' communal rights represented to the modern mestizo Mexico centralized nation state. In 1940 he abandoned his original project and supported Cárdenas' claim for a strong and united nation in response to the United States pressures against the nationalist politics of the Revolution. These circumstances changed Lombardo Toledano's politics and he began to advocate for "maximum political rights... within the framework of the current national system." Generating more local representation in regional and national organizations such as the Mexican Workers Center (Central de Trabajadores Mexicanos), regional Indian organizations, and women's groups were the new concrete objectives that he promoted.⁸⁵

During *Cardenismo* (1930-1934) the task of integrating indigenous communities under the state's action had its largest impacts, mainly through land distribution.⁸⁶ Of the three most important land distributions, La Laguna, Yucatan and Valle del Yaqui, two benefited indigenous communities directly.⁸⁷ The half-

⁸⁵ H. de Alcántara, *Anthropological Perspectives on rural México*, pp. 16-17.

⁸⁶ During this time were also founded: the Departamento Autónomo de Asuntos Indígenas (1936); the Comisión Intersectorial para Investigar las condiciones generales de la vida de los Tarahumaras (1936); the Comisión Intersectorial de Estudios y Planeación en el Valle del Mezquital; and the Comisión Intersectorial para estudio de las necesidades de la región mixteca en Oaxaca. And, in 1940 the first Congreso Indigenista Latinoamericano was held in Michoacán. It is VERY interesting to read this report on the attempt done by the government to substitute Santa Claus by Quetzacoal http://sepiensa.org.mx/contenidos/h_mexicanas/s.xx/quetza/quetza1.htm

⁸⁷ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*. Aguirre Beltrán, who does not differentiate between old and new mestizaje, denies this thesis arguing that it was mestizo and not indigenous population that lived in these regions. "Cárdenas es el que en realidad incorporó a la sociedad y a las economías nacionales, con la política agraria, a un número muy grande de campesinos que en ese tiempo se consideraban indígenas, pero que en realidad eran mestizos." (Aguirre Beltrán in Interview by Federico Campbell, 103). His biologicist perspective on indigenous and mestizo subjectivities impedes him to relate land distribution, racialization and post-revolution politics to construct the modern Mexico.

century from 1860 to 1910 was characterized by concentration in land ownership by foreigners, while Cárdenas Post Revolutionary period has witnessed a reversal of that process.⁸⁸ The land decree of 1915, declared that all communal lands alienated since 1856 should be returned to their former owners. *Ejidors* in need of communal lands should receive those lands without former titles. The constitution of 1917 incorporated and expanded upon the 1915 decree, and additional provisions were added to the agrarian code first established in 1930's. Most of the land distributed under the decree of 1915, article 27 of the constitution, and subsequent legislation took the *Ejido* form, which granted land tenure to a village rather than to individuals. However, it was in the 1930s that land reform had a significant impact upon the structure of Mexican land tenure and tremendous changes took place in rural Mexico. In 1930 the *Ejidors* held only 13 percent of aggregate Mexican cropland. By 1940 they composed 47 percent of the total. Measured in terms of hectares actually cultivated, the *Ejido* proportion rose from 15 percent to 49 percent. Furthermore, these changes entailed transfer of lands already in use, since the totals for cropland and land under cultivation rose very little during the thirties. By 1940, virtually one-half of Mexico's rural population lived on *Ejidors*; while the population living on haciendas had diminish to less than one million.⁸⁹

This process of redistribution of the land did not happen without violent resistance of the landowners. Throughout the country, most hacendados employed

⁸⁸ Indigenous peasants (named peasants by indigenistas of the time) formed the bulwark of the revolutionary armies, while most hacendados fought for the old order.

⁸⁹ Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, p. 32.

private armies to keep the indigenous populations off the lands that the Revolution had promised to return to the Indian peasants while these private armies guaranteed the hacendados' sources for men and women servant labor. Indigenous peasants attempted to stake claim to nearby privatized holdings drawing on their original rights to Mexican lands, a step that also allowed them to resist the labor conditions imposed by the armed hacendados and local caciques.⁹⁰ The 1917 Constitution states that all the land of Mexico is an inalienable possession of the nation that may be sold or bought by the state. It can at any moment return to public use when so needed. In addition, it also points out that the state has the right to permit or prohibit the action of foreigners in the country, and the obligation to watch over the public interests.

While these social confrontations happened, an increasing tension developed between the Mexican government and the United States. Cárdenas actively supported the organization of labor and generally sided with Mexican workers in opposition to foreign companies. The government also supported policies of nationalization. When Cárdenas expropriated the foreign-owned oil industry in 1938, the tensions increased.

In 1940, under the presidency of Cardenas, at Patzcuaro, Michoacan, took place the first Interamerican Indigenist Congress (III). During the following years Mexican Indigenismo was establishing in the majority of Latin American countries.⁹¹ The III was created in 1940, previous to the Latin American National Indigenist Institutes, which were finally founded at the end of the 1940s. It is an additional fact to take into account if one wants to see indigenismo as a simultaneous tool for

⁹⁰ Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, pp. 33-35.

⁹¹ See Comas, *Ensayos sobre Indigenismo*, pp. 48-49.

national and hemispheric construction. An international convention that was signed by Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, United States, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Venezuela marked the agreement for the eventual foundation of the institute.⁹² The Patzcuaro congress approved “integral indigenist politics” for the hemisphere.

In 1942 Gamio became the Chair of the III after the un-expected death of Moisés Sáenz. He stated that Pan-American institute’s objective was “to study a great number of social groups with very deficient biological development and whose economic-cultural characteristics correspond to inferior evolution stages”. He placed within these inferior cultures “the black and mulatto populations of the Caribbean and other continental regions,” as well as the “white population that lives in the Rocky Mountains of the South of the U.S. (sic)” He was the chair of the III since 1942 to 1960. Gamio explicitly focused his “vigorous and enthusiastic love” and “endless redeeming struggle” on the “Indo-mestiza population of almost all Latin American countries.” He explicitly stated that his anthropology does not take into account other groups.⁹³ Bearing in mind Gamio’s politics of *indigenista* mestizaje excluding black and mulatto Mexican and Latin Americans from the mestizaje project, his attempt to construct the myth of modern political democracy acquires visibility. Erasing the history of slavery and race relations, he positions the abstracts citizens of the national

⁹² El segundo congreso se celebró en 1949 en Cuzco, Perú; el tercero en La Paz, Bolivia en 1954; el cuarto en Guatemala en 1959; el quinto en Quito, Ecuador, el sexto nuevamente en Pátzcuaro, México en 1969; el séptimo tuvo lugar en Brasilia, Brasil, 1973; el octavo en Mérida, Yucatán, en 1980; el noveno en Estados Unidos, en 1985, el décimo en 1989, en San Martín de los Ángeles en Argentina.

⁹³ Gamio, *Consideraciones sobre el Problema Indígena*, p. 9.

state as subjects in formal equal relations while in historical subordination.⁹⁴

Drawing on the logic of anti-racism, erasure of blacks and assimilation of the indigenous were convergent strategies that supported mestizaje's instrumentality within the discourse of Mexico and Latin America's modern political democracy.

Indigenistas of the III agreed that universalizing standards of science were required to identify the Indian roots of the hemisphere. Individual nations policies will use an international standard of treatment of indigenous peoples. The Institute attempted to control the Indians' past by re-introducing their presence in the inter-American space through the mediation of the nation state. Those nation states that disciplined the present of their Indian past would be admitted within the Pan-American community.

At the same time, through indigenous identity politics, the hemispheric space was identified as "the Americas." The north of the hemisphere identified the Indians as ethnic peoples. The south identified modernized Indians as mestizos. Pan-American *indigenismo* de-racialized the political discourse, fetishized Indians and mestizos, transformed them into ethnic groups within both the nation states and the continent, and marked a hierarchical difference between the segregated ethnicity model of the United States and the spaces where miscegenation defined the character of Latin American nation states. Indigenismo was the hemispheric policy shared by the Pan-American community, while segregation and mestizaje were two different strategies to solve what was named "the Indian problem," the specific name that

⁹⁴ Page Dubois, *Slaves and Other Objects*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003)

indigenismo understood as a domain of social positivism, projected on Indians' history.

Continental unity was suggested as a possibility “even in the earliest days of the republic,” and institutional Pan-American *indigenismo* re-articulated it in the 1940s.⁹⁵ The Patzcuaro Congress, which approved the creation of the III, also declared that anthropologists of homologous national institutes, which eventually would affiliate to the III while constituting decentralized structures, also needed to develop a uniform methodology in anthropological and historical research. Anthropology approaches the study of universal mankind through comparative methods, which are deployed in order to evaluate the social distance between the referential modern European subject, and the spaces that anthropologists explored. While History also studies mankind it does so through chronological frameworks. Indigenous European centric conceptions of universal history posit the European modern man at the core of this project. Anthropologists' culture was the modern pole on the hierarchical scale of measurement, and the cultures that they studied were the primitive extreme. Gamio applied epistemology when measuring Mexican migrants' Americanization and re-Mexicanization process of modernization. When he worked for the magazine *Modern Mexico* advertising to potential U.S. tourists, Gamio stated

⁹⁵ See, Horseman, *Race and Manifest Destiny*, pp. 87-103. While American leaders believed that the American people would span the continent and carry American institutions with them, there were different theories about the political structure that would result from this expansion. Since these primal times, the emphasis on the special abilities of the people who were destined to settle throughout the Americas were usually thought in terms of race difference. Anglo Saxons as descendents of Englishmen or as citizens of a republic, it was argued, were believed to have more wisdom than other peoples to settle the continent. “If the Americans were a providential people destined to regenerate the other peoples of the world, then the American Indians became the first test.”

that Mexican Indians' communities embodied all stages of civilization.⁹⁶ He replicated contemporaneous Boasian anthropologists who believed that different steps of human evolution co-existed in the world, and that the science of modern man, anthropology, was the science destined to uncover the essence of humankind by comparing these hierarchically constructed cultures. However, according to Gamio, the contact between different stages that the Mexican population represented had produced un-reproducible offspring. Their homogenization was the *indigenista* anthropologist's manifest destiny. Under these circumstances, to integrate history and anthropology within the III means to control the Indians embodied in the Americas contemporary mestizaje. At this point, it is important to remember that Gamio was the President of the Mexican delegation at the II Scientific Pan-American Conference in Washington, when in January of 1916 he argued for the foundation of Bureaus of Anthropology all along the Americas. In 1942 Gamio's seminal idea became the Indigenista Interamerican Institute (III), and in 1948 the Mexican Indigenista National Institute was founded.

In 1942, when invested by his peers as the Chair of the III, Gamio pointed out to the audience that "one of the most transcendental tasks has still to be done in favor of the Indian." These words show that the "transcendental" issue for him was the creation of the modern Mexican man and "the reason" of his "endless struggle" for the redemption of the Indians. Education, "but not only based on the alphabet and the book," would accomplish Mexican Indians' transformation into modern men, while simultaneously acquiring what he thought was the modern man's humankind

⁹⁶ González Gamio, *Manuel Gamio, una lucha sin fin*, p. 137.

universal essence. During his multiple presidencies of the Interamerican Institute, Gamio promoted the method of “integral education” for redeeming the Indians of the hemisphere, which meant teaching the Indian to acquire modern customs in order to “expand his consumption and elevate his quality of life, modernizing his outdated agricultural and industrial methods.”⁹⁷

The institute also disciplined the field of study. The science of anthropology and the *indigenistas*' applied anthropology became two different fields of expertise.⁹⁸ Applied anthropology corresponded to the III and the national indigenist institutes (INI). The discipline that was named “pure research” and “patrimonial protection” corresponded to the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), and the formation of anthropologists corresponded to National School of Anthropology and History, “a department that depends of the National Institute of Anthropology and History maintaining its own profile”.⁹⁹ National branches of the Interamerican

⁹⁷ Gamio, *América Indígena*, (Enero 1947). Anthropologists Alfonso Caso and Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán are related to this period indigenismo. In 1957, Aguirre Beltrán stated that the function of the institute was to induce Mexican Indians' acculturation in order to introduce convenient modifications within Indian culture.” Since the 1960's great number of intellectuals accused the INI's applied anthropology of being “ethnocide, authoritarian and homogenizing.”

⁹⁸ On December 4 of 1948 the INI was created. In 1948 Mexico, with the foundation of the Instituto Nacional Indigenista (INI) a new stage in Mexico's state-led Indigenismo marked a shift away from the indigenismo of the Cardenista regime within the context of Cardenas to Alemán's transition. Led by Archeologist Alfonso Cano, the Institute was established with the mandate to: 1) research and develop projects for the benefit of indigenous people; 2) advise official and non-official institutions and 3) coordinate the activities of different government dependencies. The establishment of the INI institutionalized the indigenous politics of the state, which were removed from the direct agenda of the President to become one of many programs overseen by the state. The Venezuelan branch of the III was founded in Caracas in 1947.

⁹⁹ In Venezuela, intellectuals who came back from their exile in Mexico at the end of the 1950s repeated the pattern of institutionalization. Miguel Angel Acosta Saignes, who as Gamio for the case of Mexico is called “the father of Venezuelan anthropology, founded the Instituto de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, as well as the Facultad de Humanidades. Acosta Saignes does not follow Gamio's liberal ideology. His positions represent the emergent indigenismo that since the 60s began an intense process of reflection and critique to assimilation. On the one side, the indigenous groups begin

Indigenista Institutes began to apply Gamio's politics all along Latin America in the 1950s. This step marked the moment when the institutional matrix of *indigenismo* in the Americas produced both the institution and the subjects and objects of its domain. The new Departments of Indigenous Affairs had been incorporated into the Secretariat of Public of Education. In 2004, at least in Venezuela, all these institutions were firmly consolidated and very active, while the indigenista project changed to an ethnic model of indigenous peoples and nation state's agenda.

Interamerican Indigenismo, in its work for modernizing the Indians, became part of the collective identification of indigenous populations, on the basis of homologous experiences as well as on the institute's homogenization of these experiences. It set the basis of a continental indigenous identity, while on the domestic level it constructed new identities based on indigenous communities, which began to develop an identity of their national as well as continental unity. Indians with local and historical specificities began to be "educated" by Interamerican indigenistas' workshops. They were trained under identical pedagogical perspectives to become "modern indigenous." Indigenous teachers and leaders belonging to different ethnic communities and nation states were submitted to the universalizing patterns of inter American training. This resulted in the creation of strong national, as well as continental, pan-indigenous identities. Drawing on this pan-ethnic identification, through what, at present times, would be named "indigenous social movements," the indigenous peoples continued their contestation.

to claim their right to be different, and, on the other hand, the anthropologists begin to ask themselves about the effects of an integrationist politics.

Since the 1940 Inter-American Congress, the modern indigenous subjects, mediated by the *indigenistas*, were represented in opposition to the Indians, who, according to the publications of the III, were “pre-modern, primitive and savage figures” always menacing the nation’s modernity. The valorization of the modern and the condemnation of what was understood as pre-modern were the legitimating parameters of indigenous political action. The Interamerican Indigenista Institute and the national Indigenistas National Institutes, which were part of the international as well as of the national communities, were institutions embedded with the power of science for defining and legitimating Latin American national states as well as Indians’ modernity. By this strategy, Interamerican *indigenismo* recognized and admitted as “ethnic,” within the hemispheric modernity, the Indians, who became modern Indigenous. At the same time, the III constructed Latin American countries as Ibero-America mestizo states, which now share with the U.S. a Pan-American policy to control the Indian legacy.¹⁰⁰ Rural mestizos, the vast majority of Indians who lived somewhere between the primitive and the modern, as well as the majority of Latin American states, also lived somewhere between Indianness and modernity. The Indian became part of the nation and made it mestiza, and Latin American became an ethnic part of the hemisphere. If the material circumstances were improved, both Latin American countries as well as mestizos would eventually enjoy the benefits of becoming modern.

¹⁰⁰ See Walter Mignolo, “La Colonialidad a lo largo y a lo ancho: el hemisferio occidental en el horizonte colonial de la modernidad,” in Edgardo Lander (ed.) *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales. Perspectivas latinoamericanas* (Caracas: Ed. De la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Sociales de la Universidad Central de Venezuela, 2000), pp. 79-119.

This institutionalization marked the end of the genesis of the modern political right. Most discussions on the history of Latin American democracy and its correspondent civil society accept, uncritically, the claim that the authority of the state is legitimate. Drawing on Carole Pateman's feminist critique to liberalism and on the examination of the democratic myth underlying the narrative of mestizaje within the Mexican Revolution, it is possible to understand the productivity of mestizaje for explaining Latin America's recursive failures (and selective racialized and gendered exclusions) in achieving modernity.¹⁰¹

Since 1915, when the Mexican Revolution was still consolidating its leadership, *indigenistas*' new mestizaje offered to the victorious coalition of Revolutionary leaders the possibility to shape the nation as a problematic entity with several nations. *Indigenistas*' scientific knowledge informed the welfare politics addressing the transformation of the insurgent Indians and mestizos into the new Mexican *mestizo*. The Revolution's politics of nation making introduced into the new political system the social forces that rebelled against the perverse effects of the Porfirio Diaz regime's modernization. Cultural characteristics of mestizos and indigenous populations, argued Gamio and *indigenistas*, jeopardized theirs as well as the nation's incorporation of the benefits of civilization, which at that moment began to turn into the developing and industrialization paradigm.

Race and gender were erased from the political debate. Gamio's anthropology made the culture of indigenous populations responsible of their exclusion from the

¹⁰¹Pateman, *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*.

benefits of modernization. Mestizaje and the creation of the mestizo national subject became the first instrument for the construction of the myth of modern civil society. Distribution of community lands would free the rural Indians from their subjection to caciques and hacendados, and the *Ejido* form of communal land became the institution that introduced the now rural population into the modern political system. The *Ejido*-based form of community land drew on Indians' cooperative legacy while overlapping the socialist paradigm of community formation enacted by the Revolution. This magic shift that made race invisible and transformed mestizaje into ethnicity working within the Revolution's anti racist politics was a reflective epistemology of the Indian and mestizos successful social movement that in 1910 raised up against Porfirio Diaz. However, the erasure of race from the Revolutionary politics produced Indians as subaltern subjects and *mestizos* as national subjects, which were connected through their concave reflexivity to the modern European referential man.

Porfirio Díaz's assault on Indian lands for their incorporation to his modernization project led to the first successful popular movement of the century. After the Revolution, industrialization became the mestizos' national project. *Indigenismo* made it possible the political and epistemological representation of Indian peoples and their lands as being part of the Revolution's political system. Within this logic, the *Ejido* communal lands were at the core of the organizational principle of this mestizo national project.

Both race and gender differences, which were erased from the Revolution government's discourses, produced the mestiza nation from the wombs of the

Mexican woman while excluding them from the political sphere. In fact, by the early 1930s, the Ejidos, which “became the civilian politician’s equivalent of a general’s troops,” had developed peasant confederations in all Mexico’s states.¹⁰² In 1940, Cárdenas brought organized labor and *Ejidal* leagues into the Revolutionary party on the basis of sectors, a step that facilitated control at the national-level of the local caciques. Drawing on Cárdenas constitutional reform that connected political rights to participation within the Ejido, Indians were transformed into *mestizo* peasants.

Mexican Indians disappeared from the political scenario and mestizo peasants were the ones that acquired a limited form of political citizenship. The family holder was the representative of the *Ejido*; a gendered procedure that excluded women’s political representation while included the Mexican woman’s sexuality in order to achieve the symbolic and biological reproduction of the nation. The civil ascription of the Mexican women within the nation is defined by their natural particularity of being women.

As I stated in the introduction of this chapter, Pateman’s statement that “sexual or conjugal rights must necessarily precede the right of the fatherhood” becomes evident when examining The Revolution’s leaders’ masculinist conception of politics of nation making in Mexico.¹⁰³ The Mexican *mestizo* civil subject has been constructed in opposition to women and all that our bodies symbolize. Pateman also

¹⁰² Men who were committed to the reforms of the revolution, and who also “witnessed the reemergence of the mestizo military politician, the caudillo, whose regional military strength gained him a governorship or the presidency”, founded them. In 1920, 1923, 1927, and 1929 Mexico saw leading caudillos in revolt each time a presidential election was approached. Hansen, *The Politics of Mexican Development*, p. 165.

¹⁰³ Pateman, *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*, p. 38.

points out that, “this peculiar relation between civil society and women and our bodies is illustrated by the fact that few legal jurisdictions have abolished the right of a husband to use his wife’s body against her will.”¹⁰⁴ Feminist scholars show that “from ancient times, political life has been conceptualized in opposition to the mundane world of necessity, the body.” Within western tradition, “the creation of political life has been seen as a masculine act of birth,” which can be understood as a male replica of women’s procreative capacity.¹⁰⁵

When *indigenismo* transforms Indians into *mestizo* Mexican citizen subjects, it also inscribes the absence of the Indians, who only are part of the civil society if they become a mestizo peasant of an *Ejido*, in the foundation of the political system of the country. Boas’ cultural turn of anthropology became, through Gamio, the scientific tool confirming the viability of the Revolution’s plan to construct the mestizo Mexican subject. Drawing again on the magic of science, *indigenistas* singled out the Indian traits that define and, at the same time, justify social difference. Cultural distance rather than social inequality re-inscribed Indians as strangers in Revolutionary Mexico, a space where they constituted the primary source of cheap, while not free labor. The de-racialized incorporation of the mestizo citizen as a cheap worker to the teleology of the mestiza nation state is the second magical political achievement of *indigenistas’* *mestizaje*.

With *Cardenismo*, *mestizaje* and class became part of the nation. The erasure of race and of Indians, and Mexican women’s bodies produced the new nation. Either

¹⁰⁴ Pateman, *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*, pp. 38-39.

¹⁰⁵ Pateman, *The disorder of women: democracy, feminism and political theory*, p. 45.

by nature or by culture, for conservatives as well as progressives, either to condemn or to justify, the lower classes became national mestizos intrinsically attached to the modern bourgeois nation and indispensable to its subsistence. How to reconcile the poverty of the majority of Mexican rural and urban workers with the egalitarian vision of the democratic state? *Mestizaje* was the concept that traversing the nation conciliated the Americas as well as domestic social inequality, and through Gamio's militancy in the Indigenista Interamerican Institute it also traversed the continent. *Mestizaje* allowed bourgeois culture to attempt to postpone the unveiling of the structural limits of its project.

Gamio was one of the most significant representatives of this productive period: His *indigenismo* was characterized by a struggle between polarized Indianness and modern Mexico. *Mestizaje* was his solution to communicate different universes. Who was the true Indian and who was the true *mestizo*? Gamio's recursive definitions of Indians show how this question terrorized him all his life. For him, Indians and *mestizos* could assume two tendencies. On the one hand, they emerged as imprecise feminized figures. On the other hand, they were presented as normal human beings. They do not deviate in looks or dress from the standard national citizens. They were indistinguishable from other members of society except for slight deviation such as their language. In the 1940s, the Revolution had already accomplished a generation of national education. The Indian became the poor Mexicans who also were marked, as when they were the Indians, by their deviation from the European modern norm. In this conception the image of the dangerous Indian and the un-trustful *mestizo* did not differ much from the conception that dominating and hegemonic culture imposed

upon the lower classes of the urban centers of any industrialized country in the Americas.

Throughout the first half of the century, Mexico, as well as many other Latin American countries portrayed themselves as plagued with fears of imprecise Indian menaces.¹⁰⁶ What all these fears shared was the suggestion that the social order was in danger. Within *indigenistas*' framework of modernization, Indianness was the primitive cultural condition, which required the menaced/menacing non-modern population to become indigenous in order to have access to the progress embedded in the process of industrialization. By constructing insurgent Mexico as stemming from Indianness and un-functional *mestizaje*, *indigenismo* unified Mexican population under the myth of *mestizo* nationalism. But it also reproduced a teleological narrative promising that all *mestizo* Mexicans would enjoy the benefits of industrialization once education would transform them into modern educated citizen subjects. Attached to the system as an ontological part of it, the ghost of the Mexican Revolution haunted other Latin American nation states. Destruction could manifest itself in many forms, but it would always be there, projecting a shadow over the future and the promises of private property constructed by the universe of the modern European bourgeois man.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ In order to begin to introduce the worthy next chapter of the dissertation, at this point of the discussion of the Mexican Revolution it would be worthily to remind Gabriel García Márquez's obsession with the metaphor of the plague in Latin American spaces.

¹⁰⁷ Marx and Engels in the "Manifesto of the Communist Party" in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, Robert C. Tucker, ed., (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978) developed an entire political program from this premise. Drawing on the material conditions as well as on the imagery of the contradiction: "The development of Modern Industry, therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own gravediggers," p. 476.

Two non-dialoguing worlds, Indians and *mestizos* versus modern Mexicans, led the nation state to a state of war that menaced the existence of the nation. Porfirian ideology enabled the reconciliation of the negative effects of modernization with a utopian national future. *Mestizaje* produces both Indianness and miscegenation as fetishes appropriated by the national leaders in order to construct the magic modern state.

What happened between the Mexican Revolution and the decade of the 40s that made real Gamio's claim for an inter-American institutionalization of applied anthropology? Indians' political integration into the Mexican nation state seemed to be definitely consolidated when Cardenas' administration institutionalized the popular movement that upraised against Porfirio Díaz' ancien regime. However why does Mexican *Indigenismo* become a Pan-American project?

In 1916 Gamio's seminal *indigenismo* was represented in his book *Forjando Patria*. In 1942, when Gamio became the III's Chair, applied anthropology developed its particular ways of defining and treating Indian poverty in Latin American. Massive poverty in the modern sense appeared in Mexico when the market economy broke down community ties and deprived millions of people from access to land, water, and other resources, and the Mexican Revolution interrupted Porfirio Díaz's ancien regime's modernizing dreams. With the consolidation of capitalism, systemic poverty spread out and menaced men like Gamio. The transformation of Indians into modern mestizo Mexican subjects on the basis of the assistance of the state set in place mechanisms of control that were interpreted as the political integration of the

Indians (now named mestizos) into the nation.¹⁰⁸ At the international level, *Indigenista* institutions established the proper modernizing patterns that Latin American states with great proportion of indigenous populations needed to follow in order to be legitimated as of the Americas' hemisphere.

After WWII, when the III consolidated *indigenismo*'s institutionalization, the globalization of poverty and the United Nations' process of de-colonization veiled again the structural limits of the capitalist modernizing project by re-introducing non-European indigenous peoples' pre-modern conditions and making them responsible of their nations' poverty. In 1948 the World Bank defined as poor those countries with an annual per capita income below \$100, which meant almost two third of the world's people.¹⁰⁹ Within Mexico, the poor were defined as lacking what the rich had in terms of material culture. Poor countries came to be similarly defined in relation to the standards of wealth of the more advantaged nations. If the problem was defined in terms of insufficient income, the solution was the incorporation of these populations to productive activity generating economic growth. A new scientific paradigm identified poverty with indigenous peoples of non-European or U.S. spaces. Poverty became the organizing concept and the object of a new domain. Multiple experts' interventions created the domain of Latin American poverty, and Inter-American *indigenismo* was one of them. It was an emergent identification strategy, which

¹⁰⁸ Indigenistas' publications approved that the indigenous populations demanded financial aid for regional dances and popular festivals, training programs for efficient bi-lingual education, roads for national integration, potable water, doctors, nurses and sanitary brigades for better health care attention, and land demarcation.

¹⁰⁹ Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development, The making and unmaking of the third world*, (Princeton; New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 23.

drawing on their mestiza condition, essentialized Mexico and made ethnic Latin America. As it happened for Post Revolutionary Mexico, a new framework expanded Gamio's Mexican *indigenismo* to the Americas. The solution for Latin American poverty was now seen in terms of Inter-American and national *indigenistas'* interventions in education, health, hygiene, morality and employment and the installment of good habits of child rearing.

III. On Knowledge and Social Change

As we see, the mystical carácter of merchandises does not stem from its use value. But it does not yet stem from its determinations of value. On the first hand, because insofar as useful or productive activities differentiate, it is a incontrovertible *physiological* truth that all these activities are functions of the *human* organism and that each one of the them, it does not matter its content and shape, represents an essential waist of the *human* brain, of nerves, muscles, senses. Etc. On the second hand, because what refers to value's magnitude and what serves to determine it, meaning, *the duration in the time* of that waist and the *quantity* of work invested in it, it is evident that the quantity differentiates itself inclusive through the senses *from the quality* of the work. (cursive in the original)
Karl Marx, *El Capital, Crítica de la Economía Política*, T. I, p. 37.¹

Introduction

The crisis that often shakes the stock markets or the war on terrorism constitute some manifestations of a process in which the power of governments, the role of the media corporations, or the destiny of national jobs and cultures have been asymmetrically transformed by globalization. In April 2002, the coup against the Venezuelan government arrived to CNN spectators before it happened.² Indeed the power of media challenges nation states in view of the capacity of transnational capital to shape a free world market, and through this means to localize workers' production of surplus value while internationalizing reproduction of finance capital. Technological globality allows for the migration of capital, a commodity like others, according to business and financial interests, as a "mechanism for pricing capital and allocating it to its most profitable

¹ Karl Marx, *El Capital. Crítica de la Economía Política*, T. 1, (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1973).

² Ver el documental, "Crónica de un Golpe de Estado," *Venezolana de Televisión*, 2002. En la mañana de ese día, en la parte oriental de la ciudad, diez oficiales militares de alto rango habían citado en una residencia al corresponsal de CNN, Otto Neustald, para grabar una declaración preparada de antemano para su difusión ulterior. Leída por el contralmirante Héctor Ramírez Pérez, quien luego fuera designado ministro de Defensa por el gobierno golpista de Carmona, el testimonio deploraba la masacre de civiles inocentes y anunciaba que una conspiración macabra había sido puesta en práctica pro Chávez y había provocado la muerte de seis venezolanos asesinados por las fuerzas del gobierno. Neustald tuvo que hacer dos tomas del testimonio del contralmirante. Había sido grabada antes de que la violencia se apoderara de los manifestantes de la oposición y de los pro Chávez. Otto Neustald declaró, meses después, en una conferencia en una universidad, que había sido llamado para grabar con antelación el mensaje de los militares en una residencia privada. Afirmó que en el momento de la grabación, que hace mención específica a las muertes causadas pro Chávez, no se había producido violencia alguna.

opportunity.”³ This type of globalization has already generated thousands of books and essays and incomprehension. But globalization is a fact of life. I am not interested in the technological aspects of globalization. I rather focus my study on men and women’s agency within this process.

Part II links Gamio’s masculinist way of nation making under Pan-American modern contexts, to Wayuu indigenous women’s womanist way of nation making under Interamerican (post) modern contexts, which I develop in Part III. Part I examined how anthropologist Gamio’s ethnographic work drew on his desire as a scientific man to be admitted within the global modernity. It identified the nation state-led origin of Mexican and Latin American *mestizaje* as an instrument that would modernize Indians and transform them into indigenous of an ethnic America. How is the modern history of *mestizaje* and hybridity, evoked by Sandoval and García Canclini’s use of these metaphors, haunting its (post) modern use of it by the Wayuu women? In part II, I examine what does the application of these two authors’ *mestizaje* and hybridity frameworks produce, if, as Sandoval and García Canclini suggest, one attempts to use them to evaluate Latin American opportunities “to enter and exit from modernity.” If part emphasizes a masculinist way of inscribing a national and continental *mestiza* community, part II articulates the view on *mestiza* and hybrid community making of Sandoval, a feminist U.S. woman of color, and of García Canclini, a male Latin American anthropologist. What do Sandoval and García Canclini mean when using the metaphors of “*mestizaje* and hybridity” for writing about contestation to neo-liberal globalization in U.S third world and in Latin America?⁴ I contrast these two authors and

³ Saskia Sassen, *Losing Control; Globalization and its discontents: Essays on the mobility of people and money*. (New York: New York Press, 1998).

⁴ Néstor García Canclini, *Ciudadanos y Consumidores. Conflictos multiculturales de la globalización*, (México: Grijalbo, 1995); “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, (Bogotá: Tercer Mundo Editores, 1999); “Gramsci con Bourdieu: hegemonía, consumo y nuevas formas de organización

relate them to others who also use similar terminologies to write about (post) modern power. By bearing in mind contemporary displacement of identity of sameness versus heterogeneity-based social mobilizations, I evaluate how state-centric social movements' theories help or inhibit us for understanding what Latin American indigenous women are telling about how to contest, through social networks, the negative effects that globalization has had on their lives. Drawing on the concept of "learning identities," the general objective of part II is to link, through the introduction of an epistemological and historical framework, post Gamio's revolutionary masculinist way of nation making to the Venezuelan Wayuu women's way of nation making under the contexts of the Bolivarian Revolution.

The exclusionary patterns of liberal modernization, experienced by U.S. ethnic populations, are a significant aspect to be taken into account by decolonizing social movements of Latin America where elites, as well as many working class populations, still proposed this model as the alternative social change to be achieved. The U.S. ethnic experiences have relevance for evaluating the possibilities of inclusion into the liberal model of modernization. From Latin America, the U.S. is often understood as the model to be followed. In the U.S., class is embodied through race, and through the Organization of American States, Gamio's *indigenismo* integrated the national and the international racializing and gendering orders in the hemisphere. Neo-colonization is re-articulating Gamio's Pan-American racial order, while re-configuring it through the hemisphere. In Gamio's chapter, sexual politics were examined under modern contexts. In Part II, I introduce Venezuela's sexual politics specificities, which are related to the link between

popular," in *Revista Nueva Sociedad* No. 71 (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 1985), pp.74-84; *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2002); *Las culturas populares en el capitalismo* (Bogotá: Ed. Nueva Imagen, 1982). Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the oppressed*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

the national territory and the production of oil, in order to examine them, in Part III, under neo-liberal globalization contexts.

Frederic Jameson, who is a germinal author for Sandoval, has classified four analytical positions on globalization.⁵ A first position establishes that globalization does not exist as an ontological manifestation, and that the nation states continue to be the reference of both national and international political relations. A second position affirms that globalization has always existed. Like the first position, the second one states that globalization does not need new cognitive tools to be analyzed. A third perspective interprets globalization in terms of gradation within a capitalist scale. Globalization would be the late stage of capitalism, and the world market would constitute “the ultimate horizon” of capitalism. New ontological networks, among them counter globalization social movements, would not then need qualitatively new categorical conceptualizations. In this case, social movements’ global networks would continue to be based on nation state centric theories. Global trade is seen as transforming the exchange between nation states, while reinforcing the capitalist relations of production within the domestic order. A fourth position focuses on virtual communications as co-constitutive compressed time-space features of corporate late capitalism. This chapter of the dissertation, which argues that neo-liberal colonization requires new cognitive and political tools in order to contest it, evaluates new social movements’ relations to nation states under global contexts and introduces Venezuela’s modern state’s specificity as an oil production country.

Literature on globalization questions the validity and utility of the nation state as the main unit of government, which has become a central object of study in academic inquiry. Yet many generalizations about the future of the nation state rely exclusively on celebrating globalization, and interpretations are centered in the hegemonic pole

⁵ Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism, or the cultural logic of late capitalism*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991).

constituted by the United States, Japan or the European countries, while if a research focuses in contemporary Venezuelan or other Latin American countries would provide a different version.⁶ A great number of authors predict that the transformations of the political model under globalization, in the hegemonic nation states, will be mechanically projected to the peripheral/localized states. Drucker has posited that the more powerful nation states, that he names the “central” nation states, should become trans-national institutions.⁷ According to this author, internationalism and regionalism threaten the nation state from outside, and localism, (he calls it “tribalism,” a term that also the Chicanas use in opposition to national ascription), threatens the nation state from inside. The nation state, of the globalizing countries, shall disappear under multiple domestic and external associations that will erode its basis, and the peripheral countries, “localized” within the local/global binary logic of globalization, shall follow the same path. Ohmae celebrates contemporary globalization, and sees that the traditions of the nation states have become unnatural, and at present days jeopardize the global economy.⁸ Huntington, on the other hand, states that the nation state shall continue to be the main world actor in a world driven by the search for power and wealth, as well as by cultural preferences, coincidences, and differences.⁹ Wallerstein predicts that the nation state shall survive; this time by controlling its welfare institutions to confront the great poverty and social conflicts that the market economy has created. According to Wallerstein, the

⁶ Edgardo Lander, (ed.) *La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales: perspectivas latinoamericanas*, (Caracas: Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Sociales (FACES-UCV); Instituto Internacional de la UNESCO para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe (IESALC), 2000).

⁷ Peter F. Drucker, *Title Post capitalist society*, (New York: Harper Business, 1993).

⁸ Kenichi Ohmae, *End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies*, (New York: Touchstone, 1996).

⁹ Samuel Huntington, *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

globalization that is taking place is so deep and transcendental that it shall bring about, not only the end of socialism and communism, but the collapse of the liberal paradigm as well.¹⁰ Drawing on Wallerstein, women, indigenous, and ecological movements appear on the horizon as prolific research sites for challenging the paradigm of liberal democracy that the populations negotiating with capitalism from alternative political and social paradigms, like the Wayuu indigenous women, are creating.

These historical changes, and their contradictory interpretations, justify the study of identity mobilizing politics within an oil producing country of the imagined community of the American hemisphere. By examining domestic and external political praxes of U.S. ethnic and Latin American indigenous women, I hope to elucidate, through my study of their antiracist practices, some features of the new paradigms of democracy emerging from successful social movements interacting with national states and international institutions. A close interpretation of Venezuelan indigenous women's contestations against neo liberal colonization suggests that almost everything written about globalization, by celebrating or denying interpreters alike, is wrong. The challenge is to update identity politics insights, and to use them as a point of departure to a critical understanding of state centric social movements' theories that do not match with contemporary mobilizations against neo-liberal colonization. I am interested in a theory that goes beyond partisan posturing of either celebrating or denigrating globalization, and that captures the historical specificity that globalization has opened up to progressive and successful social movements in the Americas. The basic critical insight that the study of U.S. ethnic and Venezuelan indigenous women's mobilizations provides evidence of is that heterogeneity acquired a great relevance within new ways of understanding democracy. Sandoval's *mestizaje* and García Canclini's *hybridity* are attempts to

¹⁰ Immanuel M. Wallerstein, *After liberalism* (New York: New Press, 1995); *La crisis del estado de bienestar y otros ensayos*, C. Offe and J. Habermas (eds.), (San José, Costa Rica: Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales, 1989).

conceptualize this characteristic of heterogeneous mobilizations against neo liberal globalization. Nation state and left/right-centric categories are not capable of capturing what revolutionary politics mean and meant in Latin America, a view that becomes exceptionally evident from the research site of indigenous women.

The point of departure of this dissertation states that sexual politics are crucial for Latin American revolutionary modernizing movements that seek to disrupt the vicious cycles of liberal modernizing failures. Sandoval proposes to draw on U.S. ethnic women's "radical *mestizaje*," and García Canclini suggests to conceive Latin American "hybrid cultural consumption" as fertile political and epistemological tools capable of melding the multiple, separate, and mutually incompatible cultural traditions of Latin Americans living in the hemisphere. By articulating both authors' projects, differences between U.S. ethnic social movements and Latin American national liberation and indigenous movements could construct a space favorable to the consolidation of hemispheric decolonizing social movements.

I argue that women's place within this hemispheric mobilizing identity is crucial if one wants to avoid the reproduction of previous failures. Within this decolonizing hemispheric perspective, both the left and the right are strains within the western rationalist discourse that modernization and developmental dreams have always embedded within Latin American revolutionary projects. Modernization and development need to be reconfigured in order to achieve a successful revolution. Similarly evidenced by the Porfirian and the Mexican Revolution, these projects may be radically at odds with one another, yet they shared the same basic faith in reason, in rational analysis, as the key to understanding and changing social reality. They disagreed on almost everything, but they share a faith in instrumental rationalism as a privileged method for ascertaining reality. On the contrary, in Venezuela, President Chávez runs the nation's affairs based on a non-western rational discourse, which has deep historical roots

in the country. Contemporary indigenous movements do not believe in liberal modernization or developmental projects. Unlike the traditional left/right and Pan-American *indigenismo*, indigenous movements, as well as contemporary Venezuelan Bolivarian Revolution, represent a rejection of western rationalism's claim to supremacy over the public sphere. In a fundamental way, U.S. radical *mestizaje* and Latin American hybridity cannot be viewed from a left/right axis without distorting both themselves and the axis. In fact, contemporary indigenous and women's social movements not only fall outside that axis; they represent a rejection of the axis, a revolt of the epistemological order that sustains it, and a new political paradigm of democracy.

Cultural nationalism draws on the political impulse derived from the construction through words of the reincarnation of a mythical past. At-present, this strategy is reinforced by late capitalism's privilege of virtuality over reality. President Chávez creates a reality in front of a microphone or a camera. The *palabrera* Wayuu women restore the matrilineal tradition of their ethnic communities. By linking contemporary U.S. radical *mestizaje* and Latin American cultural hybrid consumption I create a tool to reflect on the use, which Chávez and the Wayuu women do of the opportunities that neo-liberal globalization offers to them. Theorizing on women, indigenous, and national liberation movements' practices under global contexts seeks to reformulate the U.S. and European-centric cultural and ethnic studies. The theoretical and historical framework that part II develops attempts to shape a space for promoting a dialogue between (post) modern de-colonizing rhetoric of the U.S. ethnic and Venezuelan indigenous social movements.

Nation-states' intersectionality with social movements offers an appropriate framework to reflect on the meaning of identity strategies of indigenous women within de-colonizing projects. Sassen's exploration of ways of constructing more democratic societies within and across national boundaries emphasizes the spatial dimension of

capital globalization as well as the globality of social movements. This spatial dimension frames together the multiple identities of women's organizations that negotiate racial/ethnic/class/gender local identities in contestation to globalization. My understanding of Sassen supports my core research objective to study the history of *mestizaje* and hybridity in order to reflect in its contemporaneous applicability by decolonizing (post) modern social movements. I wish to trace the paths that the experiences of contemporary anti-racist social movements provide for advancing on revolutionary practices under the opportunities that neo-liberal decolonizing struggles offer. Sassen provides a framework for this side of my work. Her speculations on the future of the nation state within globalizing contexts justify the connections I make for social movements as well as nation states' negotiations under global contexts. The indigenous women leaders' daily relations with the state and wider local, national, and transnational civil societies connect epistemological and political concerns. These concerns are linked to differentiating patterns of living within (post) modernity, while shaping common spaces against globalization, a question that Sandoval and García-Canclini formulate and answer.

From the indigenous women social movements' perspective, globalization influenced the reconfiguration of their organizational frameworks. Their ethnic communities and their relations to the nation state experienced changes. New logistic and informational technology allows for indigenous peoples' communicating all along the American Continent. Overlapping dynamics of ethnic and national women's mobilizations intersect with multiple processes of social mobilization fueled by globalization. Race and gender need to be taken into account within these processes. What does it mean to be activists of women and indigenous social movements that blur the spatial borders of the nation state while constructing a hemispheric ethnic identity for struggling for social justice and equity?

U.S. ethnic and Interamerican indigenous movements' political appeal is based on the critiques to liberal modernization that stems from these populations' historical exclusion from the American dream. This common experience led them to theorize and organize drawing on the premise that capitalist and liberal modernization paradigms require to always have a class of indispensable others. U.S. ethnic populations' from the American dream reinforces historical Latin American indigenous' rejection of the western rationality. This rationality justifies formal inclusion and substantial exclusion from modernization. Ecological movements reinforce U.S. ethnic as well as Latin American indigenous' anti-western-rationality. In Venezuela, the anti-liberal modernizing search of the state of an alter-native way of living overlaps indigenous movements' historical contestation to modernization. Ultimately, the increasing extension of Latin American indigenous movements have lent visibility to the idea that modernizing and developing projects impede the inclusion of the total population into the mainstream. The indigenous anti liberal modernization position became a discourse of power, something that has never happened before.

Nonetheless, neo-liberal globalization promotes both attraction and rejection. For exchanging commodities, the NAFTA and FTAA agreements presuppose a shared language among equals that the market and civil society's normativity should enact. Consumer and citizen subjects are the abstract references for promoting a global market for the exchange of objects, transformed into commodities, as well as for the negotiation of political differences in the international community of the Organization of American States (OAS) among nation states. This narrative defines the community by the sum of individuals or nation states. The international community, which performs the self-reflexive structure of the global market and the international community, repeats this legitimating pattern of the social and the political order. Only those nations that are legitimated states and follow this rationality belong to the international civil society.

Hegemony of financial capital, technological innovations, and the introduction of consumption within legitimating discourses of citizenship have expanded opportunities to uncover the reflexivity of the (post) modern subject.

Spatial changes seem to be transforming the rules of formation of the liberal paradigm while the consumer-citizen subject identification blurs previous nation state-centric identifications. In what follows, arguments and authors discuss the basic theoretical hypotheses on new social movements and on “*mestizaje*” and “hybridity.” The idea behind this discussion is to shape a framework capable of understanding the place that indigenous women have within revolutionary Latin American movements, which contest globalization while attempting to take advantage of contemporary cultural consumption of politics. In opposition to U.S. ethnic women, who appeal to revolutionary Mexico *mestizaje*, Venezuelan indigenous women contest neo-liberal globalization while appealing to Venezuelan nation state neo-liberation national movement. During the first half of the century, Rómulo Gallegos, the main writer of Venezuela became the first universally voted elected president of the country. His literary and political work inscribed the modern Venezuelan nation state through *mestizaje*, space, and party centralizing politics. At present, indigenous, national liberation and women counter-liberal modernization movements have re-configured the ascribed racializing and gendering identities that Gallegos’ political and literary work epitomizes. Gamio’s masculinist perspective reproduced the racist behaviors, against which the anthropologist stated that he struggled. Male centricism made of *indigenismo* a Pan-American and national state-led racist politics although its purposes were anti-racist. The Venezuelan Bolivarian process needs to reflect on the significance of sexual politics within de-colonizing and neo-national liberation social movements that come to revolutionary states. By confronting Sandoval’s “*mestizaje*” to García Canclini’s “hybrid cultural consumption,” this chapter seeks to shape a framework useful for examining, in Part III,

how the indigenous Wayuu women negotiate the contradictory effects that could stem from Venezuelan nationalist efforts, which involve women as central subjects for the reproduction of the patria.

Historical segmentation of the abstract labor force and of international and national citizenship becomes visible as soon as the universal worker and citizen subjects acquire a dark color, a step that privileges the power of reproduction of women's bodies as a research site. It is on the shoulders of the original framework of Marx's universalizing social class classification and his claim for proletarians' union, that I examine Sandoval and García Canclini's questions. They deal with the nightmare of finding a successful methodology for multiple and different revolutionary social movements and nation states that attempt to enact progressive policies. Women's bodies connect, through the color of their children, the sphere of the abstract private individual citizen and worker to the also abstract public class of Marx's species being.

At-present, a homogenizing horizon that increases the un-assimilation of the others (racism) erupted under the abstract and universalizing normativity of global capitalism, while providing relevance to reproduction of finance capital and of cultural politics. Contesting this universalizing normativity that promotes subjects' emptiness, also erupted a counter homogenizing social movement where anti-racism embodies a qualitative change of the conceptions of democracy. The struggles for the right of women and ethnic populations to be equal while different became highly visible within the homogenizing project of neo-liberal globalization. Differences also have disrupted nation states' equalizing relationships. Anti-racism and anti-discriminatory social movements are at the center both of epistemological and political searches for qualitative new paradigms of democracy, where difference and not identity will constitute the organizational principle.

The task of part II of the dissertation is to understand the conditions of emergence and the potential contributions of *mestizaje* and cultural consumption new social movements' identity politics under global capital contexts. The social movement of the Wayuu women of Venezuela, an oil producing country that experiences an anti-imperialist revolution while seeking a non capitalist way of constructing a nation under global contexts, is the case that talks back to Sandoval's and García Canclini's theorizing. Sandoval's proposal of an "oppositional consciousness" as a site for constructing alliances among U.S. third world women is a salient example of this type of constructing identities. Sandoval argues that struggles within the national Women's Studies Association in the early 1980s provide example of differential oppositional consciousnesses.¹¹ Transnational ethnic and indigenous women's movement in the Americas construct, on the shoulders of the U.S.-America and nation-led Pan-American *indigenismo*, a heterogeneous social movement that struggles for equality within the right to be different. In fact, there are uncertain shared interests between U.S. ethnic women and Latin American national or indigenous women. How can an "oppositional" decolonizing identity between ethnic women and men of the U.S. and of Latin American national and indigenous struggles be promoted? Sandoval argues that alliances across differences must continually shift and be constantly re-created. According to this author, women are crucial for contemporary de-colonizing struggles. The differences among women "give us access to ever new and dynamic tactics for intervening in the systems which oppress us – tactics which are capable of changing to confront the ever-changing

¹¹ Chela Sandoval, *Feminist theory under postmodern condition: toward a theory of oppositional consciousness*, (Santa Cruz, Calif.: Feminist Studies Focused Research Activity, University of California, 1991)

movements of power.”¹² What do the experiences of the Wayuu women leaders of Venezuela tell to Sandoval?

Ethnic studies and feminism, as social and cultural movements highlighted by the cultural logic of late capitalism, constitute two main fields of study that delimit this dissertation. For doing so, the framework that I deploy in part II attempts to integrate and synthesize the main elements that, in my opinion, need to be taken into account in order to examine how American differentiated ethnic populations could construct counter globalization alliances. It examines the meaning that *mestizaje* has if one wants to make anti-racist alliances as democratic performances that simultaneously embody the means and the ends that these social movements state to pursue. Democratic alliances of differently positioned subjects require ethnic women to negotiate differences in order to struggle against hierarchies. At the same time, the contestation of antiracist movements challenges binary principles of social organization by disrupting domination while embedding negotiation of differences. Anti-racism becomes anti-fascism. Sandoval’s “differential oppositional consciousness” and “*mestizaje*,” as well as García Canclini’s suggestion to understand contemporary Latin Americanos through “cultural consumption within hybrid cultures” acquire a precise meaning.

¹² Sandoval, *Feminist theory under postmodern condition: toward a theory of oppositional consciousness*, p. 67.

A. Indigenous Women's New Social Movements

[A] nation and a woman are not forgiven the unguarded hour in which the first adventurer that came along could violate them.
Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, p. 599.

Introduction

On March 13 2003, I interviewed Noelí Pocaterra, an indigenous Venezuelan Wayuu woman who in 1996 founded the Venezuelan Indigenous Wayuu Women's Web (WWW).¹ She was the second Vice-President of the National Assembly. In 1999, a Constituent National Assembly approved a new constitution.² Its Article 119 established, for the first time in Venezuela's history, that the state shall recognize the existence of indigenous "peoples," their social, economic, political organization, cultures, customs, languages and religions.³ It is also significant to take into account that the article promotes mechanisms of social and economical participation through different forms of association that should be guided by cooperation and solidarity.

¹ Noelí Pocaterra, interview with Sandra Angeleri, March 03, 2003, office of the Vice-President of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Caracas.

² The Constituent National Assembly (CNA) was elected by a national referendum. Its objective was to redact a new national project. After its approbation by the CNA, the new constitution was submitted to a national referendum, the Venezuelan population voted and approved it in a national election.

³ Article 119 establishes: "el Estado reconocerá la existencia de los pueblos y comunidades indígenas, su organización social, política y económica, sus culturas, usos y costumbres, idiomas y religiones, así como su Hábitat y derechos originarios sobre las tierras que ancestral y tradicionalmente ocupan y que son necesarias para desarrollar y garantizar sus formas de vida. Corresponderá al Ejecutivo Nacional, con la participación de los pueblos indígenas, demarcar y garantizar el derecho a la propiedad colectiva de sus tierras, las cuales serán inalienables, imprescriptibles, inembargables e intransferibles de acuerdo a lo establecido en esta Constitución y la ley." Constitution of 1999, supra note 82, art. 119. It is important to mention that when the Constitution of 1999 refers to the state, it is including the executive, legislative and judicial branches of both the federal and provincial governments, and also the rest of public institutions, including municipalities.

More important, it recognizes their rights on the traditionally inhabited lands of La Guajira.

Before 1999 indigenous people were not admitted inside the colonial building where the National Assembly functions. The presence of Pocaterra's indigenous women team was a curiosity. They would never have had access ten years before; the indigenous hammocks hanging within the aristocratic edifice of the Assembly would have been un-imaginable. I interviewed her at 3:00 p.m. That morning, she had been the main proponent of an act celebrating working women of the Assembly. This was one of the many activities that took place for celebrating "Woman's Day," a sacred ritual that the Venezuelan women's movement always commemorates. Noélí Pocaterra has known me since the 1980s, when we used to encounter each other in meetings where indigenous women and women belonging to the national coordination of women NGOs coincided. After informing each other about what we had been doing since our last gathering, and the academic reasons that supported my decision to see and talk to her again, I directly asked her:

S.A.: What do the Wayuu women win with this process of ethnogenesis?

N.P.: In my opinion, it has been not only a process of the Wayuu women; it has rather been of all indigenous women of the country. Because, for example, we had a Warao woman, Dalia Herminia, and we have also had indigenous women, as our representatives in the international meetings of the FTAA (Free Trade Area of the Americas, FTAA, in English, and Area de Libre Comercio de las Americas, ALCA, in Spanish), and we have also have indigenous women, Wayuu, Warao, in these meetings. And we have had a Kariña woman, who at-present, is an indigenous legislator in the Sucre State. We have won political spaces. We see many indigenous women at the level of the counties' congresses. For example, there is a new law, the Local Planning Congresses, La Ley de Planificación Regional. And the indigenous

person who represents us, the Wayuu people, there, she is a woman. Her name is Zenaida Rodríguez.

S.A.: Are these spaces stemming from the new legislation related to Amilcar Mestre?⁴

N.P.: Amilcar came and he dictated us a workshop, under my responsibility. I invited him. I invited the deputies related to this new law, and they gave us workshops. And this made the women participate and they went all around the Zulia state. Workshops explaining carefully the Planning Law, and this led them to also make a proposal of law to the Mayor of the county. Finally, the Mayor of the Paez County made a law by himself, but he took many elements of the women's proposal. It can be said that there have been great advances in this regard. For example, Wayuu, Chaima, Kariña, and Yucpa representatives went to the Indigenous executive meeting. In fact, we achieved, we have walked. We always have the idea in mind that all indigenous women participate. And we sent one Pemon, one Warao and one Kariña indigenous women to the world meeting that Rigoberta organized in Mexico in December 2002. We always attempt to give one opportunity to other women. Of course, there is not any doubt that at the Wayuu level there is more indigenous professionalism. I really cannot say that they are more interested. I would rather say that they have had the luck of accessing the university. But this opportunity also makes us responsible to open the doors to other women, so that they would be able of participating. Now, the fact that I am here as the Vice-President, for example, the fact that I am now part of the board of directors of one of the more important powers of the country, is not a recognition of Noelí Pocaterra. It is rather the recognition of indigenous peoples. And

⁴ I made this question because I contacted Noelí Pocaterra thanks to Amilcar, a friend that let me participate in the local foundational meeting, in the city where he lives, of an organization called "Middle Class in Positive," where the previous week-end, a 80 peoples gathered in a rural farm for agreeing and redacting the mission statement of this new group.

it is necessary to recognize that this has a lot to do with the rights, has to do with the activities, and has partially to do with the changes that are taking place. And then, all these things influenced our achieving this space. But this is part of a struggle that comes since the 60s. It is a very old struggle stemming from the 60s and that followed different roads, different methodologies. Once we trusted in the institutions. We believed that by coming to Caracas and talking to a minister or a military would solve our problems. Isn't that true? We passed through this experience. But now, step-by-step, we became stronger. After we realized that it didn't work to trust on the Alijuna (non Wayuu) institutions, we saw the need of organizing ourselves because it is impossible to register our traditional organizations according to the Alijuna methodology. We cannot. What can then we do? And it's okay; we copied the Alijuna model of making organizations, in order for these organizations to acquire juridical presence, and so allowing us to act. But we are verbal societies and the Alijuna are written societies, and everything has to be written. Then, we needed to take this form of organizing. Before we were more intransigent and we worked along the line that we needed to be recognized such as we were. We realized that we needed to change. Of course, it was much more difficult before, when the rights were not recognized in the Constitution. That had a great cost. They put written forms to us, the kids. "You do not speak in Guajiro." It was forbidden to use our mantas, and the old men; they obliged them to wear pants.

S.A.: And how did you struggle against that?

N.P.: Well, we talked the issues, we talked through the press, we stood up at any meeting and we spoke. We arrived and we introduced our documents to the governors, we traveled by land. Where the government people were, inasmuch as our possibilities let us, we went there. Then, we came back without seeing the President. The best we could do was to see the porter, but we insisted. I cannot say that things

changed totally. But we advanced. We advanced a little bit in the sense that at least we achieved to give a step that was very important, which was to obtain the recognition of rights in the Constitution. Because before we were invisible. And of course, if we were invisible, nobody saw us, or they didn't want to see us. But now we are visible, although they don't want to see us, they need to look at us. That is the point. These are our rights. They are there. We approved three laws. And we follow with our laws. And we have presence. Now, what happens depends a bit on ourselves. There are already connections. The fact that I am here allows us to connect to the other powers. It depends on the aspirations that we have. If I consider that I reached this position and that's all, if this is my greatest ambition and, ah, okay, I will not do anything else. But if I consider that this is a space for doing more, that this is a tool to go ahead making stronger the communities, that there is a commitment, that I feel that I am a voice woman, and I do not believe that I am the maximum chief, then I'll stay here working. Because, well, sometimes, power leads you to get lost.

S.A.: Ethnic or gender struggle?

N.P.: Of course, before we were more respected by our own men. Pay attention to those women, couples. Before, if a couple bit one, offended one, one traditionally, and still has that right, one simply didn't say anything to the man. One simply got distant. At the early morning, at any time, one decides it, and you go with your family. And you say: "I am here because he mistreated me, he bit me, he insulted me." And the family does not go to claim him anything. It's very simple. Your family rather goes to his family, and his family is the one that calls him. And then the problem becomes a collective one. And the solution has to be collective. And there is then a collective indemnification. It is necessary to make reparation agreements of something so that it will not happen again. But what's now going on? In the cities, women let themselves be beaten, "se dejan hacer." Well, because this Alijuna society

is like this. When the Alijuna society tells us, because we have our own education process that says to us, no, no, no, don't allow him to do that to you, that this behavior is primitive, that it is backwardness. Then they will never learn and feel proud of their identity. This makes that the girls do not accomplish their process of formation. Now, what else is also happening? I feel that it also happens with the elders. That's why, in this wapule (community house) that you see here, in this photo, we gave a great importance to the elders. Because it is not like in the western Alijuna society, where elders are thrown away to the asylums, or told to go there, not to talk, that they don't know anything. Then, what's happening? The elders have also assimilated this message. And they arrived to the extreme that when somebody comes and tells them, this has been a very interesting experience in Colombia, "Look you, because you are the territorial chief, because you have so much experience, we will do such and such things." "Ah, but I do not know how to read and write. And I am old, and I have a grandson, and he has a fourth grade education, and he speaks Castilian and I don't speak it. He is better than me." Then, the young man says, "I" instead of saying, "Why not, grandfather, I can serve you," because he is a drone, and then he takes advantage of that goodness of the elder. But he is a malandrín bad boy, and then the type does not assume a conduct. And in addition, the grandfather allows him to behave like that, because there is the assumption that the young man has other values. These experiences say to us that what is worthy is to know to read and write. These are the western values. Then, what did these elders do? And the same thing happens with the women. The women are a matrilineal society. We have the last word, we are those who educate the family, the providers of counsels, and we also participate in the great decisions of the family. A woman participates, and I saw it, and I was present when this happened, in the great conflicts of the clans, of wars, of hard confrontations. And this woman talks and says, after the men arrived to an

agreement, the woman talks and says: “No señor. This cannot be like this.” She has to be a very sage woman and to have a great conviction. In addition, her word has to be very full of conviction in order to convince those monsters, and tell them: “No, that is not the way. It is not through violence. We need to fix this.” But she says it in such a sage way, so beautiful, so decisive, that instead of repressing, punishing, it is rather an attitude of challenging him. She creates him charges of conscience. You see? And then the women, they speak with such a force. They have to speak very strongly, with great sage, like to say to him: “This cannot happen, be reflective. I invite you. How can we want a war? This war needs to be fixed. We’ll search the peace. What will we do with our dead men? What will we do with our small animals? The Alijuna life is very expensive. Where are we going? What will happen?” And then she begins to speak that the dead ones will remain alone. Then, here the Indian man begins, and says: “Do you know? It is true. It is necessary to fix this.” We the women, we lost this skill. We are in a different world. Now I am in the western society. And this led us to loose spaces, leadership. Then, the little work that we do, the one that I am in, is to retake leaderships, and this does not mean that the man did give the order. It rather means that from equal to equal, shoulder with shoulder, we walk together, and that the elders also occupy a space, and that they still have a lot to give us, to tell us.

S.A.: How do you struggle both as indigenous and as woman?

N.P.: It is not easy. There are many biases. It is a very complex situation. That’s why I see that the road is with the children. The road is with the young people. We are rebuilding and retaking, maybe we could not achieve many things. To simply retake what it is to be Wayuu, to retake those ethical values, that Wayuu conduct. Because of the fact that I am here and that I have contacts with ambassadors, whatever, and that I travel by airplane, I do not have any reason for changing my conviction, my values, my dress or my maternal language. It does not have to alter me. Because I am

the result of that way of living. Why do I act like this? Because I had a formation since I was a girl. Because of my parents and my grandmother. Now, I will not be changed. This Alijuna society, even though it bit me so much, it couldn't. I was able of surviving. But I survived, not because I am special, but simply because of this formation that I had of the pride of my cultural identity. I had a mother and a grandmother that formed me. And then, that's what we want to do. Because, how can we change the Alijuna world? Ah, okay, we also have our ways. The services of documentation, the messages, whatever the children are taught in the schools. And that is important. The main thing is that we, the indigenous peoples, we need to feel that it will be very difficult, that these accept us, see us as equals. That discrimination will continue, that mistreatment will continue, many of these things will continue. We need to prepare ourselves, without losing our cultural identity. And we need to work with the children and the young peoples in order to be capable. Finally, what is it that we want? We do not want that our culture disappear. We resist. We want to survive. We do not want to disappear. If we do not want to disappear we need to use all the things and all the elements that we'll need in order to avoid to disappear. I have very clear my objectives in this process. I have very clear that of the roads. I stay here, only for a certain time, in order to achieve this. I am here because I have luck, and I obtained that my family, my husband, my sons, understand and share a little bit the struggle with me. Then, if today, I decide to stay here, and to go from here to the airport, they understand it. And it would not be the first time. This became a total entrega (commitment). That's it. When the people say, ah, "I need a break, I am tired," you cannot rest. No, there is not time to get tired. But the problem is that you, as any human being, will probably get tired, and you fall asleep. But you like this, you feel passion for this, you try to go ahead as much as you can, and there will be moments when you'll stop, and you'll go back, but you don't have to forget where

you want to arrive. This is related to my project, and my project cannot fail. One has followed many roads. I consider that I am lent to this space. I do not like to be here, but I see that it is important, because it opens doors. But this is very heavy, it is not one's field, but I need to make telephone calls, I need to do my things. The people trust me, and this produces me anguish. And I need people and time for that.

After Pocaterra talked, she received a telephone call that interrupted us. She was in contact with the U.S. embassy in Caracas. During the entrepreneur strike against the Bolivarian project, the embassy closed its visa department. Venezuela lived an entrepreneur strike articulated around the professional workers of the national oil company. A school bus of Wayuu children in the oil-producing Zulia state had an accident close the Colombian border. Three children and their mothers were to travel (and traveled) to Houston to receive medical attention. The grave burns put at risk their lives but the strikers against President Hugo Chávez did not give guarantees that these children could obtain their urgent specific required treatments. While the Wayuu people possess both nation states' citizenships, meaning that they can simultaneously have a Colombian and a Venezuelan I.D., the three children and their mothers had none. As Venezuela's National Assembly vice-president, Pocaterra mediated with the visa department of the U.S. embassy to make possible the travel to Houston.

When we resumed the conversation that I saved in a tape player that I put between Pocaterra and me, I introduced the delicate theme of the Colombian border and the U.S. interests in the region. On April 1999, three members of an U.S. humanitarian delegation to the U'wa People in Colombia, including the U.S. third world feminist activist Ingrid Washinawatok, were kidnapped and killed. While the media attributed responsibility to the left-wing Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the

Indigenous Women's Network (IWN), a group based in South Dakota and that Washinawatok co-chaired, laid the blame for the murders at the United States doorstep. The IWN pointed out that during the negotiations for the release of the three activists, the U.S. State Department gave approximately \$230 million in military support to the Colombian government for what the IWN called "their alleged Anti-Drug War, knowing that FARC may have been holding the hostages and could possibly retaliate against the military forces that would intervene."⁵ Ingrid Washinawatok's death is more than a source of painful feelings for those who knew and loved her; it also constituted a great concern for the Colombian and Venezuelan indigenous movement and the national and regional governments as well. The Colombian-Venezuelan border is a strategic area where neither the Colombian nor the Venezuelan government have control of the territory, all the while being affected by multiple forms of violence due to guerrilla conflicts, paramilitary interventions, smuggling and drug trafficking.

⁵ Noy, Thrupkaew, "Indigenous Rights Activists Slain in Colombia: Feminist activist Ingrid Washinawatok remembered" in *Sojourner: The Women's Forum* V. 24, N.9, 1999, p.9. After Egypt and Israel, the U.S. sends to Colombia the third major quantity of economic aid for military reasons.

Figure 14: Location of La Guajira



Source: Gary Ghirardi and Sandra Angeleri

S.A.: Did you know Ingrid Washinawatok?

N.P.: Ingrid is a woman that I knew since almost twenty years ago in our international work. We saw each other in different parts of the world, and what I am doing right now, in a certain sense, is what we always talked about. Because in the world there have to be many people like us, working in the same direction. And the point is to assume that we are an engine group, like messengers, like palabrerros, it

doesn't matter how to name us, and that these palabrerros need to be in this struggle from different communities. If I think that I am alone, and that I am the only one that does what I do, it doesn't work. There are other women and men that are also doing this same work in other parts of the world.

A potential Vietnamization haunts the region. History and space links this oil production area to the creation of the Panamanian state, to the indigenous Misquitos' participation within the Central American conflict in the 70s. The U.S. invasion of Panama in 1991 sought to capture the U.S. ex-allied, President Noriega, while simultaneously destroying the national armed forces. When Washinawatok's death became known globally, intense debates erupted around the construction of a harbor, in the Maracaibo Gulf and nearby the border region, which would provide the hemispheric connection for projecting the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) through the Free Trade of the Americas (FTAA) to the entire American Continent, also became the subject of intense debates.

The U.S. Mexican border has been a pioneer contact zone for the hemispheric free market developmental project. The extension of the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was planned for the year 2005.⁶ Drawing on the NAFTA experiences of the Mexican/U.S. border, indigenous and women's movements participate in the FTAA meetings that pretend to reshape the continent under the neo-liberal market ideology. They are in opposition to the project, but they want to influence the negotiations of the foundational agreements. In 2003, in Geneva, the leader who represented the indigenous populations of Venezuela in the preliminary meetings of the FTAA, Dalia Herminia, began one of her speeches with a revealing story. Referring to how the indigenous populations of South America are turning over

⁶ On July 2005, the extension of NAFTA arrived only to Central America and República Dominicana (Central American Free Trade Agreement, CAFTA).

the severe consequences of neo liberal free markets, Herminia told the gathering that at present times the indigenous Pemón were led by a guiding mythical knowledge. The myth, she explained, says that “the Pemones are living a second opportunity. A small Pemon boy covered the eyes of his father with his hands when the first Europeans arrived to the Caribbean region where they lived and live. Today the child has grown up and the father now is not blind. He can see in front of him.”⁷

Ingrid Washinawatok was well known among Colombian and Venezuelan indigenous leaders (especially in Maracaibo). In the U.S., Washinawatok belongs to the U.S. third world women mestiza memory. In Venezuela, Pocatererra often mentions her many encounters with Washinawatok when both of them were activists of the World Indigenous Network. In the U.S., Cherrie Moraga while identifying herself as “a traitor to the geopolitical borders that divide nations of people” remembers how “Ingrid, her sister in indigenism was kidnapped and executed by the U.S.-aggravated civil war in Colombia.”⁸ Washinawatok’s death, Pocatererra’s life and Moraga’s words synthesize the crucial question raised by women social movements: How to articulate ethnic and women’s politics through transnational borders in the Americas? What happens to subaltern resistance and emancipation projects within globalized contexts?

New Social Movements

Now and then the workers are victorious, but only for a time. The real fruit of their battles lies, not in the immediate result, but in the ever-expanding union of the workers. This union is helped on by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry and that place the workers of different localities in contact with one another. It was just this contact that was needed to centralize the numerous local struggles, all of the same character, into one national struggle between classes.

Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 481.

⁷ Dalia Herminia interviewed by Sandra Angeleri, March 03, 2003, Indigenous Office of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Caracas.

⁸ Cherrie Moraga, “Foreword, 2001,” pp. XXV-XXVI, eds. Cherrie Moraga and Gloria E. Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called my Back, Writings by Radical Women of Color*, (Berkeley: Third Woman Press: 2002).

Do the “new social movements” in Latin America stem from the social movements that emerged in the 60s and 70s in the U.S. and Europe?⁹ This question can be shaped in an opposite way. Did the collective actions that occurred during the 60’s and the 70s (in Europe and the U.S.) give birth to “new social movements” and theories capable of representing Latin American social movements?¹⁰ Social movements have been studied usually through U.S. or European frameworks. Why is it unusual to find a study of The Mexican Revolution drawing on the theories of social movements? Or the contrary question, why does “*indigenismo*” or the Bolivarian Revolution define themselves as “social movements?”

“New social movements” express conflicts related to the quality-of-life, to cultural and ethical problems, issues that generally were not taken into account within state-centered social movements theories.¹¹ More importantly, they define identity and community making as pre-political actions. New social movements embody the values of a new society and bring about fundamental changes in the way that people think about power. In general terms, new social movements have been characterized by the inclusion of social actors: Students, women, consumers, etc. The community that gives birth to the social movements is understood as an already shaped group.¹² Occupations, interruptions, direct actions, and civil disobedience are their favored forms of action for rejecting institutional politics but still advancing claims for the

⁹ Feminist and ecological movements (1970s) and peace and local autonomy movements (early 1980s) were the subjects of these theories.

¹⁰ Such movements also appeared in Latin America, however, the literature of that time did not take them into account.

¹¹ However social movements are processes that can end separating a region from a nation state or constructing an administrative new nation state.

¹² Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990).

democratization of social structures within civil society. These features differ from previous conceptions about social movements, and the community making politics of these new social movements seem to be directly involved with Michel Foucault's theorizing on the microphysics of power.¹³

Classical sociological theories (Identity and Resource Mobilization) have not provided the proper frameworks for understanding the massive and heterogeneous social actions that have appeared all over the world since the 1960s.¹⁴ Within social movements theory, stating it in a very schematic way, it can be said that there have been two main paradigms: In the U.S., the "resource mobilization" model, and in Western Europe, the "identity" approaches.¹⁵ U.S. ethnic and Latin American social movements are often studied within these frameworks.¹⁶ A fundamentalist liberalism understands others' social mobilization as attempts to become modern liberal societies. Modernization and development discourses assume that Latin America is an "underdeveloped" sub-continent that needs to become a "First World" society. The liberal model with its civil society appears as the public space where economic and political conflicts are mediated, and they are represented as the goal pursued by Latin American social movements. There is not any doubt that Gamio's Mexican and Pan-

¹³ Michel Foucault, *Microfísica del Poder*, (España: La Piqueta, 1980).

¹⁴ Bert Klandermans, Hanspeter Kriesi, and Sidney Tarrow, *From structure to action: comparing social movement research across cultures* (Conn.: JAI Press, 1988); Cohen, *Strategy or identity: new theoretical paradigms and contemporary social movements*; Claus Offe, *Disorganized capitalism: contemporary transformations of work and politics*, (Mass.: MIT Press, 1984); Alan, Scott, *Ideology and the new social movements*, (London, Boston: Unwin Hyman 1990); Alain Touraine, *Actores sociales y sistemas políticos en América Latina* (Santiago de Chile: PREALC, 1987).

¹⁵ Klandermans, Kriesi, and Tarrow, *From structure to action: comparing social movement research across cultures*, p. 3.

¹⁶ There are few comparative studies on U.S.- Latin American social movements in general, and fewer in globalizing contexts. Comparative although often not commensurable perspectives that analyze social movements of Latin America and the United States interpret Latin American social mobilization as struggles that promote the rise of the civil society of the classic liberal system.

American *indigenismo* and *mestizaje* are part of this liberal dream. Many social scientists interpret Latin American social movements as vehicles for the construction of the civil society that will be able to build a modern state in the future: How are power relations both at social movements and nation states' domestic and hemispheric orders working through this modernizing discourse? How is power produced and reproduced through local as well as local/global social movements and nation states' practices and discourses?

Globalization studies often focus on capital, and not necessarily on contestations to capital restructuring. Class, gender, race, and ethnicity reconstruct the identity of national and global movements, while cross-national and anti-racist sites are crucial to understand the new economy of difference through equality that they embody. The Identity Theory approach enables the research of the processes of remaking the national, transnational, regional, ethnic and global identities of women social movements.¹⁷

Dissatisfaction with the effects of industrialization, frustration with the failing welfare system and new concerns, such as the environment, led to a generalized desire for community, self-realization and personal (rather than professional) satisfaction. Moreover, such values are concentrated in 'new educated classes,' which are unable to achieve the income or opportunities that their education led them to expect.¹⁸

Alain Touraine understands that the actions of social movements are "normatively oriented."¹⁹ "We want to be more human, less machines, less objects."

¹⁷ Touraine 1988. The identity perspective is interested in explaining collective identities as pre-conditions to the emergence of social movements, and under these premises this trend creates the concept of "new social movements," that within the European and U.S. history, resulted from the transition from industrial to post-industrial society.

¹⁸ Joe Foweraker, *Theorizing social movements*, (Boulder, Colorado: Pluto Press, 1995), p. 10.

¹⁹ Touraine, *Actores sociales y sistemas políticos en América Latina*, p. 11.

These are the words that a young indigenous woman told me. With English language graduate university studies to her credit she does not want to accept work in any multinational corporation. She works nonstop as a woman leader in La Guajira.

Why individuals get involved in collective identities is one of the questions that the identity framework approaches. In fact, the new social movements ask why individuals come together searching for solidarity. How do social networks encourage identity-formation? On the basis of Touraine's work, other authors reformulated the role of identity in new social movements' theory while adding social movements' interaction with their institutional environment to the identity approach.²⁰ Drawing on different questions, a second perspective on collective identities provides different answers. This second tendency focuses on the centrality of formal organization for social movements. Tarrow's differentiation of social movements as formal organizations from the organization of collective action is a useful tool for examining ethnic and indigenous women's social movements.²¹ Integrating the identity and the organizational approaches in comparative analyses reveals the importance of politics and resources of the mobilizations.

Social movements "involve contestation between organized groups with autonomous associations and sophisticated forms of communication (networks, publics)."²² In order to understand social movements, it is indispensable to focus on civil society because it is on this terrain that social actors organize, mobilize and seek identity, autonomy and recognition. It is where they struggle for new kinds of social

²⁰Foweraker, *Theorizing social movements*, p. 12.

²¹ Sidney Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics*, (Cambridge ; New York : Cambridge University Press, 1994)

²² Jean Cohen, "Strategy or identity: new theoretical paradigms and contemporary social movements," *Social Research* (52), p. 673.

relations. The salient features of new social movements is that “they are involved actors who have become aware of their capacity to create identities and of power relations involved in their social constructions.”²³ But social movements are also related to ideological discourses and social networks. In this context, collective action is seen as culturally inscribed and communicated, while characterized by collective capacity to challenge other groups, elites, authorities, powerful opponents or cultural codes.²⁴

The degree of temporal continuity of the social movements to activate identities that make the action possible helps to distinguish movements, like the indigenous women, from more contingent kinds of collective behavior. Laclau and Mouffe show that social movements are always reforming their ideological profile to adjust themselves to the demands of potential members and supporters. In this way they construct the interests they represent.²⁵ Under Laclau and Mouffe’s perspective, identity is a discursive product. The choice of values identity is contingent and will change as historical conditions change. These authors introduce interesting elements to the comprehension of new social movements. Yet, like many Latin American academicians, Laclau and Mouffe are blind to the way race difference works within

²³ Cohen, "Strategy or identity: new theoretical paradigms and contemporary social movements," p. 694.

²⁴ Cohen, "Strategy or identity: new theoretical paradigms and contemporary social movements;" Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the present: social movements and individual needs in contemporary society* (London: Hutchinson, 1985); Louis Matheu, "The new social movements revisited: reflections on a sociological misunderstanding," 107 -119 in Louis Matheu (ed.), *Social movements and social classes: the future of collective action* (London: Sage, 1995); Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, eds. *The Making of Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992); Scott, *Ideology and the new social movements*; Doug McAdam, John McCarthy and Mayer Zaid (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1996); Sidney Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics*.

²⁵Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics*, (London: Verso, 1985).

identity-based mobilizations. Laclau and Mouffe see the new social movements' internal development, in terms of the "discursive constitution of subject positions," which they added to the relationship of the social movements with the political local/global environment.²⁶

Touraine's new social movement framework supports the analysis of social movement in global/local contexts as well. According to him, the new social movements are inclined towards affective concerns, expressive relations, group orientation, and horizontal organization. The transition from "old" to "new" organizations allows a unitary theoretical and historical framework that enables the integration of the Identity Theory with aspects of the Resource Mobilization framework in order to discursively reconstruct the identities of group members and groups, and provide basic features that complement the Identity approach. However, it also implies a historicist approach that relates the new social movements to the new ones through pre-established conditions of industrialization.

Nonetheless, the European, as well as the American references, also introduces negative connotations to reflect on *mestizaje* and hybrid cultural consumption as proper methodologies for/of (post) modern social movements. The Identity Theory assumes a linear historical transformation. In this light, globalization is a historical pre-condition of the current transformation of the "old" into the "new" social movements. But globalization is a phenomenon that offers ambiguous evidence as a pre-condition. As I mentioned above, I am not interested in discussing the infinite number of books that have been written on globalization. In this chapter I am interested in an operative definition, and in this sense I accept Jameson's definition of globalization as emerging from the qualitative changes of late capitalism, while I also understand that globalization is the action of localizing the other, and that the

²⁶ Laclau and Mouffe, *Hegemony and socialist strategy: towards a radical democratic politics*, p.168.

meaning of term “late” do not mean the something for different subjects.²⁷ If globalization is established, it is necessary to analyze its relationship with the “new” social movements.

The Resource Mobilization perspective introduces necessary elements for examining indigenous women’s social movements, although it tends to minimize the cultural contexts. It analyzes the functionality of social organizations without taking into account the class, gender, ethnic, national, and racial features of the groups’ mobilizing identities through the process of struggling. Although ethnic women’s social movements engage in transnational relationships due to the changes that globalization brings to society, the explanation of their identities nonetheless depends on previous ontological societal transformations. This controversy is one of the reasons why the expression “learning identity” proves fruitful in examining how García Canclini and Sandoval’s proposals could work together to promote a U.S. third world- Latin American indigenous social movement.

From a state-centric perspective, short-term theory only views social movements in the “mad moments” of social mobilizations, a framework that does not acknowledge any kind of family, communal, national or neighborly activity as social movements. This kind of associationalism assumes a model that interprets social movements “as stages in a linear model of development, with the first stage creating identity and the second focusing on strategic action.”²⁸ Within this framework, the problem for the analysis of contemporaneity is that, while the movements are going on, the academics cannot evaluate if future circumstances will transform the popular

²⁷ I am aware that the simplification that this operation means, and how easy it is to deconstruct this definition by simply discussing the “late” attribution. However, within the context of this dissertation, the “late” attribute of capitalism connects Sandoval to García Canclini.

²⁸Foweraker, *Theorizing social movements*, p. 22

associations into social movements. From a procedural and Identity perspectives, history as well as popular associationalism could provide the social and cognitive identities that people use to construct social networks and learn how to engage in social mobilization.²⁹ Indigenous and national liberation movements searching for alternative projects to liberal modernization find in the pedagogical strategies of cultural nationalism the means for remembering these cognitive identities.

MacAdams, McCarthy, and Zaid point out how different theoretical approaches use three common factors to analyze the emergence of social movements: political opportunities, mobilizing structures and framing processes. A broader institutional political system and its opportunities and constraints influence the visibility that in abeyance social movements acquire in abeyance at historical particular moments. “Social movements and revolutions are shaped by the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded.”³⁰ Social movements occur when “changing political opportunities and constraints create incentive for social actors who lack resources of their own.”³¹ Under these circumstances, it can be said that the state is not an entity outside of the civil society where social movements express their struggles. It implies an interrelation between social actors and the state and vice versa, although social movement theories often represent them as operating outside of institutional politics. In this political interrelation, social movements’ contestations (and the control of their history) become a recursive incentive for mobilization.

²⁹Jean Cohen and Andrew Arato, *Civil society and political theory*, (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1992), p.557 in Foweraker, *Theorizing social movements*, p. 22.

³⁰ MacAdams, McCarthy and Zaid, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*, p. 3.

³¹Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics*.

The second common factor that social movement theories include as useful for the analysis of social movements addresses the forms of organization (formal and informal) that these groups use, particularly, the forms of organization available to them within and outside the institutionalized political system. Social networks within indigenous and women's movements have increased doubts about the universalizing values that the abstract citizen and worker promote. Such organizational dynamics involve kinship, intellectual and grassroots associations, churches, informal friendship networks, state-structures of organization and cultural practices, among others. Studying these dynamics of organization allows the identification of the relationships between the type of organization and the kind of cultural politics of the movement. In addition, the study of the organizational infrastructures within a specific community, and of the effects of the state structures and organizational cultures on the social movement allows inferences about the political features of the social changes that the movement promotes.³² Tarrow notes that it is "life within groups that transforms the potential for action into social movements."³³

Finally, the third common factor for the analysis of social movements is how political opportunities and mobilizing structures interact with shared meanings, feelings to fuse a common identity that catalyzes collective action. "Mediating between opportunity, organization, and action are the shared meanings and definitions that people bring to the situation."³⁴ Tarrow states that collective-action frameworks allow for identifying the "us" and "them," and allow the shaping and influencing of

³² McAdams, McCarthy and Zaid, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*.

³³ Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics*, p. 22.

³⁴ MacAdams, McCarthy and Zaid, *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Cultural Framings*, p. 6.

other identities, but what happens when the “us” and “them” are part of the same social movement?

Social movements have been analyzed primarily within homogeneous national, identity, or class contexts. But contemporary mobilizations allow cooperation across borders and the construction of transnational identities, which use heterogeneous mechanisms and identities, such as international law, Interamerican indigenous movements or Pan-national institutions in order to transform hemispheric or domestic political situations.³⁵ Although cultural dimensions have been pointed out as essential factors in the emergence and development of social movements,³⁶ Escobar claims that there is a need for “the reconstitution of meanings at all levels, from everyday life to national development” in order to grasp the cultural politics of the social movements.³⁷ Cultural dimensions, as Escobar’s words express, are of central interest for Latin American theories about social movements.

Social Movements and Social Movements Theories in Latin America

Though not in substance, yet in form, the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie is at first a national struggle. The proletariat of each country must, of course, first of all, settle matters with its own bourgeoisie.

Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 485.

The workingmen have no country.

Karl Marx, *Manifesto of Communist Party*, p. 488.

³⁵ Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics* 1998; Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, Arturo Escobar (eds.), *Cultures of politics/politics of cultures: re-visioning Latin American social movements*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998).

³⁶ Touraine, *Actores sociales y sistemas políticos en América Latina*.

³⁷ Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez (eds.), *The Making of social movements in Latin America: identity, strategy, and democracy*, (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992).

In Latin America since the 1970s, a multiplicity of actors has been defined as new social movements. New forms of identification and political spaces for making claims on the public stage made public their characterization. Urban inhabitants, peasants, workers, indigenous peoples, women, mothers, ecologists, and many others acquired visibility while rising up to demand a change.³⁸ Some scholars argue that these social protests stem from economic and political crises: the crises of modernization and development (as cultural and economical discourses) that did not better the social condition for most of Latin America's populations, as well as the crisis of the political parties and their forms of representation that opened arenas for contesting authoritarian regimes. Other scholars consider that these movements are reactions to the capitalist transformations of society, especially globalization, and neo-liberalism. The left theory that considered society as a structure that only class struggle could transform by taking state control could not explain these processes. The dependency³⁹ and modernization⁴⁰ theories are also inadequate to explain these movements.⁴¹ These social movements are expressions of social processes which need a better theoretical understanding.

³⁸ See Escobar and Alvarez (eds.) *The Making of social movements in Latin America: identity, strategy, and democracy*.

³⁹ Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependencia y desarrollo en América Latina; Ensayo de interpretación sociológica*, (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1972)

⁴⁰ Alain Touraine and Gino Germani, *América del sur: un proletariado nuevo*, (Barcelona: Editorial Nova Terra, 1965)

⁴¹ Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez (eds.), *The Making of social movements in Latin America: identity, strategy, and democracy*.

Contemporary social movement theory, especially Touraine's analyses of the particularity and specificity of these collective actions, proposes new theoretical approaches to understand the complexity of the social and its actors in Latin America. This change is reflected in new perspectives that consider society as fragmented and complex, while social actors are seen as multiple political agents who can reshape their society by demanding and affirming their differences. For the social theory, social actors have become agents that have political power to participate in the construction of their social identities. Latin American analyses of social movements have revised the notion of social movements by taking into account the ambiguous relationship with modernization and the heterogeneity of these movements.

There is, then, a wide spectrum of social movements. Many of them center on specific actors, others are self-referential or monadic; some are synchronic and latent, other of long duration; some are the product of intensification of capitalism, other of exclusion; some are unprecedented, perhaps ambiguous, constantly changing, with polyvalent meanings. All of the movements, based on identities that are often changing, are internally complex and produced themselves within novel historical processes. In short, they present new historical movements in the making.⁴²

More important, Slater as well as Touraine show how differences between European and Latin American new social movements are related to the role of the state, welfare state functions, the degree of centralization of state power, and state legitimacy, features that become evident when examining the Venezuelan indigenous women's

⁴²Calderón, Fernando, Alejandro Piscitelli, and Jose Luis Reyna. "Social Movements: Actors, Theories, Expectations," in Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, eds. *New Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992), p. 23.

social movement.⁴³ Escobar partially coincides with García Canclini when pointing out that in Latin America “there is no linear path between the two (multiple) places, no epistemological center and periphery...rather, there are multiple and mutual creations and appropriations, and resistances... that create an overlapping and decentered network within which both theories and theorists travel.”⁴⁴ Escobar proposes that in order to understand Latin American social movements, it is necessary to analyze the links among economies, politics and culture. He relates the emergence of social movements to the crisis of development as a cultural and economic project of liberal modernity, a perspective shared by indigenous social movements and by the Venezuelan Bolivarian government as well. Escobar sees that social movements, especially grassroots movements have the potential to postulate alternatives to development, and by extension, to modernity itself.

This would require changes in social relations and institutional practices, openness to other forms of knowledge and cultural manifestations – not so mediated by the language of development—and greater autonomy for communities over the creation of their own ways of thinking and doing things.⁴⁵

Escobar introduces how the crisis of modernity allows social actors and mechanisms for “the production of meanings, identities, and social relations.”⁴⁶

⁴³ David Slater, ed., *New Social Movements and the State in Latin America*. (Amsterdam: CEDLA, 1985)

⁴⁴ In Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, *New Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy* Escobar, p. 63.

⁴⁵ In Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, eds. *New Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy* Escobar, p. 66.

⁴⁶ In Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, eds. *New Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, p. 68.

“Social movements must be seen equally and inseparably as struggles over meaning as well as material conditions, that is, as cultural struggles.”⁴⁷ Analyzing cultural struggles implies understanding the daily practices, meanings, relationships and identity construction of the social actors, because all this cultural production constitutes social experience and constructs social relations. This perspective arises from the people’s self-understanding and gives them the role of agents.⁴⁸ Cultural politics have become essential to the analyses of social movements’ actions in Latin America.

As the process enacted when sets of social actors shaped by, and embodying different cultural meanings and practices come into conflict each other. This definition of cultural politics assumes that meanings and practices, particularly those theorized as marginal, oppositional, minority, residual, emergent, alternative, dissident, and the like, all of them conceived in relation to a given dominant cultural order – can be the source of processes that must be accepted as political.⁴⁹

In this perspective, the three factors (political opportunities, mobilizing structures and framing processes) proposed by McAdams, McCarthy and Zaid have new dimensions. Political actions are related not only to broader institutional systems but also to multiple ties that are embedded in daily-life practices of microphysics of power. Relating these actions with the spread of meaning through invisible “social

⁴⁷ In Arturo Escobar and Sonia E. Alvarez, eds. *New Social Movements in Latin America: Identity, Strategy, and Democracy*, p. 69.

⁴⁸ Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar expanded categories and methodologies to face the social movements’ actions in Latin America. The social movements’ actions affect the dominant political culture as a result of their cultural politics that seek to change or disrupt the dominant political culture. Social movements are challenging modernity by proposing new conceptions of rights, economies, developments and social conditions.

⁴⁹ Sonia E. Alvarez, Evelina Dagnino, Arturo Escobar, (eds.), *Cultures of politics, Politics of cultures: re-visioning Latin American social movements*, p. 7.

movement webs” expands the notion of political actions. In this way, assessing social movements’ impacts implies seeing the circulation and spread of social movements’ proposals, not only within the institutional framework, but also in other spaces. Similarly, social movement’s actions are seen in relation to civil society. The cultural politics of social movements relate to civil society, but they do not focus only on “why” or “how” they emerge or act, but also on social actors and their possibilities to transform their conditions into more democratic spaces or into a “radical and plural democracy.” In this context, social-movement scholars in Latin America focus on the politics of the actors and their relations to processes of identity construction, while racialization being usually absent from their studies.

This framework leads to examine indigenous and women movements in a new way. The key question concerns to how indigenous women’s social movements have helped to re-signify the national political culture by opening new democratic spaces and by changing ways of doing politics. I am especially interested in differentiating social movements from pressure groups, and in looking for precise tools for exploring the Wayuu women’s social movement. According to Tilly (Resource Mobilization Theory), “[a] social movement is a sustained series of interactions between power holders and the person successfully claiming to speak on behalf of a constituency lacking formal representation, in the course of which those persons make publicly visible demands for changes in the distribution or exercise of power, and back those demands with public demonstrations or support.”⁵⁰ In this view, the emergence of

⁵⁰ Charles Tilly, *Big structures, large processes, huge comparisons*, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984).

social movements corresponds to the rise of the nation-state. Contrary to Tilly, Touraine (Identity Theory) points out that social movements cannot be identified with the state, and must be distinguished from the activities and strategies of political parties. Social movements are "defending another society." Social movements cannot be understood without the introduction of the meaning of social actions that are "normatively oriented."⁵¹

In addition, Touraine says that a struggle requires four principal conditions. There must be (1) a committed population, (2) an organized struggle, (3) a fight against an adversary and (4) the conflict with the adversary should concern the whole society.⁵² This last feature is considered to distinguish social movements from pressure groups. In the case of the Venezuelan Indigenous Wayuu Women's Network (WWN) the relational feature of identity complicates the differentiation of pressure groups from new social movement. In regards to the Wayuu women population, the network is a new social movement, while, until the National Assembly declared the Venezuelan nation as multi-ethnic, the WWN has been a pressure group in relation to the Venezuelan national society. The Bolivarian Revolution constructs its South American project drawing on a modernization alternative to liberalism and convergent with indigenous peoples' views of how to combine modernization to their way of living. This point needs to be taken into account to understand how the Wayuu women dynamically adjusted their relationships in regard to the Venezuelan nation state, and to women's and feminist organizations as well.

⁵¹ Alain Touraine, *Actores sociales y sistemas políticos en América*, p. 11.

⁵² Alain Touraine, *The voice and the eye: an analysis of social movements* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 85.

The above approaches offer some insight for studying transnational social movements' relations to particular social movements such as the Venezuelan Wayuu Women Web (WWW), or *la red*, as these women name their network. The emergence of social movements does not just happen; there is a set of facts that need to take place in order for a movement to arise. The level of analysis must be brought down to a more concrete level and the problematic needs to be defined differently. The concept of "opportunity," which relates to the conditions that allow for the emergence of social movements and refers to those factors that encourage and explain why a group mobilizes at a given point in time, provides relevance to the importance of the surrounding domestic and international environment for examining the womanist strategies of the Wayuu women leaders. Their social movement arises within pre-established structures. The Wayuu women awoke at the collective and individual levels under favorable global conditions that led them to channel awareness in a common direction although there are great differences among them. Transnational and national issues seem to have contributed to the emergence and relevance of the Wayuu women's web that states that its task is to continue empowering the population from which it emerged. The alliance with a nationalist state that legitimates its authority by promoting ethnic rights is not an unproblematic political site for the Venezuelan women, and they know it.⁵³ The WWN seeks a more just world for the indigenous women and communities and in order to achieve this goal, these women globalized their contestation to modernization. Sassen posits that globalization's

⁵³ Such is also the case of contemporary efforts of the UN, the IMF, and various NGOs that promote South American ethnic and women's movements

“cross-border networks also contain possibilities for new actors and for new practices oriented to projects that are totally different from capitalism and economic globalization. A way of thinking of these new actors and new practices is as constituting “countergeographies of globalization.”⁵⁴ The recognition of the diversity of global/local sites that the Wayuu women leaders use in order to construct their mobilizing identity shapes new questions and answers that are also related to nation states stemming from social movements, which became governments in opposition to parties organizations. How do old and new local social movements and nation states articulate their identities within a globalization process that projects them to transnational boundaries? Women’s solidarity within domestic or international arenas has not been easy, especially for locally based social movements engaged in nation states’ restructuring processes emerging from global capital re-articulations. It is not easy for U.S.- America women of color /Latin American social movements’ networks to articulate their organization and mobilization strategies. In Gloria Anzaldúa’s words, “We must be wary of assimilation but not fear cultural *mestizaje*.”⁵⁵ Nonetheless, today’s retrospective view understands that since the 60s, global social movements contested locally financial capital hegemony, as civil and human rights and national liberation movements in the Americas provide evidence. Dalia Herminia, Ingrid Washinawatok, Noélí Pocaterra and Cherrie Moraga are some of the many differentially positioned women and men who at present days construct a dissenting globalization.

⁵⁴ Saskia Sassen, *Cities in a world economy*, (California: Pine Forge Press, 2000), p. 3.

⁵⁵ Anzaldúa, “Foreword, 2001,” *This Bridge Called My Back*, p. XXXVII.

B. Sandoval and Garcia-Canclini

It is just in the working-up of the objective world, therefore, that man first really proves himself to be a *species being*. This production is his active species life. Through and because of this production, nature appears as *his* work and his reality. The object of labor is, therefore, the *objectification of man's species life*: for he duplicates himself not only, as in consciousness, intellectually, but also actively, in reality, and therefore he contemplates himself in a world that he has created. In tearing away from man the object of his production, therefore, estranged labor tears from him his species life, his real species objectivity, and transforms his advantage over animals into the disadvantage that his organic body, nature, is taken from him.

Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," pp. 76-77.

Introduction

This chapter evaluates the contributions and limitations of Sandoval's *mestizaje* and García Canclini's culturally hybrid consumption methodologies for contemporary de-colonizing social movements. It draws on the U.S.-American and Latin American state-led *indigenismo*, which the analysis of Gamio's sexual politics within the Mexican politics of *mestizaje* and nation making introduced, the chapter relates general statements on globalization and new social movements to these two authors' *mestiza* and hybrid methodological proposals for (post) modern social movements.

How does women's simultaneous object and subject condition within patriarchal nation states affect indigenous women's mobilization within the context of transnational decolonizing social movements? This question is especially relevant because the biological and symbolical role of women within collectivities complicate the identification politics of transnational as well as national and ethnic women's social movements. Cherrie Moraga says that, "For a number of years, I have been

looking at questions of cultural nationalism in the face of economic globalization and so much warfare in the name of tribal/religious affiliations.” She relates the manifestations of nationalism that are emerging today to the efforts by Western nation-states to dominate the world economically justified by a kind of moral (Christian) superiority were the winners are blessed. Cherrie Moraga continues

Among feminists of color in the United States, the strategy toward achieving sovereignty for indigenous peoples and the state-sanctioned recognition of, and respect of, cultures within the United States, remains the subject of much debate and, at times, deep disagreement. As survivors of the ethnic and cultural nationalism of the sixties and the seventies, which silenced and severely castigated women’s freedom of movement and expression, as survivors of rape perpetrated in the name of nation, as widows of race wars and mothers of murdered children, it is no wonder women of color can feel a deep ambivalence or downright fear when questions of “nation” appear within political contexts.¹

Rey Chow’s elaborates a theoretical linkage between “community formation and sexual difference.” She draws on her reading of Freud’s *Totem and Taboo* and Fanon’s efforts for conceptualizing “a community alternative to the colony.”² Chow posits that “when we read the different manners in which Fanon describes the black man and the black woman” the significance of sexual politics within decolonizing movements emerges.³ When analyzing Fanon’s chapter entitled “The Woman of

¹ Cherrie Moraga, “Foreword, 2001,” *This Bridge Called My Back*, p. XXVI.

² Rey Chow, “the Politics of Admittance: Female Sexual Agency, Miscegenation and the Formation of Community in Frantz Fanon” in *The UTS Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 5-29, p. 9.

³ Joan Wallach Scott mentions three strategies used by socialist feminists in order to investigate how gender intersects class-consciousness and relations of production. One of these strategies draws on psychoanalytic theory. While Scott recognizes the importance of positing “conflict between women and men as a fundamental fact of human experience and modern social organization,” she also sees the importance of the introduction of the unconsciousness as a factor in human behavior. Scott also points out the limitations that this perspective embeds. I synthesize her critique as stating that for her “men” and “women” are assumed to be fixed categories of identity, with historically variable (but inherently conflictual) needs. Scott’s critique is crucial for my study on the Wayuu women, whose history, however, I also make by the support of a psychoanalytic framework. My approach draws on Chicanas’ deconstruction of Malinchismo, supported by Luisa Muraro’s inspiring article “El Orden Simbólico de la Madre,” that I understand as crucial for interpreting the Wayuu women social movement. See Joan

color and the White Man” in the text *Black Skin, White Masks*, Chow posits that for this intellectual the woman of color, “Unlike the black man, who is considered a wronged sovereign subject,” is first of all an object with exchange value”. The implications of Chow’s reflections on Freud and Fanon link the veneration of the father to community formation. Transnational feminist social movements enable the interruption of this community-building paradigm. While Latin American ethnic women seem pragmatically to use globalization to guarantee the survival and reproduction of their communities, U.S. women of color seem to emphasize the cultural side of the struggle. Grounded in Chow’s reflections, my intention in this chapter is to make visible the theoretical challenges stemming from attempts to articulate transnational feminist and ethnic movements in the Americas through the lens of the identity-based community paradigm and historical experience. The chapter asks what are the new social principles that transnational feminist and ethnic movements are proposing under globalization contexts? A second general question asks how can we think about contemporary transnational women and indigenous social movements of the American continent at the same time? At an abstract level this chapter asks: How do Sandoval’s forms of struggle fit into García Canclini’s dense history of Latin American postmodernism? At a more concrete level, the chapter asks how do nation state-centered theories on social movements help or inhibit us for understanding Latin American ethnic women and their social movements?

The opportunities opened up by globalization to social movements enable the analysis of Sandoval’s “*mestizaje*” and García Canclini’s “hybridity” as potential methodologies for social movements struggling against the effects of globalization.

Sandoval identifies “love,” as the methodology of the new *mestiza* identity. Could this concept support the construction of a common space for (post) modern social movements in the Americas? The racializing ethnic and *mestizaje* models make it necessary to interpret the persistence and the changes of a history that negates itself.⁴ U.S. women of color and Latin American indigenous women have complicated relationships as women, as the book *Doméstica, Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence* by Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo shows for Mexican American women.⁵ It is necessary to reconsider the U.S. third world women project, and ask what does it mean to be ethnic in contemporary U.S.-America. It is also necessary to reflect on García Canclini in Mexico, and ask what it means to be at present a Latin American man (*latinoamericano*, sic).⁶ But for feminist and ethnic voices it is also vital to ask what does it mean to be indigenous and a woman within the context of Latin American. In order to work together against the negative effects of neoliberal globalization, U.S. ethnic and Latin American indigenous women need to take into account that if they share some identities, they also share competence and not only reciprocity. The processes of publicly taking up the word by those that until recently have been objects of ethnographies has not stopped. In the academic field and within grass-roots women ‘s groups as well, middle class white feminist discourses have been challenged since in 1975 bell hooks and Domitila Barrios criticized Betty Friedan for generating s universal analyses (for example related to the

⁴ Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the oppressed*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).

⁵ Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo, *Doméstica. Immigrant Workers Cleaning and Caring in the Shadows of Affluence*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001). The author describes the hidden world of transnational care-work and calls to organizing to shape domestic and international policies drawing on principles of human rights.

⁶ Néstor García Canclini, *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Piados, 2002)

family, the state, or labor) based on the narrow experiences of her particular group. Chandra Talpede Mohanty argues that white feminism needed to be rejected as erroneous and purposely biased.⁷

This chapter attempts to illuminate how in the hemisphere, questions and answers about “*mestizaje*” and “hybridity” are changing. Historical voices, like the Chicanas, are still in the debate on radical *mestizaje* and hybridity, but more voices are now audible, like the Wayuu women, who have added new argument to the debates. At the same time, the scale of Latin Americans became more extended and the nation states have changed. Additionally, as Moraga and García Canclini state, conflictual global conditions cannot be avoided after the attack of Manhattan Twin Towers.⁸ From the ruins of lower Manhattan, the attacks resurrected metanarratives that (post) modernism buried, while making visible that neo-liberal globalization implied asymmetries and complicities expressed through racialized and gendered discourses of manifest destiny with a long history behind them. Within the context of this new war, where does “love” for “hybridity” and “*mestizaje*” of the women of the Americas fit?

A point of departure of this chapter is to pay attention to the invisibility of women’s roles within production-centered state and market logics. It draws on a critical approach to the proposals by Sandoval and García Canclini while supplementing the authors’ insights on Latin American mestiza identity with my interpretation of the absence of women’s reproductive power within human beings’ classificatory social systems. I read Sandoval and García Canclini from the matrilineal research perspective that the voices of the Wayuu women leaders always

⁷ Chandra Mohanty, *Feminism without borders: decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003)

⁸ Moraga, *From Inside the First World, Foreword*, 2001, p. xvi.

emphasize. On the one hand, I draw on women's experiences and theorizing in these experiences. This research strategy embodies a matrilineal exchange of women's experiences that contests male ethnography and literature. I seek to draw on an epistemology stemming from women theorizing their experiences. On the other hand, as I already did with Gamio, I read García Canclini against the grain. My perspective would look for the absence of race and women's within this author's project.

My starting point is the confrontation with liberal feminism by U.S. women of color and indigenous women against liberal at the 1975 meeting at Ciudad de México organized by the United Nations in order to celebrate the international year of women. Many middle class white women from Latin America and the United States participated in this conference to examine the place of women in society. During the conference, Domitila Barrios, a Bolivian woman, along with other Latin American indigenous and poor women attempted to take the microphone. Liberal feminism acquired resonance in the 60s, when middle class women felt that they shared a common secondary position in society because on account of their gender. Subsequently, these women separated themselves from mixed social movements. Often, this feminism is referred to as "western feminism." Describing this position, Connells writes: "Women's Liberation groups argued that women are oppressed because men have power over them; and that changing the situation of women means contesting, and eventually breaking, this power."⁹ In this liberal line of thinking, the women's movement is associated with modernization, which often led them to a generally positive if sometimes critical perception of the development process. They mainly associated gender inequalities to the situation of working-class women, while

⁹ R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1987), p. 34.

justifying colonization of indigenous peoples by development.¹⁰ But after the 1975 meeting in Ciudad de México, the difficulty of including U.S. women of color and Latin American indigenous women's movement under the western feminist umbrella of modernization became public. In the 1985 Nairobi United Nations (U.N.) conference, South American indigenous women abandoned the myth of global sisterhood and acknowledged profound differences in women's lives and in the meanings of feminism cross-nationally. At-present, within postmodern feminisms, assumptions of universality and of a universal truth are questioned.¹¹ Modernity is not the universal reference, and multiple subjects find a recognized frame to legitimate their agency. Mohanty highlights this relation between power and knowledge.

I argue that assumptions of privilege and ethnocentric universality, on the one hand, and inadequate self-consciousness about the effect of Western scholarship on the third world in the context of a world dominated by the West, on the other, characterize a sizable extent of Western feminist work on women in the third world. An analysis of sexual difference in the form of a cross-culturally singular, monolithic notion of patriarchy or male dominance leads to the construction of a similarly reductive and homogeneous notion of what I call the third world difference.¹²

¹⁰ For a critical approach of women within developmental frameworks and of postmodernism, which does not take into account the centrality of racialization within modernization, see Jane L. Parpart, *Development & Change* (SAGE, London, Newbury Park and New Delhi) volume 4, number 3, July 1993 (439-464). Along the same line, Magdalena León has an extend work on the theme. As a Colombian feminist, who is in charge of a Foundation for women's books, she is often in contact with Venezuelan leaders of women social movements. The text that best could summarize her position on this topic could be Magdalena Leon and Diana Deere, *La Mujer y La Política Agraria en América Latina*, Bogotá, Siglo XXI, 1986. There is an English version of this text. See by the same authors, "Derechos individuales y colectivos de la tierra: mujeres e indígenas bajo el neoliberalismo," in *Análisis Político*, # 36, pp. 36- 54.

¹¹ I am perfectly aware that I use the term "postmodernism" in a general way. It is not the objective of this dissertation to enter into the multiple manifestations of this trend. However, differences among postmodernists will be taken into account when the particular analytical circumstances will require it.

¹² Chandra Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," in *Third World women and the politics of feminism*, edited by Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, Lourdes Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, c1991), p. 53.

Aihwa Ong also refers to western feminism pointing out that “[t]he feminist work (...) seeks a modern form of individual freedom in their analyses of gender relations in the non-Western world. There is insufficient attention to non-modern social values which do not conceptualize gender relations in those terms (of individualism).”¹³ In this sense, U.S. ethnic women’s postmodern feminism offers a valuable research site for understanding gender inequality within different contexts, and in addition provides to non U.S. audiences the possibility of reading non hegemonic domestic perspectives of this country’s modernization. The latter detail on the heterogeneity of U.S. women’s domestic alliances is very significant. It helps to break down the universal paradigm for evaluating the U.S.-America that Latin American elites have followed. Within this critical perspective, to examine Latin American interlocutors’ relationships with Latin American elites constitutes an important face of the re-configuration of the international dialoguing strategy. Within this chapter, to analyze Sandoval and García Canclini’s related projects is part of this critical perspective.

By exploring the inter-textuality of U.S.-American literature on postmodern subjects within social movements, it seems that Jameson's essay "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capital" constitutes the foundational framework for Sandoval’s formulations about U.S. women of color. According to Jameson, the contemporary neocolonial expansion of capitalism neutralizes the cultural practices of globalization as well as those of counter-globalization social movements. Jameson proposes that the "cognitive mapping" methodology corresponds to what U.S. scholars call "First World" postmodern subjects. Drawing on Jameson, Sandoval state

¹³ Aihwa Ong and June Nash, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline, Factory Women in Malaysia*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994) p. 277.

that U.S. feminist women of color encapsulate both the modern and the postmodern condition of counter globalization subjects. U.S. third world feminism arises between the deaths of modern subjects that globalization has dissolved and the non-existence of postmodern subjects that globalization is fragmenting. An evolutionist view appears behind the dissolution of modern subjects and the fragmentation of postmodern subjects. Sandoval argues then, that U.S. third world feminism, which simultaneously belongs to the globalizing and the globalized poles of late capitalism, is the postmodern privileged subject of counter-globalization social movements.

Sonia Saldívar-Hull follows Sandoval's feminist path. She titles the epilogue of her book "Refugees of a World on Fire, Geopolitical Feminisms." In this 10-page epilogue, Saldívar-Hull relates Rigoberta Menchú, Domitila Barrios, and Elvia Alvarado to Chicana feminist writings.¹⁴ The U.S.-American centered position puts at stake the redistribution of power within self-reflexive epistemological and political frameworks. Diane Nelson develops a narrative symmetrical to that of Saldívar-Hull, although stemming from the opposite research site.¹⁵ She writes as a "gringa" anthropologist who informs the U.S. audience about her research site. Indigenous Latin American women's agency remains an important question silenced within this literature. As Ong indicates, "the non-Western woman as a trope of feminist discourse is either non-modern or modern; she is seldom perceived as living in a situation where there is deeply felt tension between tradition and modernity."¹⁶ It seems to me that these research sites do not take into account South American women. This assumption led me to write this dissertation attempting to reverse this strategy by

¹⁴ Sonia Saldívar-Hull, *Feminism on the border: Chicana gender politics and literature*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).

¹⁵ Diane M. Nelson, *A Finger in the Wound*, (California: University of California Press, 1999).

¹⁶ Ong, *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline, Factory Women in Malaysia*, p. 237

focusing on what indigenous South American women have to say to feminist U.S. women of color.

This Bridge Called My Back by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa represents a critical perspective of the aforementioned women of color writing. In fact, different debates took and take place within feminist women of color. These debates stem from the need to bear in mind the complex intersections that constitute the power relations within which U.S. ethnic women live. In this sense, *The Bridge* draws on a long tradition of African American feminist writing exemplified by bell hooks, Angela Davis, Alice Walker, Patricia Hill Collins or Barbara Collins belong. The title of the text *All the Women Are White, All blacks are Men, But Some of Us are Brave*, could not be more eloquent.¹⁷ All these authors denounce the legacy of white feminism and the scarce attention that it gives to the different material situations between white and black women, to the class and race intersections, and to the incorporation of different agendas within feminisms.

Since the 80's, the term "women of color" became a theoretical-political artifact capable of incorporating the common oppressions around racism that women in the U.S. face from different national and ethnic-racial spaces.¹⁸ The term recognizes the specificity of their concrete experiences. In general terms, the mestiza and bilingual works of Chicanas, Puertorriqueñas and Latinas can be considered examples illustrating this trend. Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera. The New Mestiza*,¹⁹ Moraga's and Anzaldúa's (eds.) *This Bridge Called My Back*,²⁰ and

¹⁷ Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott and Barbara Smith (eds.), *All the Women Are White, All Blacks are Men, But some of Us are Brave*, (New York: The Feminist Press, 1982)

¹⁸ The immediate question that raises contesting the use of the term "women of color" is: Of what color? However I use the author's expressions, among other reasons because I am not able of finding a better one.

¹⁹ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera. The New Mestiza*, (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1987)

Anzaldúa's (ed.), *Haciendo Caras/Making Face, Making Soul: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color*,²¹ are only some of the best known anthologies of these women. In "Movimientos de rebeldía y las culturas que traicionan," Anzaldúa proposes to assume *mestizaje* and the multiplicity of non-reductive forms. She transforms into a fertile epistemological space the political tension derived from living in between different cultures, using different languages, and inhabiting the critical distance that stems from the fact of being rejected by both of these societies where she lives. As a lesbian and Chicana woman, Anzaldúa's mestiza consciousness emerges from the possibilities that she embeds when living a border position.

The works of Chandra Mohanty and M. Jacqui Alexander introduce postcolonial studies into this women's tradition. The authors situate feminist thought within a world where the intersections between colonialism, imperialism and nationalism make more complex the oppressions stemming from patriarchal and racist globalized and globalizing capitalism. Within this context, "postcolonial" does not refer to a temporality where colonization ended. It rather refers to "glocal" domination relations that reproduce colonial power relations here and now, and not only within colonized countries, through the well known effects of decentralized production, but also in the colonizing countries that, at-present, receive migrant Diasporas which come from the old colonies. Authors like Gayatri Spivak and Trinh Minh-ha belong to this tradition. The latter elaborated the expression "The Inappropriate/d Other" in order to talk about third world women.²² "Genealogies, legacies, movements," by Mohanty and Alexander is the introduction to a key

²⁰ Moraga and Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back*.

²¹ Gloria Anzaldúa (ed.), *Haciendo Caras/Making Face, Making Soul: Creative and Critical Perspective by Women of Color*, (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1990).

²² Minh-ha Trinh T. (ed.), "She, the Inappropriate/d Other." Special Issue on Third World Women," *Discourse* 8, Fall-Winter, 1986-1987.

anthology of postcolonial feminism: *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*.²³ In this introduction, the authors shape a significant critique of postmodern relativist positions, which dissolve identity categories by accusing them of being essentialist (meaning many of the critiques against identity politics). They critique the calls for a Western white international sorority which draw on the universal oppression. Mohanty and Alexander criticize how third world feminists continue to constitute the periphery under the consensual rhetoric of the articulation of different voices that defined an inclusive feminism drawing on a center-periphery framework. Their project implies a democratic feminism in contestation with the capitalist free market formal democracy. Their project focuses on particular feminist practices that articulate the local to transnational and global processes. Using the U.S. as a model, these authors examine the central mechanisms that shape citizenship under advanced capitalism through discriminatory forms. They identify that the representation of the “good citizen” is the heterosexual white male that consumes and pays his taxes in opposition to the representation of “the dependent black woman” who would take advantage of social services and of “the black and immigrant men” associated with crime. They also invite the reader to reflect on the meaning of citizenship from the position of an immigrant black woman without citizenship “papers.” Within this context, concepts of equality in relation to the law defy conventional definitions of the supposed legitimate citizen with real access to opportunities. They denounce the systemic use of the legality of “democracy,” in order to make inequitable differences.

The texts that are born from postcolonial women of color and third world feminisms provided visibility to the relevance of situating research and reading sites.

²³ Chandra Talpade Mohanty and Jaqui Alexander (eds.), *Feminist Genealogies, Colonial Legacies, Democratic Futures*, (New York and London, Routledge, 1997).

Only by recognizing the connections among speaking, listening, writing and reading, is it possible to determine the relevance of questions and statements about difference, articulations of oppressions, alliances and trans-nationalism. The politics of localization that the U.S. women of color made visible emphasize the specificity of the writer's knowledge and position.

Postmodernism, the fragmentation of the modern subject, and the position of U.S. (relatively privileged) third world women of color shape Sandoval's central questions. I will discuss the contributions and limitations of Sandoval's postmodernism to conceptualizing Latin American indigenous and national women's movements. When the notion of modernity has become "more problematic" and since it "became evident that the metropolitan models of development are not mechanically applicable in Latin America," García Canclini's states that the conception of history that saw as oppositional modern and non-western traditional technologies needs to be re-configured.

Both authors identify themselves within the field of cultural studies. Sandoval focuses on a north/north dialogue, while García Canclini on an archeological north/south dialogue. However, García Canclini explicitly points out that to write from Latin America does not imply to write outside of globalization, or to write from a position whose difference would construct radical alternatives, i.e. a society radically other. A research style prevails within Anglo-Saxon cultural studies that understand this process as a universal crisis of paradigms. The strategy followed by social sciences, however, is to make empirical studies within specific contexts, an approach that has greater influence within Latin American cultural studies.²⁴ I

²⁴See Guillermo Sunkel, "Introducción, Explorando el Territorio," Guillermo Sunkel (ed.), *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, (Bogotá: Convenio Andrés Bello, 1999), pp. XI-XXV.

examine both the theoretical narrations of the crisis of multiculturalism by Sandoval and García Canclini and the empirical way the crisis has manifested itself in Venezuela.

It is necessary, however, to notice that many of the voices of U.S. women of color stem from the 70s (and many years before, if I take into account the legacy of women who were protagonists of abolitionist and suffragist movements of the middle of the nineteenth century) and remain within the U.S. binary racial model. Ethnic and racial diversity is openly part of the capitalist construction of the U.S. nation, in opposition to Latin America's negation of multi-ethnicity. Within these two contexts, "mestizaje" and "hybridity" have different meanings for U.S. women of color than for Latin American indigenous women. Each one of these situations has its specificity. The history of the domination of people is the history of colonial and postcolonial processes and of the successive classifications, hierarchies and exploitations that took place along with capitalist development. Anzaldúa shows that it is a history of identities constructed and re-constructed through hybridity and Diasporas, through displacements and multi-local experiences or multiple belongings. Alexander and Mohanty demonstrate that these re-configurations contribute to overlap postcolonial and trans-national scenarios and to the history of multiracial relations that do not only respond to binary contacts, for example, between white and black women. Feminism also responds to conflicts and solidarities that cross origin, race, class and gender differences, while shaping a dialogue among women with multiple and complex constituencies that remit to their proper genealogies.²⁵ This implies that the voices of U.S. women of color and of an Argentinean-Mexican male anthropologist talking in

²⁵ Audre Lorde, *Conversations with Audre Lorde*, Joan Wylie (ed.) (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2004) and Adrienne Cecile Rich, *Arts of the possible: essays and conversations*, (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001).

and through these texts, respond to a long historical trajectory crossed by race and strongly marked by postcolonial struggles and the movements of racial liberation.

Chela Sandoval

The antithesis of *propertylessness* and *property* so as it is not comprehended as the antithesis of *labor* and *capital*, still remains an antithesis of indifference, not grasped in its *active connection*, its *internal*

relation—an antithesis not yet grasped as a *contradiction*.
Karl Marx, “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,” p. 81.

I revisit one of the questions of my qualifying exam, while I reconfigure my answer according to the changes that the documentary and ethnographic research that I completed from 2002 to 2004 introduced. How does the idea of “*mestizaje*” advanced by Chela Sandoval in *Methodology of the Oppressed* enable and inhibit us in attempting to imagine hemispheric and global struggles for social justice waged by individuals and groups with dissimilar histories and very dissimilar roles in the global economy?

The title of Sandoval’s text, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (2000), evokes Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970),²⁶ a coincidence that does not have any explicit reference in her book, except in a footnote. Freire wrote in Brazil at the end of the highly politicized decade of the 60s, a period that marked social movements all around the world. At-present, this period can be understood as the starting point of the contemporary hegemony of finance capital. Sandoval is a Chicana who writes in US-America in 2000, also a period of increasing international social mobilization in response to the consolidating hegemony of financial capital reshaping the production and the political trends. In the 60’s, international solidarity for social justice was based largely on the position of workers in relation to capital.

²⁶ Paulo Freire, *Concientización: teoría y práctica de una educación liberadora*, (Buenos Aires: Búsqueda de Ayllu, Galerna, 2002).

Currently, class identification is often removed from academic debate by a chain of dominations that displaced traditional political actors, while making visible previously othered historical subjects. Transnational social movements overlap international solidarity. In U.S.-America, global capital privileges the financial sphere, and productive jobs flow to other global spaces, while restructuring the social order of the country. Jameson names this process “late capitalism.”

Nonetheless, this process is not homogeneous, as the term “globalization” proposes. Asymmetrical displacements of capital relations introduce great opportunities, while complicating the domestic and the international dimensions of social class solidarity and alliances. The metamorphosis of work into financial value enforces a hierarchical order of oppression and exploitation that inhibit the use of the framework of sameness and difference that constitutes the basis of social class coalitions.

Both authors, Freire and Sandoval, attempt to provide a tool for the emancipation of the oppressed, Freire to South American peasants and factory workers in the 60s, and Sandoval to US- women of color and Euro-American (post) modern social movements in contemporary globalization contexts.²⁷ Sandoval and Freire’s writing sites correspond to differentially situated subjects in relation to financial capital. Focusing this section of part II on the contributions and limitations of Sandoval’s project “for groups with very dissimilar histories and very dissimilar roles in the global economy,” it seems to me relevant to notice similarities in titles that revealed to me deeper although unnamed connections. Sandoval’s title reveals an

²⁷ I am aware of the generalization and ambiguities that the term “(post) modernism” implies. Many of the authors that in this dissertation this label names as postmodernist authors, will never accept to be referred through a common denomination. In order to go ahead on my main subject, I avoid this debate that would require me to write an additional chapter on “(post) modernisms.”

ideological program whose discovery constitutes the interpretative code of my reading of her text.

The use of the term “consciousness” in Sandoval’s title also connects both authors.²⁸ Freire’s *concientización* emerged from a political context that promoted a Marxist transformation of the “false conscience” of the oppressed into a revolutionary ideology that would transform the latter into scientific knowledge. Sandoval emerges from a historical and geographical space, the U.S. women’s of color tradition that criticizes the reason of the Enlightenment and promotes the creation of an alternative paradigm unthinkable through rational tools, while imaginable through hermeneutic frames.

Both authors emphasize the political dimension of the consciousness of the oppressed, while using similar frameworks in terms of their political objective and their class conscience perspective. Chronological and geographical positions, in addition to their differently gendered incarnations differentiate their proposals. According to the consciousness framework, the organization of class, a collective actor constituted by homologous subjects in order to increase their political power, will be the step that will follow the process of becoming conscious of common roots. This epistemology shapes immediate representative coalitions. Position in relation to capital classifies, through a criterion of sameness or difference, a human being, his or her definition as a worker or as a capitalist. The transformation of ideology in class-consciousness, in the case of Freire, and the power of love for bridging differences between oppressed U.S. women of color, in the case of Sandoval, is the epistemological tool that the authors identify as the methodology of the oppressed.

²⁸ Though the first part of the dissertation emphasizes the consciousness order, the second part focuses on the experience order of indigenous women. I hope that the structure of this dissertation helps to illuminate how the experience/consciousness influences the result of academician efforts.

To promote the formation of class or identity consciousness through academic writings requires a previous imagined order of human beings to define the organizational principles of the classes. The epistemological and political act of classifying is at stake, and in the case of Sandoval, the feminist feature of U.S.-American women of color is an essentialized premise of her text. It seems to me that although both authors work through classificatory lines, their reciprocal relations to political activism and consciousness led them to differentiated constructions of class and identity consciousness. Freire's *concientización* is linked to concrete grassroots groups' practices, within the Marxist "false consciousness" perspective, while Sandoval, closer to U.S. scholarly scenarios, identifies activism and intellectual opposition within a feminist framework. Although the title of her text refers to the methodology "of" the oppressed, while one reads her text it often seems that the oppressed are her subject of study.

This difference is important because it reflects their respective subjectivities. The north and the south of the continent produce different experiences in relation to productive and financial capital. Sandoval emphasizes the identity framework, while contemporary oppressed subjects from South America seem to emphasize the urgency for bettering their material conditions of life. It is relevant to examine the reason of the epistemological and political differences between southern and northern American subjects to avoid automatic projections of power relations emerging from national positions or romantic alliances between U.S.-American third world and South American social movements. I argue that it is relevant to examine the effects of the national frame that delimits Freire and Sandoval's proposals. This intellectual effort is important because domestic and transnational coalitions that could empower U.S. as well as Latin American oppressed subjects require us to take into account the articulating axis that produces their sameness and differences.

In addition, Freire wrote during the sixties, when financial capital began to consolidate its hegemonic trajectory, while Sandoval writes in present times, when US financial capital becomes so powerful that it names itself “global” and erases its inter and intra national dynamics. The asymmetrical and unequal positions of the South and the North of the American continent, in relation to productive and financial capital, are the points at issue which I parallel to women’s centrality for examining modern production versus (post) modern reproduction contexts. Under these circumstances, Sandoval’s use of the expression ‘Third World feminism in the First World’ names an old phenomenon that globalization stresses and emphasizes. Through the “Third World feminism in the First World” metaphor, the author achieves a great aim. For South American subjectivities that are not familiar with the ethnic model, while often understanding it only as the result of Anglo-Saxon racist attitudes without understanding the investment that it represents to be “white” in the U.S., Sandoval makes visible what racial blindness often hides when looking from the southern perspective. By giving a name to a naturalized fact that contemporary globalization has emphasized and extended, Sandoval provides a fertile point of departure for forging Pan American alliances.

Freire and Sandoval share the aim of providing political tools through consciousness raising processes for oppressed people. In Gramsci’s words it can be said that Freire and Sandoval are organic intellectuals who elaborate a written proposal for the emancipation of the oppressed. Both Freire and Sandoval share the emancipation framework (as well as with García Canclini). Sandoval posits her consciousness process in a different space and time than Freire. The phrase that she appropriates from Freire and that titles her text, “the methodology of the oppressed,” makes the activist readers who are familiar with the proposal of the Brazilian author suspicious. Sandoval identifies herself as a Third World feminist who lives in the

First World. In this sense, the “Third/First World” categorization differentiates Freire’s from Sandoval’s use of the expression. This label, which emerged within the Cold War context, was buried by (post) modernists while it becomes resurrected under different denominations at present times. Sandoval’s use of the image of the Third World within the First World, although theoretically confusing, acquires powerful evocative dimensions that remind the reader of an erased colonial side of the U.S. national capitalist society. This is an important achievement. However, García Canclini, as many other Latin American authors, understands U.S. racial formation through the lens of the *mestizaje* model.

García Canclini’s *mestizaje* framework impedes him transcending Anglo-Saxon racism as an ethical perspective, a residue of slavery and colonialism. García Canclini is blind in relation to the U.S. ethnic model, which supports a binary segregation guiding Chicanas to see in the new *mestiza* identity as a tool for transnational mobilizing. This limitation leads García Canclini to use the terms “hybridity and cultural consumption” within a different context than the Chicanas’ use of *mestizaje*.

The systemic presentation and the pedagogical language of Sandoval’s *Methodology of the Oppressed* relates her text to the Latin American “Investigación-Acción” alternative academy, a project that emerged from Freire’s proposal, and that acquired epistemological projection mainly through the Colombian historian Orlando Fals-Borda.²⁹ Nevertheless, her emphasis on Euro-American authors (Frederic Jameson, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Donna Haraway, and Hayden White), who constitute her main points of departure, and her silence on Freire

²⁹ See Orlando Fals Borda, *Ciencia Propia y Colonialismo Intelectual*, (México: Ed. Nuestro Tiempo, 1970); *Knowledge and People’s Power*, (Delhi: Indian Social Science Institute, 1988), and Orlando Fals Borda and Anisur Rahman, eds., *Action and Knowledge: Breaking the Monopoly with Participatory Action-Research*, (New York, Apex Press, 1991).

or on any other Latin American author working in her same direction raises questions for a Latin American reader.³⁰ Initial questions about the author's intentions oscillate between cultural blindness and U.S.-centric chauvinism. My ruminations on Sandoval's use of Freire led me to perceive the difficulties of shaping a common language between South American and U.S.-American third world scholars.

Sandoval centers the agency for her coalitional practices within U.S. women of color; Freire doesn't assign relevance to gender. Although both authors write within patriarchal regimes, Freire and Sandoval belong to two nations whose social classificatory systems construct gendering and racializing processes differently. Freire identifies himself as a man, and emphasizes class as an identifying feature of collective action that draws on his interpretation of the Marxist social class classificatory system. South American academicians and activists have been usually blind in relation to the specificities of their countries' racializations. Within the U.S., class articulates its historical expressions through specific racial lines that provide to "mestizaje" a different meaning than the one that South American societies perceive. However, the societies of both authors share the material and symbolic reproduction of the social order through women's roles, while these roles are not homologous. Miscegenation and segregation frame two national styles of racialization that provide different meanings to women, the privileged agents of Sandoval's project. Nonetheless, she does not approach this crucial intersecting point. In addition, she theoretically and historically biases her study on global de-colonizing movements when she erases the North/South power relationships. The U.S. produces the perverse effect of reproducing hemispheric inequalities as Arturo Escobar shows in his text *Encountering Development, The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. This

³⁰ See Edgardo Lander (ed.), *Colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales: perspectivas latinoamericanas*, (Caracas: CLACSO, 2000).

epistemological angle has enormous political consequences for transnational coalitions between U.S. and Latin American ethnic social movements. According to theories of negotiation, which draw on open procedural models of constructing transitional pacts, coalitions need to be constructed based on trust.³¹ Anzaldúa says, in relationship to U.S. women of color, “To trust the other (i.e. whites) is hard when in the past they’ve betrayed us, and when our lives have depended on not trusting them.”³² The problem with Sandoval’s attitude is that what she writes becomes part of the history that potential future coalitions will take into account, and her neglect of Latin America and Latin Americans could negatively inform the process of constructing alliances.

Sandoval’s project looks for tools for building (post) modern Euro-American coalitions. She does not explore the feminist definition of women’s movements and her point of departure is identity as an already forged fact. Her essentialized conceptualization both of women and feminism veils the role of women and of women’s organization for the production and the reproduction of the civil society. On the other hand, her ontological feminist construction is coherent with her interpretation of the multiplicity and fragmentation of the post-modern identity.³³ Her

³¹ See Carlos M. Vilas, “Más allá del Consenso de Washington? Un enfoque desde la política de algunas propuestas del Banco Mundial sobre reforma institucional” en *Reforma y Democracia* No. 18: 27-76, Caracas: CLAD, 2000); Julia Barragán, *Cómo se hacen las leyes*, (Caracas: Editorial Planeta, 1994), and “Las reglas de cooperación. Modelos de decisión en el ámbito publico,” *Doxa*, 6, (España: 1989).

³² Anzaldúa, *Haciendo Caras/Making Face, Making Soul: Creative and Critical Perspective by Women of Color*, p. xxvi.

³³ See Roland Barthes for an incisive analysis of the ambiguous relationships between logic and ontologic, an examination that leads the author to propose the use of the term onto-logic in order to make visible the effects of the dialectic relationships between the order of things that both terms refer to. See Roland Barthes, “Sociológica y socio-lógica. A propósito de dos obras recientes de Levi-Strauss” in Roland Barthes, *La aventura semiológica*, (Buenos Aires: Paidós), pp. 227-238.

radical *mestizaje* opens spaces for differentially positioned interlocutors, while erasing asymmetries.

To build *mestiza* coalitions it is necessary to avoid misunderstandings. This premise frames the critiques that I formulate in this section to Sandoval, while understanding that her project offers significant potential contributions to those involved in coalition building between U.S. third world and South American indigenous women movements.

Sandoval's *Methodology of the Oppressed* embeds Foucault's perspectives on the reflexivity of knowledge and power, science and police research, and of investigation and construction of evidence. To introduce a methodological tool while arguing against methodology in the same book is a logical contradiction that embeds Sandoval's proposal, which expresses the need to articulate fixity and movement, and science and myth in order to struggle against global capital. In Sandoval's proposal, content and shape parallel her rhizomatal argument on consciousness and social movements under globalization contexts. Reflections of globalization seem to shape the methodology of the oppressed.

According to Sandoval, postmodern globalization contexts both enable and disable the emergence of oppositional consciousness. It is important to notice the "oppositional" framework of the author. Her proposal needs to be evaluated within a counter-discursive frame. Her methodology embodies the utopian moments of alternative paradigms. Sandoval points out that in the 1970s and 1980s, the U.S. third world feminist movement epitomized this complex process and traces the path to be followed by other North American liberation movements. Sandoval writes as a U.S. woman of color who attempts to project her feminist experiences to other social movements, while participating in the effort of constructing counter-globalization common spaces.

In order to point out the relations between women of color and feminists, Sandoval writes the history U.S. feminism articulated through an ideological-conceptual axis. Equality, difference, superiority, and separation shape four tactics of feminism, which the differential mode of knowledge articulates. According to Sandoval, re-cognition and re-distribution of power led U.S. third world feminism to integrate these four ways of contesting dominating powers. This is exactly what Sandoval does in her text. *Methodology of the Oppressed* is a concrete example of her statements. Her writing embodies her project. She overturns the object/subject logic, and subsequently, she identifies social movements with social consciousness. (This is a second point that connects Fals Borda and Freire's "Investigación-Acción" to Sandoval's *Methodology of the Oppressed*.)

Coalitions are simultaneously a process and a result. U.S. women of color feminism integrates liberal, Marxist, and cultural versions of "official feminist history," as Sandoval names it, when constructing these coalitions. In doing so, women of color made an insurgent connection. "The differential mode of knowledge" reinforces shared traits in spite of reinforcing "cultural, class, sex, gender, and power differences."³⁴ In her book, Sandoval shapes a comparable issue. She rearticulates the limitations and contributions of her theoretical sources, and on this mestiza basis she elaborates *The Methodology of the Oppressed*. She projects this empowering strategy to broader spaces, and makes a claim for unified efforts of emergent cultural studies within the Euro-American academy.

Sandoval links the U.S. women of color social movement to U.S. third world feminism and cultural studies to feminist approaches as well. These assumptions position consciousness at the center of her proposal, and posit U.S. women of color as crucial for opening the knowledge/power space necessary for shaping a cognitive

³⁴ Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, p. 52.

methodology of contemporary social movements. Production of meaning acquires great relevance, and a strategy for deconstructing and reconstructing the hegemonic symbolic order through rhetorical skills emerges. Barthes and Fanon seem to be Sandoval's main theoretical sources, and bridging roles between cultures by Chicanas and other U.S. women of color seem to be her experiential source for the development of this strategy of counter-globalization activists. Within her project, consciousness provides means and space, while feminism provides agency to the ideological strategy of the oppressed. Women's movements and feminisms have historically dealt with differences and equality. Nevertheless, for Sandoval, U.S. and European white feminisms have political limits. The dissolution and fragmentation of post-modernity and the hegemony of western modernity shape women's condition as citizens subjected to the state. Overlapping modern and postmodern conditions of U.S. women of color both embodies universalizing and fragmented social practices. For Sandoval, U.S. third world feminism entails both modern and postmodern subjectivities. This modern/postmodern duality leads the author to position U.S. third world feminism in a privileged site. As women of color, U.S. third world women are subordinated but potentially insurgent subjects; and as U.S. postmodern feminists, they possess de-colonizing emergent revolutionary traits. This encapsulation of both modern universalism and postmodern difference leads Sandoval to propose US third world feminist methodology to other postmodern counter-globalization social movements.

According to Sandoval, "love" (the differential mode of knowledge) has enabled U.S. women of color to re-cognize while re-distributing power. By analogy, love, the methodology of the oppressed, could enable differently situated social movements, which embody the postmodern/modern condition, and would shape "a convergent mode of resisting and decolonizing globalization." She argues that under

globalization contexts, the pervasive presence of globalization disables neutralizing the pervasiveness of the cultural logic of what Jameson names “late capitalism.” If consciousness is the core space for both globalizing and counter-globalizing practices, a postmodern oppositional social movement needs a new postmodern rhetoric. “Love,” the methodology of the oppressed, is the tool that reads across cultures while shaping a common identity among multiple and diverse social movements. Semiotic operations lead from resistant and negatively ascribed identities to insurgent and self-defined learning identities. Drawing on the transformation that self-consciousness produced by social mobilization creates in alienated and consumerist subjects who become politically active subjects, reconfiguration of meanings parallels reconfiguration of politics. The referential paradigm that shapes Sandoval’s semiotic operation (which simultaneously moves between scientific rationality and the hermeneutics of love) makes ideological relationships between objective and theoretical orders visible. Sandoval’s *Methodology of the Oppressed* embeds a meta-ideology that unveils the magic of scientific knowledge, and looks for a mythological methodology for decolonizing oppressed subjectivities through the performance of insurgent norms.

Sandoval reads theoretical articulations through empathetic eyes in order to critically integrate other authors’ writings into her own. She overturns hegemonic science, and constructs an alternative academy where oppositional identities fit into objectivity while conceding their subjectivity. Additionally, the introduction of the hermeneutics of love subverts hegemonic scientific proposals while reinforcing pragmatic efforts for naming the subjectivity of science. She introduces “the hermeneutics of love,” and by this epistemological movement she opens a space for insurgency against knowledge-power social relationships. Positing the construction of life by love exposes its destruction by capitalism, as well as it also evokes the

presence of war within the liberal paradigm of democracy and indigenous women's ecological Cosmo vision. These strategic moves seek hegemonic disempowerment. They are deliberate reflexive movements that teach the use of her methodology of love. Sandoval points out that this new rhetoric operates differentially "because it is guided by the terms of the methodology of the oppressed: the consciousness it requires, reads the variables of meaning, apprehending and caressing their difference."³⁵

Through a unique overlapping argument Sandoval's project integrates three complex dimensions of counter-globalization collective subjects: i) consciousness versus experience, ii) equality versus differences, and iii) organization versus identity.³⁶ Dynamic practices of exchange among these three poles introduce a shared space for dialogue among subalterns while constructing a revolutionary ideology and agency. She constructs this space following an academic logic. This strategy legitimates her project within the scientific order that she is deconstructing. In this sense, her text again embodies the epistemological reconnection of "language to action" that her argument pursues.

Sandoval looks to both the contributions and limitations of Barthes' project. According to her, Barthes identifies five main figures that shape the western way of constructing of ideology, i.e. inoculation, privation of history, identification, tautology, and "neither-norism." Dominant ideology works through these figures while purporting scientific neutrality. Sandoval constructs a semiological tool that overturns hegemonic ideology and methodology, and produces a new ideology, which scientifically empowers the oppressed through hermeneutic means. Sandoval's

³⁵ Sandoval, *The Methodology of the Oppressed*, p. 129.

³⁶ Each one of these points have a precise meaning within social movements theories, a point that I further develop in this chapter.

Methodology of the Oppressed is again a concrete example of how this new semiotic works. The author deconstructs theories of knowledge, rearticulates ideological practices of social sciences, and presents her rhizomathical methodology of love in spaces usually under the control of capital and conservative academies. She creates an alternative academy on the basis of challenges to hegemonic normativity, a turn that actualizes debates on revolutionary agency, formation of groups, associations and social movements.

The intersection of counter-globalization social movements and of theoretical writings constitutes the basis of Sandoval's project. Jameson, Foucault, and Haraway are her main references, with Fanon and Derrida supplementing Barthes' proposal. To link cultural relativism and feminism requires the skill of negotiating two related dimensions: construction of meaning and re-distribution of power. This is not an easy task, and *The Methodology of the Oppressed* exemplifies the difficulties of theorizing on social movements, as well on differences and equity under globalization contexts.³⁷

Sandoval's theorizing on the methodology of the oppressed stems from feminism's efforts at coordinating women social movements. The issue at stake in

³⁷ Sandoval's claim for the need of coordinating cultural studies expresses one of her contributions for elaborating both the equality versus difference, and the organization versus identity dilemmas of contemporary social movements. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that contemporary counter-globalization social movements manage coordination as "one" alternative among others forms of organization. The *Foro of Sao Paulo*, which in my opinion is the contemporary more important organizational gathering of counter-globalization movements, defines that challenges derived from the multiplicity and diversity of struggles constitute simultaneously a strength and a weakness. This topic is present in the mission statement of this global organization, whose logo states, repeating the idea that in 1994 the Zapatista movement initiated to promote, that "many worlds are possible." In this point iagain Sandoval's distance from concrete contemporary social movements is evident. "Coordination," "articulation," "mestizaje," are the academic terms for talking about what social movements already do, while involving richer scenarios. Bolivian social movements are multiple: Struggles against water privatization, organizations of real state debtors, police demonstrating against the increasing taxes on popular salaries, union of coca cultivating peasants ("Coca is not cocaine," "Out Coca Cola"), groups of human rights activists who struggle against the article 108 of the Constitution that defines as a terrorist those related to drug consumption or cultivation.

this argument is a global differentiation of meanings. Although globalization is an all-encompassing process, women's identities are positioned differentially, and especially asymmetrically and unequally, within contemporary capitalism. By delimiting (post) modern social movements in Europe and U.S.-America as her subject of study, Sandoval makes an epistemological mistake with significant political consequences. An indispensable premise of any attempt at constructing a (post) modern social movement needs to take into account the story of the asymmetric power relations that racializing and gendering has produced. Her analytical operation, which delimits her study only to European and U.S.-American subjects, hides the power relations involved in her framework.³⁸ The ethnocentrism of her project marks the limits of her contributions. To avoid celebrating globalization, to make claims for global resistance, to propose a methodology of the oppressed, and to write a book that concretizes your principles acquires relevance at a time when cynicism prevails. To locate identity transformations and epistemological alliances as the means for constructing universal/singular social movements against globalization, also has great value. Nevertheless, to locate postmodern third world women as privileged subjects of counter-globalization social movements follows a linear

³⁸ Jameson's essay "Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capital" constitutes Sandoval's foundational framework. This article emphasizes the cultural crisis of the United States. According to Jameson, contemporary neocolonial expansion of capitalism neutralizes cultural practices of globalization as well as of counter-globalization social movements. Jameson proposes the "cognitive mapping" methodology which corresponds to first world postmodern subjects. According to Sandoval, Jameson's methodology (the cognitive mapping) does not enable first world postmodern subjects to frame collective projects due to the fragmented condition of the postmodern subject. As I already said, Sandoval argues that U.S. third world feminism solves the dilemma that postmodernism constructs insofar this social movement encapsulates both the modern and the postmodern condition of new counter globalization subjects. An evolutionist framework appears behind the dissolution of modern and fragmentation of postmodern subjects. Sandoval indirectly alludes to this weakness of her project. She argues that under "previous and modernist conditions of dispossession and colonization" people deployed the methodology of the oppressed." (p.37) Within Sandoval's framework, to look for empowerment through the re-articulation of these practices is a nostalgic behavior. U.S. third world feminism simultaneously belongs to the globalizing and the globalized poles of "late capitalism." This specific treatment of U.S. women of color leads them to embody "love" as the "differential mode of cognitive mapping," i.e. the methodology of the postmodern oppressed.

historicity that contradicts the basis of Sandoval's project. Unintended pervasive political consequences emerge from this reflexive bias.

Sandoval is unable to perceive both U.S. as well as the non-U.S. third world as constitutive elements of first world post-modernity. The author is aware of these limitations, and signals the reflexivity of power and knowledge,

Differential social movement finds its expression throughout the methodology of the oppressed. The technologies of semiotic reading, deconstruction of signs, meta-ideologizing, differential movement, and moral commitment to equality are its vectors, its expression of influence. These vectors meet in the differential mode of consciousness, which carries them through to the level of the "real" where they can impress and guide dominant powers. So too differential oppositional consciousness is itself a force that rhizomatically and parasitically inhabits each of these vectors, linking them in movement, while the pull of each vector creates the ongoing tension and re-formation of the liberal, revolutionary, supremacist, or separatist ideological forces that inscribe social reality.³⁹

Jameson and Sandoval are unable to raise the possibility of a third world agency without the mediation of the first world.⁴⁰ They compare and relate both social spaces, but they do not connect them. This operation suggests a fetishism of space could be at work within both authors' projects. The embodied site of the activist researcher frames an ethnocentric path of thinking that emphasizes the postmodern citizen-subject identity. Nevertheless, Sandoval's approach to contemporary postmodern citizen subjects of the state raises important questions. To point out the fascist characteristics of globalizing societies is a great achievement of the author. But there are some of her reflections that do not support a shared third

³⁹ Sandoval, *The Methodology of the Oppressed*, p. 181.

⁴⁰ I am not making a Latin American chauvinist claim. I am arguing that both authors deal with an epistemological bias that prevents them seeing the connections between first and third worlds through an integrative lens.

world perspective. The relations of South American women's movements with the symbolic realm and the State do not coincide with U.S. third world feminism. The complex debates on the "gender" issue between U.S./European and Latin American feminists exemplify these differences.

Deep insights into the globalizing practices of international civil society need to complement Sandoval's *Methodology of the Oppressed*. Violence and conflict, as constitutive elements of capitalist society, oppose love and alliances, as constitutive elements of the oppressed. Together, these poles perform mutual identifications. Sandoval opens a question, which puts at stake agency. Who makes the revolutionary ideology? She answers that Euro-American third world citizen-subjects constitute the emblematic revolutionary identity of contemporary late capitalism. Women's power in relation to the (re) production of society through hierarchical patterns, fixed by the law of the state, links feminist struggles to a more extended order of things. Sandoval seems to deal with this intuitive premise on the significance of women within revolutionary processes, while her "differential consciousness" reflects the power relations that shape her identity in the new global order. Knowledge does not emerge from the human mind's autonomous development, but it is always rooted in social relations.⁴¹ Sandoval's words are the expression of her own practices, as she clearly

⁴¹ Examining Sandoval's writings through Marx's ideas of the *German Ideology*, it seems that she is telling us that the new social order calls for a new multi-site epistemology. Marx wrote his texts when some European countries (England, France, Germany) were intensively experiencing political changes due to the effects of the Industrial Revolution. Feudalism, Capitalism, and Communism were three political projects at issue. Marx's knowledge site explicitly corresponds to the proletarian emergent political perspective. In other words, the contradictions reflected the emerging bourgeois society versus old feudalism versus emergent proletarians. Thus, his text engages in a larger epistemological and political debate where the bourgeois revolution struggles against the feudal privileges while simultaneously struggling against emergent proletarian class interests. In this context, Marx's works *Thesis on Feuerbach* and *The German Ideology* state important points that he afterwards develops

points out in “U.S. Third world Feminism: The Theory and Method of Oppositional Consciousness in the Postmodern World.” “Differential consciousness was utilized by feminists of color within the women’s movement; yet it is also a form of consciousness in resistance utilized among subaltern subjects under various conditions of domination and subordination.”⁴² Sandoval seems to understand her philosophical activity as a political activism, but she does not make this mistake. Her confusion originates in the homologous value that she projects to women’s social movements, feminist social movements and feminisms. Philosophers are already involved in revolutionary actions. Their thoughts and words are part of the social life dynamic which does not reflect a mechanical identity of logic. Time and space have to be taken into account to evaluate philosophical statements. Actions and thoughts are mutually determined. However, time and space need to be taken into account not from a sequential perspective, but from Stuart-Hall’s “articulation” view. In Sandoval’s case, as in any other case, it is important to understand the life conditions of the author, who is a woman of color scholar living in the U.S., that influence her classification or her order of beings. Within the U.S. domestic space, she is able to view the articulation of race and gender as the point that stresses class corporeality. This leads her to construct her interesting expression “Third World in the First World.” Nonetheless, she thinks through a sequential and aggregative order, while

through historical concrete analyses. In *The Jewish Question*, Marx discusses the contributions and limitations of political emancipation to achieve human emancipation, and in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, he analyzes the multiple class alliances that allowed the Bonapartist state of Louis Napoleon. In the former two articles, Marx states that materialism and idealism prevent us from knowing social relations. He states that it is necessary to understand philosophical positions as the result of historical “moments,” as Feuerbach and the young Hegelian did in those days, and as Sandoval and other theorists do in contemporary contexts.

⁴² Sandoval, *The Methodology of the Oppressed*, p.16.

veiling social articulation when she proposes her differential consciousness and privileges the agency of U.S. women of color. Her nationalist identity biases her epistemological proposal that seems to have a new universalizing Chicana-centered code, which understands “*mestizaje*” from the U.S.-American ethnicity model perspective.

Néstor García-Canclini

Do not let us go back to a fictitious primordial condition as the political economist does, when he tries to explain. Such a primordial condition explains nothing. He merely pushes the question away into a grey nebulous distance. He assumes in the form of fact, of an event, what he is supposed to deduce—namely, the necessary relationship between two things—between, for example, division of labor and exchange.

Karl Marx, “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,” p. 71.

I introduce García Canclini’s concept of “hybridity” within his consumption framework. This operation introduces an author who could supplement Sandoval’s linear historicity with an archeological view on Latin American identity. The social movements, which grew up fueled by the dictatorships of the 70s, emphasized class and national liberation against imperialism without taking into account gender and race difference. Latin American feminist, ecologist, and pacifist new social movements embodied their solidarity with indigenous and black populations as a distant support. Modern thought turned around the classification, characterization, study and exposition of the others with the purpose of delimiting the borders between modern men and the other, the racialized ethnic. Aníbal Quijano states that the invention of America introduced a fundamental category, “race,” in the western

imaginary.⁴³ Walter Mignolo adds that this imaginary, which erased the racializing process by celebrating *mestizaje*, has been part of Latin American political and intellectual genealogies.⁴⁴ However, in Latin America colonial history towards black and indigenous populations is still hidden behind the narrative of *mestizaje* within Latin American nation states.⁴⁵

This blindness in relationship to the ontologic of racializing shapes the limitations of Latin American academicians and inhibits the intuition of the role of “race” within contemporary neo-colonization. These limits, on the one hand, draw on Latin American elites’ indifference to the connections between the U.S. modernization and its ethnicity model. This attitude resulted in the existence of few Latin American analyses involving the racial formation of the American continent. On the other hand, left wing frameworks have been the main references to understand counter-globalization’s heterogeneous social movements. Since the end of the 80s, the discussion on multiculturalism, especially on what is related to women, has adopted an enlightened U.S.-Euro centric perspective. But during the last twenty years, the organizational level of the indigenous peoples, with great differences among them, increased their presence, both in the domestic and the international

⁴³ Aníbal Quijano, “La colonialidad del saber: eurocentrismo y ciencias sociales” in Edgardo Lander (ed.) *La Colonialidad del Saber*, pp. 281-247.

⁴⁴ Walter Mignolo, “La colonialidad a lo largo y a lo ancho: el hemisferio occidental en el horizonte colonial de la modernidad,” in Edgardo Lander (ed.), *La Colonialidad del Saber*, pp. 79-117.

⁴⁵ Mohanty, *Feminism without borders: decolonizing theory, practicing solidarity*. Even though, the so-called solidarity movements of the 80s and beginning of the 90s began to see the specific dependence that the external debt and the adjusting structural plans have on the indigenous populations. Due to the financial terms of the IMF agreements, on 2005, for example, Venezuela already paid once the external debt, and almost paid it for a second time, however the debt is still intact. Here lies Fidel Castro’s word game that names “eternal debt” the “external debt.”

arenas. While Latin American governments have promoted promissory political changes in relation to indigenous populations, indigenous groups have generated new forms of relating their ways of living to modernity. These movements claim cultural and political autonomy, while requesting their full integration to modern development.

The position of national groups in relation to ethnic women continues to be ambiguous, and a paternalist relationship permeates the perspective of feminisms on race difference. Indigenous consumption and its relationship to indigenous populations' conditions as citizens are experiences still waiting to begin to be researched. Like Gamio, García Canclini seems to identify himself as a white man who interrogates, from a contemporary perspective, how simultaneously to “enter and exit” from modernization.

To answer this question, García Canclini argues that social participation organizes itself through consumption more than through the exercise of citizenship. He sees Latin American civil societies as segmented unities of consumers, while adding that this consumption-centered conception does not explain the transformations that occur in the articulation between citizens and consumers, which contemporary economic, technological and cultural changes would have blended. For García Canclini, national identities increasingly draw on symbols that are not originated on their own territories; rather Latin American identities could have been influenced by non-national centers, such as New York City. This process that García Canclini points out has a twofold interpretation. It could be perceived as a negative aspect from a liberal democratic perspective, or it can be seen as the expansion of the

notion of citizenship from an open societal view. Indeed, García Canclini re-conceptualizes consumption “as the place that serves for thinking, and where a great part of the economic, sociopolitical and psychological rationality organizes itself.”⁴⁶

To recognize these transformations does not mean that he promotes the dissolution of citizenship within consumption, or of nations within globalization. For García Canclini there is not any model capable, per se, of explaining what consumption is. García Canclini identifies “consumption” as an epistemological place, which opens up a space to rethink the entire communication process. He emphasizes the need to research on “communication,” as a process where subjects are socially constructed by exchange interactions taking place under conditions that are asymmetrically “produced” and “of production.”⁴⁷ García Canclini departs from the theoretical difficulties that challenge the study of cultural consumption as one part of the cycle of goods’ production and circulation.⁴⁸ This starting point allows him to justify, theoretically and methodologically, the separation of goods or activities, which he calls “cultural consumption,” and to seek how to define these goods’ specificity. He defines “cultural consumption neither as a cultural nor as a

⁴⁶García Canclini, *Ciudadanos y Consumidores. Conflictos multiculturales de la globalización*, (México: Grijalbo, 1995), pp. 15-16.

⁴⁷ This dissertation approaches “mestizaje” and “hybridity” from the point of view women. Our object/subject condition within exchange contexts among men is the point at issue.

⁴⁸ Here, also, this dissertation extends the politics of economy of cultural consumption by introducing two new elements: women as potential objects/subjects of cultural consumption, and the need to supplement Marx’s commodity cycle, which emphasize modern production, by emphasizing the need to incorporate “reproduction” to Marxist political economy.

reproductivist” phenomenon.⁴⁹ Confronting functionalist theories on reception, García Canclini says that, “The point at issue is not to measure the distance between the messages and its effects.” He insists on the need to construct an integral analysis of consumption, which he understands “as the total social processes of appropriation of the products.”⁵⁰ García Canclini does not work with the framework of consumption-compulsion, neither with the perspective that focuses on market recollection of data of tastes and behaviors. For this author, everyday practices, as places that embody the internalization of social inequalities, constitute the space for reflecting on power relations’ changes. Following Foucault, García Canclini posits that consumption is the space where humans internalize the relationship with their own body, their habitat, while forming their conscience of what is possible, achievable or un-achievable. Consumption is also the place where the limits that produce the subject are contested. It is the place of the expressions of desires, subversion of codes, and pulsations and pleasure. García Canclini does not only see in consumption the reproduction of forces, he also sees it as the place of production of meaning.

Sandoval’s semiotic methodology of the oppressed shares this framework. For both authors, social movements’ struggle is an open process for the construction of meanings. For Canclini it does not end in possession, and it takes place in

⁴⁹ García Canclini, “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, (Bogotá: 1999), p. 30.

⁵⁰ García Canclini, “Gramsci con Bourdieu: hegemonía, consumo y nuevas formas de organización popular,” in *Nueva Sociedad* No. 71, p. 74, Caracas, 1985.

consumption. For Sandoval the construction of meaning happens through social movements' processes, which she hinges on identities defined by their capacity for bridging among subjects in oppositional positions.

In his text *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, García Canclini introduces a strategy for new social movements. He does not develop this strategy, while coinciding with Sandoval's view on the need for constructing alliances among different positioned subjects. In Canclini words:

At this point of the profits and failures of ones and others, it is reasonable not to conceive as omnipotent the States, neither the mass media, nor the Market. We cannot either understand the citizens without the state actors and the cultural industries. The method consists in exploring some strategic interactions in which "the Latin American" disputes and negotiates itself. It is possible to clarify the viable actions for Latin America by distinguishing what can the states, the media and the citizens do.⁵¹

Canclini signals the need for "exploring" Latin American interactions. As a result of these "explorations" it will be possible to know the viable options; and subsequently, to make the best choices. An important point to bear in mind is that monopolization of sources of information does not figure within García Canclini's research project on cultural consumption. In addition, he also states that in order to "situate Latin America in a different position within already existing exchanges, it is

⁵¹García Canclini, *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, p. 32. "A estas alturas de los logros y fracasos de unos y otros [Canclini se refiere a los Estados nacionales, las industrias culturales, el Mercado y a la sociedad civil] es razonable no concebir a los Estados, ni a los medios de comunicación, ni al Mercado como omnipotentes. Tampoco podemos entender a los ciudadanos sin los actores estatales y las industrias culturales. El método consiste en explorar algunas interacciones estratégicas en las que "lo latinoamericano" esta disputándose y negociándose. Es posible que al ir distinguiendo lo que pueden hacer los Estados, los medios y los ciudadanos se aclaren las acciones hoy viables para América Latina."

necessary to re-structure what has being understood as “cultural cooperation.”⁵²

Canclini supplements his liberal framework, which reduces political action to rational choice, with his “consumption” perspective, a rational operation that he supplements by the introduction of “desire.” If for Sandoval the methodology of the oppressed is the radical mestiza identity, which draws on her semiotic skill for analyzing and bridging differences, for Canclini the methodology is “to explore interactions” in order to have the information that one requires to do the correct choice. In this sense, Sandoval is much more precise than García Canclini. This difference between the two authors probably stems from García Canclini’s understanding that European and U.S. cultural studies emphasize the crisis of the universal paradigm, where modernity is, for him, already completed. Latin American cultural studies draw on social sciences’ view of impediments to achieve modernization. When the point at issue is “the method for advancing in social change under globalization contexts,” Sandoval’s abstract work points more precisely to the object of enquiry. However, the comparison between Sandoval and García Canclini is much more complex. Sandoval obviates any concrete reference to the social movements that inform her theorizing. Canclini does the homologous asymmetrical operation. His works bombards the reader with illustrative cases. He manages a solid theoretical framework, comparable to Sandoval’s, but he does not make explicit references to it, except in rare occasions. Neither Sandoval nor García Canclini, however, develops a negotiation theory for (post) modern social movements, which, according to what they point out, would be the crucial point at stake.

⁵² García Canclini, *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, p. 103.

The anthropologist says that “now we need to know how to achieve a political culture, democratic and intercultural, where debates and tribunals operate before the arms.” In addition, his specific definition of “a nation,”⁵³ allows García Canclini to avoid the tensions between the international and the transnational frameworks, a point at issue if one wants to look for a methodology for promoting (post) modern democratic identities.⁵⁴ Would it be the citizen’s rights circumscribed to her national ascription or would it be a human rights condition?

It is even more important to notice that men and women citizen subjects’ positions are not the same if one talks of international or transnational orders. Women, as cultural subjects and objects of exchange within nations are ambiguously marked in their (post) modern emancipation, a reflection that also applies to the authors. Admittance within modernity follows different scripts for men than for women. The “territory” appears as a point ignored in García Canclini’s cultural consumption framework. He emphasizes Latin American cultural integration while reproducing neo-global and (post) modern blindness in relation to the material corporeality of the imagined community.⁵⁵

⁵³ “Any nation is, among other things, the result of pacts among producers, institutions, markets and receivers about what is common and verisimilar under particular historical contexts.” According to Canclini, “partially, a nation is an hermeneutic community of consumers,” in “El consumo cultural, una propuesta teórica,” p. 43.

⁵⁴The transition from solidarity internationalism to transnational politics is related to thinking the differences, both at the international and the domestic order. See Audre Lorde, “We needed some time to understand that our place is precisely the home of differences, instead of the security of a particular difference.”

⁵⁵Venezuela as well as Venezuelan indigenous women will introduce in the debate through the oil condition of its economy a different experience.

The use of products gives social form to the products while at the same time inscribing in them the requirements and the disposition toward the mobilizing action of different identities. This epistemological and political turn introduces the theme of the “subject” within García Canclini’s framework. He relates everyday practices to a disperse creativity and productivity which are inserted into consumption. These practices are “modes of doing” that do not accept statistical measurement while making visible cultural residues which do not fit into technological colonization. Michel De Certeau defines these residuals as a blend of “technical inventive and moral resistance,” which is visible in ways of surviving, walking the city, living in the house or watching television.⁵⁶ This space, according to García Canclini, facilitates understanding of the forms of sociability that are produced through consumption.

Like in Gamio’s case, a masculinist conception marks García Canclini’s words. This anthropologist often cites Claude Levi Strauss, who is a leading voice within anthropological studies on women’s foundational role for the construction of the patriarchal social order. But García Canclini, within his precise analyses of the dominium of cultural consumption, never mentions the ambiguity of women as simultaneously objects and subjects of exchange among equal men belonging to the brotherhood. “Amnesia: the inability or unwillingness to recall due to trauma or enforced taboo.”⁵⁷ Bambara’s words evoke the rationality undermining García Canclini’s erasure of U.S. third world women’s radical new *mestiza* identity, which

⁵⁶ Michel De Certeau, *L’invention du quotidien: Arts du faire*, in García Canclini, “El consumo cultural, una propuesta teórica,” p. 70.

⁵⁷ Toni Cade Bambara, “These Bones Are Not My Child,” in Moraga, *This Bridge Called My Back*, p. ixx.

shares multiple points with his hybrid cultural consumption framework.⁵⁸ In fact, his “residual” perspective is very similar to U.S. third world women’s learned skill of moving with great cultural flexibility. As Sandoval does, García Canclini searches a methodology for studying subjects whose lives require them to learn how to adapt to different contexts and to develop a great capacity for appropriating technological languages. In this point, the author coincides with Sandoval, who in her text introduces Barthes’ “love” as a methodology that parallels the one that García Canclini states to be seeking. As Sandoval does with Freire, García Canclini erases Sandoval (and U.S. women of color) from the picture, a behavior that evokes Gamio’s scientific inscription of the nation leading to his admittance within the male modern brotherhood. These reflections on García Canclini’s concern with manliness reveal the difference between the Chicanas’ use of the metaphor *mestizaje* and the

⁵⁸ If we compare his to Anzaldúa’s and Moraga’s books, interesting evocations appear, paralleling Sandoval’s erasure of Freyre. The book’s edition appears to be 2002, while an internet research focused on Paidós, its publishing firm, shows that it appears to the public on 1-1-2003, while a skip on the sources show that he used journal articles from March 2002. In addition, Canclini reproduces and extends Moraga and Anzaldúa’s initial arguments on the need to write a new foreword for the book drawing on two facts: the demographic changes that increased the presence of ethnic peoples within the U.S., and the effects of the attacks to the Twin Manhattan’s Towers in 2001. These facts do not provide evidence of any “intentional blindness,” however they led me to review Canclini’s bibliographic sources. I find that he does not use ethnic studies sources. Therefore I understand that the framework for his Latin American/U.S.-European cultural studies stems from an hegemonic white Latin American man who talks (and probably looks for his admittance, as also Gamio did) within hegemonic (post) modernity. I do not develop this argument, while I am interesting in writing the doubts that emerged from a quick research on structure, contents, sources, and mainly on questions that emerged from Canclini’s limitations to understand racialization and take into account racialization processes. In fact, the entire “consumption” framework of his work draws on the liberal democratic assumption of equal exchangeable citizens and on the Marxist framework that also assumes equally exchangeable workers. Equality is a condition for exchanging within the market or for voting within the state. To inquiry on Canclini’s equals led me on the same direction than the Chapter on Gamio, a strategy that it is not proper for the use of Canclini that I am arguing in this chapter.

author's privileged use to the metaphor of hybrid cultures. A quote makes noticeable how he understands hybridity:⁵⁹

How can one situate the economic and cultural integration of Latin American societies within this reconfiguration of global markets? What can be at-present understood as Latinidad? It is not possible to engulf it to the use and teaching of the Latin languages. Neither to a number of thought and life habits linked to a group of European countries which are different among them (Spain, Portugal, Italy, France) and of nations of America that with different emphasis absorbed these influences (Catholic religion, modernizing liberalism, etc.). That is why we talk, more than of a common Latin American identity, of a very heterogeneous cultural space. In this space or net, Latin languages are associated to editorial and academic, gastronomic, tourist and communicational circuits, while all of them mobilize great economical investments. "Lo latinoamericano" modulates with a different emphasis according to the historical weight, and the actual influences of Europeans, U.S. peoples, and their articulation with national and ethnic projects.⁶⁰

While his use of hybrid cultures could evoke Chicanas' use of the metaphor of *mestizaje*, the point of "territory" versus "space" makes an additional significant difference, as I will provide evidence through the chapter on the Venezuelan Wayuu indigenous women. The question that immediately emerges is: If to be Latin American implies so many options, which is the one that García Canclini chose? He does not understand that to write from a Latin American perspective implies to write

⁵⁹ See his book *Culturas híbridas*

⁶⁰ García Canclini, *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, p. 69, "Cómo puede situarse la integración económica y cultural de las sociedades latinoamericanas en esta recomposición de los mercados globales? Qué se puede entender hoy por latinidad? No es posible restringirla al uso y enseñanza de lenguas latinas. Tampoco a un conjunto de hábitos de pensamiento y vida ligados a un grupo de países europeos diversos entre sí (España, Portugal, Italia, Francia) y de naciones de América que absorbieron con énfasis esas influencias (religión católica, liberalismo modernizador, etcétera). Por eso hablamos, más que de una identidad común latinoamericana, de un *espacio cultural* muy heterogéneo. En ese espacio o red las lenguas latinas van asociadas a circuitos editoriales y académicos, gastronómicos, turísticos y comunicacionales, todos los cuales movilizan altas inversiones económicas. "Lo latinoamericano" se modula con énfasis diversos según el peso histórico y las influencias actuales de los europeos, los estadounidenses, y su articulación con proyectos nacionales y étnicos."

outside of globalization, or as writing from a position whose difference would construct radical alternatives, i.e. a radically other society. I understood these words as a positive analytical point that contrast to Sandoval's North/North framework. However, from a U.S. ethnic woman or a Latin American indigenous woman's perspective the evaluation of Canclini's word leads one to ask about the author's research site, as a Latin American male anthropologist looking for his admittance within the modern brotherhood.

As important as observing the erasure of the specificity of women within the field of cultural consumption is to observe that his insight signal that the globalization of the market is related to consumption fragmentation, an assumption that provides relevance to research efforts on consumption, and especially cultural consumption, as a form of social associational principle. In "El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica," García Canclini points out that the difficulties for studying cultural consumption do not only come from the lack of theoretical references. Often, disciplinary fields falter when confronted with the study of fragmented behaviors, a feature specific of cultural consumption. People follow different logics according to the specific contexts of their particular consumptions. This premise that leads the author to ask: Does it have any meaning in our atomized societies, where simultaneously are circulated traditional, modern and postmodern messages, to unify, not under *one* theoretical model, but under a multiple perspective, what the people do in their jobs and in their free time, in urban spaces that are disconnected and in distant generations?" The main theoretical challenges that he perceives do not coincide with homogenization. Pitfalls are rather the effect of "the interaction among distant groups

in a much segmented communicational plot.”⁶¹ Sandoval and García Canclini share this theoretical perspective. Sandoval contradicts her framework when she defines the U.S. third world in the first world women as the privileged (post) modern citizen subject. García Canclini, on the contrary, builds his own argument on cultural consumption, on multiple subjectivities.

Drawing on the deconstruction of two notions: needs and goods, he emphasizes the socially constructed character of needs in opposition to a naturalist conception of needs. While García Canclini localizes consumption within the process of production and circulation, he also understands that the latter economic-centered perspective has a linear approach that locates consumption at the end of the cycle. Theories on literary reception, which is the field of study that he uses for giving his examples, deconstructed the linear approach by making visible the interaction between producers and consumers. García Canclini understands that consumers blend the strategies of those who make and commercialize goods by implanting tactics necessary to adapt them to everyday life’s dynamic. The recognition of the interactive character of consumption and its significance within everyday life has contributed to shape a framework that sees contemporary social movements distancing themselves from labor struggles. At the same time, the consumption framework supports the incorporation of social movements to goods consumption.

From a different angle, the author says that in those societies that pretend to be democratic, “consumption is the fundamental area for the construction and

⁶¹ García Canclini, N. “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, pp. 30-31.

communication of social differences.”⁶² Many distinctions within classes and fractions manifest themselves transmuting the objects of consumption in signifiers. García Canclini states that economic inequality makes subaltern sectors more dependent on material issues, which they experience as a need and even as urgency. But consumption does not always work separating classes and groups. There are goods that relate to all social classes, although each process of appropriation follows different paths. García Canclini argues that to consume is also to exchange meanings.

At this point of the author’s argument, the reification of consumption seems to be a plausible critique of his project. The author introduces a rhetorical question on the specificity of cultural consumption, which he answers by stating that,

[i]f the appropriation of any good is a fact that symbolically integrates and communicates, objectifies desires and ritualizes their satisfaction, if we say that, in summary that to consume serves to think, all consuming acts, and not only the relations to art or knowing, are cultural facts. Why do I separate, then, certain goods or activities and call them *cultural consumption*?⁶³

Canclini correctly argues that in addition to having socially constructed needs we also follow desires that do not embody specific objects. “We experience pulsations that do not point out to the possession of precise things or to relations to particular persons.”

⁶² García Canclini, N. “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, pp. 30-31. “Tienen los consumos culturales una problemática específica? Si la apropiación de cualquier bien es un acto que distingue simbólicamente, integra y comunica, objetiva los deseos y ritualiza su satisfacción, si decimos que consumir —y no solo las relaciones con el arte o el saber— son hechos culturales. Por que separar, entonces, lo que sucede en conexión con ciertos bienes o actividades y denominarlo consumo *cultural*?”

⁶³ García Canclini, in “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, p. 41. “Tienen los consumos culturales una problemática específica? Si la apropiación de cualquier bien es un acto que distingue simbólicamente, integra y comunica, objetiva los deseos y ritualiza su satisfacción, si decimos que consumir —y no solo las relaciones con el arte o el saber— son hechos culturales. Por que separar, entonces, lo que sucede en conexión con ciertos bienes o actividades y denominarlo consumo *cultural*?”

Desire is erratic, and institutions that pursue it “would never be satisfied.” “Which is our basic desire? Since Hegel until Lacan’s time, the desire to be recognized and loved that move us, provides a weak response to the initial question if we bear in mind the thousands of forms that this aspiration adopts within the proliferating offers of consumption.” It is difficult to insert “desire” within social studies. Desire accomplishes a significant role within the semiotics of social relationships. García Canclini states that it is impossible to ignore desire if one wants to understand social change. These words approximate again Sandoval and Canclini’s projects. Both look for a methodology for promoting progressive social change under global contexts. While Sandoval proposes that the new *mestiza* identity enacts this methodology through “love,” Canclini argues “that no society sustains the erratic and diffused irruption of desire and the subsequent uncertainty of meanings; humankind has created the rituals.” This framework leads the author to say that goods may be understood as “ritual accessories,” and consumption as “a ritual process whose main function constitute in providing sense to the rudimentary flux of events.”⁶⁴ García Canclini argues that the moment of selecting, buying and using the goods that one chooses, contributes to the construction of an intelligible universe. In this sense, in addition to satisfy needs or desires, appropriating good means to charge them with

⁶⁴ Douglas M. and Baron Isherwood. *El mundo de los bienes. Hacia una antropología del consumo*, Grijalbo, in García Canclini, N. “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, p. 114.

meanings. Goods help to hierarchically organize the facts and configure their meaning: “Goods serve to think.”⁶⁵

If the appropriation of any good is an act that symbolically differentiates, integrates and communicates, objectifies desires and ritualizes their satisfaction, if consumption serves to think, then all consumption acts are cultural facts. Why does García Canclini separate certain goods from other activities that he names “cultural consumption?” Drawing on the partial independence that art and intellectual fields achieved within modernity, the author justifies his theoretical and methodological operation. As also happens with women, cultural products have use and exchange value, contribute to the reproduction of society and sometimes to the expansion of capital. However, symbolic cultural consumption of capital prevails in relation to utilitarian and mercantile values. It is then possible to define “the particularity of cultural consumption as the total of processes of appropriation and use of products where symbolic value prevails on use and exchange value, or where at least the latter values configure themselves in subordination to the symbolic dimension.”⁶⁶

This definition allows the inclusion within cultural consumption also of those products that are greatly conditioned by their mercantile implications but whose dependence on a religious system, or whose elaboration and consumption require a long training within symbolic structures of relative independence. For García Canclini, the autonomy of cultural consumption increases according to the greater

⁶⁵ García Canclini, N. “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, p. 77.

⁶⁶ García Canclini, “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, p. 43.

integration of the producers and publics to the modern world. But he also states that there is a trend that shows that there is a consumption band of traditional goods that does not correspond to its traditional meanings. They rather are adaptations that the producers do in order to sell them to modern sectors, which do not really share with them their beliefs, productive habits or social organization. This consumption band can be conceived as a relatively autonomous system in relation to the society that originally produced these objects. According to García Canclini, the particularity of Latin American modernity, where artistic and scientific markets obtain a partial independence of political and religious markets, generate cultural consumption patterns that are different from those of the European or US-American societies. Again his Euro-centric parameters lead the author to say that “The surviving of ample areas of production and consumption, art and crafts, fiestas, etc., which are of significance not only for their old producers, but rather also for ample modern consumers, reveals the existence of a multi-temporal heterogeneity present within the constitution of our societies.”⁶⁷ García Canclini, like Gamio, understands Latin American “heterogeneity” as the result of the coexistence of cultural formations stemming from different ages, which promotes crossings and processes of hybridity that have more intense manifestations in Latin America than in the U.S. or European metropolis. It is important to take into account that these processes of hybrid consumption formation are not homogeneous. Social differences exist and reproduce within the symbolic distinctions that separate consumers.

⁶⁷ García Canclini, “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, p. 44.

By assuming “the coexistence of cultural formations stemming from different ages,” García Canclini negates contemporaneity of cultures. This original sin of modernity gave birth to ethnicity. His naturalization of this temporal linearity of culture, which is visible behind his framework, implies the hierarchical position of modernity in relationship to cultures that are residual and ethnic. This is a theoretical bias that supports García Canclini’s blindness in relation to the function of racialization within modernization.

García Canclini questions the possibility of the existence of a nation existing within a segmented, multicultural form with multiple temporalities, types of traditions and modernizations. This overlaps Sandoval’s efforts for theorizing on the methodology of the oppressed under (post) modern contexts. The reverse of his question is: How can the persistence of cultural diversity in Latin American be explained after five centuries of colonial integration and independent modernization? García Canclini’s consumption framework explains the history of heterogeneity as the result of multiple movements of assimilation, rejection, negotiation and reconfiguration. Consumable goods are, for him, a stimulus for thinking. Goods are spaces where consumers produce unexpected meanings. “Consumers are not pure creators, but producers neither are omnipotent.” What seems omnipresent in García Canclini’s view is “consumption,” a term that although he theoretically differentiates he also assimilates to “cultural consumption,” and that he recursively reifies within the multiple (con) texts through which he illustrates his argument.

Within García Canclini’s framework, the research question to formulate would be: How is it possible for societies to exist although consumers who do not

share patterns of consumption antagonize them? Any nation is, among other things, the result of pacts among producers, institutions, markets and receivers about what is common and verisimilar under particular historical contexts. According to García Canclini, “a nation is partially a hermeneutic community of consumers.”⁶⁸ Even those goods that are not common to everybody are significant to the majority of the population. This discourse seems to be of great utility in order to redefine the nation state where cultures are de-territorialized and many political practices are subordinated to the rules of massive communication. This perspective is also crucial if one wants to examine politics of nation making when tensions between historical national structures and changes generated by modernizing politics generate revolutionary processes. According to García Canclini, on the one hand, the integration between social classes and ethnic groups seem to be subsumed by the nation, while he sees that on the other hand, these tensions also reveal the crisis of the national institutions that the multiple social processes produce.

Almost all Latin American social movements appeal to the restoration of the administration of the state in order to take care of the consumption of the goods of the nation. In Latin America, any project that aspires to intervene in the modernizing re-ordering seems always to take into account the state order as a crucial administrative-territory. In the U.S. women of color case, the situation is the opposite. The “citizen-subject” formation led activists to distance from governmental politics, which would enable them to achieve the state power. In García Canclini’s view, the state would

⁶⁸ García Canclini, “El consumo cultural: una propuesta teórica,” in Guillermo Sunkel (Ed.) *El consumo cultural en América Latina. Construcción teórica y líneas de investigación*, p. 46.

enable the construction of the public interest when the free market trend would lead to the transformation of consumers into simple buyers of private goods. The cultural consumption appears then, for him, as a strategic space in order to rethink the society that the consumers want. An emergent classificatory system would assign the place that each sector would have. The role of the public power as a guarantee of the public interest would not be forgotten.

An alternative position appears when examining the case of the Venezuelan Indigenous Wayuu Women Web. Nation and territoriality acquire great significance when the resources of the State stem from the land's production of oil, a feature that simultaneously introduces the civic anxiety for the reproduction of this non-renewable resource. In the case of Venezuela, to know what occurs under the global context to the cultural consumption of citizenship requires asking about the efficiency of politics, the distribution of what belongs to the nation among those admitted within the nation, or to say it in García Canclini's words, to relate "the diversification of tastes to the formation of a democratic citizenship."⁶⁹

Indigenous and feminist movements embrace diversity not only as productive sites of social differences but within equality frameworks. Their mobilizations have made visible that differentiation which forms the basis of social hierarchies and domination.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ García Canclini, *Ciudadanos y consumidores*, pp. 157-164.

⁷⁰ For example, feminism argues that "woman" is not only different from, but also subordinate to "man."

Indigenous movements emphasize how racialization responds to a social ordering, where whiteness is the hegemonic pole of the racial order. These hierarchies constitute social domination in the sense described by Foucault.⁷¹ Drawing on this understanding of domination, the central problem for social movements is not to establish freedom from capitalist power relations, but to resist domination within fields of power. This definition implies that emancipation projects always occur within power relations of domination, and that the purpose of social movements is to resist relations of domination and to change the structure of power, not to escape the implications of power. Domination is also produced and maintained through universalizing discourses, languages and activities in their social and institutional contexts, which work to control diversity. As persons are induced to fit into simple categories of differentiation, complex relationships among axes of differentiation are elided. One of the main discourses that constitute social differentiation as hierarchy and domination is that of binary opposition. Sexual politics produces gender and racial orderings as opposing types of persons. Women or ethnic communities are defined in terms of man or civilized societies, and only two positions are available as “genders” or “civilized” persons. Opposition is created because woman is “not man” and racialized subjects are not white, implying that woman is “other” than man and that “*mestiza* and ethnic people and women” are “the other” of the modern subject. Thus, two positions for lived experiences (subject positions) are established: the norm and the difference positions. This negative definition establishes hierarchy between

⁷¹ A hierarchy becomes domination when there are few, if any, avenues for reversal of the relationship or for resistance to the claims of the subordinate parts of the hierarchy.

the pair, and hierarchy becomes domination when opportunities for embedding the subjectivity of the other are shaped by the universal reference. By operating within networks of differentiations, binary oppositions both invoke and contain complex diversity, while denying the genesis of differentially positioned subjects. But as Barthes reminds us, there are many types of “oppositions.” They require a cognitive skill that the Wayuu women demonstrate they know perfectly well how to use.

As Escobar points out when describing (post) modern critiques of modernization and developmental models, connecting U.S. ethnic women social movement to the Wayuu women social movement offers a privileged research site for learning how to construct (post) modern social movements. Both Pateman and Chow parallel women’s *trabajo de parto* (birth labor) to men’s *trabajo etnográfico* (fieldwork). The next section introduces the historical information for linking this epistemological question to Venezuelan indigenous women’s experiences of giving birth to a *mestiza* nation. These experiences will enter in dialogue with anthropologist Gamio’s masculinist way of field working through the lens of Sandoval and García Canclini’s “*mestizaje* and hybrid cultural consumption” perspectives.

C. An Endogenous Indigenous-Rooted Project

Introduction

On April 2002, a two-day coup d'état led to President Chavez's imprisonment for two days in the Venezuelan Caribbean island of La Orchila.¹ The Venezuelan population who lives in the slums surrounding Caracas (around three million people) came down from the *cerros*, occupied the center of the capital city, and obliged the military and entrepreneur *golpistas* to retire from the governmental buildings. These popular actions repositioned Chávez in the presidency. The domestic and international private media that demonized the Pan-American Bolivarian project since its inception transmitted the details of the coup d'état all over the world while silencing the popular participation in defense of President Chávez.

During the coup of April 2002, I was writing answers to the questions for my Ph.D. qualifying exam. While I attempted to focus on the Wayuu indigenous women social movement, which was the original topic of my dissertation prospectus, the e-mails that I received from the women about whom I was writing shook my project and me. The two-day coup d'état violently blurred how I would write about transnational indigenous social movements.

¹ Spain, Columbia and U.S.'s support to this coup provoked a diplomatic impasse whose political cost is still running in 2005, when in January the Colombian army kidnapped a Colombian citizen in Caracas and the only official acceptance of this act of the Colombian government came from the U.S. In 2005, the U.S. checks paying the civil as well golpista military leaders participating in the coup became public. See the many U.S. government declassified documents quoted by Eva Golinger, *El Código Chávez, Deciphering the intervention of the United States in Venezuela*, (La Habana: ed. de Ciencias Sociales, 2005).

Two weeks before the brief insurgency against President Chávez, a colleague recently arrived from Venezuela informed me that in Caracas the coup was understood as an already given fact. When it eventually succeeded on April 10 2002, she celebrated it because she believed it would end the presence of “those ugly Indian and black people” that “had invaded with their presence and smells” those spaces of the capital city, Caracas, where it would be unimaginable to see them before Chavez’s presidency. “I do not know from where do all these blacks and Indians came off,” she said to me while attempting to explain why she celebrated a coup against a president who was the chair of a legally elected populist and nationalist government that promoted the integration of South America and the Caribbean region.

Five days after the coup and one day after my qualifying exam, I went home to share the experiences of the people of a country where I was not born but which taught me to be the person that I now am. In Venezuela I learned that South American countries share homologous and different herstories in relationship to European and U.S. American hegemonies, and that Uruguayan and Venezuelan women do not experience class, race and gender alike. At the end of the 1970’s, I postponed my exile from Uruguay and refused France’s offer of asylum. Six months after this opportunity that my mother had been able of obtaining for me, the Venezuelan ambassador issued me a passport that allowed me to leave the prison where I was held because of my rejection of the French asylum. I did not want to live again in Europe; I wanted to remain in South America.

Manuel Gamio always mentions Uruguay as a country that, according to him, has the proper altitude, latitude and white population that would enable it to achieve modernization. On the other hand, he identifies Venezuela among those “other” countries where, for him, it was almost impossible to achieve a stable democratic government. For Gamio it was unthinkable to foresee a democratic and modern future for countries, such as Mexico and Venezuela, without state-led eugenic politics provoking a new mestizaje. He argued that indigenous and black populations would always jeopardize modernization projects if their respective governments would not first homogenize their nations through a new cultural and biological mestizaje.

The dictatorships that established military regimes in the Southern Cone in the 1970s had already taught me that those countries that Manuel Gamio identified as “civilized” also “give birth” to coups d’etat. However, drawing on the ontological non-existence of “race,” during the decades of the 1960’s and 1970’s, class and national liberation frameworks prevailed within the epistemological and political paradigms of revolutionary social movements in countries like Chile, Argentina and Uruguay. I argue that this strategy failed to evaluate the productivity of erasing the constructions of race difference. This erasure co-constitutes South Americans’ blindness in relationship to the meaning of racialization within the domestic space as well as within the Americas’ as a whole. In addition, the efforts by South American male intellectuals’ like Gamio to be admitted within the international modern community, like in part I Gamio’s examination provided evidence, supported masculinist nationalist inscriptions of the nations. To achieve their incorporation as men into the Euro-centric brotherhood was the goal of this inscription strategy.

In the case of Venezuela, the country is often represented by modern-centric analyses as a dysfunctional hyper-modern nation state. Its contemporary nationalist reaction against U.S. imperialism would stem from its simultaneous “tropical” and “mestiza” condition as well as from the “excessive” oil resources of its territory. Venezuela’s tropicalization parallels Gamio’s *indigenista* logic that assumed that Mexican Indians jeopardized the Revolution’s modernizing efforts. Gamio struggled endlessly toward Mexican Indians transformation into modern *mestizos*. According to the actualization of this logic, in Venezuela, there would be an additional factor that would impede its modernization and development. To the “tropical” and *mestizo* condition of its inhabitants, according to contemporary media discourses, it is necessary to add that the state administration cannot normally “assimilate” the resources stemming from the oil, in opposition to “normal” wealth that would come from hard working.²

Contemporary actualization of Gamio’s *indigenista* narrative applied to the Venezuelan and other oil producing countries promotes two myths. First, oil-mining countries are not capable of “reasonably” using the incomes resulting from its “easy” exploitation and commercialization. This premise becomes mobilized to highlight the supposed inability of President Chávez’s and all Venezuelans’ inability to construct a liberal democracy. The second myth is that capital comes from hard working. While it is true that capital, as a social relation, comes from hard working, it is also true that racialized and gendered bodies are those that work hard in order to increase others’

² Observe again the “digestive” domain of racializing metaphors. Gloria Anzaldúa states that metaphors are “gods” (notice that she does not say “goddess”) in her article while Ernesto Laclau, writing from a different methodological perspective than Anzaldúa, examines the scientific role of metaphors in his text *The Politics of Rhetoric* (Essex: University of Essex Press, 1998).

capital. In the U.S. American formulation of this myth, “once you have money, money works for you.” Why does this U.S. American myth that states that “money produces money” apply to the effects of capital that comes from U.S. financial investments while it does not apply to those countries whose money comes from oil extraction? The hegemony of finance capital that characterizes late neo-liberal capitalism has tensioned the war with other forms of social relations. Venezuela, as well as other mining countries, developed a capitalist onto-logic that does not fit with finance capital’s production of money from money. This is, in my opinion, one of the reasons that led the contemporary world, where finance capital is hegemonic, to confront through war the “other” nations states whose economic logic does not fit with the production of money by money. By a similar rationale, as has happened since the sixteenth century, when European emergent empires attempted to destroy indigenous ways of living drawing, at present times the logic of finance is incompatible with other ways of conceiving economic exchange. Finance capital requires increasing rates of investment in virtual money in order to continually produces money from money. Political economies, like Bolivarian Venezuelan that reproduce circulation logics, which draw on the production of oil, collective and personal networks, and which invest great amounts of money within social-centered politics, imply a deviation from the normal patterns of finance capital. This deviation is a threat that leads to a state of war among countries living on the resources derived from finance capital investments, and those other countries that invest resources within different frameworks. The indigenous culture of exchange points out that “you help me to construct my house,” and “I’ll help you to construct yours.” Commitment

is the key word, as my interview with Pocaterra shows. This is one of the most important legacies of indigenous ways of living, and at-present, an endogenous project confronts the Venezuelan oil-based governmental strategy with finance capital ways of exchanging.

The specter of violence has always haunted my life. I understood one of its meta-narratives, however, when the documentation on television of U.S. American soldiers' tortures against racialized and feminized bodies of men from the (also) oil producing national state of Iraq. Uruguayan, Venezuelan and U.S. American acts of violence are represented as exceptional moments within a linear progress that will transform, through the social contract of human beings', the natural state of war into nation states' civilized free market relations. Within this framework, the concept of equal citizens neutralizes social class differences while reducing "race" to its ethnic and national dimensions often framed within racist or anti-racist discourses, and social movement's transnational networks will be substituted by a free-market-based integration of the Americas.

"Race" appears in Latin American references within ethnic or national liberation contexts. Articulating race and gender to processes of classification opens up a privileged angle to examine the contributions and limits of liberal democracy. The Venezuelan Wayuu Women Indigenous Movement supports the Bolivarian populist project of Venezuela. A new national subject, a *mestizo* of African and Indigenous ancestors, who does not coincide with Gamio's Inter-American *indígenas*, is the point of departure of this revolutionary government. The women's movement of those states, which build new national identities on the basis of de-colonizing

projects, presents concrete challenges to social contract-based democracies.

Venezuelan indigenous women's struggles for ethnic rights within both ethnic and nation state's nationalisms have opened up new questions and answers: especially how to construct a democracy organized on the principle of reproducing difference instead of producing sameness, within a nationalist context, is the point at stake.

Months after the Two-Day coup d'état of April 2002, from December 2002 to March 2003, Venezuela experienced a business-led "national strike." The leaders of this strike coincided with the leaders of the previous coup, and it drew on the same sources of funding and mobilization. This effort sought to oblige Hugo Chávez to retire from the leadership position that he occupied since December 1999 when the 80% of the voters elected him as the new president of the nation. This strike repeated the pattern of a history that the country had already lived a hundred of years before. At the beginning of the twentieth century the elites of the country failed in their coup d'état attempt against President Cipriano Castro. The U.S. and Great Britain, the countries of the owners of the national asphalt concessions, sent war boats to the Venezuelan coasts. This maneuver also failed, and the U.S. entered the scene. The struggle, at that moment was for the asphalt between the U.S. and British companies. Oil did not yet have the relevance that it would acquire fifteen years later. In 2003, the main force of the strike was the national oil company (Petroleum of Venezuela Anonymous Society, PDVSA).³ During the strike, after the Chávez administration intervened inside the PDVSA, the Venezuelan population followed the details on

³ "Anonymous Societies," as it could be the "Company" identification, is one of the many options of legal classification for collective doing business."

television of the domestic and international economic policies of the oil company. A public notion developed that the PDVSA was “a state within the state.” The strike gave President Chavez the opportunity to re-introduce PDVSA within the nation.

The strike created a polarization between “the oil people,” as the striking oil workers named themselves, and those who subsequently were constructed as not “oil people.” The representation strategy of the strikers, drawing on an already established onto-logic, appropriated the main resource of the nation on behalf of a group of experts and special interests.

Figure 15: Venezuela



Source: unknown

The division between “the oil people” and those who “were not the oil people” was one of the main mistakes of the government’s opposition that eventually accelerated the failure of the strike against President Hugo Chávez. A first examination shows that “the oil people” shaped a representation strategy that by naming themselves “the oil people” separated the striking people from the nation. A second view suggests that in addition to this strategic mistake something else was going on. Neo-liberal globalization stressed the Venezuelan state in economic and

political terms, putting at stake and shaking the basis of the nation. The national debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) allowed neo-liberal politics to be introduced systematically in Venezuela, but the “national debt” is a veiling framework.⁴ Two main interpretations overlapped. On the one hand, it was said that previous politicians misused the oil income while the entire population suffered the consequences of their corruption. On the other hand, it was expressed that middle and upper class Venezuelans (politicians were among these categories) enjoyed and misused the oil resources that belong to the entire nation. Their political power transformed their private debt into a national one. Only a sector of the population benefited from the income originated in the debt, however, the entire nation assumed its consequences. The Chair of the party Acción Democrática (Democratic Action, AD), Dr. Gonzalo Barrios, stated in 1989, that in Venezuela “it is stolen, because there is no reason for not doing it.”⁵ This same politician declared some years before, that the law could not be enforced in the country because “Venezuela is not Switzerland.” When the mistreatment of the nation’s oil resources put at stake the future of the nation with the introduction of the IMF’s measures, ethnic and nation state nationalism flourished, grew up and consolidated in a decade (1992-2002).

President Chávez’s project is represented as a populist response to neo-liberal globalization, and certainly it is. The Venezuelan Bolivarian project embodies a

⁴ At-present Venezuela paid thrice the external debt, with minimum changes in its capital debt. Recently, president Chávez begin to buy the bonus of the Venezuelan external national debt to the international institutions where it has been laying for years without any change on the total capital to be returned.

⁵Fernando Coronil, *El Estado Mágico*, (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 2004), p. 17.

change in relation to the Venezuelan nation from the first half of the twentieth century. President Chávez is world leader of an oil producing country who embodies the magical power of words. Those who oppose him in Venezuela understand that these are words abstracted from any point of contact with non-verbal reality, with anything outside discourse itself. But they misunderstand his leadership by looking at it from a western rational point of view, and see in this stance lunacy. Western rationalism is a method for ensuring that a reliable link is built between word and world, and President Chávez's words are in opposition to the world to which the opposition belongs. To reject the western word is to reject the whole. And this is what President Chávez does. But he also seeks a new way, that he names "endogenous," of experiencing modern life. Vice-President José Vicente Rangel, who is a journalist, pointed out on April 13 2005, in the commemorations of the populations' success against the coup, that a Venezuelan military is more dangerous in front of a microphone than a gun. President Chávez, as well as those who oppose him, do not talk about reality, they create it. The opposition uses this strategy to their benefit. Its newspapers created the 2002 media coup and strike, shaping the international community's image of the Venezuelan process. But Chávez's opposition can hardly contain its anger when the Bolivarian process plays the same word game. The opposition tries to force the government to establish what they understand as some point of contact between the president's words and reality as it exists beyond his discourse. They insist on this. They cannot understand that, when President Chávez as well as his supporters, reject western rationalism they draw on a different epistemology and methods between word and world.

Millions of excluded Venezuelans seem to actively want the nation's affairs to be run based on a non-western rationality. They elected leaders who adopt such a stance. They rewarded President Chávez with their votes in eight consecutive elections during the last five years because his rejection of western rationalism represents for them the construction of an alter-native rationality of power with a deep history of cultural meaning. The non-western rational discourse is one of the fundamental building blocks of Venezuelan culture, but the elite has always negated it. Since President Chávez was elected in 1999, an endogenous modernity serves as the primary discourse of power for millions of poor Venezuelans and is the basis of their faith in the Bolivarian process and the source of President Chávez's popular appeal.

This rejection of western rational ways of being and thinking has been out there for centuries especially within the indigenous populations. This alter-native rationality was and is invisible to the national elite. Since the 1940s, the indigenous social movement has drawn on this force, but it found in President Chávez's 1999 electoral victories the vehicle that has allowed them to take power for themselves. President Chávez often makes public his opposition to oligarchic Venezuelans while identifying himself as a "zambo," a term that in this country means a mestizo descendent from indigenous and black parents. His public discourses always emphasize a nationalist and protectionist perspective. The project relies on an "endogenous" process that draws a non-western rational-based re-configuration of the Venezuelan nation as well as of South America integration. President Chávez, paralleling Garcia Canclini's ideas extends the South American identity to those

African descendents, indigenous, and Latin Americans who live in the Caribbean and in other continents.⁶ South American unity is the supplementing strategy of what President Chávez names “a third way project,” which recalls Simon Bolívar’s *patria grande* Pan-Americanism.

South American integration is the Bolivarian alternative to the U.S.-led FTAA. President Chavez names this alternative project “ALBA,” which in Spanish means “sunrise,” in opposition to NAFTA, the U.S.-led project that was projected to be extended to South America in 2005. President Chavez opposes “ALBA” to “ALCA.” “ALCA” is the acronym in Spanish for the NAFTA expansion to South America. ALCA means “Area de Libre Comercio de las Americas,” (In English, Free Trade Area of the Americas, FTAA). The President used this word game (ALBA versus ALCA) for the first time in Quebec 2002, in a meeting of the Americas’ presidents for the expansion of NAFTA into the entire hemisphere. These gestures are usually understood as histrionic performances of this president’s populist style that would appeal to race and national differences in order to mobilize the majority of the population – the people living under conditions which are defined by international and domestic patterns, those who belong to the “E” strata, meaning living in “bottom conditions of extreme poverty,” a euphemism to avoid the use of the term “misery.”

This third chapter incorporates race and sexual politics into the abstract universalizing concepts of citizen and worker. It argues that feminizing and racializing are not political epiphenomena. It rather suggests that racializing and

⁶ Néstor García Canclini, *Latinoamericanos buscando un lugar en este siglo*, (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Piados, 2002).

gendering enter in dialogue with, while co-constituting fundamental changes in the nation state and the universal national citizen subject. In this chapter, the main objective is to provide evidence of the centrality of sexual politics as a crucial political pattern for the construction the racial order within the Americas.

Indigenous and women's movements, which draw on social and cultural mobilizing emphasize the significance of making alliances as democratic performances that simultaneously embody the means and the ends that these social movements state to pursue. Democratic alliances of differently positioned subjects require trans-American third world women to negotiate differences in order to struggle against hierarchies on the base of the rights that national citizenship provides.

Engendering non western nationalisms

Venezuelan and other Latin American racializing and sexual politics have come a long way since anthropologist Gamio's indigenista politics. They provide a key to understand the meaning of "populism" within contemporary Venezuela. At the present time, it is still proposed by national elites that Latin American populations, because we are mestizas, do not constitute a useful element for political and economic development. According to this view, that the Bolivarian process and the indigenous movement contest, it is said that we conserve too many defects that come from the indigenous and black populations.

During the first half of the twentieth century, the Venezuelan state sought to achieve the racial and territorial centralization of the nation. It did so through the

politicization of the population in quite specific ways. In the case of Venezuelan nationalism, its mestiza feature is additionally marked by the country's identification as an oil-producing nation. This particularity of Venezuelan oil-based nationalism is potentially in contradiction with the universalism of neo-liberalism, while its mestiza condition re-introduces the debate on sexuality and racializing politics of a third world country. The crisis of universal history as a narrative for humanity in general, also affects the interpretation of Venezuelan mestiza nationalism. Particularities require new ways of thinking about them. Nationalism and ethnicity have been constructed by scientific political theory as the other of modernity. If the hypothesis tested in this dissertation, which contrast a masculinist and a womanist way of mestiza nation making within modern and (post) modern contexts, would be that Mexican and Venezuelan nationalism and Venezuelan Wayuu Indigenous women's nationalism is "the other" of modernity, there would not be any originality in this project. By connecting, from a feminist perspective, mestizaje, nationalism and populism emerges a significant angle for redefining what is "political" and what is "social" in (post) modern third world contexts. *Indigenismo*, mestizaje and nationalism, which can be insurgent political practices, could reproduce an exclusionary space if sexual politics are not taken into account. In Venezuela, the process of subjectivation by the nation state is usually thought of as collective and individual, while it is scarcely taken into account how racial and sexual politics differently inform men and women's processes of becoming consumers and citizens.

The narrative of nationalism draws on politics of identity directed to promote the community making of one people. David Lloyd argues that a certain sort of

regression achieves the progressive moment of nationalism. “In mobilizing its past in order to leap forward across this threshold, a society is like a man who has to call on all his inherited and (up to this point) largely unconscious powers to confront inescapable challenge.”⁷ As I did in Gamio’s case, I reformulate this question and change Lloyd’s universal “man” for the particular “woman.” Lloyd’s new question will now sound like this: How do women experience Lloyds’ words regarding how nationalism reconfigures men’s past? In fact, instead of Lloyd’s aforementioned statement, a feminist research site of writing would ask are men and women’s inherited and unconscious powers the same? If they are not the same, then, which are women’s “inherited and unconscious powers? Why are men’s inherited powers representing women’s inherited powers? In order to answer to these questions, as I also did with Gamio, I will connect theories of nationalism to colonized women and men’s subject formation in order to examine, in Part III, Venezuela indigenous women leaders’ experiences within neo-national liberation contexts.

Modern narratives see nationalism as romantic and historically anterior.⁸ In the case of Latin America, mestizaje complicates racial and sexual connections of history. It leads to mestiza and hybrid cultural formations that introduce women as sexualized bodies that will give birth to the new mestiza patria. Drawing on Lloyd, it can be said that nationalism, as “attending to a forceful atavism effect,” requires a transformation led by the elite who overlap “historical anterior and physically deep”

⁷ Tom Nairn, *The Break-up of Britain*, (London: New Left Books, 1977), p. 349 in David Lloyd, “Nationalism against the State,” in Lisa Lowe and David Lloyd ed., *The Politics of Culture and the Shadow of Capital*, (London: Duke University Press, 1997), p. 175.

⁸ See, for example, Ernst Gellner, *Nations and nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

memories. What new questions and answers does it imply, within the context of the previous idea, for the substitution of Lloyd's neutral "elite" for "male elite?"

These effects of forceful atavisms overlapped to "historical and physically deep" memories, according to Nair, "is not an occasional slippage." This relation with the past is "intrinsic to the general historical form of the argument about modernity." Nationalism, as a political strategy that modernity sees as romantic, embodies this relation to the past. There is not any doubt that men, women, and national and indigenous populations' "historical and physically deep memories," as Nair names them, are different.

Feminism has paid attention to the psychic impact through which the emergence and formation of nationalist movements take place. Generally it is acknowledged, while also it is true that it is often regretted, that nationalism achieves a vertical integration based on the brotherhood's solidarity against a common enemy rather than a horizontal integration based on social class antagonism. It must equally be acknowledged that, within colonized contexts, such solidarity is not based merely on ideological manipulation of the population but on common experiences of foreigner domination.

If the white man is the hegemonic modern subject, men of colonized countries experience their feminization, and contest it through a specter of strategies that go from the confrontational warrior identity, in opposition to the colonizer power, to maneuvering within the interstices that their feminization, done by the colonizer European men, opens to them. That's why feminists from non-hegemonic nations are many times trapped between insurgent nationalism and the changes in sexual politics,

which they promote as feminists.⁹ On the contrary, feminists within metropolitan powers, for which vertical integration is achieved in an inverse relation to the exercise of domination, live different experiences than the ones lived by women of third world nation states.

“Racism and sexuality politics,” as Chow’s critique of Fanon’s studies on black men’s subject formation show, help to understand this complicated crossing of overlapping identification strategies. For Fanon, the “insufficiency” of the colonized intellectual is mostly originated in the racism by which his systematic underdevelopment is legitimated and reproduced. Chow argues that men and women live different process of subject formation. This premise affects the universalizing meaning of Fanon’s (and Lloyd’s) words stating that colonizing racism leads to that “plunge into the past” which marks the beginning of nationalism in the emerging intellectual’s turn back to *his* (cursives are mine) own culture to find another reflection, another human image.

But feminists’ insights made visible the different processes of subject formation experienced by women and men. In this case, it is important to examine the formation of the national identity within third world women and men. The analytical tool emerging from this study, will lead to reinterpret populism through Fanon’s insistence that “the people” inhabit an irreducibly contemporary space. In this space and out of the resource of an “unevenly developed” hybrid culture, which is neither traditional nor modern but contemporary, Fanon places “means of resisting

⁹ See Chizukio Ueno, “Orientalismo y género,” in *Debate Feminista*, Año 12, Vol. 21, Oct. 2001, pp. 165-175.

colonization.” Within the politics of nationalism, what is at stake is not so much the attempt “to invite the *masses* into history as *the form* (cursives are mine)” through which that is done. Fanon’s conclusion to the “Third World” is: “let us not pay tribute to Europe by creating states, institutions, and societies which draw their inspiration from her.” Although, most Latin American forms of nationalism coexist with “bourgeois” forms, they do not totally coincide with western hegemony.

A third world feminist perspective helps one to evaluate universalizing understandings on nationalism and its references to “colonized people” as “paralyzed in an unchanging prehistory of modernity.” Feminism suggests that women’s position within nationalism require a revision of traditional modern views on the social/political relations. The previous chapters on Gamio, Sandoval, and Garcia Canclini complicate the historians’ assumption that state nationalism supersedes or subordinates other modes of social organization.¹⁰ However, if the nation-state is assumed as the proper end of historical processes, as theories on social movements imply, only one line of development can be seen as “normal.” The examination of the Mexican Revolution’s main historiography showed how popular movements are absorbed into the historicist trajectory of nationalism. Within this perspective, Latin American contexts show other traits thought as incompatible with *mestiza* nationalism, which are also relegated to residual spaces of historical contingency. The official nation state’s Mantuana historiography erased these residuals, but this erasure from the construction of the nation does not produce their real defeat, and they remain

¹⁰ A nation state-centered framework understands that peasant movements, for example, are often “protonationalist,” while feminist or Marxist social classes are usually understood as international or transnational.

in abeyance. While this relegation inscribes such popular movements out of history and into the mythical space of arrested development and fixity vis-à-vis the forward movement of nationalism itself, feminist insistence on women's rights for controlling their bodies and indigenous populations' claims for alter-native modernizations make a stake at the very core of the possibility of progressive inclusions within the liberal state formation.

Along traditional lines of representing nationalism, modern historiography sees it as superseding other movements. Historical modernity embeds the state form, and atavistic moments are held within a mythical space. As Lloyd synthesizes, "The state is both the proper end of historical process and the eternal antagonistic of contingency and myth." A tautological logic states that the end of any nationalism is predicated on its adequacy to the state form, which is the institutional embodiment of the end of humanity.

Walter Benjamin gives us theoretical suggestions for capturing an alter-native history of nationalism in relation to social movements. Benjamin emphasizes the relation between "historicism," which culminates in universal history, and by which traditional historiography understands the history of modernity, to the conception of "progress," which informs social democratic theory and practice. Benjamin's suggestions draw on his interest in exploring the meaning of a historiography of those social movements whose potential and formative effects have not been exhausted simply because they were not victorious. For Benjamin, the "fragmentary and episodic" form of the narratives of these social movements, are not a symptom of their failure, "but a sign of a possible intrinsic resistance against totality." As the U.S.

women of color clearly point out, from the perspective of modern historiography, these are movements that are represented as interrupted, as peripheral. But more significantly for the context of this dissertation, Benjamin's theoretical suggestions help for capturing indigenous social movements' history, often misunderstood as residual and inassimilable.

Benjamin challenges the concept and the form of history as/of progress.

Writing on historicism, Benjamin states "That the concept of the historical progress of mankind cannot be broken apart from the concept of its progression through a homogeneous, empty time. A critique of such a progression must be the basis of any criticism of the concept of progress itself." The historicist view of the irrational is mapped onto a temporal schema: Marginalized forms with regard to the state are attached to the prehistory of the nation, while becoming sites attainable only through regression. Benjamin proposes a temporal-spatial mapping that seems to have been the point of departure of both Sandoval's and García Canclini's intellectual projects. His suggestion refers to the need of re-writing history as a simultaneous process of movements and contiguities. Sandoval retakes this proposal and projects it to (post) modern social movements. Her radical *mestizaje* implies the conjunction of incommensurable mobilizations. Theorizing on those processes that modern narratives present as incompatible, she finds, within those spaces of radical discontinuity with the rationality of the developmental history of the nation state, a fertile point of departure for promoting a mobilizing identity that she relates to the mythical origins of nationalisms, of (post) modern social movements.

The modern state needs and accepts the indigenous rationality as pre-modern. This manifest destiny ideology requires the transformation of the 'pre-modern' into the only modernity that liberal modernization accepts through developmental plans. But it is also worthy to take into account that the nation state cannot accept the inassimilable that its own rationality produces. As it happens with Sandoval's trope "third world in the first world," the existence of the inassimilable that its own rationality produces provides visibility to multiple contemporaneous times and spaces, a fact that is in itself a negation of traditional modernity's intrinsic ontologic. Seeking an answer to these residual social movements' inassimilable condition in relation to modern history reveals their assimilability within indigenous movements' herstory. In the case of third world nations, like Venezuela, the Wayuu and (post) modern social movements as well, the representational limits of the mestiza mobilizing methodology were informed by this modern history that excluded alternative ways of thinking. The interpretation as lunatic of the Bolivarian Movement done by the western reason in opposition to the mestiza identification of the Venezuelan majority of the population exemplifies how indigenous reason became a (post) modern discourse of power.

For Benjamin the field of subject formation within the nation state is the space of citizenship, which becomes the central organizational principle. In relation to the national subject, any other possible modes of subject formation are marked as different and subordinated. However, nationalist movements emerge in conjunction with other emancipation movements, a conjunction determined by the intersection of social dislocations in the case of de-colonizing nationalisms. Within Benjamin's

framework, the history of nationalism must be understood in terms of its constant nuance with allied but differently positioned social movements. At different moments, particular groupings take convergent leading roles, while different movements have specific paces. Each movement has a distinct history and a distinct tempo that may be occluded, but not terminated by the consistent focusing on political institutions and state apparatuses. But it is the possibility of their conjunction that is striking. Initially, the new social movements seem to be subordinated to nationalism; however the very articulation of distinct engagements together maintains all in a mutually critical condition of process. Such conjunctions could not be sustained without continuous mutual modification of their mobilizing identities.

These heterogeneous processes require concrete studies. In 1999, the Venezuelan women as well as the indigenous movement worked very hard all through the country. Each one of these movements collaborated for their respective unified projects which were successfully introduced into the Constituent National Assembly (Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, ANC). In the case of the women's movement of African-descendants, the leaders asked the indigenous women to represent them. According to Noelí Pocaterra: "I couldn't do too much for them, because we needed to focus on our strategy."¹¹ In 2005, when the revolutionary government consolidated its institutional power, the African Venezuelans began to make public their specific political agenda. The Minister of Education, Aristóbulo Istúriz, a black professor of History, as well as the President, Hugo Chávez, are always present in Venezuelan African descendants domestic as well international

¹¹ Noelí Pocaterra, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Caracas, March 13 2003.

encounters. In July 24 2005, when Telesur was inaugurated, President Chávez personally called by the telephone and publicly said in English to the African American actor Danny Glover that he supported his critique to the ethnic and gender constituency of the event. Glover pointed out his disagreement with the great presence of white middle class men on the higher positions of the television space that broke the U.S. monopoly of Latin American news. His voice, as well as President Chávez immediate telephone call supporting Glover was televised *in vivo* through the continent. However, in Venezuela, the African descendent women's movement, whose founding leaders came from the Caribbean British islands, has never been accepted within the national society as well as among the African descendent population.

The Venezuelan women movement participated in the initial moments of the revolution. Drawing on their desire to participate in the patria's future, the women's movement identified themselves as "the wombs which will give birth to the new patria," as it can be observed in the poster calling to "a women's encounter of political and local participation." The face of a woman and the land of the nation-state melt into an undifferentiated figure. The woman's face has at her back a dark sky and sea which coincide with the blackness of a sort of "tail" (as it is named by many Venezuelans) that corresponds to the Guiana Esequiba, an eastern area that in the nineteenth century Venezuela lost under the force of the British and international colonial powers.

The woman looks toward the bright horizon of Venezuelan future. Her eyes express her committed disposition for loving the patria. The design of the woman's face and of the patria's territory coincides in their dark past and in their bright future. The three colors of the national flag cover the map. At primary school, all Venezuelan children study that these colors represent Venezuelan men's sacrifice for giving birth to Independent Venezuela. The red color would correspond to the blood of the white soldiers, the blue to the black slaves who Simón Bolívar liberated in order to become soldiers, and the yellow to the Indians' blood who fought for giving birth to Venezuelan Independence. The Venezuelan woman is again the body through which the sacrifice of the men's military power will be successful for achieving the nation's mestiza unity that the flag evokes. In 1999, women entered in the revolutionary process reproducing their historical strategy. They will be the mothers of the new republic. But after the initial time of the national revolution, their critical approach to the movement modified their mobilizing identity. They do not mobilize any more as the wombs which will give birth to the new patria. In 2005, the Venezuelan women made a national campaign demanding the de-criminalization of abortion and of female adultery, the elimination of the Penal Code article that exonerates from legal punishment those men who married women after they rape them, and finally they ask to change sexual crimes' legal classification. Those facts that the Penal Code classifies as against the good traditions and the familiar order will become "sexual crimes." The indigenous movement followed a similar pattern. At the beginning of the nationalist revolution, they struggled in the ANC by identifying themselves as the defenders of the national borders. At present, they have consolidated an indigenous

pan-Venezuelan identity, and accompanying the Bolivarian project of Latin American integration, they are constructing their Pan-American Indian identity.

Latin American electoral victories led to coalition-based social movements which, like the Bolivarian project or the Ecuadorian, Bolivian and Peruvian indigenous social movements, draw their nation state project from an endogenous way of experiencing (post) modernization. On the one hand, the struggle cannot be defined simply in nationalist, decolonizing terms, since its end is the transformation rather than merely the capture of the state. On the other hand, the neocolonial nature of the state defines the terrain of struggle of the nation. The process of “*concientización*” that is fundamental to the nationalist politicizing work embodies a double requirement: it seeks to produce class-consciousness through the analysis of specific local concerns while seeking to connect the endogenous national project to the hemispheric system. The necessity of transforming local consciousness into national consciousness becomes a process mediated by the pedagogical function of the activist leaders of the movements.

But what happens with “gender” as an analytical tool within these opportunities that globalization opened up to neo-nationalist contestations in Latin America? Is it enough to introduce a gendered language, a step that is recognized by the most sensitive among the men leaders? Drawing on Scott, a feminist perspective implies much more than to give visibility to women. Latin American male leaders’ contestations that the feminization imposed on them by the men of colonized countries could assume a specter of behaviors. Men can assume the role of confrontational warriors, like the Bolivarian process exemplifies. But they can also

maneuver within the interstices that the colonizers' feminization leaves open to them. Often, Latin American male intellectuals compensate their feminization by depicting Latin American women as doubly feminized. A double negation can be an affirmation, and Latin American women, as Rómulo Gallegos' Doña Bárbara, can represent a male dictator. But a double negation is not always an affirmation. Gamio's politics of mestizaje inscribes Latin American women as hyper-feminized and in permanent disposition of love toward the colonizer men. Sexual politics within de-colonized strategies, which draw on racial and ethnic mobilizing identities, are crucial for the consolidation of a revolution. Women's inclusion within the revolutionary project as reproducers of the nation provides a great strength to the decolonizing identity-based project. Radical democrats follow this pattern and the struggle for citizenship becomes the mobilizing identity. However, women's inclusion as citizen subjects of a nation accepts the reversion of the revolutionary process, as soon as the revolutionary circumstances decay. On the contrary, women's inclusion as subjects (and not as objects of exchange among men) implies a change in the social and political paradigm. At-present, exchange is done among democratic equal citizens who speak the same language. Exceptions to these practices are accepted by ad-hoc interpretations that impede the consolidation of a new democratic paradigm where exchange could be done through different subjects speaking different languages. Equality through difference is contemporary challenge to the liberal paradigm of democracy. Women's inclusion is a contemporary challenge to the liberal paradigm of democracy. The Bolivarian Movement that in 2005 requires equal numbers of female and male representatives within the local and regional elections

that will take place in August is a step toward the consolidation of a new paradigm of democracy. However, the point at stake is not women's inclusion but the type of women's inclusions within the social realm.

In historical terms, Latin American independent states tended to be structured along the ideology of hegemonic elites, which in Venezuela are known as "oligarchic Mantuanos." In the decade of 1940, the institutions of the American State Organization expanded the politics of *indigenismo* through the continent. The absorption or dissolution of the indigenous societies within the hegemony of state-oriented mestizo nationalism did not efface the indigenous cultures. On the contrary, they persist as distinct elements of the struggle. But at-present, they do not wait their absorption as part of the prehistory of nationalism. They do it as active constituents of (post) modern social movements. They look for incorporation into citizenship rights, though with the very particularity of simultaneously asserting their rights as a different culture.

The emergence of the modern state is inseparable from a massive restructuring of the modes of interpellation by which individuals become citizen-subjects who will, as Althusser puts it, "work by themselves." Althusser emphasizes the crucial historical importance of educational apparatuses. The pedagogical process replicates the narrative that occurs at the "private" level of the family. The disciplining of the individual subject, that takes place by way of what the subject learns to desire, leads to the socialization of the subject. As a result, subjects would learn to will their subordination. However, desire and will do not coincide, and social movements continue to maneuver between the blurring limits of will and desire.

According to Freud, sublimation of the male subject involves not only the dissolution of the Oedipus complex, but also the sublimation of the family for the individual, insofar as the figuration of the father as superego makes that figure available for transference onto other and generally abstract forms of authority. Within this onto logic, other modes of sociality belong to the domain of non-sense. Herein lay the secret and function of the fetishism of the modern state that invokes “traditional” figures precisely to mask difference and excess. But when the state assumes the excess identity, like in the Bolivarian Venezuela, identification processes invert the mirroring logics.

The modern state is in a profoundly ambivalent relation to the forces of rationality and irrationality at whose interface it is constituted. Placing irrationality within nationalisms is convenient for globalization when a further effort of homogenization is taking place. At the same time, when the violence of the militarist and patriarchal hegemonic state is beyond reason, and its rationality is conjoined with transnational capitalism, pragmatic reasons lead non-hegemonic states to adhere to nationalism as a minimal defense against homogenization. The nationalism about which Sandoval writes is a radical and emancipation project of (post) modern social movements, rather than fixed by the repressive apparatuses of the state formation. It is this (post) modern social movements’ conjectural relation (to say it in Benjamin’s words) to other social movements that Sandoval emphasizes. In a hegemonic country, like the U.S., the possibility of nationalism against the state lies in the recognition of the specter of the excess of the people that haunts the nation state, and in the understanding that, beyond itself, the very logic of nationalism implies a definition

that is easily assimilated to progressive populist nationalisms. Venezuela followed a different path. The nation state embedded the non-western rationality, and the 1999 new constitution incorporated the indigenous populations within the nation. They became “ethnic” in order to become (post) modern citizens of a decolonizing neo-national liberation state.

Women and men within decolonizing nationalisms

A paragraph of Simone de Beauvoir, that is part of the first volume of *The Second Sex*, states:

The warrior put at stake his own life in order to increase the prestige of the horde, of the clan to which he belongs. And, through this means, he brilliantly proves that life is not the supreme value for men, but that he rather needs to serve to ends more important than the same life. Man elevates himself over the animal when putting at risk his life, no when he gives life: that is why humanity agrees on providing superiority to the sex that kill and not to the sex that engenders.¹²

Drawing on Hegel’s Dialect of the Master and the Slave, she adds that “[t]he woman is originally an existing being who gives Life and who does not put at risk her life; between the male and her it has never been a struggle; the definition of Hegel, is particularly applied for the woman.”¹³

These words always come to my mind. When I read them, I was a very young woman who put at risk my life, as many young women and men did in 1970’s Uruguay. Since those days, I always considered that the time that I would live from therein was a goddess’ gift. As soon as I had the opportunity I engendered two boys.

¹² Simone de Beauvoir *El segundo sexo*, (Buenos Aires: Siglo Veinte, (1949) 1970), T.1, p. 9.

¹³ Beauvoir *El segundo sexo*, p. 9.

Although I was 18 years old, I believed that there was not any other experience except maternity that was missed from life. I assumed a gender colonized identity, and decided to be simultaneously a man and a woman, something that is very common within Venezuelan popular sectors. However, as I am not representative of Fanon's colonized "sclerotization," many questions on this identity have come to mind. I assumed an identity that simultaneously put at risk my life while engendering life. I attempted to empower myself, but in this process of empowerment I learned that to be a mother also implied for me to give and at the same time to put at risk. Reading books from first world authors did not help me to find an answer to the questions stemming from my experiences. Feminist and women's movements were not attractive for me. I was not interested in becoming feminine; to go to a woman's center and work with women of the barrios teaching them how to survive by smartly cooking the leftovers that they were able to collect. I was interested in empowerment. Individual recognition as sacrificed mothers is a cliché in Latin America. Nobody in Venezuela might even dare to make a critique to her or his mother. In fact, one of the most well known graffiti of Caracas was written in the main freeway. As the greatest irreverence capable of challenging the values of this society, a young individual wrote: "I do not like the hallacas (sort of tamales) that my mother cooks."

In opposition to Simone de Beauvoir's statements, I argue that the colonized situation of Latin American mestizaje provides to maternity a central social space within the mestiza culture. However, this centrality is ambiguous, and in order to reflect on the conditions of this ambiguity I go back to Lomnitz's notion of sacrifice both in relation to women and men. This examination will help to understand the

protagonist role of the Venezuelan Wayuu Women social movement within the contemporary neo-national liberation process. First world feminists state that “gender” names the cultural construction of sexual differences, and that each human group elaborates in specific terms the feminine and the masculine, as well as the relations between both. This elaboration is related to the particular history of each group, in the sense that each person will become a specific gendered subject according to her class, culture, race, family, etc. Identity is understood as an experience that is not a consciousness, a premise that supports the privileged research site that I provide to women social movements.

The birth of Latin American mestizaje has been marked by illegitimacy. The historical experience of the union, violent or love-based, between the Indian or Black woman and the Spanish or Portuguese man, was constructed as an illegitimate relation, from the point of view of both societies. The children who resulted from these relations, had un-known paternal filiations. Mestizos and mestizas had as their only reference their mother, who was in many cases, the only economic and social reproducer of this new familial order. Since this historical experience, in Venezuela, the image of the mother as presence emerges in opposition to the image of the absent father. The weight of the maternal presence is of relevance in the creation of the feminine and the masculine.

The majority of the psychological discourses underline the strong emotional links between the mother and the son in Latin American families. One should bear in mind that those societies that are dominated by the mother are patriarchal, and it is relevant to examine why patriarchal societies give more value to mothers than to

fathers.¹⁴ The matrilineal Wayuu society is a specific form of patriarchy, where the male links draw on the mother more than on the father lines. Independently of the maternal or paternal line, institutional political power is in men's hands. Within patrilineal societies, women emphasize their roles as mother of sons, who would be the successor within the familial lineage. Women's power lies in a strategy controlling sons and becoming mothers of the chief of the subsequent generation. Drawing on the expectation of achieving the top of power by way of being the mother of a patriarchal of the next generation, could dispose a woman in being complicit with patriarchy. In a matrilineal society, where the maternal line defines belonging to a familiar group and its legacy, women tend to attribute more value to the daughters than to the sons.

Daughters are safer members of the community than the sons who will become part of a different lineage. A matrilineal society is completely different than a society dominated by the mother. Mother's domination reflects her power in a patrilineal family, and this is not related to matrilineality. In fact, the sons that depend of the mother are precisely the product of patriarchal power relations, not of matriacalism.

The Wayuu women represent themselves as belonging to a matrilineal society, while it seems that the Venezuelan society seems to be closer to a society dominated by the mother. The psychology of the sons who depend of the mother, frequently are

¹⁴In the Wayuu society, the law defines the child who is born from the union of a Wayuu mother and a non-Wayuu man, as Wayuu. On the contrary, the child that is born from a Wayuu father and a non-Wayuu woman is not Wayuu. One interpretation can lead the ethnographer to think that the Wayuu do not trust in the liability of the paternal line, if one takes into account that the wives could commit adultery. The Wayuu give more relevance to mothers' cultural legacy, while being very aware that the reproduction of the patriarchal system is not possible without the cooperation of women. However, this Western reason will assume a completely different meaning as soon as we hear and examine the Wayuu women's voices.

considered as permeating the entire society, and this feature is a dominant organizational principle within the Venezuelan society. Mestizaje is related to the dominium of the mother, and the absence of the father. The model of the suffering Virgin Mary, associated to painful maternity, is crucial for the nation's gendering process.

The discourse of *mestizaje* makes of the indigenous woman the body to be sacrificed in order to eliminate Indianness and create the mestiza population. Drawing on Rene Girard, who argues that to give birth to the sacred order implies an initial victim and a sacrifice, it is important to find the hidden connections that in Gamio or Lomnitz elevate the warrior into the sacred sacrificed men, while ambiguously constructing the victimization of the sacred woman mother. What is sacred is related to the violence of sacrifice. In Latin American cultures, women are victimized and often they assume themselves as victims inasmuch as their identity draws on a national vision where the sacred figure of the victim mother is predominant. Women's victimization and their subsequent sacrifice stems from a colonized patriarchal order that, paradoxically, present the fathers of la patria as the sacrificing men.¹⁵ These circumstances make of each woman a divine maternal figure that evokes sacrifice, and therefore, the archaic violence that made her sacred. As the analysis of Gamio's *indigenismo* provided evidence, this way of shaping the feminine gender identities makes of women only sexuality, bodies that lack of any other value than the possibility of reproducing the nation.

¹⁵ See Claudio Lomnitz, "Times of Crisis: Historicity, Sacrifice and the Spectacle of Debacle in Mexico City," paper presented at Irvine, March 2002.

Two related questions stem from these premises. How is the masculine *mestiza* identity constructed around the image of a society where the mother is the central figure? How is it that, although women are sacred sacrificing victims, discourses on men's sacrifice are hegemonic within Latin American cultural studies? A possible strategy for finding a fertile answer to these questions implies a rupture within the circle that makes all women victims in Latin American territories. This strategy draws on a critique of the specific conception of *mestizaje* that engulf women within a binary system that give them the option of being identified as sexual objects or as subjected virgin mothers.

Gender and sexual politics of nation making

While "women" are creatures of masculine fantasies of power, *mestiza* Latin America is a fantasy of a European fantasy of power. Both were created by the western masculine discourse as "the other." In this sense, both women and Latin America share the fact of being considered as "the other." Difference, which is attributed to them as a distinctive character, defines their ascribed otherness. Latin America is a name that is used to refer to those American countries that are not "America," meaning the United States of America. Indeed, Latin American feminization is also a discourse of power, an operation by which colonialism names the other as inferior and empty. In fact, "virgin names" of "women" are always the name that colonizers give to the lands to be conquered.

How does feminization work within the Latin American colonizing discourse? Conquered men, as we saw in Gamio, are represented as feminine. Therefore the women of conquered men are feminized twice, as Gamio's redundant classification of "the feminine" Mexican woman showed. If colonized men accept their feminization, this double feminization of Indian and Latin American women place us in a very complicated situation when struggling as feminists against Latin American and indigenous men. Within the process of the construction of Latin American countries' identities, Latin American men often recur to their feminization as a struggling identity. When the white European or U.S. American men define themselves as masculine, how does the other that the hegemonic masculine sees as feminized men construct themselves? As Chow and Pateman argue, and as the case of Gamio show, within colonized intellectuals there is a masculine way of identification that rejects, through different strategies, the ascribed otherness while competing for their admittance within the colonizers' universality. Gamio's strategy drew on the universality of science to achieve his admittance within the modern brotherhood. While other Latin American colonized men opted for the strategy of founding a competing Latin America universality, others, on the contrary, accept their feminized otherness and attempt to take advantage of it.¹⁶ This strategy, which is obviously performed when the unbalance of power relations is significantly impacted against the colonized men, predominates in the literature of Rómulo Gallegos, the

¹⁶ The first case can be related to the examples on President Chavez's machismo that this chapter narrates. This de-colonizing strategy of colonized men can lead to conflictive relations between men struggling for achieving the most legitimating universality. In onto logic terms, one universalism cannot accept the existence of another universalism

man who is known as the father of Venezuelan democracy and on whose political and cultural work the next chapter focuses.

As García Canclini argues, Latin America identification stems from the negotiations that their elite carries on in order to become moderns. On the one side, the elite see a deformed mirror when looking at U.S.-American and European modernity. But on the other side, these elites see in this mirror what they understand as a still more deformed image when they look at Latin American indigenous and black mestiza populations. Confronted with what they understood as the “ideal” modernity of the north, the Venezuelan identity was created as an ontologic posterior fact as Gallegos’s struggle for modernizing Venezuela from a perspective that situated the nation as a particular, distant, differentiated country in relationship to universality show.

During the first half of the twentieth century Gallegos affirms Venezuelan specific universality. This strategy leads to a fatal conflict between the mestiza universality and the U.S.-American and European universality. However, Gallegos’ construction of the mestiza Venezuelan identity does not reject the existence of the universality of the U.S.-American and European universality. Gallegos does not define the hegemonic identity as one among many particularities. Indeed his literary strategy seems to replicate the *mestiza* community making strategy. He defines Venezuela mestizaje as what U.S.-America and Europe are not. This turn transforms Gallegos’s politics of community making into a residual category of U.S. and European universalism. However, he also rejects the universality of U.S. and European identity by naming them as “Saxon.” Gallegos’ literature and political work

constructs a *mestiza* Venezuelan nation that is the mirroring view of U.S-America and Europe.¹⁷ In this sense, it can be said that for Gallegos the U.S. and European identities are a part of Venezuelan identity.

This point of departure leads Venezuelan men's identity to occupy a residual position in relation to colonizing men. This point of departure leads Venezuelan men's identity to occupy a residual position in relation to colonizing men. By connecting women's roles within what Venezuelan national anthropologists name the "matri-social" matrix of the nation to men's residual position in relation to U.S. and European images of masculinity, complicated gendering politics provides great visibility to women's centrality while reinforcing a patriarchal society.¹⁸

When Venezuelan women incorporated feminist perspectives to the women's movement, there was a reaction against it. Two correlated arguments were done in order to reject feminism. It was said that Venezuelan women already were the center of the society. In addition, middle class sectors of women's social movements argued that a feminist activism would deliver to Venezuelan women additional work. They previewed that men could take advantage of feminist discourse and reject the already scarce responsibilities that they accomplished. In this sense, Venezuelan women understand feminism as a product imported from the U.S., and in it is perceived as a new form of western Occidentalism. However, Venezuelan feminism has its own history, its own voices, which correspond to different Venezuelan women.

¹⁷ The Wayuu society will introduce a completely different strategy of community making.

¹⁸ Samuel Hurtado, *La Sociedad Tomada por la Familia. Estudios en Cultura Matrisocial Venezolana*, (Caracas: Ed. de la Biblioteca de la Universidad Central de Venezuela, 1999).

Venezuelan *mestizaje* is clearly gendered. There is not any doubt that indigenous and black men are feminized by national Mantuanos, while also Venezuelan elite men struggle against their own feminization. This pattern that affects both Venezuelan women and men, leads Venezuelan women to a trap. If they are not on the correct side, they become automatically enemies of the nation. To struggle as women against men is represented as favoring imperialist men. How Gallegos conceived the modern mestiza nation during the first half of the twentieth century, exemplifies the double gender perspective that simultaneously embodies Venezuelan men's feminization and Venezuelan women's roles within *mestizaje*. A new question arises: how can Venezuelan men accept a feminized ascribed identity? By examining Gallegos's literary and political work, it became evident, that for Gallegos, the acceptance of this feminization implied the possibility of evaluating the Venezuelan mestiza community making from a universal perspective. Gamio did this operation through the discourse of science, and Gallegos did it by taking advantage of the mestiza condition of the nation, while positioning himself as the literary and political author of this *mestizaje*. Gallegos transformed the residual identity of Venezuela, and makes of it the national identity, a legacy that is perhaps the most durable legacy of this literary politician. Gallegos accepts the power relations that the U.S. imposes on Venezuela, and accepts that the *mestiza* nation would be the shadow of the U.S. modernity. He also states that Venezuela would belong to the dominium of a universalism that would never be understood by the European and U.S. hegemonic identity. Gallegos reverses the content of the ascribed identity of Venezuela, but he uses the same logic, a cognitive turn that implies the creation of a

counter-discourse. Venezuelans are unique, and foreigners could never understand an essentialized Venezuelan identity. Although Gallegos still works within a colonial framework, in opposition to Gamio's insistence for admittance within the universal brotherhood, his representations reflect an effort for constructing a national pride. Gallegos' politics of nation making is part of a colonizing perspective and is a product stemming from the colonizers' construction of *mestizaje*, however, it is also part of the conscience that Venezuelan men have of themselves. This reversion of the colonial discourse of *mestizaje* takes control on the feminizing discourse on Venezuelan men. Within this context, femininity and *mestizaje* are again empty signs that only denote "that what is not." The consequence of this feminist ventriloquist discourse posits women in a complicated situation, which make it most difficult to struggle for feminist goals. How can women escape from this trap of the hegemony of *mestizaje* in its gender language?

D. Politics of Transgendering

December 14th 1922 at six o'clock in the morning represents a drastic turning point which shifted Venezuela's national identity from an agricultural to a mining country. At La Rosa, a small town from the Zulia state, in the well Los Barrosos Two, a U.S. American team found oil. Six dwellers and a superintendent comprised the foreigner working team. The neighbors of the town knew these men by their English names: Mister Marchland, Gilcrease, Cole, Grimes, Cox, Cochran and the superintendent, mister Degenais. Around seven o'clock in the morning, "from the wombs of the hole came out a roar that shook the ground." La Rosa's settlers saw a gigantic gusher coming out as a stream from the mouth of the hole. It flooded La Rosa town. "An oil rain fell upon the town. From every person rose a shout: Oil! And it was heard all around the world."¹

The oil era began for Venezuela. A few days after the Barroso Two discovery, investment men and oil technicians from the United States and Europe arrived, while representatives of different companies would dedicate their efforts to search oil in Venezuela. For an entire week, 100.000 barrels daily flowed continuously from Los Barrosos Two. Oil seemed to cover everything: houses, trees, bushes. Even all along the Maracaibo Lake's coast, waters became black.

In order to give an explanation to the people's alarm, which stemmed from their perception that the oil would not stop being "vomited by the ground, the town's

¹ Federico Baptista, "El esfuerzo pionero," in Creole Petroleum Corporation, *El Farol*, Abril-Mayo-Junio, 1964, pp. 4 – 8.

priest denounced that the devil's womb has been perforated."² The night of December 22nd, while the American workers were still working for controlling the hole, a group of neighbors from La Rosa town paraded with San Benito and the drums sounded toward the place where the oil came out. They prayed to the black saint and to La Chinita, the indigenous virgin of Maracaibo. Their prayers sought the end of the oil's release upon their lands. The new day found them still on the hole. On December 23rd at 8:30 a.m., after eleven days of un-interrupted oil, Los Barrosos Two suddenly stopped. Subterraneous sands tapped the hole.

The real beginning of this story is part of the European and U.S. American expansionism. The existence of oil filtrations that were close to the coast of the Maracaibo Lake were known by British, French and Dutch buccaneers navigating in the Caribbean Sea. They entered into the Maracaibo Lake in order to obtain the asphalt that they needed to water seal their ships. Venezuela owns the distinction of the first known oil exportation. On the 30th of April of 1539, Francisco de Castellanos, the treasurer of Nueva Cadiz, sent an oil barrel to the king of Spain.³

But the transition from national consumption to foreigner companies' concessions represented a fundamental change of Venezuela's national state and Venezuelans' national identity as well. The Venezuelan dictator, Juan Vicente

² Baptista, "El esfuerzo pionero," p. 4.

³ The Creole Petroleum Corporation states in the 1964 *El Farol* that in 1839, Venezuelans already studied how to increase oil commerce. From the commercial point of view, it is often narrated that a small company in the Venezuelan Andes in the Táchira State initiates the oil exploitation. Mister Manuel Antonio Pulido Pulido created the Petrolia of el Táchira Company which in 1878 received exclusivity on exploration rights. The oil came out from filtrations from hand made holes, it was refined in a small alambique with 15 daily barrels capacity, and the kerosene that was made there was destined to the consumption of the people of the zone.

Gómez, who governed the nation from 1908 until 1936, gave concessions to his national followers. The latter sold them to the foreign companies, and the governments of the oil companies protected and supported the Venezuelan dictator.⁴

On 31st July 1914, the Caribbean Petroleum Company had completed the first commercial Venezuelan hole in Mene Grande, on the coast of the Maracaibo Lake, where the company also constructed a refinery and an oil pipeline. In 1917, close to San Lorenzo town, on the coast of the lake, the first commercial exportation of Venezuelan oil was done. In 1920, the dictator General Gómez had already given 176 additional concessions to Venezuelan citizens that sold them to foreigner companies.

When in 1922 the hole Los Barrosos Two marked the Venezuelan new exportation age, Maracaibo was already a cosmopolitan space. Two days after the burst of the hole of La Rosa, the news had already circulated all around the globe. The New York Times described it as “the most productive hole of the world.” All the companies fought for land.⁵ And two weeks after Los Barrosos Two burst, even a part of the lake’s ground had already being given to the oil companies.⁶

⁴ In 1907, four immense concessions had been granted. The first of these concessions was given to Andres Vigas, and it totally covered the Colon County in the Zulia state. Andrés Vigas transferred the Colon county concession to the Colon Development Company that was afterward Shell. The second concession was given to Antonio Aranguren and covered the Bolivar and Maracaibo counties from the Zulia state. The Venezuelan Oil concessions, which also belonged to Shell, bought this second concession. To Francisco Jiménez Arraiz “it was given the concession of the Falcon and Lara state” which was afterward bought by the British Controlled Oilfields. In 1909, General Gomez gave another gigantic concession to a British company. It covered 12 states and the Delta Amacuro Federal Territory. The concession passed to the hands of Max Valladares, a lawyer of the General Asphalt Company, which after became a member of the Shell Group.

⁵ The Venezuelan Oil Concessions from the Shell Group makes itself practically with the last land palm of the Bolivar County, and oil was there.

⁶ The explosion of the hole Los Barrosos Two in La Rosa oil field of Maracaibo initiated the apex of Venezuelan oil. Seven years later, at the end of 1929, 73 companies sought oil in Venezuela. Only

In 1922, Maracaibo was a city of approximately 40,000 inhabitants. Streets were made of dirt, and during the summer months the dust circulated all around the town, while during the season of torrential rains it became mud.⁷ To this Maracaibo, so different from contemporary Maracaibo, arrived indigenous peoples from La Guajira, fishermen from Margarita Island, Venezuelan and Colombian Andean peasants, black and coolie oil workers from the British colony of Trinidad and Tobago or the Dutch colony of Curaçao and Bonaire. Oilmen from Texas, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, California, Virginia, New Mexico, from almost every state of the United States of America flew to Maracaibo looking for easy and quick wealth.

For those U.S. American foreigners who filled the restaurants, bars and nightclubs of the city, these spaces became the favorite meeting spots of the city. A great number of small hotels emerged. The American man Pop Middleton administered one of these small hotels. It was the favorite of the oilmen of the region.⁸ The Rotary Bar of the Baralt Square was the heart of the city for these oilmen. The Rotary Bar was also Casey Moran's operation center. Casey Moran was the editor, owner and star journalist of *Tropical Sun*, which was the first English language journal published in Venezuela.⁹ Many European and U.S. American men

those that formed the Shell group were successful. They united themselves in order to create the Creole Petroleum Corporation and the Venezuela Gulf Oil Company.

⁷ "Mud" translates into "barro" in Spanish, the word that possibly originated the name of "barrio" to those spaces inhabited by poor populations.

⁸ It was in the Sucre Square, in front to the Cosmos Club, a gambling space and a center of international sexual work "with beauties imported from Belgium, Holland, France and other European countries."

⁹ This journal registered some of the more interesting pages of the oil history of Maracaibo. In the Baralt Square it was also the High Life tailorshop. One day its owner threw away the scissors and

arrived to the region attracted by the wealth that had been discovered, but the majority did not like the work once they saw it close-up. The workers were men from the Antilles or Venezuela, while the indigenous populations emigrated to the *haciendas* of the southern areas of the lake, a practice that until the mid forties they performed as labor slaves or indebted peonage.¹⁰

Before the oil exploitation the state's resources came from importation fees and taxes to coffee, which was the main agricultural product of the hacienda system. Afterward, it passed to resources coming from the sale of oil, which belonged to the nation's territory. Within this new context, the definition of who belongs to the nation and to whom belongs the land of the nation became part of a crucial political struggle.

The dictator offered favorable conditions to the companies since 1908. Gómez, in turn, was given economic and political support. While the companies focused on the business of oil extraction, the state acquired a new role. It became the owner of the territorial land and administrator of the national resource wealth. A co-constitutive relationship between the foreign oil companies, the dictator's state, and the domestic elites gave birth to Venezuela's oil age. The national elite mediated

became an employee of the Lago Petroleum Corporation. One of the more eating and drinking attractive places was the Blue Book bar.

¹⁰ When the industry began it was very difficult to the companies to hire workers in the lake area, which had small numbers of populations. The news of the finding of oil went around Venezuela and the Caribbean made many men to travel to Maracaibo. Many came from the Andean regions, but for them it was very difficult to get used to the hot weather of Maracaibo. Fevers end with them very quickly. The companies gave quinine with the food. Roads, telephone lines, trains, oil fields were constructed for these workers. After the companies built the train linking the *campos* with Maracaibo, foreigner workers' wives began to arrive to the oil fields. They had expectations of experiencing a life similar to colonizers of other countries and foreigner communities appeared. "Women from Lagunillas got up early in order to take the train from La Salina and there they took the ship to Maracaibo in order to go shopping in the Baralt Square." Actual Yucpa's words ...

between the state landowner, which conceded them the right to exploit the oil of the lands, and the European and U.S. American companies. A dictator, who was the chief of a state which previously had appropriated indigenous' territories, had created a mediating elite committed to the international oil trade.¹¹

Since those days, Maracaibo became the greatest city of Venezuela's western region.¹² Less than one hundreds kilometers separated La Guajira from Maracaibo, a city where El Zulia State's indigenous people have always traveled back and forwards.¹³ Commerce and jobs have always been at the center of these populations' movement toward Maracaibo.

“The image of opening the water faucets for having water was a powerful magnet attracting the Wayuu to Maracaibo.”

In the 1930s, the Wayuu started to move in larger numbers from La Guajira to the city of Maracaibo. This was probably related to the changes that the growth associated with the oil boom and the combination of the worsening of living conditions in their home land, the Guajira peninsula, with the dreams of the “easy” city life. As Renilda Martínez, the woman who replaced Noelí Pocaterra as the director of the Wayuu Women's Network when Pocaterra became one of the three indigenous representatives at the 1999 Constituent National Assembly told me in

¹¹ Fernando Coronil, *The Magic of the State*, (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad y CDCH of UCV, 2002), p. 78.

¹² More than two million people live in 2005 Maracaibo.

¹³ At present, they still go to the capital of the state looking specifically for services, particularly health care and governmental assistance. In the city of Maracaibo, Wayuu men work within the expanded trades of construction work and are highly prized by Creole entrepreneurs both because they constitute the greatest number of laborers and because of their skills.

2002: “the image of opening the water faucets for having water was a powerful magnet attracting the Wayuu to Maracaibo.”

However, the various patterns of the Wayuu migration since the 1930’s until the present day indicates that, seen as a whole, this transition is not an abrupt step, but takes place as a gradual movement. Some Wayuu never make it all the way to the city but build a rancho somewhere along the highway to Maracaibo. At present, those who make it to the city arrive in a large downtown terminal or get off a bus in one of the barrios at the outskirts where public services are not available to Wayuu people or are available only to a very limited degree to them. Most Wayuu settle their homes miles from the bustling city core. While the Wayuu might live with relatives during the first days in the city, crowded living conditions do not allow for overnight guests for very long. In the case of the families, they will soon have to move to their own place, building their own house out of cardboard or blocks. To have cash is very difficult for them. Their society draws on a different system of exchange.

In the early 1940s, this situation led to the first Wayuu mobilizations within Maracaibo. They successfully achieved a settlement when the government founded the barrio of Ziruma for the Wayuu population of Maracaibo. In that time, the Wayuu were looking for a homestead for those coming to the city while the government observed with concern the growth of slum areas around Maracaibo.¹⁴ Ziruma became the first Wayuu *barrio* of the city.¹⁵

¹⁴ Walter Dupouy, “Proyecto de Reubicación en el medio Rural de Indígenas no Adaptados a la Vida Urbana, Residentes en los Barrios Indígenas de Maracaibo,” in *Boletín Indigenista Venezolano* VI 91-4, pp. 17-33.

In Ziruma, as well as in other Maracaibo peripheral *barrios*, the indigenous population experiences a very specific integration to the city. In general terms, it can be said that they have developed a rural-urban nomadic culture and a racialized subaltern status. For example, for the funerals or religious ceremonies, which are regularly observed in Maracaibo or in La Guajira, the Wayuu go to the peninsula or vice versa. At present, the 100 kilometers do not constitute the same obstacle that it did decades ago.

But after the foundation of Ziruma, the numbers of migrant Wayuu increased, and new and ever larger *barrios* sprang up around the edges of the city, especially in the northern and western areas.¹⁶ Thus, the Wayuu began to be part of the immense rural-urban migration that has been changing Venezuela during the last several decades. In 1936, for example, two-thirds of the country's population lived in rural areas, whereas, by 1961, two-thirds lived in urban areas.¹⁷ In the 1980s, Venezuela had the highest urbanization rate in South America.¹⁸ The case of Maracaibo makes

¹⁵ For some linguistics, Ziruma, which is a Wayuu word, means "cielo," while for others it means "nube," *nublado*.¹⁵ It is important to notice the silencing of the slavery condition of the Wayuu within this official narrative both of the nation-state as well as of some indigenous leaders or persons. I will attempt to try how it has been constructed by their history by the Wayuu social movement, and I will depart from how is told the story of the barrio Ziruma. La Leyenda Guajira de "Ziruma" introduces a defeated people whose women do not become the traidora-traduttora of La Malinche. Wayuu women embody an affirmative role, whose onto-logic can be traced both in the legend that is behind the name of Ziruma as well as in Women's appropriation of traditional narratives to construct their contemporary identity. I will develop this theme in detail in the next chapter.

¹⁶ Alvaro C. Guzmán, "Problemas de la Alta Guajira," in E. Ghul ed., *Indios y Blancos en La Guajira*, (Bogotá: Ed. Tercer Mundo, 1963).

¹⁷ Lisa R. Peattie, *The View from the Barrio*, (Chicago: University of Michigan Press, 1968), pp. 22-23.

¹⁸ Louise Margolies, "Rural-Urban Migration and Urbanization in Venezuela," paper presented at the 76th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Houston, Texas, 1977; María Matilde and Ricardo Torrealba, paper presented at the 43rd International Congress of Americanists, Vancouver, 1979.

this growth dramatically visible: in 1917 Maracaibo had a population of 40,000. In the early seventies this number had increased to more than 700,000, and in 2005 Maracaibo, more than two million people live there.¹⁹

Modern state-centered narratives on Venezuela history state that the long-term structural changes set in motion by oil accelerated the decline of Venezuela's stagnating agricultural economy. This transformation would have had, in turn, an important impact on social structure that would be the decline of landowning elite and the parallel decline of a significant peasant population.²⁰ Oil would also be related to the emergence of new urban middle sectors –white-collar workers in the service sector, professionals, civil servants, students, intellectuals and politicians, who eventually became allied with a small but strategic working class. As a result of this oil-based modernization process, Venezuela would have achieved one of the most stable South American party-based political systems.

This narrative argues that oil tends to delay industrialization, and on this basis it explains Venezuela's modernizing failure. A late industrialization would have delayed the configuration of the social classes that are assumed as typical of European-centric versions of capitalism, while also tending to adjudicate to the

¹⁹ Robin John P., Frederick C. Terzo and Jaime Valenzuela. *Urbanization in Venezuela. An International Urbanization Survey Report of the Ford Foundation*. Working paper No. 4. (New York: Ford Foundation, 1973).

²⁰ Indigenous peoples are invisible and included within the in-transition peasant population. In the case of the western region of Venezuela, where the oil fields began their extracting activity overlapping the Wayuu population's territory there were some variations. First, the Wayuu peasants were never smallholding proprietors; they were kidnapped slaves who in turn became indebted peonage. Second, this official narrative naturalizes the expropriation of the Wayuu's lands, their captured presence within the semi-deserted area of the Peninsula of La Guajira, and their subordinate working status within the haciendas or areas around the oil fields.

production of oil the Venezuelan specific experiences of democracy. Within a linear conception of modernity, oil would be responsible of Venezuelan population's delay to expand political participation that is associated with the modernization derived from hegemonic U.S.-America and Europe political sciences' views of democracy. The argument goes on stating that the weakening and the eventual disappearance of landowners in Venezuela would have facilitated the transition to democracy.²¹ The dictator Juan Vicente Gómez gave the land concessions to his followers who sold them to the U.S. and European companies. By the late 1940s, Venezuela's capitalist-renter class was very linked to the state and depended on the distribution of oil income for its survival.

A progressive, state-centric narrative would remember this history through class modernizing frameworks. The subject of this progressive historiography would be the emergence of the oil workers' unions, and the development of a national labor and peasant movement. The political environment of the early twentieth century fueled by the emergence of oil field and peasant worker consciousness would assert pressure to the transition to liberal democracy.²² The workers' disposition to become allies of emerging urban middle-class sectors, in their fight against dictatorship, is represented as Venezuela's specific way for transiting from autocracy to democracy.

²¹ Moore's most famous statement, "no bourgeoisie, no democracy," does not seem to work in Venezuela.

²² Celestino Mata, *Historia sindical de Venezuela, 1813-1985* (Caracas: Ed. Vadell, 1985); Pantaleón García Salazar, *Aporte para la historia del movimiento sindical zuliano* (Maracaibo: Ed. UCV, 1982); Juan Bautista Fuenmayor, *Veinte años de política, 1928-1948* (Caracas: Ed. Monteavila 1968).

The natural death of the autocratic president, Juan Vicente Gómez, in late 1935, would be, as Fernando Coronil's critique correctly notices, as the decisive moment that introduces the nation simultaneously into the twentieth century and modernity.²³ This critical moment is often represented as creating an opening for the peasant and oil unions to manifest their discontent with the political and economic situation.²⁴ Oil workers overtly organized into unions and peasants through leagues, while parties' leaders called for strikes. These representations stress the primacy of the national political events in the formation of workers' monolithic consciousness. It also simplifies the delicate relationship between workers and the state, and it naturalizes a sequential process of identification of peasants, middle class sectors and oil workers. Their common experiences would have led to the simultaneous emergence of national and class-consciousness, through the institutional mechanisms embedded in [Acción Democrática](#) (AD). Since the thirties, when the nation shaken by the changes that oil production introduced, this party defined itself as Marxist-Leninist.

This perfectly idyllic narrative erases how the inscription of race, through women's bodies, informed the construction of modern Venezuela. The articulation of the simultaneous processes of nation and state formation disappears from the scene. This narrative blurs the political productivity resulting from the erasure of the violence inscribed on women and indigenous populations at the foundational moment of the birth of the modern nation state. The construction of the modern *mestiza* nation

²³ Coronil, *El Estado Mágico*.

²⁴ García Salazar, *Aporte para la historia del movimiento sindical zuliano*, p. 31.

and the party system chronologically coincided. The case of the Mexican Revolution showed a similar pattern. Taking into account the sexuality politics of a state that constructs its national identity drawing on mestizaje opens up compatible questions and answers to the ones that the study of Mexican *indigenismo* provided. In the case of Gamio, his struggle for his admittance within the modern brotherhood was done through the universalizing discourse of science. In the case of Gallegos, who uses his literature for forging Venezuelan spatial and racial unity, his struggle for admittance within the modern brotherhood is more complicated.

The defeat of the military force of the *caudillos* and the civil unification of the territory of nation state is represented as the sine-qua-non condition for the foundation of the modern patria. Parties, unions, and leagues would be the institutions that would structure the state. The indigenous populations are incorporated as Venezuelan peasants to the state's institutions. Within this narrative, the success of Pan-American *indigenista* policies for the modernization of South American was a required religious premise. The simultaneous racial and territorial centralization accompanying the social and political transition made invisible the governmental efforts for transforming what was understood as un-balanced mestizaje into a new mestizaje.

In 1947, Rómulo Gallegos became the first universally elected president of Venezuela. He is known as the father of Venezuelan literature. The name of one of *Doña Bárbara*'s female character, Marisela, was assumed as the representative young woman who will give birth to the new nation to be born. "Marisela" was a common alias that women struggling against the dictator Marcos Pérez Jimenez chose for their clandestine identification. Gallegos has simultaneously been the father of the national

literature and of the party political system. In examining his literary work, it becomes evident the productivity and the specificity of Venezuela's *mestizaje*. Women's reproducing roles within both Gamio and Gallegos' masculinist conceptions of nation making will be evident when examining this literature. The *mestizaje* and hybrid culture tropes reinforce the ties between the state, the nation and the parties within Venezuela's transition to democracy.

Political parties were crucial actors in undermining the authoritarian regime and in crafting the pacts which gave birth to the new democratic arrangement in the late 1940's. Parties were the vehicles through which the new alliance or coalition behind the new regime were forged and crystallized, and as the examination of Gallegos' literary work will show, parties and the formation of a mestiza nation intertwined for the nation's transition from dictatorship to democracy. In opposition to Mexico's case, the nation state's failure was not thought in terms only of modernization, but mainly in terms of democratizing the state, while *mestizaje* and women having a crucial although erased role within this process.

Figure 16: Symbol of the Party Accion Democratica



Source: www.acciondemocratia.org.ve

As Luis Britto García points out, AD's symbol integrates a phallic fire penetrating the national territory. The leaves around the logo represent the presence

of women defending the borders of the patria.²⁵ Drawing on Britto García's interpretation of the meaning of each of the parts of the symbol, women appear again incorporated as sexual bodies to the *mestiza* patria in the design that characterized the party (also named as the "white" party). Since the nineties, the second symbol, which can be seen in figure 18, represented this party. A racial shift led the *mestiza* representation of the 1940s party to a 1990s white project.

By the time AD came to power for the first time, in 1945, it was the most successful party in Venezuelan politics mainly because it had managed to organize the unorganized, the peasantry, and because it had won the contest against the Communist Party of Venezuela (Partido Comunista de Venezuela, PCV) for the control of the trade unions.²⁶ Immediately after the 1948 coup, AD and its affiliated organizations, the Peasants' Federation of Venezuela (Federación Campesina de Venezuela, FCV) and the Workers' Central of Venezuela ([Central de Trabajadores de Venezuela, CTV](#)) were banned and destroyed by the military regime. Its leaders had to go underground; many of them were imprisoned, exiled or killed during the dictatorship. A few years later, not much of AD's previous organizational apparatus existed: the remnants barely survived as clandestine networks of students, workers,

²⁵ Luis Brito García, *La máscara del poder* (Caracas: Ed. CDCH de UCV, 1989).

²⁶ Presidential elections in Venezuela, 1947: Gallegos, (AD), 880,720 votes (74,4%); Caldera (COPEI), 265,163 votes (22,4%); Machado (PCV), 37,881 votes (3,2%). Total: 1,183,764 votes. Miriam Kornblith and Daniel H. Levine, *Venezuela: the life and times of the party system*, (Notre Dame, Ind.: Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame, 1995), p. 49.

and political activists.²⁷ Unity among the parties was produced as a result of government repression and its attempts to outlaw all parties.²⁸

The Wayuu indigenous movement articulated through many channels to the parties' struggle for democracy. This umbrella character derived from the state's control on the oil producing lands gives the parties their "radical populist" character, which, in addition, matches with the new *mestiza* nation that the party that won the first elections represented. Gallegos' *mestizaje* embodies Venezuela's specific way of enacting Gamio's Indigenismo. Gallegos shaped a Venezuela *mestiza* nation in his literary works, and he related this *mestiza* nation to the appearance of the parties, and especially to the AD, the party that he belonged to when he became the first elected president by universal vote.

Imagining the nation and organizing the state

Fernando Coronil states that during Gómez's government the drastic expansion of the national budget intensified the contradiction between the public nature and the private appropriation of the state's wealth. Gómez's successors,

²⁷ Two years later, in 1950, the Communist Party (PCV) was also outlawed by the dictatorship. Its militants then joined AD's cadres in the underground network. They were soon to be joined still by another party. URD, after winning the 1952 elections which were later rigged to favor Marcos Pérez Jiménez personal rule. Finally, in the last period of the dictatorship, even the conservative, social-Christian party, COPEI, was driven underground by increased repression from the authoritarian regime.

²⁸ Unity took shape in two different spaces: one was the underground network in Venezuela which was responsible for much mobilization previous to the downfall of the dictatorship; the second was a network of political exiles, which was active in Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, the United States, Colombia and Canada. Even though there were some tensions between the exiled and the underground networks the parties were able to unite and collaborate in a common cause: the toppling of the Perez Jimenez dictatorship.

general López Contreras (1936-1941) and general Isaías Medina Angarita (1941-1945) were forced to distance from Gómez politics by the political environment and the political pressures coming from below that led them to advance toward the establishment of democratic regimes. Drawing on Skuski, Coronil sees in Rómulo Gallegos's 1928 first version of *Doña Bárbara*, the first mythical foundational text of the Venezuelan democracy.²⁹ Integrating the travel of Gallegos entire narrative along the national territory to his activity within Venezuela's AD political party, the coincidence among spatial, racial and party politics of nation-state making becomes visible. As also Gamio did, while through scientific texts, Gallegos' essays, novels, short stories and articles represent the re-foundation of a *mestiza*-modern Venezuelan nation, while excluding women from their original indigenous communities.

Gallegos was one of the founders of the main Venezuelan political party, AD. "Juan Bimba" ("Mouth John," a *zambo* male figure incorporating black bodies' stereotyped physical features) represents the peasant and urban population that AD organized through the Peasants' Federation of Venezuela (Federación de Campesinos de Venezuela, FCV) and the Workers Federation of Venezuela (Federación de Trabajadores de Venezuela, FTV).³⁰ Drawing on the role that in his novels the author

²⁹ Coronil, *El Estado Mágico*.

³⁰ Coronil examines the figure of "Juan Bimba" from a class perspective. Rómulo Betancourt belonged to AD. As Gallegos he was a founder leader of this party. His text *Venezuela, política y petróleo* (Caracas: Editorial Senderos, 1967) approaches a supplementary face of Gallegos' environmental, racial, and educational perspective. During the same foundational period, Rodolfo Quintero wrote *La Cultura del Petróleo* (Caracas: Universidad Central de Venezuela, Ediciones Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Sociales, 1968) from a Marxist perspective. In order to have further information of the personal links about these men see Omar Rodríguez, *El antropólogo como objeto: lecciones vivas de Miguel Acosta Saignes, Mario Sanoja, Gustavo Martín*, (Caracas: Fondo Editorial Topykos: Ediciones FACES/UCV, 1994).

attributes to: 1) geographic environment, 2) inheritance and ethnic composition, and 3) education, Gallegos re-found the Venezuelan nation through a new *mestizaje*, while the AD party incorporating the nation into the state. The state, through the FCV and FTV's integration into the bureaucracy, promoted the creation of the nation. Venezuela's *mestizaje* encapsulates for him the geographical and racial integration of races that, as Gamio also argued for Mexico and *Mestiza America*, constituted what the "aborted nation" required in order to achieve the racial homogenization that would make possible its modernity. Gallegos' AD long term militancy and the authority that he embodied after becoming, in 1948, the first universally elected president of the country were two co-related aspects that reinforced his literary representations of the nation. His texts are still obligatory readings in Venezuelan public high school classes. In addition, during the decade of the 1940s, when massive public education supported Venezuelan modernization, Gallegos was a teacher in the most well known public lyceum of Caracas, Liceo Caracas, as well as in the teachers' school of the capital city.³¹ In many opportunities Gallegos insisted that he did not conceive himself as a "pure artist." He often stated that his (nationalist?) pedagogical inclination led him to write.³²

³¹ See Juan Liscano, *Rómulo Gallegos y su tiempo* (Caracas: Ed. FACES/UCV, 1961).

³² "... no soy un artista puro que observa, combina y construye, por pura y simple necesidad creadora, para añadirle a la realidad una forma más que pueda ser objeto de contemplación. (...) Porque no soy un escritor de novelas ni para solazarme en humanas miserias, ni para evadirme de la realidad, sino antes bien para captar y fijar en obra estimuladora de algún interés, los rasgos característicos de la cotidiana sobre los cuales debemos poner atención; pero tampoco un realista de posición asumida dentro de un encasillamiento exclusivamene artístico, que se limite a copiar y a exponer lo que observó y comprobó, sino que, por obra de costumbre docente, (...) aspiro a que mi mundo de ficción le retribuya al de la realidad sus préstamos con algo edificante." Gallegos in Lowell Dunham, Ed., *Rómulo Gallegos: Una posición en la vida*, (Caracas: Ed. Monteavila, 1977).

Between the 30s and the 40s, Acción Democrática encapsulated the foundation both of a new mestiza nation and of a democratic state. Gallegos' literary and politically prolific work provided both the territorial and racial narratives that struggled against Venezuela's recursive dictatorships while founding, through a party named "Democratic Action," a new mestiza nation. The party's national organization simultaneously embodied the foundational myths both of the new *mestiza* nation and the democratic state, a strategy that articulated poetics of nation making to politics of state making while naturalizing the country's radical populist and nationalist identity.

Figure 17: Gallegos



Source: Gary Ghirardi and Sandra Angeleri

Gallegos' novels focus on whitening as well as on overcoming the characters that he considers the negative legacy of the black and indigenous races. His literary strategies introduce antiracist psychological, cultural and class perspectives. One of the effects of these strategies is the celebration of national *mestizaje* and the erasure

of black and indigenous populations that now become a new Venezuelan *mestizo* citizen.³³ After locating the scenes of his first texts in Caracas, the capital city, and in the Central plain region of Venezuela, Gallegos displaces the scenarios of his novels to the East and Guayana, and he concludes the territorial circle in the Maracaibo region. He completes the national engulfment by a novel titled *Sobre la misma tierra* (1943) in La Guajira and Maracaibo in the Zulia state.³⁴ After 1948, his last essays and novels leave the national space. When he was banned from the presidency and experienced his second exile, he writes on Cuba and Mexico's *mestizajes*.

For Gallegos, "race and ethnic legacy" have more importance than social history. In *Cantaclaro* (1934), his second novel, Gallegos ties plain's inhabitant's individualism to "the essence of the plain." According to Gallegos, plains riders's individualism is determined by the solitude of the plain; geography enters into the soul of men.³⁵ The plain creates madness, which in war is worthy because it reflects

³³ Both the nation and the state changed. In political terms, Gallegos is much more progressive than Gamio in the construction of an organizational structure overlapping the racial unification of the nation, while in gender politics they coincide. On February 1948, Venezuelans celebrated, in el Nuevo Circo of Caracas, the starting point of Gallegos' presidential period. The great national party was called the "Festival of Tradition," Noeli Pocaterra who is the main Wayuu woman leader traveled with her father from Maracaibo to Caracas to celebrate indigenous peoples' participation within the new national state. In 2004, Noeli Pocaterra was the Vice-President of Venezuelan National Assembly.

³⁴ Rómulo Gallegos, *Obras completas*, (Madrid: Aguilar, 1962). Several thinkers gave reason for the history of Venezuela drawing on the determination that they provided to the influence of geography and climate.

³⁵ Gallegos' first essay was published in the inaugural number of *La Alborada* (January 31st 1909). The name of the essay was "Hombres y principios." His first essays supported for eight months Vicente Gómez's displacement of Cipriano Castro from the government. According to Liscano and Urriola, Gallegos's project can be traced within these initial writings where the author uses the metaphor of disease to talk about the country.

men's heroic games, while, in order to make the mestiza nation, it needs women's presence for population reproduction.³⁶

Gallegos thinks that education can, to a certain extent, modify and accelerate the racial homogenization that Venezuela requires. "Certainly we do not believe that these defects will disappear only by correcting differences. Although we give great importance to education, we did not exaggerate the value of education to the point of understanding that by itself it would be enough to transform the condition of a race, extirpating its hereditary qualities." Gallegos writes that it is necessary to contribute to fuel this racial-social evolution by creating "habits that will be soon fixed by their inheritance and will therefore become instincts, and soon again they will become a new race character. This is the reason why we want a rational education, where empirical perspectives would be replaced by scientific methods, deduced from observing experience." For him peoples "occupying inferior levels" correspond to mixed races." "The wave of evolution has not arrived to them." However, there are other Venezuelans whose "origin provided them with better equipments and more privileged means." This legacy would lead Venezuelans to acquire the defined and unified characters that define "a race." These "pure" races originated "castas," which stem from an evolutionary process that ends selecting them as the best race.

Replicating Hegel, for Gallegos evolution consists on the racial unity that would originate a national soul while obtaining Venezuelan people's identity:

³⁶ In Gallegos' essay "The Education factor" the author considers that the mixture of servitude and revolt that characterizes Venezuelans stems from the "race's atavisms which draw from the confusion of gentlemen and servants." Gallegos supposes that in Venezuela there is a superior race that biology equipped to govern the country, while inferior races would be destined to subjection and obedience. Gallegos thinks that the Venezuelan population, which he states is formed by black, Indians, *mulatos*, *mestizos* and *zambos*, is incapable to rise to general concepts and subsequently to form political parties.

These are amorphous multitudes of hybrid origin, formed by the unfinished fusion of diverse ethnic elements which led to races' negative atavisms and survivals to fight against each other. This does not allow building anything solid and stable as it would be impossible to obtain a defined melt on the surface of the Earth while geological process were on its historical process of coming together. The character of our race has not yet crystallized in a defined form. Our national soul still has all the shades of confused bloods. The mentality of this unfinished Venezuelan soul is quite rudimentary; it has limited intelligence, the ideas have not yet gotten rid of the specific form that gave them origin, rather, they are so intimately linked that they form a single and same thing.³⁷

Social evolution would tend, then, to obtain a racial *mestizaje* that, for Gallegos, is a necessary condition for creating the country's national unity. This new *mestiza* unity does not only suppose the fusion of the diverse original races (Indian, black and white), it also supposes the overcoming of all characteristics that for him are "atavist and negative features" of the indigenous race and, mainly, of the black race. At the same time, the predominance of the positive characters of the white race would be guaranteed through this selective *mestizaje*.³⁸

When explaining Venezuela's landowners' military governments, *caudillismo*, Gallegos appeals to Venezuelans' incapacity to rise to the sphere of general concepts. According to him, Venezuelan population is conditioned by biology and environment to position itself under a man's authority rather than under the guidance of principle-centered parties. Indeed, for him these are the racial conditions that lead the country to need military men's authority while, at the same time, making Venezuelans incapable of constructing a democracy based on political parties' organization. In all

³⁷ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 223.

³⁸ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 236.

phases of the Venezuelans' individual or social life, "the confusion of ethnic groups that do not match one with the other" explains his contradictory spirit. The "in-formation Venezuelan soul" is "a mixture of revolt against the law or any principle of authority." It also embodies the "servant's submission to the man that incarnates the abstract organization of those same laws or unrecognized authority that the 'in-formation soul of the nation' rejects." This would be one face of the in-formation politics of nation making that would need to precede the country transition from military to political organizations, a process that Gallegos relates to the "atavism of races of confused masters and servants."³⁹ This deficient process of nation making justifies Gallegos' pedagogical vocation, a feature that both his political and writing histories embedded. Gallegos developed his political activity within the framework AD. He was a foundational leader of the party, its first national president, and in Venezuela he is always represented as a man that provided a hard struggle in order to achieve the party's legalization. This articulation between his ideals exposed in his literature and AD party organization was of great importance for Gallegos, the party, and the national state. As AD's candidate, Gallegos was elected president of Venezuela in December 1947. He struggled for the universal and secret vote in the electoral campaign preceding his election.

His first novel, which was written in 1913, *Reinaldo Solar* (Sun Kingdom), has an autobiographical origin. At the beginning of his novel Gallegos, as also Gamio did, relates the main character's conquest trip. He narrates the celebration of "a

³⁹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 234.

solemn rite that had the taste of forgotten nature-based religions."⁴⁰ "Reinaldo Solar will undertake the redeeming of nature's work in reconstructing his moral being, as it also does with a plant which, deformed by the culture, returns to the original forest in order to recuperate the vigor of its wild, old condition."⁴¹ "Poor men, women, weak and sick peoples are remora of the human species' progress. One does not need to conserve them; one needs to destroy them, as Nature, implacably, also destroys them, because Nature wants only strong individuals and species," says Ortigales.⁴²

For Gallegos, evolution is an undisputed principle. Reinaldo Solar welcomes free love while relating it to the need to better the race: "In species' fight for life, the female is stronger than the male."⁴³ Gallegos introduces through the male character's voice the necessity "to improve the Venezuelan race" through women's bodies.⁴⁴ Gallegos' Reinaldo Solar novel's main character does not believe in the possibility of a national literature. He thinks that the Venezuelan people "do not have an interior life." "Nor a word that reveals a noble spiritual restlessness; nor a feeling that is not purely animal. They have a buried soul, totally abolished." Venezuelans lack, for him, the raw material necessary in order to create literary works, which in Gallegos' words is "the soul of the race." And the soul of the Venezuelan race was not yet born. For

⁴⁰ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 249.

⁴¹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 250.

⁴² Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 254.

⁴³ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 258.

⁴⁴ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 260-261. Reinaldo Solar proposes to replace maize by wheat for such intention. This substitution coincides with Gamio's claim for maize's substitution by soybeans, a scientific statement of the anthropology of the age that asserted that "the man is what he eats."

him the new race, the product of the synthesis of the three original ones, has not melted into a unified race. “We did not constitute one race. We do not count with this people, which seem to be the fetuses of an aborted nation. In each one of us all races are dissolving.”⁴⁵

In *La Trepadora* (The Female Climber), a novel published in 1925, “necessity for national cultural values” is again the main subject. “The elite lead the vigor of the Barbarian social sector. The vigor of this sector would be lost if not properly led. The individual as well as the national social body need the contribution of a vigorous sprout.”⁴⁶ Once again the author advocates for the solution of what for him was the main problem of the nation. The racial integration of the emergent nationality would be done through the male elite’s leadership. To concrete the emergence of “the sprout of a vigorous sprout” was Gallegos’ way of “solving” the nation’s deficits.⁴⁷ All the plot of *La Trepadora* focuses on the transformation of the central region of the country embodied by the lives of Hilario Guanipa and her daughter Victoria.⁴⁸ In this novel Gallegos represents the national soul’s genesis through miscegenation, and spiritual miscegenation emerging as the result of biological and racial mixture. Gallegos states that Hilario (Weaved man) inherited his mother’s racially mixture and his father’s noble white landowner’s part. “Bloodthirsty instincts that are momentary,

⁴⁵ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 265.

⁴⁶ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 285.

⁴⁷ In an article published in La Havana in 1949, Gallegos says about *La Trepadora* that, “In Venezuela, cultural miscegenation is not yet defined.” He desires that miscegenation slowly would make it real, “step by step.”

⁴⁸ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 289.

are surpassed or resisted by the mixture that brings a civilized inheritance” express, according to Hilario Guanipa’s voice, the mixed racial inheritance of his family.⁴⁹

The female indígena inheritance is celebrated in what she has of “uncontrolled force and melancholic and wild independence,”

Guanipa! She tastes to earth, like the rough flavor of a wild full fruit, nevertheless full of sweetness. Guanipa! Listen how sonorous and pleasing it is the sound of this word, with the melancholic loudness of the pipe of the sad Indian. It also evokes the melancholy of the savage desert, the uninhabited Earth’s moan that moans in the voice of the wind, on the ardent sandy ground where wide rivers of useless transparent waters run. Listen to the history of your last name, so that you see that it also has illustrious ancestry: Guanipa was called an Indian princess, daughter of a brave cacique of the mesas of the Orinoco’s coasts. Her beauty and heroism led the conquerors to perpetuate her memory by calling by her name the mesa where the cacique’s tribe lived.⁵⁰

In the *mestizo* Hilario Guanipa, opposite instincts fight one against each other.

In his daughter, who takes the symbolic name of “Victoria,” “the best part of all the ancestors triumphed.” The mixed Venezuelan race aspires to this human and spiritual type, which Gallegos identifies with the secular female climber soul.⁵¹ Gallegos leaves “very little Indian blood in Victoria.” Gallegos states that she needs to unite herself with the white and Germanized Nicolas del Casal in order to continue climbing and producing ideal fruits. Hilario’s life provides a “healthful air, optimism and an impression of strength,” which comes off from “the kindness of a simple heart

⁴⁹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 291.

⁵⁰ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 292.

⁵¹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 293.

and from a mountain of fragrant forests." Victoria will exclaim in front of him: "Yes. This is a man" ⁵²

Doña Bárbara was published in Barcelona in 1929. Its subject is race subordination to geographic environment. In its first pages of, Gallegos characterizes the Brujeador (The Witcher). "The wreck guardian of Doña Bárbara," is "one of the many disquieting men, of Asian factions, who make one think about some Tartar seed fallen to America who knows when or how."⁵³ The Yankee, mister Danger, considers Venezuelan Brujeador "a man of inferior race."⁵⁴ But Doña Barbara and El Brujeador are miscegenation's offspring, "a mixture that leads her to be dragged by the fatalism of the Indian that she has in her blood."⁵⁵ Doña Bárbara's personality is for Gallegos "the mixture of the white and indigenous blood." "From there came the tragic *guaricha*, which is the fruit produced by the violence of the adventurous white in the shady sensuality of the Indian woman. Her origin was lost in the dramatic mystery of the virgin lands."⁵⁶ Santos Luzardo (Holly Light) interprets the plain woman's opposition to social change as drawing on "the Indian's indolence that we carry in the blood."⁵⁷ Inheritance explains, in the eyes of Santos Luzardo, the personality of Marisela who is the "fruit of an immoral union who perhaps inherits the unfortunate

⁵² Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 294.

⁵³ Gallegos adds that he El Brujeador is "one of those men who belong to inferior, cruel and shady races" Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 298.

⁵⁴ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 299.

⁵⁵ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 302.

⁵⁶ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 303

⁵⁷ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p.304

maternal and paternal conditions.”⁵⁸ But such inheritance will only give its fruits of shady cruelty "by lack of the advisable education."⁵⁹ Regression explains Lorenzo Barquero's (Lorenzo Boatman), who is a man that resigns from Caracas in order to return to the plains, behavior.⁶⁰

In *Doña Bárbara*, Gallegos argues that “the soul of the Venezuelan race,” the spirit that would confer its own personality to the Venezuelan nation is still in gestation. Marisela personifies the soul of that race "opened like the landscape to any bettering action."⁶¹ The “desire for loving her as she was, beautiful but Barbarian, entered into Santos Luzardo,” as well as the desire “to let himself be molded by her, leaving that perennial vigilant attitude against the adaptation to the simple and hard life and pasturing.”⁶² Gallegos naming both Doña Barbara and the plains as “men’s devouring,” expresses colonized male intellectuals trans-crossing power relations. "Lorenzo already succumbed, victim of men’s all-devouring woman/plain, which was not perhaps as much Doña Barbara as the implacable Earth, the brave Earth, with its brutishing solitude. The man who once was the pride of the Barquero family disappeared in the plains’ floods. Drawing on these events, Santos Luzardo begins to think in that other tremendous space of barbarism, which does not pardon those who throw themselves to her. Also, he became the victim of the men’s all-devouring

⁵⁸ Nora Castañeda, a leader of the Venezuelan women’s movement assumed Marisela’s name while she struggled in AD against Pérez Jiménez.

⁵⁹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 305

⁶⁰ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 306.

⁶¹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 309.

⁶² Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 310.

woman.”⁶³ Doña Barbara is nature predominating on man; Santos Luzardo is man dominating both nature and women. He defines the novel’s objective: “To fight against nature, against the un-health that annihilated the plain race, against floods and droughts disputing every year the earth, against the desert that does not let penetrate civilization.”⁶⁴

In order to end José Vicente Gómez’s dictatorship, Gallegos thinks that it is precise to modify environment and population, although he also believes that this is a difficult goal. “It is urgent to modify the circumstances that produce these evils: to populate. But in order to populate more: it is necessary first to adjust and in order to adjust: it is urgent first to populate. A vicious circle.”⁶⁵ For Gallegos, the centaur symbolizes barbarism, and therefore it is necessary to exterminate him. “Centaur is barbarism and, therefore, it is necessary to end him,” says one of his characters.⁶⁶ The plain rider represents the fusion of the man and the beast. The centaurs are for Gallegos symbols of uncontrolled nature and sexuality. Symbol of civilization is, however, the fencing that puts limit to centaur’s ridings. The fencing, in effect, determines and defines property as opposed to the indefinite and ownerless plain it indicates Gallegos’ sense of the evolution. The novel of Gallegos closes with these words: “The barbed wire arrived, which was bought with the product of the heron’s pens, and it began the work. The posts were already planted; from the wire rolls came

⁶³ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 313.

⁶⁴ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 314.

⁶⁵ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 315.

⁶⁶ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 316.

out innumerable roads' threads, where the errant hopes get lost since many time before; the fencing began to trace only one thread which was directed toward the future."

Cantaclaro (*Sings clearly*), published a lustrum after *Doña Barbara*, is also a novel of the plains. However, Venezuela's transition from an agricultural to an oil-based economy marked a new national identity. *Cantaclaro* is the plain where poets and storytellers group themselves around the figure of Florentino, the rival singer of the Devil. Thanks to him, landscape becomes verse and nature becomes song. A year after *Cantaclaro*'s publication, *Canaima*, the novel of the forest was published. In *Cantaclaro* nature appears as home of demonic and divine forces. This simultaneity of heaven and devil that oil represents for Venezuelans is manifested in *Canaima* (1935), *Pobre Negro* (1937), and *Sobre la misma tierra* (1943).⁶⁷ In *Canaima*, Indians' and blacks' boats came "with merchandise and passengers from Trinidad, and a shipment of blacks arrived to the mines of El Callao."⁶⁸ "The Antillean blacks left behind the farm manager who went on his horse, scenes of the times when the *negrero* boats overturned Africa in the coasts of America."⁶⁹ But Indians' oppression is the main theme of this novel that takes place within the forest of the Guayana region. Gallegos surrounds Indians by a mystery aureole; their lives and origins deploy a "quiet and lost millenarian legend." The "always exciting encounter with the Indian that shakes the slept water" and "his reflection in the river" formed "two

⁶⁷ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 334.

⁶⁸ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 345.

⁶⁹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 346.

hallucinating figures.” “The Indian extends his arc or points his *cerbatana*, shoots the arrow or the blowpipe, and returns to the rivers’ silence.” “The serious and taciturn Indian, who is bronzed silence rowing in the solitary river suddenly appears and disappears within the forest without being noticed from where he comes or to where he goes.”⁷⁰

Gallegos alludes to the (for him) in-extinction indigenous populations.⁷¹ “The enigma of the millenarian forest of the Terramaras’ funerals serves as frame and scenery” to Gallegos’ narration of the history “of a tribe that existed in the past but that only the powerful tribe that will exist in the future will be capable of deciphering.”⁷² Marcos Vargas, the main character of *Canaima*, resigns to a promissory future among his people and to his marriage with “the blonde Aracelis.” He gets lost in the forest where he marries the indigenous woman Aymara, who leads their mestizo son to Caracas in order to receive the proper modern education. The same patterned trip of the conquerors: men would descend to the depths of the forest, would mix their blood with indigenous women, and would send their sons to the capital, the space of the civilization. Gallegos’ racial-cultural synthesis is made again through indigenous women’s bodies while expulsing those from their ethnic communities in order for the Venezuelan nation finally to have its own mestiza soul.

In 1937 Gallegos publishes *Pobre Negro* (Poor Black). *Pobre Negro*’s narration time coincides with Republican Venezuelan history preceding slaves’

⁷⁰ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p.347.

⁷¹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 349.

⁷² Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 348.

freedom between 1854 and 1857, after the Federal War.⁷³ This novel adds a new dimension to Gallegos' narrative on Venezuela racial formation. The main character, Pedro Miguel, is not only "the fruit" of miscegenation between whites and blacks. He is also "the fruit" of a love beginning as a white woman's "deep hate and aversion against all black people." Gallegos includes in his narrative the African legacy that he explicitly relates to the existence of an oppressed and exploited popular class by the white oligarchy and to the recognition of justice embodied by the Federal War that he represents as a social revolution that followed Simón Bolívar's led independence war.⁷⁴ In this novel Gallegos states that Venezuela needs to forget the idea that the *mulatto* is "a field of fight between two un-concealing races." The nation needs to understand that the *mulatto* population, on the contrary, is the base for "the harmonic construction of a nation which faces with determinacy and bravely its future, and to accept the consumed fact of its miscegenation totally and consciously."⁷⁵ One of Gallegos' novel's main characters argues that it is necessary to "accept the body and the soul of the nation that originally were from Africa." "Our black is an in-march race, but he is not a stranger who passes through our ground, and if those who brought him here did something bad, we do worse if we do not cultivate him as a plant of ours. Here he reproduces his intact soul, but also he melts, and this is the way through which the body of the nation digests him; but it is necessary to incorporate

⁷³ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 351.

⁷⁴ At the end of the novel, Luisana and the mulatto Pedro Miguel embark towards the Venezuelan island of Margarita in a small boat. Luisana is named the captain of the boat, while "Pobre Negro," the noble and faithful African man who represents Venezuelan people, is assassinated by his back.

⁷⁵ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 355.

him also to the national soul providing him with part of the common cultural patrimony.”⁷⁶

After positioning the scenes of his narrations in Caracas and the Central region, in the plains, in the East region and in Guayana, Gallegos place the action of his last novel in Maracaibo and in the Zulia state. The novel *Sobre la misma tierra* (On the same ground) develops in the Western region of Venezuela and closes Gallegos’ racial geography of the nation. *Sobre la misma tierra* was published in 1943. The landscape is no longer the protagonist of the human drama. The text represents a pastoral and slavery-based Wayuu society as if it were destined to perish when absorbed by the modern Venezuela and impelled to disappear by the machines and the electricity of the oil fields.⁷⁷ Gallegos’ points out that “the splendid alien luck comes together with his own uncaring misfortune.”⁷⁸ *Sobre la misma Tierra* underlines the rapid transformation from the agricultural to the oil mining production. He depicts this crucial moment of Venezuelan transition from an agricultural to an extracting nation.⁷⁹

Nevertheless, the central subject is once again the racial and spatial integration of Venezuela, and the unity of the national soul as the central subject of *Sobre la misma tierra*. Petroleum and the birth of *Venezuela Petrolera* constitute the new environmental conditions in order for the new national identity to be born. But in

⁷⁶ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 356.

⁷⁷ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 373.

⁷⁸ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 374.

⁷⁹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 375.

Gallegos' last novel on a Venezuelan subject, he approaches the nation's mestizaje with greater force and clarity than in all his previous novels. In *Pobre Negro*, race difference is expressed in terms of the presence of Africaness in the eastern region; in the novel *Sobre la misma tierra*, he resolves the native presence within the new national mestizaje. Three parts constitute the novel, in order to shape an organizational strategy that coincides with the author's objective. The first part narrates the generation of Remota, daughter of the criollo Demetrio Montiel and the Wayuu-Italian woman Cantaralia. Miscegenation is represented as the future and inevitable end of the Wayuu society. In the second part, the assimilation of Remote Montiel turns her into the German named Ludmila Weiner who goes to live in New York. The second part of the novel is the antithesis of the first thesis as well as Ludmila is the antithesis of Remota. In the third part of the novel, the Wayuu Indian woman returns to her original society, in order to redeem the Wayuu from misery by imparting the contributions of the western civilization. This new synthesis embodies Gallegos's ideal *mestizaje* of the new Venezuela.

Gallegos is convinced that blacks and Indians are inferior races. The *mestiza* condition of the Venezuelan population would be an inevitable *mestizaje*, an "ethnic fusion" requiring the predominance of the values and cultural forms of the "superior European race." For him, the persistence of diverse and opposite races in the national territory impedes the emergence of the nation. For the author it is necessary to integrate the different races in order to consolidate definitively the national identity. One of the characters of *Sobre la Misma Tierra*, Doctor Viñas (Doctor Grapevines) recognizes that "we are an inferior race. It was not in our hands avoiding it, but it is

for us to find some way to repair it. *Y adelante con los faroles.*”⁸⁰ The Guajiros are “a few thousand of undernourished semi-barbarian Indians who are incapable of a great constructive effort, an inferior ethnic element on which hope of a great future cannot be founded.”⁸¹ When Ludmila Weimer leaves New York, returns to Maracaibo and becomes Remota Montiel, she sought to avoid the definite extinction of the Guajiros’ native force in order to incorporate it to the national, soul in formation project.⁸²

In 1948 Gallegos went in exile to Cuba. He then left Cuba and went to Mexico. Here he wrote a second short story that does not take place within the Venezuelan territory, *Tierra bajo los pies* (Ground under the feet).⁸³ The idea that the Venezuelan people lack harmonic synthesis of opposite races also appears in “Pejugal.” Mulattos are represented as un-limited of ambition as well as in “their tendency to climb to higher social statuses, which is their greatest aim.”⁸⁴ Searching for the cause of his failure, Paturuco “smelled the trace of the paternal blood.” He found the reason of his incapacity: “He was done by an unformed human substance

⁸⁰ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 377.

⁸¹ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 378

⁸² This novel is located during WWII. *La brizna de paja en el viento*, one of Gallegos’ expressions that President Chávez’s more often repeats, was published during the author’s second exile, in La Habana, and it is his first novel that does not take place in a Venezuelan scenario.

⁸³ The author develops the action of his novel in Mexico, in the post-revolution state of Michoacan. The subject of the racial synthesis is present from the beginning to the end of the novel through the personality and action of Emiliano Gracián. The latter is the main character of the novel and is the son of an aristocratic agrarista man that promotes the Agrarian Reform and of an Indian woman of Tarasca. “Through him go “two scrambled bloods.” “The scorn that the white man feels toward the Indians expresses Orozco’s, to whom all that is Indian smells to him bad go together with the cruelest exploitation.” You, the Orozcos have shared with the Mexican Indian, through centuries the sun, the air, the water and the Earth of this country, and yet you have not learned to even consider him neither as a compatriot nor as a human being.” Gallegos, *Obras completas*, p. 391.

⁸⁴ Gallegos, *Obras completas*, pp.408, 410.

that would never be capable of crystallizing in the delicate and noble form of the art since the centuries' work would purify the original rude dust." This reflection on Paturuco's son synthesizes Gallegos's theory on Venezuela's lack of modernization and democracy: Venezuela's men (not women) are formed by inferior ethnic elements (indigenous and blacks). Indeed, for Gallegos, it is more important that the Venezuelan population would be formed by harmonic and synthesized elements of a new race. For Gallegos, only the passage of centuries could harmonically synthesize the opposed ethnic elements and make predominant the noblest, the white man.⁸⁵ Venezuelan women's embody the political and literary inscription of the democratic and mestiza nation to be born through the democratic action of Gallegos' party and pedagogical texts.

Part III approaches the answer of this question by examining the experiences of the Wayuu women leaders within Venezuelan warrior men nation making strategies.

⁸⁵ In "Los inmigrantes" relata la historia de dos vendedores ambulantes, un judío y otro calabres, en Venezuela. Y no sin complacencia dice que la semilla de ambos, sembrada en tierra vernácula, produce frutos muy criollos, aptos para impulsar la evolución de la raza venezolana. Fácil es advertir que Gallegos comparte una idea que aparece ya en los precursores del latinoamericanismo (Alberdi, Sarmiento, Gamio) y que encontramos en casi todos los intelectuales: la inmigración europea es uno de los principales instrumentos para impulsar el progreso económico y cultural del país. Algunos, como Gallegos, piensan que también formarán una síntesis racial superior.

IV. Constructing Fertile Traditions Gave Birth to Womanist Politics of Nation Making

Introduction

In Venezuela, it is an almost sacred custom that during the month of March, women's organizations always celebrate "El dia de la mujer." The *Coordinator of Women's National Non-governmental Organizations (Coordinadora de ONGs de Mujeres)* supervises a ritual that takes a great proportion of energies. Its objective is to provide a public ceremony where deserving women receive a symbolic medal. The age of the women is always taken into account; the ONG's women want to be able to honor them before they die, not after. The struggle has been so long that many of these women have championed different political perspectives, passing from union to party organizations, from ecological to barrio groups, from street theatre performances to Liberation or Methodist theologies. The indigenous women of Venezuela, who do not identify themselves as feminist, now and then participate in these activities, and many times, within personal conversations voice strong critiques to the national women's movement of La Coordinadora. In the case of Pocatererra, the Wayuu woman leader who in 1999 became the Vice President of the National Assembly until December 2004, she firmly and repeatedly stated that she "is an indigenous woman who struggles side by side with the Wayuu men for the restoration of their traditional values."

Women have dissimilar herstories, but the *Coordinadora de Mujeres* is always committed to honor and give them the “Josefina Camejo” award. Not one of the women who celebrate the woman’s day believes in the power of rituals or in medals. It can be said that they reject the crystallization of power that these acts represent. But all of the women of the *Coordinadora* make a claim for honoring publicly these activist women’s lives and for leaving a testimony of their “endless” struggle. It is not a casual fact that the genre of “biography” has the most significant presence within the testimonial and editorial efforts of this group of activist women. “Women in movement,” instead of “women social movement,” is how Gioconda Espino, one of the few feminists, names these women.

For many years, these regular celebrations that women have in March at the Central University of Venezuela have never attracted more than two hundred women and men, although the organization adjudicating the medals is an umbrella NGO organizing individual women and groups of different tendencies.

Families, friends and university authorities accompany the usually very old women. The celebration encompasses music, theatre, the baptizing of some new books, the sharing of a copa of champagne, and as we say in Venezuela, “calabaza, calabaza, cada cual para su casa,” meaning that the party is over.

On March 8, 2003, President Chávez gave a speech in the biggest public space of Caracas, El Poliedro, to more than two hundred thousand women organized through the *Fuerza Bolivariana de Mujeres*. The public TV and radio transmitted the celebration throughout the national territory. The *Fuerza Bolivariana de Mujeres* have different programs: women’s houses, workshop against domestic violence or on

sexuality, a Women's Bank. The feminist leaders that had more than forty years struggling together were in 2003 divided between Chavistas and non-Chavistas.

In El Poliedro, music from different bands indicated that a massive ritual was going on in the stadium where President Chávez spoke for more than three hours. Many of those women leaders who usually were at the university in the Josefina Camejo medal celebration were there. Nora Castañeda is the economist who presides over the Women's bank, a project that the Coordinadora imported from Bangladesh. Castañeda's alias, while she was a teenager struggling against the dictator Marcos Pérez Jiménez, was "Marisela," the name that Gallegos gave to the *mestiza* young woman who in his book *Doña Bárbara* will give birth to the modern Venezuela. The Bolivarian Revolution incorporated El Banco de la Mujer into his program, although in a subordinated position in relationship to the Peoples' Bank. Reina Urrutia, the leader of the black women also attended. She now designs black women's politics from the Instituto Nacional de la Mujer. She sat close to Maria León, an old activist of the Venezuelan Communist Party whose participation was crucial for achieving the 1982 legal reforms of the Civil Code. This reform allowed the legal recognition of those children who were born outside marriage, meaning that if a woman gave birth to a daughter whose father was married to another woman, it was possible to have the father's legal recognition of his daughter. To "legitimate" her, it would be said in the Venezuelan Spanish language. In my opinion, the reform of the Civil Code that the women achieved in 1982, as an almost imposed requirement of the UN to all nation states, became a crucial moment for the re-foundation of the nation, a point that many movies and telenovelas of the period marked.

But many of the traditional feminists were not at the Women's Day Act at the 8th of March at El Poliedro. Adícea Castillo, Ofelia Alvarez, and Moni Pizani, while still belonging to the Coordinadora founded a new organization in opposition to the new government. The Bolivarian process split the women's movement, whose unity had a long history of surviving in the most different political conditions thanks to women's politics of alliances. The celebration that the Women Studies Center and the Coordinadora observed in 2002 and 2003 showed, for the first time since the beginning of the twentieth century, a divided women's national movement.

After women's participation as a compact group within the process that led to the 1999 National Constituent Assembly, the polarization of the nation resulting from the Bolivarian process split the Venezuelan women's social movement in two. The racial and class identification of the Venezuelan national subject changed. Drawing on the struggle for the re-distribution of the revenue stemming from the production of oil divided the women's organization. President Chávez's nationalist project seeks the re-distribution of the national wealth among the population that had been excluded from the benefits stemming from the land of the national territory. The Bolivarian project, which seeks the unity of South American in response to globalization, complements President Chávez nationalist project.

Since the beginning of the nineties, in Venezuela, indigenous women have organized within and across national boundaries. Months before the Fourth World Conference of the United Nations in Beijing (1995), the Venezuelan national women's movement had prepared their national platform of action, a step that many world women's organizations also took in order to follow the procedural instructions

of international funding centers. In the case of the indigenous women, their petitions are specifically expressed in the collective document that the Venezuelan women sent to Beijing.¹ The number of articles addressing indigenous women's issues in the UN increased from three in the 1985 World Conference in Nairobi, to over a dozen in Beijing. As an example, the Declaration of Indigenous Women points out that we “had and continue to protect, transmit, and develop our *Indigenous Cosmic Vision*, our science and technologies, our arts and culture, and our indigenous socio-political and economic systems.”²

The rise of Wayuu women activism does not chronologically coincide with the rise of the Venezuelan women's social movement. At the beginning of the 1980's, the Venezuelan women's movement started to organize drawing on principles promoted by international ONG's proposal. Within this national-based framework, the indigenous women's movement is invisible in institutional terms, and its story is said to have originated recently. This narrative says that in Maracaibo, where a great number of the Wayuu population lives, the women founded their network on the 22nd of February 1996, at a meeting of professional and student Wayuu women. This indigenous network also overlapped the organizational principles that the UN promoted. La Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres had been meeting the Wayuu women since the 1980s, but the indigenous women were often absent. When they went to specific meetings, there were friendly talks and sharing with the women of La

¹ CONG, *Juntas Camino a Beijing*, (Caracas: CONG Ed., 1995).

² CONG, *Juntas Camino a Beijing*, p. 256.

Coordinadora. But they always emphasized that they were indigenous women, and that their main space of struggle was the indigenous movement. Indigenous women had an irregular presence in the meetings of the Coordinadora. As an example, the indigenous women were and are absent from the publications funded by the Venezuelan women's movement. The Venezuelan Woman Institute edited a book on the biography of the best-known women who participated in the 1999 National Assembly that voted for the new constitution. When asked these about indigenous women's absence from the National Women Institute's activities, the feminist leaders answered that they are part of the indigenous movement.³

In Venezuela, gender alliances were common, in spite of the fundamental differences in the goals held by the groups of women. Personal relations arose in the fifties, in the struggles against Marcos Pérez Jiménez, Venezuela's last dictator, that linked women of different political positions. The "scholar" feminists, the grassroots activists, and the administrative workers of the state made temporary and dynamic alliances on the basis of women's issues. Pocaterrea, a worker linked to the University of Maracaibo, irregularly participated in La Coordinadora since its founding. La Coordinadora included feminist and non-feminist women. From an organizational point of view, national women as well as the Venezuelan Wayuu Indigenous Women Web (WWW) follow similar patterns promoted by the international funding centers. Differently positioned women founded an umbrella organization in the 1980's that they named The National Coordination of Women's NGO's (The CONG de Mujeres,

³ The indigenous women presence, on the contrary, can be traced through the publications of the Center of Women's Studies of the Universidad Central de Venezuela.

as it is named). The groups and the individuals, who formed this umbrella organization, cannot be identified through the official character that the UN requires for legitimating NGO's within the international community. However, to be an NGO was a task of these women, who searched international funds for their domestic struggles. It was not easy for Venezuelan women organizations to fit into institutional international funding patterns. The production of oil for the nation did not facilitate women's organizations' classification as third world women, an indispensable requirement for receiving international funds. The funding principles of the international society do not take into account the domestically unequal distribution of the Venezuelan national income. When feminist NGOs of Europe or of other industrialized countries enter in contact with the CONG de Mujeres, the oil production condition of the state makes invisible women's poverty. This international interference led the Venezuelan women organization to make up and adapt their agenda to funding dispositions. International alliances worked mainly for indigenous and black women's movements. Drawing on these experiences, La Coordinadora Nacional focused on the mediation of the nation state in order to achieve resources, while the international sphere introduced debates that took a long time before being accepted within their specific domestic agenda. Nonetheless, through international alliances, the women of La Coordinadora became part of transnational movements, a tactic that empowered their efforts for receiving international support in addition to the resources that they struggle to receive from the nation state.

Venezuelan feminism has been connected to the traditional parties. In fact, contemporary Venezuelan feminist leaders were clandestine political activists who

had organized themselves through alliances against the dictatorships that ruled the country until 1958. Some of these women became part of the state apparatus, while others accessed the resources of the state through personal networks that they had with those women with whom they struggled together for many years against the dictatorship. The new generations of women activists follow the path of this nation state centered legacy. The relation to the state is one point that differentiates the U.S. from the Venezuelan feminist and women's movements. In fact, the women organizations made alliances through La Coordinadora in order to empower themselves as women by the mediation of the state.

It is difficult to define the indigenous and the Venezuelan women's movement through a U.S. racial and ethnic perspective. A U.S. centric view parallels U.S. white middle class feminism to Latin American national feminisms. This perspective posits that if the gap between the two (Venezuelan mainstream and ethnic women) should disappear, indigenous women would lose their (essentialized?) identity. I am not arguing that the Venezuelan national women do not have a privileged position in relation to indigenous and black women. I am arguing that the national women movement organized itself throughout the umbrella strategy of nationalism while emphasizing popular women's networks through class lines.

One of the questions that emerge from this story refers to contemporary globalization's re-ordering of ethnic, national, and continental feminisms throughout the continent. Indigenous women never identified themselves as "ethnic." They make a claim to the state that they are Venezuelan indigenous at the same time that they are women. The black women's organizations also find it difficult to organize themselves

through racial lines. Many black women, while recognizing race and gender discriminations that are specific to their circumstances, argue that they do not share an ethnicity. They understand as racist the attempts to differentiate them from the national culture.

In the case of the indigenous women organizations, they emphasized that increased contact with the dominant society brought and bring instability and discontent to the indigenous peoples. The indigenous women state that this contact negatively affected their traditional roles within their ethnic communities. The legal document for registering the Wayuu Women Network includes: (1) representing Wayuu women members of the network in front of public and private institutions and organizations, (2) contributing to recognition of indigenous rights in constitutional reforms, (3) promoting capacity-building of the Guajiro women from childhood, (4) increasing Wayuu women's presence in decision-making positions, (5) promoting and struggling to maintain indigenous women's role in transmitting culture and advising the family and (6) strengthening ethical and moral values of the family and community in general. Pocaterra explains the issue as follows: "The woman are inserted in a new modality that prepares them for another society that is not their own; what is worse is that they are not prepared to survive in the dominant society, which tends to reduce them to sub-salary positions and condemns them to a socio-political marginalized position."⁴

⁴ Interview with Noelí Pocaterra, December 13, 2000, Vice-President of the National Assembly office, Caracas.

The relationship between Pocaterra, the leader of the Wayuu Women's Network, and the Venezuelan nation state seems to indicate that both entities have significant investments in contemporary indigenous peoples' renewal. Feminist organizations and individual female leaders played key roles in the complex legal and political process of redefining the national identity put forth by President Hugo Chávez. Two of the best known and most recognized Venezuelan feminists (Gioconda Espino and Victoria Ferrara) were part of the commission of the National Constituent Assembly that wrote the new constitution. They achieved great advances by using a gendered language for the foundation of the new legal order of the nation. At-present, after five years of the feminists' inscription of women as subjects of the new constitution, only President Chávez and some of his younger male and female collaborators use a gendered language.

In 2002, one year after women's shared experiences in the National Assembly and in the referendums for the election of its members and its approbation, Venezuelan feminists and Venezuelan women's movement were differentially positioned in regards to the national government. Without public confrontations, feminists withdrew their support from president Chávez, while the Wayuu women's movement, the Group of Black Women, and other women organizations that identify themselves through class lines, remained related to the Chávez' project through the *Fuerza Bolivariana de Mujeres* and became the leaders of women's governmental programs.

It is of significance to reflect on Venezuelan men and women's politics of sexual and gender identification. Similarly to Mexican men, Venezuelan male leaders

identify themselves as warriors. The country constructs its new identity on discourses of freedom from the United States, on autonomy and independence from neo-colonial contexts and roots their alter-native endogenous project drawing on a anti liberal modernization rationality. Maneuvering through feminization ascribed by colonizers has not been a mobilizing identity used by Venezuelan men. Indigenous, Republican and Bolivarian men represent themselves as successful warriors. According to these narratives, the national territory has not been dismembered, and masculinity, resistance and victory of the indigenous populations, at-present embedded in the national population, are constructed as contesting and victorious traditions that support the Venezuelan and Latin American nationalist project of La Revolución Bolivariana.

Feminist women who organized against President Chávez, and who supported the 2002-2003-oil strike construct the nationalist army as feminized men. These women follow the tradition of Venezuelan women movements that centered their demands by constructing a feminine identity of a colonized country. Maternity of the brotherhood's patria was their mobilizing identity. Within this strategy, women who are against President Chavez's project provoked the military supporters of President Chavez by feminizing them. In 2002, they sent a pair of women's pink underwear to generals and lieutenants by mail. These military men showed the pink underwear on TV complaining against the maximum offense that a Venezuelan military could receive. The logic of these gendering politics led feminists to adopt this oblique strategy of the "pink underwear," as the nation named it, seeking to provoke the

military that supported the Bolivarian project. Indeed, their strategy provoked a national debate on the military and feminization.

President Chávez decorated General Acosta Saignes, who was responsible for the military officers' violent reaction against a group of middle class women who were showing them the pink underwear in front of the TV cameras. The theme led to an internationally and domestically televised spectacle where the soldiers brutally hit the women. By the use of violence, they reacted against the feminization that the opposition against President Chávez deployed. General Acosta Saignes, who was offended in his masculinity, opened a huge regional storage of beers, opened one beer in front of TV journalists, and erupted with flesh satisfaction in front of the national audience. At-present, General Acosta Saignes has become the elected governor of the Carabobo state, the region where these successes occurred. On Sunday 20th February 2005, the governor sang a friendship song in Portuguese to the Brazilian President Lula da Silva, an ex-metalworker-mechanic union leader who came to Venezuela to show his solidarity with President Chávez's South American project of integration. A few minutes after this scene, President Chávez and Governor Acosta Saignes sang romantic lyrics in honor of Venezuelan women on all the TV national channels. The public reaction to these songs showed could be perfectly described as "national women's delirium."

Figure 18: President Hugo Chávez Frías



Source: <http://www.univision.com>

A few weeks before, the 23rd of January, President Chavez publicly attacked Condoleezza Rice, arguing that she was talking so much against him because she fell in love with him. He rejected the alleged sexual offer of Condoleezza Rice that he constructed while sitting in the tribune giving his political speech to millions of Venezuelans demonstrating in favor of the national sovereignty, and suggested that some of his male collaborators should accept the offer he attributed to her. Applause expressed the reaction of many of the people, men and women, who were there. Sexual politics complicate feminist strategies in de-colonizing countries.

The organizations of Venezuelan women of color have access to more resources than other women's popular organizations due to their racial and ethnic links to international and continental feminisms and UN politics. Nonetheless, within the domestic space, it seems that Venezuelan ethnic women's social movements organize themselves through class principles. Through the mediation of the state,

these Venezuelan women, most of them women of color and *mestizas* of working class origin, acquired for the first time in the country's history, social presence, rights, and political recognition. The re-foundation of the Venezuelan nation seems to have followed differentiated paths for Venezuelan feminists, working class women, and women of color.

What is at issue is the use of the resources of the oil based renter nation state; a nationalist project which opposes globalization. The national army and the impoverished working class citizens support this counter globalization narrative, while promoting the re-foundation of the imagined community of the nation. The umbrella condition of both the women's movement and of nationalism shapes this problematic alliance. This women's movement accepts this nationalist discourse aware of the gender dangers. They rationalize their strategy through a procedural approach to a new identity that will emerge from shared political experiences, a key element for President Chávez' counter globalization nationalism and South American politics of unity. The nation state is the political interlocutor of indigenous and of women's social movements. While not remaining monolithically tied to the institutions of the state, the women's organizations mediate their activity, either in an oppositional or in a coincidental position, through the nation state. What also seems to be at stake is a chain of transnational women and indigenous and black social movements, nation states, and Pan-American projects that are re-positioning their agendas and identities under globalizing contexts. They deploy different mobilizing identities. This counter globalization project defines itself against the United States' neo-liberal ideology and economic practices. Drawing on the power that minorities

have within the multi-polar project, it also maneuvers within the interstices opened up by the competition between the U.S. and Europe. Spain is the bridging country that embodies this side of the Bolivarian project. At the same time, it seeks to construct an endogenous alternative social paradigm drawing on the indigenous identity stemming from the 513 years of resistance by the Venezuelan and continental indigenous populations.

On the thirteen of March of 2003, five days after the women's event where President Chávez gave his speech to more than two hundred thousand women in the stadium, in the building of the National Constituent Assembly, women from approximately 100 grass root groups and the female workers of the Parliament celebrated Woman's Day. Pocataerra, the Wayuu Vice-President of the Parliament, would be the main voice in the event. Some of the women who were in the event solicited the female parliamentarians' mediation in order to achieve the favor of the state for solving personal problems: a loan for a house, a fellowship for supporting the education of a daughter, a place in a public hospital for an urgent surgery, and so on.

The event began two hours later than its planned announcement, and while all these revolutionary women waited for the leaders, conversations and commentaries provided me information about their feelings about the indigenous peoples' presence in the highest legislative institution of the country. Two women who belong to an organization named "Venezuelan Friends of Cuba" sat next to me. I answered their questions about my presence in the event, and informed them that I was interested in the indigenous women's social movement. They conveyed in erotic terms for half an

hour, about how, according to them, the indigenous peoples, who they compared to dogs, behaved in Caracas. The public waited for the speakers in the aristocratic and austere environment of the Parliament's Hall for two hours. Two enormous screens, similar to the ones used in baseball games, showed, as representative of Venezuelan women, a blonde woman whose long hair was the exact replica of any shampoo propaganda. To entertain themselves, the cameramen traveled the focus of their instruments from the blond image to those young women that were in the hall and whose exterior aspect replicated the one that the screens promoted.

Marelys Pérez Marcano, a long-term feminist with a heroic herstory of resistance and who was a university professor before becoming a deputy of the National Assembly, Noelí Pocaterra, and Marisela Salvatierra were those chosen to represent the Venezuelan women in this celebration. Marisela Salvatierra was the main speaker. She is a doctoral researcher who was introduced as seriously ill with cancer, and who recently received a European recognition, The Galinda Premio, for her work as a biologist. While the event corresponded to the traditional rituals where institutional political power reproduces itself, Pocaterra's words constituted my main interest as an instrument to understand indigenous women's commitment with the indigenous and the Bolivarian movement. Her political speech stemmed from her gender role within her construction of indigenous women's place within the Wayuu matrilineal society as well as within the Venezuelan nation state nationalism. However, in order to examine and add insight to her strategy it is worth knowing that the Venezuelan women's national movement also always struggled for women's rights behind "family" covertures.

These were Pocaterra's initial words.⁵

“As it is my custom in these spaces, I always make greeting in my Wayunenki language. I express my pride of being indigenous.”

After speaking for five minutes in her Wayunenki language, Pocaterra restates in Spanish the formal and standard introductory speech for these types of events. Her *mestiza* words articulate traditional nation state rituals of power to Wayuu women's conception of nation making; words (re) producing the Wayuu politics of *mestizaje*, while marked by her womanist agency. In opposition to García Canclini's emphasis on cultural consumption, Pocaterra speaks as a woman. Her agency expands García Canclini's emphasis in consumption, while providing a cyclical perspective of the political economy of community making. Pocaterra assigns to consumption a punctual place for the (re) production of the Wayuu society. Men's power of inscription within writing-based societies and women's power of biological and symbolical (re) production belong to different while overlapping histories/herstories. The *mestiza* words that Pocaterra pronounced to a non-indigenous audience in the space of Venezuelan National Assembly help western rationalities to listen and hear how contemporary indigenous women construct their mobilizing identity as indigenous women performing within the national arena. Her words express her politics of nation making from a womanist perspective. Giving birth is again the point at stake:

⁵ This is a written translation of a spoken speech. Pocaterra's native language is Wayunanki. She spoke in Spanish, which is her second language, and I translated it into English, which is my third language.

Citizen President of the Family and Youth permanent commission, female President of Woman's Rights National Assembly's Sub-Commission, female and male deputy citizens, women and men Director citizens of the National Assembly, women and men workers of the National Assembly, distinguished special invitees, representative of the communication media, ladies and gentlemen. In the first place, I want to begin by excusing the absence of the President, Francisco Ameniach. It would have been his desire, and since half an hour ago his intention, to share and to have this direct experience with all of you, but this could not be possible because his parliamentary activities took him away. He had to accomplish an urgent activity where his presence was necessary as the president of this Assembly. I want to greet all the women in the name of the directive board of the National Assembly, women friends that are in this auditorium. Especially the parliamentary colleagues, employees, house-wives, workers, those who assist us in the bathrooms, those who are always taking care of our coffees; to all of those who have known to appreciate the silence, the tolerance, who continue although with doubts, that in front of un-love give love, that in front of violence put limits. I greet all those women, without ideological or age differences, especially to those, without excluding the other ones, who opted for different roads, while making honor to their freedoms. To those women who every day give birth and who go around the world feeling, creating, puzzling, doing, undoing what others who have been invaded by the spirit of the violence, that finishes with loving presence that genuinely exists in this revolution, in this planet, destroy. For us, the indigenous peoples, plants are men and women according to our cosmic vision. Therefore I also want to refer to the women-plants,

that although they do not have water they look to the sun and confronting the drought of the earth pray for the arrival of the man. To those women that understand the spirit of the trees and flourish even though their legs are cut to a stump by those who received the order to prune the thousands of trees in our cities, and especially in Caracas. To the grass-women, who after receiving an excessive charge in the gardens or in the squares still have the value of resurging again from the ashes and newly sprouted. To those women raped in the earth, those who violently oppose guns, tanks, weapons, and convince their sons to opt for the option of consciousness. To those women who are between life and death, and who desire to die in order give birth to their child. To those who ask to live, although they do not give birth to their child, because they think in their other children. To those women who go around crazy by tortures and rapes, and who being unable to obtain a son from the un-love, commit suicide because society only provided them this uneasiness. (Claps from the public)

To those who see to those women who look out from behind the rejillas in Afghanistan, because it has imposed on them that way of looking, to women who risk their lives to learn to read and write, to the revolutionary women, also goes my greeting and recognition and to the indigenous women who re-vindicate their right to give birth sitting down, to give birth standing up in their communities. To the midwife women, that although the persecution they have suffered through so many centuries and with the offer of their lives, have had the moral prevision of perpetuating giving birth through traditional ways, and who, without knowing it, oppose to the conception bank, to the seed bank, to the life bank, to the genetic bank, to the bank of material life that is not more that the greatest deviation and un-love that

a species has. Because love could never be in a bank. Because love could never be raped. To the women of the kitchen who with their magic prescriptions fill us with love through their foods. To the economist or office women who made miracles with the money that they do not have in order to feed their children. To the millionaire women that feel compassion for those who are poorer and offer part of their fortunes in support of those who have nothing. To all women, definitively to all women, those who are here and those who are not. In one word, what I want today is to newly give birth. Excuse me and let me say it, and we are in a very special scenery. I want to go ahead giving birth until I die. Giving birth to dreams. Giving birth to ideas. Giving birth to indigenous experiences. Giving birth to indigenous houses, Wayuu kitchens, Wayuu stoves, mantas as the one that I wear on many occasions, with a great force due to the mocks and discrimination that I received by this depredator culture because of my way of dressing. Giving birth handkerchief for the heads, giving birth food for those who are under nurtured. Giving birth to alternative ways of producing light and encountering water. Excuse me sisters and brothers, for sharing with you my experiences. I believe that I arrive here only to go ahead giving birth. This is a serious and conscious step of a woman who was grown up by her father in the customs of her indigenous grandparents, talking her language until she was ten years old, until she arrived to the communitarian work that has been the womb from which many of these seeds have stemmed. Then, let me tell you that the significance of my presence in this event is life itself. The steps that a shy woman has done for searching her people's recognition, of our customs, culture, language, and way of living. My first learning was with my grandmother and my parents, all of them Wayuu. My grandmother was

a fundamental character in my life, as well as my mother and my father. But I always remember my grandmother as a benefactor spirit. We were happy with her. We were happy with few things, including many of the foods that maybe for you could be quotidian (everyday), for us they simply did not exist because they were not part of our culture. We neither knew discrimination within our families. Afterwards we became informed that we were different, and that we were put aside simply for having a different face, using another language, having other beliefs about the origin of the world, having a different type of family, having other dreams. That's why I wanted to be a lawyer, and I still think of my graduation. I only need to finish one year, but I didn't have time for that. Sometime I will have time for that. My first profession has been that of social worker. I achieved it in the middle of Perez Jimenez's dictatorship, with many efforts. It could be said that it practically was a torture, practically clandestine. That was the way through which I initiated my public activities, and like me, many women struggled for forming themselves, for having access to express their opinions. We experienced persecution for a long time while we saw disappear our conocidos (known ones), some of our woman and man friends. That's why when I graduated I couldn't get a job. And the questions came. I also discovered myself as a woman in my job. But my formation as an indigenous woman, I will always keep it with me, wherever I will go. That is what allowed me to continue and to survive, to have a clear objective. We can help the Alijuna, that is to the Alijuna who are you, who are not indigenous. Help you to recognize us, help you to search us in Venezuela's origins and admit our presence in your lives, in your families. Although is not yet enough, we realized that we had to work in favor of

indigenous peoples' access to initial education. We formed the first experience of intercultural bilingual education when did not yet exist the decree of intercultural bilingual education in the Education Secretary. We perceived that our boys and girls needed to be first formed in their culture, and only afterward give them the possibility of transiting through intercultural education. That the Wayuu indigenous women needed to be organized in order to maintain through time the matrilineal feature of our culture, and thus our culture could follow its cause. We also made networks of indigenous women with the first experience of the Wayuu women, and we continued providing venues to the other indigenous women of other populations in order for them to organize themselves. We do not talk a lot about gender, I confess to you. Yes, it is true that travels help us, the possibility of sharing with other women, of participating in the United Nations, of knowing indigenous women of other countries, from other latitudes. We realized that in addition to work with the indigenous peoples in a general sense, we had to particularize women's themes, to gather among us, to begin to work with boys, girls, young people, and on this basis we gave birth to indigenous boys and girls that today, after ten years, continued and are still so successful. We also gave birth to the seed of the first association of indigenous students of the University of El Zulia, ASELUZ. Today they walk by themselves, and at the same time there exist particular mechanisms to provide access to the indigenous students to the University of El Zulia. We founded indigenous women's nets in many communities of La Guajira and we have been able of arriving to the National Constituent Assembly. We also recognize the great work and support of our friends, alliances, some of them who are not indigenous and that have been with us for many

years believing in this struggle. One of the alliances that most promoted us has been the president Hugo Chávez. I cannot leave out the mention of him as a step in this struggle of so many years. But now that we have been able of writing the rights in the National Constitution, we have a great dream. As a woman, this has been the dream for which I have struggled so much time, and now I am seeing its conversion into reality. At the beginning we thought in a center for assisting childhood, in a house for boys and girls. Now the women, with the web of Wayuu indigenous women that exists in La Guajira, we are building intercultural integral centers drawing on our culture that we denominated “wapule” that in the indigenous Wayuu language means “our space,” “the site where our life flows.” Sometimes, I confess it, that in the plenary meetings of the National Assembly, when I am bored, I make drawings of these centers. And these are the plans that afterwards we discuss among all the women that we will construct. We do no do the centers by ourselves. We look for our indigenous men who know about building. We do not elaborate a great plan in a paper. No. We go from our experience, from our intuition to the practice, and we already have constructed four centers that we have named “wapule,” that is to say, “our space.” We see at wapule all the women of the Wayuu Indigenous Women Network, the professional spiders, the community spider workers, the nutritionists or teachers, the elder worker in her community who makes reality a dream with boys and girls, with her group. Why do we refer to the spiders? Because for us, the indigenous people, the spiders are women. They are women who weave life. And why do we refer to the ants? Because we are never alone. We are always in group, we are many. We have begun to walk together to solve the problem of the production of

the land. And that's why we have brought our projects to the Secretary of Agriculture and Land. The problem of water is one of the greatest of our life, and that's why we also brought our projects to Hidroven and Hidrolago. We have done the first tours together with the engineers, and we confronted the representatives of the Executive Power in order to achieve that water that is our fundamental aim to see that it could be brought to our communities. The water of which we take care, that we love, we protect. And also the women of the community, after the water pipes were collocated, they called their neighbors, the men, there in a beautiful community named Yamana, in the Guarero sector, a too poor community, where for the first time the water came out by that pipe, it happened as if, maybe for you, the people had seen it as an oil gusher. It was like a golden chorro, because those women, how they were glad, happy, and because the news watered all around La Guajira. They came by mule, which is a normal transportation, to search water for two weeks. And they said: "Let's go. The water arrived. We have water in the house of the children. Let's go to the wapule, which is our space." But we go ahead dreaming. And now we prepared a land in order that through the water we can have productive activities, so that the center, in the future, will sustain by itself. But how all this is related to women? In many ways, this is how we have come to do things. We planned to cultivate original seeds, to have putting hens that live in simplicity, without being martyred by animals, without being desperate and copying other hens to make eggs. We are in the search of our own specific project, and that would be able of self-sustaining, and that within a middle term period could be directed by the same people of the community. That each community makes a productive project that serves by sustaining the center

of the same community. We have also been dreaming in bettering the houses and animals' corrals. This is the work that the indigenous women do. I dedicate my Saturdays and Sundays to these communities in addition to my Parliament activities. As you can see, today I wished to share with you this indigenous women's dream that has come to be done with many other women. Inclusive, we already are including elder people and with [INAGER](#)'s support we have obtained the first economic help, and they already created a small health center and an intercultural pharmacy.⁶ That's how we have been making a reality the drawings that we made time to time. These drawings to which I previously referred many times with a sort of shyness in front to my brothers or my colleagues of the directive board, because we were treating very serious the issues, we were in political debates, and I took advantage because I cannot forget everyday life. I cannot forget the indigenous communities that haunt my Parliamentarian activities, and I take advantage for a moment in order to prepare these drawings and think how we could go ahead working. We have organized many meetings among us. The latest national meeting that we did was in December, in order to prepare the first cumbre of indigenous women of the Americas that took place in Mexico where indigenous women from different parts of Venezuela attended. Through dialogue and explanations we achieved that different institutions motivated to work together participating in this dream that can also be the example of how to reconstruct Venezuela. We went to Mexico, where indigenous women attended from different regions of the country. We achieved the motivation for different institutions working together through dialogue and explanation in order to participate in this

⁶ Instituto Nacional de Atención Geriátrica (INAGER) <http://inager.venezuela.com/>

dream that also can be the example to reconstruct Venezuela. We also achieved that other indigenous women organized themselves. For example, the Chaima women of the Sucre state, that after this encounter in Mexico, they have already formed their web of Chaima women. The Warao women that have been working in the formation of the first Warao women organization, the indigenous women of the Apure state, the Yaruro indigenous who already have also organized their first organization, the women from Sucre who work in the organization of the Kariña women. As you can see, friends, it is not the issue to ask to our people to remain immutable. To strengthen our culture is the point at issue, and we also accept bettering it. We are not only interested that elder women make the decisions. No. This is not our idea. Sometimes we are criticized because for this inclusiveness in very hard terms. Already it is said that we need to retire and leave everything. No. Our commitment is to transmit our formation and knowledge to the young indigenous women, and that they make their own experiences. For me, this is a task of great love, of a deep conviction in the intuition of the heart, in diversity, in the hope of another possible world that allows us to make of every day an act of deep love. The pact with the love symbol, because material life yet implies suffering. We achieved so that different institutions participated in our way of working. What is at stake, brothers and sisters, in this message is woman's recognition in all its dimensions. Therefore we could direct our actions in a more balanced way drawing on whom we are towards a life with consciousness."

Pocaterra's finishes her talk with new words in Wayunanki, and says in Spanish, "That's all."

Other parliamentarian indigenous women went ahead talking to the audience, while after some songs of these same parliamentarians the act ended with a small lunch.

A. The Wayuu

Introduction

During the 1970s, the indigenous grassroots movement had great international publicity. Its political mobilization aimed at the reconfiguration of power while maintaining their differences in relationship to national societies. The international projection of their mobilization led analysts of collective action to pay attention to them as a valid topic of inquiry within the academy.¹ For these theorists, indigenous movements achieved a greater presence within the international arena starting in the 1970s when indigenous people's actions began to have a profound political impact within nation-states. Brysk states that only with the formation of the Indian Rights movement, in the 1970s and 1980s, did indigenous peoples begin their political participation in modern terms.² By the middle of the 1970s, the indigenous

¹ At the end of 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, there were various indigenous collective actions that helped to consolidate the indigenous movements that began to spread throughout South America: the Shuar Confederation against transnational oil companies, in Ecuador (1964), the recuperation of indigenous lands from landlords' hands by the Consejo Regional Indígena del Cauca-Cric, in Colombia (1971), and the formation of the Committee of United Peasants (Comité Unido de Campesinos-CUC) that brought together ethnic groups, workers, and peasants to protest against military repression in Guatemala (1978), among others. Indigenous problems, demands and political actions began to have a wider political impact on national and international political arenas.

² Alison Brysk, *From tribal village to global village: Indian rights and international relations in Latin America*, (California: Stanford University Press, 2000). Some scholars, such as Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *México profundo: una civilización negada*, (México, D.F.: Secretaría de Educación Pública, CIESAS, 1987) or Héctor Díaz Polanco, *La rebelión zapatista y la autonomía*, (México, D.F.: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1997) consider that the birth of indigenous movements may be traced back to the conquest of America, because from that moment, indigenous peoples began their struggle for cultural difference and autonomy. On the contrary, José Bengoa, *La emergencia indígena en América Latina*, (Santiago, Chile: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2000) considers that if they struggled, they voices were silenced by diverse processes: in the Colonial Period through racial subjection, in the Republic because they were servants, and in the first half of the twentieth century indigenous peoples could not be heard because the indigenistas (intellectuals, poets, artists and some public employees) took their voice and spoke on behalf of them. The indigenous peoples' organizations were unknown to some scholars, as well as by orthodox left militants, because of their conceptions of the indigenous peoples as culturally enclosed within engulfed territories or as peasants without ethnicity. Indigenous actions were recognized by the academy as part of the political parties' structures.

international movement was consolidated with the creation of the “World Council of Indigenous People” (1975).³ During the 1980s and 1990 different indigenous movements appeared in Latin America. Indigenous peoples from Colombia, Brasil, Bolivia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela, Surinam, and Guyana integrated in 1984 into the [Coordinadora de las Organizaciones Indígenas de la Cuenca Amazonica-COICA](#) . The [Ejército Zapatista de Liberación Nacional-EZLN](#) made public its existence in 1994 in Mexico.⁴

In opposition to this historical and theoretical interpretation, from the Wayuu point of view their social movement has been and is part of the history of the Venezuelan nation state. Women and men activists have different memories; they are activists of different political parties; but when the decisions that they will make are directly related to their communities, they mobilize as activists of the same social movement. For them, the starting point is their organizing in order to contest the process of modernization of the Venezuelan nation state. Within this dissertation, the historical and spatial reference is to examine how, within the oil-producing region of La Guajira and the Maracaibo Lake Basin, the Wayuu women re-structured Gamio’s *indigenismo* and Gallegos’ *mestizaje*.

Although it is true that the *indigenista* model was hegemonic in Latin America until the seventies, it is also true that a long history of resistance within indigenous movements led to the reconfiguration of their conceptions of identity, development,

³ The International Indigenous Treaty Council (1974) that grouped indigenous peoples from America, Scandinavia, Australia, and New Zealand and began to work in the United Nations’ arena. See www.treatycouncil.org

⁴ Indigenous organizations in different parts of the world were created, for example: The Alliance of the Mountain Range Peoples in Philippines (1984), the Council of the Indigenous Peoples in Tribal India (1986), and the Asian Pact to which belong the Japanese Ainu populations and indigenous peoples of Taiwan, Indian, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Nepal. Brysk, *From tribal village to global village: Indian rights and international relations in Latin America*.

democracy and nature.⁵ In the case of the Wayuu, the Wayuu men are remembered as successful horseback warriors and smugglers, and the Wayuu women are remembered as the wise leaders who are always consulted when the life of the community is in danger. According to their tradition, before the contact of the Wayuu with the European and capitalist societies, women had a greater position within their communities.⁶

Nation state centered narratives of social movements represent indigenous and women's mobilizations as epiphenomena that became visible thanks to the projection that the international arena gave to their actions. Under (post) modern contexts, indigenous movements became crucial to explain the qualitative changes that Latin America experienced. Endogenous modernization and the unity of South America in opposition to the U.S.-led FTAA are the points at issue. Contemporary process of the Wayuu political ethnogenesis has overlapping points of coincidence with the process of neo-national liberation experienced at present in Venezuela, and the Wayuu Women Network (WWN) and their leaders have a privileged position within this process.

Indigenismo can be understood as a starting point for Indian populations identifying themselves as indigenous peoples. The state apparatus defined them and

⁵ Alyson Brysk, *The politics of human rights in Argentina: protest, change, and democratization*, (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1994) and Brysk, *From tribal village to global village: Indian rights and international relations in Latin America*.

⁶ Francisco Silvestre, a Spanish chronicle writer cited by Maria Teresa Olivares de Castro describes "that indomitable country:" Although the province of Rio Hacha belongs to the province of Santa Marta... its situation and circumstances require to make a particular narrative of it, because in its territory of more than 40 leagues lives the celebrated Goajira nation, that maintains itself without being conquered, and that is calculated to have ... between ten and twelve thousand indigenous men in arms. Maria Teresa Oliveros de Castro, *La Goajira*, (Mérida, Venezuela: Universidad de los Andes, 1967). "Aunque la provincia de Rio Hacha es parte de la de Santa Marta... su situación y circunstancias requieren que se haga de ella particular narración, por comprenderse en su distrito de mas de cuarenta leguas la celebrada Nación Goajira, que se mantiene sin conquistar, y que se calcula compondrá ... de diez a doce mil indios en armas."

created the necessity of organizing themselves as indigenous and modern. Contemporary indigenous networks have shifted from this *indigenista* identification to a self-centered Indian perspective, while operating on the shoulders of the nation state's *indigenista* channels. The first question I address is how to approach the study of the experiences of the Wayuu women activists without reinforcing the *indigenista* model.

When I began to write my dissertation, I was able to imagine three theoretical and methodological options that delimited different answers – 1) the experiences of the Wayuu women in relation to an established theoretical canon on Latin American indigenous subjectivities; 2) a social and political space for the dialogue between the Wayuu activist women's experiences and social movement theory; and 3) contemporary narratives of theory of social movements. In the first case, the research would be normal research. In the second case, my research would not be compatible with the academy. Subsequently, it would not empower, through the discourse of science, neither progressive social movements nor the Wayuu women activists. In the third case, the research follows García Canclini and Sandoval, as well as other third world theorists engaged in re-articulating transnational activism.⁷

Between December 2002 and March 2003 I stayed for three months within the Wayuu communities of La Guajira, Maracaibo and Caracas. Through these experiences including my previous research on the Wayuu women's organizations which I have been doing during the summers since 1997, re-structured my scholastic positions and made me think of a fourth option. I decided to transmit what I listened and learned from the Wayuu women leaders on the politics of nation making from a

⁷ Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), Sonia Saldívar-Hull, *Feminism on the border: Chicana gender politics and literature*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), Paula M. Moya, *Learning from experience: minority identities, multicultural struggles*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).

womanist point of view in opposition to politics of community making marked by masculinist perspectives. Obviously, my voice is always here. Representing the Wayuu women's specific understanding on women's biological and cultural roles within politics of community making is a task that required me to abandon Gamio and Gallegos's men-centered politics of community making. Their perspectives also required that I listen through my western mind, while hearing through my feminist identity what the Wayuu women and men told me about the Wayuu women's roles within their contemporary process of ethnogenesis.⁸

How does globalization re-order the ethnic, national, and continental chain of feminisms throughout the Americas? How do the Wayuu women activists modify traditional conceptions of political representation? The generative point of departure connects theoretical research to social movement activism. How can identity and nation state-centered theories on social movements help illuminate an indigenous South American social movement? How can one understand and study the Wayuu women's movement within the framework of contemporary Venezuelan nationalism? To relate community and individual agency to (post) modern conditions of reproduction is a project that traverses the entire chapter, as well as the dissertation.

Theorizing on the emergence of new epistemologies and social movements confronts a homologous difficulty. Both tasks require the displacement of the existing references and replacing them with an alternative social ordering. The experiences of the Wayuu women activists can help us to understand why under contemporary

⁸ An additional pitfall is to translate ethnic women's struggles against globalization for an academic transnational audience, a parallel task to the one that women's transnational social movements confront when constructing counter-globalization spaces among differentially situated networks, grass-roots groups and organizations. The mediation of the nation state (which also is not homogenous) complicates the knowledgeable horizons of powers.

globalization contexts, social movement theories based on identity⁹ and class definitions¹⁰ compete with identities centered on the skill of constructing alliances among heterogeneous groups.

Identifying the relationships between those who write and those about whom an author writes constituted a crucial framing moment. I am not an indigenous or a Venezuelan woman, although I shared spaces with the WWN through the Coordinadora de Organizaciones No-gubernamentales de Mujeres in Venezuela (CONG). Venezuelan women's social movements, the nation-state and the UN have shaped this transnational yet local common space. The Wayuu women identify themselves as indigenous peoples. They emphatically reject (as the great majority of the Venezuelan women also do) supporting any type of feminism. The experiences of the Wayuu women activists challenge the abstraction that implies the use of labels in regards to human identities. The process of stereotyping turns people into commodities, and subsequently reifies human beings. One of the theoretical advantages of learning from the Wayuu women's experiences is the difficulty of labeling them. There is no single theory that fits into their experiences. This initial difficulty became a strength in my research.

The Wayuu women organize themselves as indigenous women. They mobilize within national and international civil society looking for the restoration of their cultural difference from the national identity. They consciously construct a positive

⁹ See Evers Tillman, "Identity: the hidden side of new social movements in Latin America" in David Slater (Ed.), *New social movements and the state in Latin America* (Amsterdam, 1985). It is interesting to see Alain Touraine, *América Latina: política y sociedad* (Madrid, 1989). In this text, Touraine states (paradoxically, in my opinion) that in Latin America never existed social movements. Cf. this position to Touraine's words in 1978. In addition in Touraine's texts of 1987, the author points out an interesting reflection on "el reflujo de los movimientos sociales." It is necessary to evaluate the logic of the sequence of these positions of Touraine.

¹⁰ See Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Manifest of The Communist Party," in Robert C. Tucker (ed.) *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: Norton, 1978).

identity capable of leading them to disrupt a subaltern ethnic and domestic position. While historical research shows that the Wayuu were slaves and indebted servants of the *hacendados* of the Maracaibo Lake Basin until the 1950's, they construct their history as a free indigenous people that no European empire has ever been able to conquer.¹¹

In the 1999 Constituent National Assembly (ANC), Noélí Pocaterra was one of the three representatives of the 34 Venezuelan ethnic groups. The 1999 ANC created a new constitution that was approved by a national referendum in 2000. The new foundational narrative of the state abandoned the tutelage model of the 1961 constitution, which framed the legal status of the indigenous populations as Venezuelan citizens. It also legislated ethnic rights for the indigenous peoples of the newborn multi-ethnic nation.¹²

After 1950, the national elites of Venezuela saw in the new *mestizaje* that Gallegos' political and literary work embodies the strategy that would modernize the country. Assimilation through education and miscegenation were the institutional tools of this *mestizaje* project. While the *mestizaje* model was the nation state politics for modern nation making, the U.S. way of understanding ethnicity, was almost unknown within Latin American countries. During the seventies, the international community, nation states, and indigenous peoples began to use the "ethnic" label under incipient (post) modern contexts. "To become 'ethnic' in order to be (post) modern," are words illustrating a strategy of the indigenous social movements of South America, of the nation states and of the international community.

¹¹ None of the Wayuu peoples that I interviewed ever used the word "conquered," (in an historical or contemporary sense) to refer to them. They neither used the word "ethnic." They name them as "Venezuelan Indigenous Wayuu" women or men, according to the specific voice who talked.

¹² For audio clips off some of the ANC's sessions and access to related documents and links, see the following web site: http://politica.eluniversal.com/informespecial/resumen_anc/documentos.htm

It may be said that from 1950 to the present, development has negatively impacted the Wayuu. Their leaders contested these effects through national political parties' organizations. At present, however, the Wayuu are a robust indigenous social movement that still maintains strong relationships with the nation state's political structures and leaders. Geopolitical considerations in the strategic location of La Península Guajira on the Colombian-Venezuelan border, Caribbean Sea, and Maracaibo Lake's entrance promoted an integrationist development. Other important conditions for the emergence of indigenous movements have been the participation of internal and external agents, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), international organizations (Human Rights, Amnesty International, among others), and foreign governments in processes of construction of social movements.

The Wayuu women have appropriated and reversed these discourses. Recognizing that the Wayuu society is tied to broader social systems, they create the tools to manage this interaction for their ethnic group's benefit. The Wayuu women have negotiated rights for self-determination within a national society that still has many individuals and groups who advocate assimilation development policies. Transnational discourses like those of the UN see self-determination as the key goal and essential precondition for indigenous development. The Wayuu women activists argue that they organize themselves as Venezuelan citizens for restoring their Indian way of living. By doing so, they reconfigure the ascribed identities that the national, hemispheric and global order offered to them.

Within the international order, the indigenous peoples have found significant resources and alliances framed by global discourses. Their indigenous identity, that is simultaneously local and hemispheric, emerged from competing spatial strategies of

identification.¹³ This process of ethnogenesis is constructing new ethnic categories all around the hemisphere where claims of indigenous peoples articulate herstories of exclusion to processes of nation making within nations that are neo-colonized nation states within the hemisphere.

Indigenous women's agency within the indigenous communities and the national state is the point at issue. The state's mediating role, both in relation to domestic and global spaces, and the nationalist responses that globalization has opened up in Latin America is an additional circumstance that pervades the whole picture. Nation state and ethnic nationalism have responded to global stresses. When globalization challenges Latin American nation-states, indigenous and women's transnational movements are crucial research sites for re-articulations of power because of gendering and racializing processes' links to the construction of the nation, of the domestic order in relation to the Americas' racial order and at the hemispheric order. The Wayuu and La Península Guajira shape a paradigmatic example of global identity and territorial displacements, a shift that while deploying complex strategic and tactical processes of identification again connects activism to theorizing. The logic of identity is at stake, as well as the emergence of an alternative reason to modernization.

In 1999 Venezuela, the indigenous societies, the nation state and the global organizations dealt with competing social models, while strategically coinciding in promoting the ethnic identity of the indigenous population of Venezuela and a multi-

¹³In Venezuela, the national subject is the *mestizo*, and the romance, either transgressive either normalizing, according to the involved gender, race, and class intersections at issue, is the mechanism that enact the miscegenation civilization discourse. The official and obligatory education programs reinforce this narrative by the inclusion of Rómulo Gallegos' texts, the foundational books of the Venezuelan gendered and racialized identity. I am not mentioning the national literature which shapes this identity that permeates all the official discourse of the nation state while differentially constructing the other as the indigenous or the black population, while ethnic women and white civilized man being the favorite trope for the miscegenation project.

ethnic foundation of the nation state. By this twist from *indigenismo*, the media and hegemonic scholars understood that the Venezuelan government of President Chávez attempted to legitimize itself both within the national and international civil society. This logic also understood that the indigenous population empowered their societies by becoming “ethnic,” as global discourses expanded the U.S. racializing model to the rest of the continent. The experiences and processes of identification by the Wayuu women activists parallel the epistemological interrogations on how and when a scientific theory displaces an alternative theory. The nation state is represented as taking advantage of these coincidences. Its populist and nationalist project stems from indigenous roots in opposition to the elite’s project of modernization.

From the indigenous perspective, however, the story provides a different version of the facts. The indigenous recovery process of the 1990s shows a conceptual change stemming from the experiences of the previous decades. 1992 was a crucial year for the indigenous populations of the Americas. Commemorations of the 500-year anniversary of the Conquest of America generated a series of protests and reactions between Central and South American by indigenous peoples who claimed a different view of the 500-year anniversary, calling for commemoration of indigenous peoples’ resistance. The Ecuador Indigenous Insurrection in 1990 advanced claims for respect and recognition of cultural difference. Then, the Zapatista insurrection in Chiapas occurred in 1994, an insurgency that continues to present days. Indigenous populations entered in contact with one another throughout the continent, and since the 1990s, indigenous peoples’ movements in South America have gone beyond contestation of the negative impacts of modernization. The indigenous populations have in common a series of characteristics: the recognition of the indigenous as “peoples” and their ethnic difference within the nation-states; the deployment of ethnic identities centered on tradition (but also, as national citizens in

dialogue with modernity) and the discourses of human rights that allow them to strengthen their cultural differences; the construction of new identity processes, for example, with aspects related to environmental awareness; the pan-indigenous movements that allow establishment of an articulation of diverse indigenous peoples in the transnational order; and the demands for autonomy in their territories and in resource management.¹⁴

Indigenous peoples' movements built a pan-indigenous identity to mobilize and center their political actions. Yet their different and particular identities posed challenges to this agenda. Differences and conflicts emerged, but the movement maintained its unity. Since the colonial encounters and through differentiated historical processes, their way of living has changed as have conceptions related to the notion of the indigenous itself. The relationships with national policies (from being incorporated into development programs to proposing alternative developments) and cultural identity (from fixed to relational identities) have been also transformed. The actual indigenous peoples' situation in Latin America entails a permanent struggle for the recognition of their rights of self-determination, autonomy, territories, resources and knowledge. The indigenous peoples' search for cultural identity and spaces for social expressions are constant and historical continuities. In the case of the Wayuu, the indigenous women are at the center of this cultural restoration strategy.¹⁵

¹⁴It is important to emphasize the creation of the "Working Group on Indigenous Peoples" in the United Nations in 1982. This working group had as its background the proposal initiated by Bolivia in 1949 to create a subcommittee within the United Nations to study the situation of indigenous peoples. Another precursor of these movements was the inclusion of the indigenous peoples in the UN Declaration of the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination in 1973. It is also important to mention the declaration of 1993 as the International year of Indigenous Peoples, and the International Decade of the Indigenous Peoples from 1995 to 2004.

¹⁵ The indigenous movements' actions led to change national constitutions throughout Latin America. Bolivia (1994), Brazil (1988), Colombia (1991), Ecuador, Guatemala (1985), Mexico (1992), Nicaragua (1986), Panama (1972 and 1983), Paraguay (1992), Peru (1993) and Venezuela (1999).

The Wayuu social movement

Through the strength of being alive
the fruits of the cactus still nourish the peace of the birds.
My eyes still Find Iiwa and Jujou.
Dreams still reconcile us with our dead...
...Our women still weave our life
Vito Apshana, Wayuu poet

Thirty-four indigenous groups live in Venezuela. The Wayuu are the most numerous. They live in the 15.380 sq. km of la Peninsula Guajira, at the northern part of South America.¹⁶ Today, the provinces of Riohacha and Santa Marta, the Serranía de Montes de Oca, and the County Paez of the Zulia state constitute the territory which has been recognized as their “habitat” both by the Colombian and the Venezuelan nation states.

But a long history predates the Wayuu achievement of ethnic recognition by the two nation states that appropriated and divided their territory. The Spanish conquerors arrived there in 1499. Financial debts incurred by the Spanish Crown led to the transformation of La Guajira into a possession of the Federman family. When

Some of these constitutions recognized multiculturalism or special rights for indigenous peoples; however each constitution has a different scope and implication for indigenous peoples. At the same time these movements generated new ethnic revivals. Some scholars have shown how these processes are strategies of identity formation that allow indigenous peoples to relocate themselves within national and transnational spaces. Christian Gros, *El indio como sujeto y objeto de la historia latinoamericana, pasado y presente*, (Bogotá: Instituto de Estudios Políticos, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Fundación para la Investigación y la Cultura, 2004).

¹⁶ The indigenous movements’ actions led to change national constitutions throughout Latin America. Bolivia (1994), Brasil (1988), Colombia (1991), Ecuador, Guatemala (1985), Mexico (1992), Nicaragua (1986), Panama (1972 and 1983), Paraguay (1992), Peru (1993) and Venezuela (1999). Some of these constitutions recognized multiculturalism or special rights for indigenous peoples; however each constitution has a different scope and implication for indigenous peoples. At the same time these movements generated new ethnic revivals. Some scholars have shown how these processes are strategies of identity formation that allow indigenous peoples to relocate themselves within national and transnational spaces.

Curaçao fell to the power of the Dutch Empire around 1643, the island, which faces La Guajira, became a permanent base for the introduction and extraction of merchandise to the Spanish Vice-Kingdom of Nueva Granada. The territory of the Wayuu became a bridging point between the European empires of the Caribbean Sea and the South American northern Pacific and Andean areas.¹⁷ Wayuu trading, which was named “*tracto illicito*,” made it possible for them to obtain firearms from the British owners of the slavery boats, who had acquired the right of monopoly on the human trade for the Caribbean and South American spaces. Inter- and intra-ethnic trade reinforced the Wayuu’s resistance capacity against the Spanish Crown’s attempts to subdue them.

Simón Bolívar had the vision of La Gran Colombia, whose capital would be Bahía Honda, in the Wayuu territory. On May 20th 1820, El Libertador, as Simón Bolívar is named in Venezuela and Colombia, decreed the devolution of the lands to the indigenous communities, “as its legitimate owners.”¹⁸ The administrative jurisdiction of Maracaibo has historically attempted to control the region since 1864, and the Peninsula Guajira was attached to the Province of Maracaibo, which became in 1886 a Federal Territory incorporated to the Venezuelan regional state of El Zulia.

¹⁷ At the beginning of the 17th Century the Wayuu recuperated the rich pearl mines of its coasts, a wealth that had stimulated the presence of the Hispanic population in its territory. After this reconquest, they used the pearls for trading with the Hispanic, British, Dutch and French traders.

¹⁸The Wayuu recognize in Simón Bolívar a founding figure related to their indigenous revival. However, after Bolívar’s death, a Venezuelan Constituent Assembly arbitrarily divided the Wayuu territory in 1830. In 1833 the Tratado Michelena-Pombo fixed the limits between Venezuela and Colombia, and in 1891, in Madrid, Spain, a mediation agreement compromised both countries to accomplish the accorded limits. It was only on 1923 that the Colombian and Venezuelan national states’ controversy on La Guajira fragmentation between the two countries was internationally resolved through the mediation of the Helvetic Confederation, and in 1941, in Cúcuta, Colombia was signed the last pact on the issue, the Tratado Santos-Lopez. *Revista Sic*, p. 360.

The long history of conflicts over the possession of La Guajira territories between the Colombian and Venezuelan leaders of the Republican Period led to the 1941 international treaty of Santos- López. The treaty between the two nation states divided La Península de la Guajira between Colombia, which has 12.240 Km² (70.58%) and Venezuela, which has 3.140 km² (20.42%).¹⁹ This treaty recognized that La Guajira is the “patria and site of residence of a single indigenous people, which is ethnologically indivisible.”²⁰

The Wayuu consider that their territory is only one.²¹ They have always defended their right to live on their land according to their own customs. At-present, this territory has become the focal point of delicate controversies and conflicts due to the oil industry’s recognition that La Peninsula Guajira is a strategic site for plans for linking the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. In addition to economic interests, there

¹⁹ The region of La Guajira was one of the many territories occupied by Indian peoples that at present identify themselves as a nation, and which were invaded by the Spanish empire. After the independence of Venezuela on July 5 1811, La Guajira became an ethnic corridor between two national states. The region was the object of a great number of treaties promoting the presence of Spanish religious missions in order to reduce the indigenous populations. On October 18 1842, the president of the Republic of Venezuela, Jose Antonio Paez, created the “Reglamento organico para fomentar el comercio con La Goajira y la reduccion de los indigenas en Maracaibo.” See Fray Cesareo de Armellada, *Fuero Indigena Venezolano* (Caracas: Universidad Católica Andres Bello, Instituto de Investigaciones Historicas, 1977), p. 17.

²⁰ As Alfredo Jahn points out “Venezuela and Colombia maintained a long dispute on their respective rights upon the Guajira Peninsula.” See Alfredo Jahn, *Los aborígenes del Occidente de Venezuela I*. (Caracas: Monte Avila Editores, 1977), p. 137. Drawing on dispute between the two national states, a strong tendency within contemporary Wayuu social movement sees president Chavez Latin American Pan-Americanism as an opportunity to acquire their independence as a nation. See the editorials of the Wayuu journal *Wayunnanki*.

²¹ The limits of these more humid areas result from soil and geologic characteristics of the area rather than to climatic conditions. Often the Wayuu people refer to a mythological past in order to explain contemporary droughts. God’s punishment for an unknown mistake is a usual comment that can be heard within informal chats. Its average temperatures of between 27oC and 29oC vary very little throughout the year and are not affected by altitude since, as far as climate is concerned, no significant elevations are found. Indeed the highest peak to the northeast of the Wayuu territory does not reach 900 meters above sea level, whereas most of the surrounding land lies below 500 meters of altitude.

are also great pressures for installing international military bases in zones close to the Gulf of Venezuela.²²

In terms of its physical environment, La Guajira is a very arid region.²³ The Wayuu identify two rainy seasons; the main one, *juyapu*, includes part of September, October and part of November, the shorter one, *jiwa*, part of May and June.²⁴ Isolated small elevations that oscillate between 400 meters (Epitz, that is translated as “La Teta” in Spanish, a word that in English means “the women’s breast”) and 800 meters (Macuira, Serranía de Jarara) allow the circulation of strong winds that come from the north east through the *sabanas* and hills while avoiding the rains during almost ten

²² “Proposition number 3 – External military menace: To reactivate as a third element of our system of hemispheric security, our traditional military links with this hemisphere through the offer of military training and attendance to the armed forces of the Americas with particular emphasis on the young officials and in the officials of lower grades.” “Final synthesis: the Committee of Santa Fe, in addition, urges to the United States to take the strategic and diplomatic initiative to revitalize the Rio Treaty and the OEA; proclaiming again the Monroe Doctrine and weaving links with the key countries and helping the independent nations to survive to the subversion. (Secret Document of the Reagan Policy for Latin American, known as the Document of Santa Fe). Plan Colombia.

²³ To the south, an area of higher humidity borders the territory, while the northern part constitutes a great dessert. The limits of these more humid areas result from soil and geologic characteristics of the area rather than to climatic conditions. Often the Wayuu people refer to a mythological past in order to explain contemporary droughts. God’s punishment for an unknown mistake is a usual comment that can be heard within informal chats. Its average temperatures of between 27oC and 29oC vary very little throughout the year and are not affected by altitude since, as far as climate is concerned, no significant elevations are found. Indeed the highest peak to the northeast of the Wayuu territory does not reach 900 meters above sea level, whereas most of the surrounding land lies below 500 meters of altitude.

²⁴ The whether changes that the Kyoto Agreement tries to avoid, also arrived to La Guajira. At present, one of the main problems of the region is the lack of infrastructure to confront the rains, while historically, according to the chronicles of the nineteenth century, the environmental challenge was the opposite: the lack of water. While I stayed in Maracaibo and La Guajira, the absolute lack of water deeply affected the quality of their life. Ordinarily, there are rainless periods of two to four months, although a particular area may not receive significant precipitation for several years. Frequently precipitation is so scarce that it barely wets the ground; these rains, however, are often so intense that they run off to sea without penetrating into the earth. Rainfall distribution throughout the year and across the land is irregular from one year to the next.

months each year.²⁵ The lack of agricultural work in the soil, the prevailing vegetation, the intensity of the rains and the constant wind all contribute to a high degree of erosion in the region as a whole. This process of erosion has been further exacerbated by human action.²⁶

The Wayuu store surface waters in *maueyes* (small reservoirs) near *arroyo* bottoms, although these reservoirs are depleted within a few months. The Wayuu relate that this fact has not posed a problem until the fifties. Before, they moved in search of new water sources when those in use dried out or became too brackish.²⁷ Tremendous rains flood the region in September, October and November and make transit by road impossible.²⁸ The Wayuu distinguish three great areas in La Guajira. Wuinpumin, which are the lands toward the north west of the peninsula (Wuin means 'water' in Arawak); Wopumin, which is the central part of the peninsula (Wop means 'toward the road'); and Jala'ala, which is the southern area where the majority of the

²⁵ See Ann McClintock, *Imperial Leather, Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*, (New York, London: Routledge, 1995). The author argues on colonial sexualization of maps and territories.

²⁶ To the south and southwest of the peninsula there are two permanent watercourses. One of them, the Wasare River (Río Limón) runs from the Montes de Oca to the Gulf of Venezuela. The other, the Kalankala River (Río Ranchería) comes down from the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta, in the Colombian side of La Guajira, to the sea. In the Macuira Range at the tip of the peninsula to the northeast, there are a few privileged narrow valleys with permanent water sources.

²⁷ Other division can be also done as functions of landscape: the northeastern region often called by non-Wayuu Upper Guajira and the southwestern portion referred as Lower Guajira. Although the Wayuu do not recognize such divisions in their territory, these divisions, nonetheless, are helpful to understand the recent transformations of the Wayuu society. In national administrative terms, the Wayuu territory is divided between the Department of La Guajira (Colombia) and the Zulia State.

²⁸ Otto Vergara González, "Los Wayu. Hombres del desierto" in *La Guajira*, p. 142. In opposition to the Wayuu narrative, a great number of anthropological works point out the hard living conditions of the environment, and attribute to water's scarcity and irregularity Wayuu's contemporary nomad way of living as well as the absence of property on those goods that they can not transport when they travel.

mountain sits.²⁹ Maracaibo's population names these divisions as the higher, media and lower Guajira. The Venezuelan state of El Zulia and the Colombian department La Guajira are the two national administrative spaces that at present delimit the territory of the Wayuu. About three hundred thousand individuals who identify themselves as Wayuu live in the rural and urban areas of the State of El Zulia in Venezuela and the Department of La Guajira in Colombia.³⁰ According to the study *Venezuela y su gente*, the two main Wayuu towns in Venezuela are Paraguaipoa and Sinamaica.³¹ However, a great number of Wayuu live in the northern areas of Maracaibo. The first Wayuu *barrio*, Ziruma (officially founded in 1944) is situated at the northern extreme of the city, on the route from La Guajira. After a new administrative division of Maracaibo's urban space (1995), the Wayuu mainly live in the county of Ildefonso Vásquez.³²

In Venezuela there is a great debate around the demographics of the indigenous population, not only of the Zulia State but also of the whole country. The Colombian-Venezuelan census of 1992 established a total of 307,318 Wayuu people.

²⁹See the article "Ser mujer es saber tejer" in *TUMI Journal*, Issue Number 2, 1992, p. 7.

³⁰ En la alta Guajira las comunidades más importantes son Kusia y Cojoro, siendo la de Tapurí, a orillas de la laguna de Cocinetas, la ubicada más al norte en territorio venezolano. La media Guajira es la de mayor extensión de las tres zonas citadas. La Baja Guajira, situada más al sur, tiene su comunidad más importante asentada en la población de Sinamaica.

³¹ Antonio Gómez Espinoza, *Geografía del Estado Zulia*, (Maracaibo: Publicaciones Venezolanas, 1982), p. 31.

³² Since 1995, the decentralizing reform of the national state, diminished the area of Maracaibo. The urban space of the city was of 557 Km² and now has 392 km². Some of the barrios where the Wayuu live are: Chino Julio, Alvirio Leon, Indio Mara, Terepaima, Cujicito, La Victoria, Los Olivos, Tierra Nuestra. More new names are La Esperanza, Nueva Democracia, Motocross, Mirta Fonseca, 23 de marzo, Virgen del Corao, Grafito Villalobo. See Mabel Cuñarro, *Historia de la Reforma del Estado*, Doctoral Dissertation, UCV, 2003.

According to the census, 179,318 lived in Venezuela and 128,727 in Colombia. 57.6% of the population is not twenty years old. The same source states that, “62% of the population lives in towns that have between 500 and 2000 inhabitants and 38% lives in towns which have less than 5,000 inhabitants.” These villages are dispersing settlements. These numbers provide an idea of the difficulty that the state encounters in knowing the Wayuu population that lives either in La Guajira or in Maracaibo. It makes sense to think that a great number of the Wayuu population is not visible within the national or local census, an assumption that in addition to the impact of these ciphers on the national as well local elections leads to explain the delay that the government always has in providing the numbers corresponding to the indigenous population.³³

The Wayuu have maintained their indigenous identity different from the Venezuelan or Colombian ones. In 1900 Venezuelans could not enter into the Wayuu territory without a passport.³⁴ Commerce and cattle cultivation were increasing. Along the entire region Wayuu horses were famous. There was trade with Jamaica, Aruba, Curaçao, Riohacha as well as with Venezuelan border populations.

In 1922, the battle of “Carazua” and the assault on the hacienda “Los Limonzones,” in the Limon River were military actions taken by the Wayuu in order to preserve their autonomy. This is a turning point for the Wayuu people’s history, and marks their rapid transformation into subaltern Indians of the hegemonic *criollos*

³³ In terms of the Colombian state, the lack of control of the census is still more visible. In 1991, they asked the guerrilla to do the census in the regions that they controlled and where there was not any possibility to the state to get into.

³⁴ Fray Pedro Simons, quoted by Nemesio Montiel, *Testimonio sobre la lucha y reafirmación étnica*, (Maracaibo: LUZ, 1988), p. 46.

hacendados. At the same time, the oil industry made their lives still more difficult. Since the beginning of the century the Wayuu had been transported as slaves, and sometimes sold themselves as slaves, to those regions of the Zulia state where oil exploitation required supplementary labor due to *Criollos* emigration as oil workers to Campo Mara, Perijá, and the Eastern Coast of the Lake of Maracaibo. Venezuelan peasants abandoned the fields to go to the oil camps. The *hacendados* needed cheap workers, and again as during the XVI century, the indigenous were hunted and made slaves.

Their survival draws on specific characteristics of their patriarchal yet also matrilineal way of living. Young Wayuu graduate students are re-appropriating their history. They have written many master and doctoral theses that can be read in the library of the Anthropology Department at the Universidad of El Zulia. Their story and traditions are often related along the *sabanas* and the hills of La Guajira, under the roofs of their *enramadas*. As Zenaida Martínez, who is a Wayuu women leader studying for her master's degree in Public Politics in the university of El Zulia told me "the stories are warming themselves within the stones of the stoves." The whispers that come off from the Wayuu hammocks narrate the great gestures of their ancestors, and their quotidian pain and hopes as well. Their story can also be heard in the *jayechi* of a singer, in the turns of the *yonna*, the girl who becomes a *majayura*, the skillful fingers of the women weavers and the songs of the shepherds, the menacing or tolerant payment, and the deep family solidarity. Their sonorous language is heard all around La Guajira and Maracaibo. But in January 2005, when I visited the region for the last time, the Wayuu were not allowed to enter into the malls

of Maracaibo. Conservative and progressive Venezuelan peoples as well are blind in regards to this racial discrimination. When asked about why the Wayuu people cannot enter into the Miami looking malls that proliferate in the capital of the Zulia state, they react as the question is out of place.

However, in the Zulia State, there are spaces that are specifically Wayuu. They freely pass through the border that crosses the peninsula, especially looking for jobs and commerce on the Venezuelan side, and for education on the Colombian one.³⁵ There are also very rich Wayuu merchants whose economical and political power influenced national Colombian and Venezuelan politics. For example, they were crucial in deactivating the maneuver of the Granda's case, which in 2005 led to the U.S. government's declarations against President Chávez as supporting the FARC, a guerrilla force declared terrorist by the U.S. government.

The Wayuu origins

According to the Wayuu conception of their origins, the Wayuu come from where they actually live. The translation of their name "Wayuu" as a pronoun means "us."³⁶ Pocaterra interprets this translation stating that "you move within your society and not outside or above it. That's how you feel, and subsequently you behave as a community, as under a 'protector political and national umbrella.' Our origin corresponds to the collective birth of the clans. These matrilineal clans resulted from

³⁵ The 88 % of the indigenous population of Zulia state belong to the Wayuu society, while the rest of the indigenous population of the Zulia belongs to the other three indigenous groups.

³⁶ Manuel Matos Romero, *La Guajira, su importancia*, (Caracas: Ed. Jutatay Juya, 1971).

the love between the rain and the earth. “³⁷ According to ethnographer Alfredo Jahn, “drawing in the fact that women’s blood give the gift of life, women have a privileged site in relationship to men in regards to the descending or ascending affiliation.” The Wayuu family comprehends to five members, which “are like the five fingers of the hand,” while the latter is like the common branch of the group.”

The thumb finger is the maternal grandmother
 The index finger is the mother
 The middle finger is the maternal uncle
 The ring finger is the daughter
 And the pinky finger is the small daughter



Within this body scheme, by making their hand represent the Wayuu family it could mean that a Wayuu person carries their family around always. It goes like this: The thumb is different, it only has one joint; it is opposable. It is separate from the other fingers because that's what makes it work, and without the separate thumb, the fingers lose all their strength too. This is how, as Pocaterra’s words say, the maternal grandmother informed her cultural identity, both physically and emotionally. The grandmother remains separate from her family, not too attached, objective, because only through this objectivity is she able to support his family correctly. The Wayuu

³⁷ Noelí Pocaterra, interviewed by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 2000.

think of the index finger as an organizing tool. It selects things, it points, It chooses.

This is the mother.

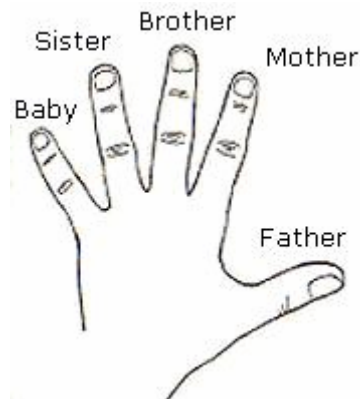
Within the western tradition, bodies, hands and fingers correspond to a different system of representation, a difference that can also be appreciated through one of the many songs that small kids are taught since kindergarten school. In this case, the family is not the hand, but the finger:

The Finger Family

This is mother, kind and tender,
Loving all the children dear.
This is father, strong and faithful,
His kind smile is full of cheer.

This is brother, brave and merry,
Growing up so straight and tall.
This is sister, sweet and happy,
Playing with her dearest doll.

This wee finger is the baby,
Dearest, sweetest, best of all,
Here you see the happy family,
All its members great and small.



The matrilineal organization, and especially the centrality of the female principle within the Wayuu society, is part of their feminine centric cosmic vision.³⁸ For Atala Uriana, Environmental secretary for President Chávez during the period 2000-2003, “the Wayuu are the children of the Earth, who is the Mother, and from her body stems both nature and human’s life. While Earth’s husband is Yuya (the rain) it is her, the Earth, the one who provides fertility and abundance, and the binomial life-death never gets separated because between its poles oscillate the marvelous world of dreams.”³⁹

Ethnographic literature translates through “scientific” terms what Atala Uriana says, and it states that the Wayuu society shows important subdivisions. Such subdivisions are clans of a matrilineal type.⁴⁰ The Wayuu name these subdivisions *e’iriükuu*. These *e’iriüku* can be defined as categories of persons who share a common mythical ancestor.⁴¹ The Wayuu may also form themselves into branches of lineage, called “*apüshii*,” which have a corporate character. All individuals who belong to an *apüshii* identify themselves as descendents of the same ancestors through the female

³⁸ José Angel Fernandez Silva, who is a Wayuu leader, uses the term “cosmovision,” in his 2003 paper, “El principio femenino como constante en la cosmovisión femenina,” for his magister in anthropology in the Universidad del Zulia.

³⁹Uriana Atala, “A la luz de la luna se enciende la Yonna,” in “El Zulia profundo,” *Revista Bigot* no. 40, oct-nov-dic. 1995, p. 63.

⁴⁰ In most of the colonial chronicles and in contemporary everyday language of non-indigenous peoples these divisions are referred to by the name of “castas.” Old Wayuu usually use the term “castas” while young ones use mainly the term “clan.” See Angel Ronsenblat, *La población indígena y el mestizaje en América*, pp. 74-80 for an example of how the “castas” worked in Venezuela within Spanish ethnic model.

⁴¹ There are twenty-two clans on the Colombian and Venezuelan side of the peninsula.

line.⁴² Minor uterine relatives usually designate a man of the group as *talaula*, which may be translated as “my old man,” “my maternal uncle” or “my boss.”⁴³ Situations of serious conflict demand the presence, as the head and representative of the family group, of the maternal uncle who is best known because of his wealth, prestige, courage, and sound judgment. This is the figure to which the *Alijunas* refer by using the (inappropriate) term of “*cacique*.”⁴⁴ The Wayuu tradition states that women exercise a strong influence in the bosom of their extended family and have a lot to say in the decisions of the men.⁴⁵

The feminine presence haunts the Wayuu’s life. Women can give life as well as take it off. The spaces where the Pulowi (female personages who are Yuya’s wives) live are socially avoided. This female principle is found at everyday level, as well as within the great occasions and rituals of the social and political life of the community. From birth to death, from marriage to the coming of full moon, the woman plays a fundamental role. Each great moment of the familial life, of the clan or of the society as a whole, is measured through rhythms of dances, interpretations of

⁴² José Angel Fernández, “El principio femenino como una constante en la cosmovisión guajira.” They may openly express their opinions about matters of importance for the family group since the patterns of respect are not an obstacle for them in influencing their elders. Due to the respect shown for their feminine condition they are frequently responsible for important processes of mediation with different sectors of the national societies.

⁴³ This person is responsible for organizing work groups for different tasks, easing tensions that arise among the residents of the settlement and representing his co-resident uterine relatives who become involved in disputes with Wayuu from a different family group.

⁴⁴ Politicians, government officials or businessmen from national societies, who try to link themselves with the *caciques*, have favored many of these personages. Such figures, at the same time, try to satisfy this stereotype if they can derive political or economic advantage of it.

⁴⁵ Weidler Guerra Curvelo, *La disputa y la palabra: la ley en la sociedad wayuu*, (Bogotá: Ministerio de Cultura, 2002).

dreams or cries of the women. One of the most well known rituals of the Wayuu is La Yonna, which literally means “The Dance.” The Wayuu sociologist and poet José Angel Fernández Silva describes this dance as a “ritual behavior that has multiple symbolical connotations. It is a social phenomenon that maintains within the Wayuu society three essential attributes, which are i) the constant search for social balance; ii) collective solidarity; and iii) the harmony between men and cosmos.”⁴⁶ Fernández underlines three great occasions when the Wayuu dance *La Yonna*, and he interprets these occasions as ritual passages.⁴⁷ For Uriana, on the contrary, it seems that any circumstance can be opportune for dancing the Yonna. Fernández points out that the Wayuu dance *La Yonna* when the young woman is introduced into society before her “*enfermedad*” or isolation, for the celebration of the arriving of the rains and the harvests, for the *Yanama* (collective work day). A *piache* or shaman makes the initiation rituals. The marking phenomena at the interior of the same ritual is, as Fernández underlines, the fact that the dance “accomplishes a balancing function of first order, thus, while executing the dance, the physical inferiority of the woman, passes to a second order.”⁴⁸ The circles that the dancers make evoke the moon female

⁴⁶ Jose Angel Fernández Silva, “La danza guajira, su multiplicidad simbólica y ritual,” *Revista Yanama*, p. 14.

⁴⁷ In terms of my experience, I saw it in the schools of the Wayuu barrios of Maracaibo for the celebrating the Day of the Indigenous Child, which coincided with January 6th, the Christian Epiphany when the six magician kings kept their gifts to Jesus.

⁴⁸ Fernandez Silva, “La danza guajira, su multiplicidad simbólica y ritual,” p. 15.

element's movement, in opposition to the sun, that is conceived as the masculine principle.⁴⁹

Drawing on the Wayuu societal representation of women's roles within their community, it is of significance to examine how this matrilineal conception intersects with the urbanization process.⁵⁰ Matrilineal descent and a tendency toward matrilocality give Wayuu women certain advantages compared to women in western industrial society. In their communities, Wayuu girls receive more education and training than boys. Only girls undergo a long period of formalized learning. This institution, known in Wayuu as *Majayuraa* (or "encierro," in Spanish) prepares the girl for her life as an adult woman. In Wayuu words this means being an economically independent, self-reliant person, who is in control of herself and her life situation. Starting with puberty, the girl is put in seclusion. This might last from two months to five years, and at-present it has been adapted to Maracaibo or Caracas' urban circumstances. The time of the *Majayuraa* depends on the socio-economic status of the family. The teachings focus mainly on weaving and sex education, including the preparation and use of contraceptive medicines. Through her education, the Wayuu woman learns to control her productive and reproductive power. Wayuu

⁴⁹In addition to this order of mythical representation of the feminine principle, it is significant to notice that within the Wayuunanki language, the feminine genre is the marking element. Edixa Montiel is a linguistic and radio speaker of a Wayunaki-Spanish bilingual station. "The genre that marks the Wayuu's language is the feminine one. For the plural case, for example, the feminine genre determines more than the generalities. Also from the linguistic point of view the feminine is very important. It should have ... it should have some kind of relationship ... it could be an interesting research subject." Interview with Edixa Martínez, Maracaibo, September, 2001.

⁵⁰ Latin America has one of the highest urbanization rates in the world, and in opposition to what happens in other continents, the trend shows that more women than men migrate to urban centers. Adaptation to the city life can only be understood in terms of migrants' past experiences, thus it is necessary to consider the indigenous background before studying their organizing, in this case, the Wayuu women network.

women often voice negative remarks at Arijuna women in general, pointing out their lack of education as women as compared with the Wayuu woman. A Wayuu woman cannot believe that a woman will be successful as a woman unless she has been enclosed.

While both Wayuu and national Venezuelan culture expect women to become mothers and to be “good” mothers, birth control and maternal roles are different between Wayuu and Venezuelan women. For the Wayuu woman, to be “a good mother” means to impose a rather harsh and very strict discipline, and to exercise considerable economic and social powers. In her society, her power as mother is linked to the most basic control that she possesses, namely that of her reproductive functions. While the Wayuu philosophy condemns abortion, it also provides women with the knowledge to avoid contraception without limiting her sexual activity and gives her the right to apply such knowledge. She is actually expected to plan and distribute her productive and reproductive powers effectively and wisely. Wayuu girls attend schools like boys, and mothers encourage their daughters to study diligently.⁵¹

Since educational institutions are free in Venezuela, there has been an opportunity for the contemporary generation of women leaders to study at the public schools. But as Fernández said to me when I interviewed him at the Universidad del Zulia in February 2003, “The Wayuu mother is always taking care of sending her daughter to the Alijuna school while simultaneously training her within the Wayuu traditions.” He added an emphatic statement: “I am completely satisfied with being

⁵¹ Virginia Gutiérrez de Pineda, “Organización social de La Guajira,” (Colombia: Revista del Instituto Etnológico, w/d). This is the best traditional ethnographic work on the Wayuu population.

represented by Noelí Pocatererra at the National Assembly. She is a wise woman, and has prepared herself for occupying this ruling role since many years ago.”

From the western perspective, it is usually assumed that kinship has a limiting effect on the individual. Arguments focus especially on restrictions that kinship-oriented social systems impose on women. But the traditional kinship organization regulates and limits the lives of all members, both female and male, and critiques to this communitarian way of life are built on the western illusion of the neutral “free” individual. It is easy for these positions to see group pressures, while it is harder to recognize and acknowledge oppression on the individual level.

While the Wayuu’s social organization is matrilineal, it is also necessary to have a more extended idea of how power relationships map this society. How does power work and what is known as “power?” Wayuu anthropologists point out that the passage from pre-Hispanic forms of living to shepherding, which was introduced by the Europeans, implied the transition to a specialized economy.⁵² This change sacrificed self-sufficiency in the production of food while generating the need for exporting surplus cattle products.⁵³ At the same time, the transition to the economy of shepherding within the indigenous groups of the peninsula brought the emergence of deep inequalities stemming from the tenancy of large herds. This social stratification emerged with the rise of wealth and prestige for some clans and slavery for other

⁵² Guerra Curvelo, *La disputa y la palabra: la ley en la sociedad wayuu*, (Bogotá: Editores Tercer Mundo, 2003). According to the author, ethnographic sources identify these forms as “hunting, fishing, small agriculture and recollection of fruits.”

⁵³ The cattle products that the Wayuu produce in order to exchange were leather, meat, cheese and acid milks. The Wayuu needed to accede to the Hispanic villages in order to sell and exchange their products, while at the same time buying the foods that they were anymore capable of producing in sufficient levels.

clans.⁵⁴ The relationship between this society, which did not have a centralized political power and the European societies created more opportunities for some familial Wayuu groups disputing with other extended families their political and social preponderance in a determined place.

Wayuu people often express that they know that they are immersed in a social universe that does not coincide with that of their ancestors. Nevertheless, the Wayuu often emphasize that they have a strong capacity for living between the indigenous, the national, and the international societies, though at the same time preserving their social and political organization. While it is certain that a strong process of urbanization has taken place since 1930, it is also true that the Wayuu are equipped with an enormous number of strategies for reinforcing their Wayuu way of living within an ever-changing reality.

The group has experienced massive urbanization since the decade of the thirties. Before this time, the Wayuu were only “visitors” in their contacts with the Venezuelan and Colombian cultures. They borrowed certain traits, attitudes, and objects. At present, the trade of coffee, spirits, tobacco, gasoline and other substances has prospered. It is a frequent sight to find the carcasses of airplanes that crashed some time ago, now part of the daily background at their settlements. In addition to commerce, the most important economic activities are the rearing of goats and other herd animals, small-scale fishing, crafting and extraction of salt and gypsum in the

⁵⁴ In terms of persons, there were different values for the persons according to their corporate group, and in terms of its economy, in addition to its economic importance, cattle acquired great symbolic value. It established a social link between the image of the familial group and the image of his herd.

coastal zones. The agriculture, based on the *conuco*, depends enormously of the rains, that, when they come, allow the cultivation of beans and corn.⁵⁵ Fishing is concentrated in the coasts like Caño Laguna and Caimare Chico, while the production is sold to the *caveros* because the Wayuu do not own refrigerated storage or vehicles for commercial transportation. Cattle rearing, which was very important during the 19th century has survived on a small scale, while reducing substantially its dimensions. Goat and sheep livestock are seen all along the peninsula.⁵⁶ Paid jobs and cross-frontier commerce have a growing importance in the economy of the Wayuu society. The Wayuu developed two qualitatively alternative types of trade, which draw on compatible while different logics of exchange. The Wayuu, when living outside of La Península (in Maracaibo and the southern region of the gulf) work for a salary in the construction industry in the cities or as fieldworkers in the *haciendas* of coffee and *plátano* and relate through money value to the Alijuna population. They maintain their system of exchange (based on cattle, women's jewelry of clans and sacred stones) for exchange relations among themselves.

For the Wayuu, their location in La Guajira has been simultaneously a problem and an opportunity.⁵⁷ On the one side, while developing their commerce the

⁵⁵ Conucos are small gardens situated far away from the main settlement. They are usually cultivated by women or older peoples and provide everyday vegetables and roots. It is a form of gardening that can be found all along the Venezuelan territory.

⁵⁶ According to Alfredo Jahn, in 1890 there were more than 100.000 *reses vacunas*, 20.000 *bestias mulares y caballares*, around 30.000 donkeys and around 200.000 goats and sheeps. At present times, the Wayuu do two types of commerce.

⁵⁷ The different reaction of other ethnic societies close to the Wayuu can provide arguments for this statement. The ethnic groups of the Sierra de Perijá could not develop a defense of their culture and identity while living in a relatively isolated and without many contacts with the national culture space.

Wayuu always took advantage of their placement on the margins and out of the two dominant national societies.⁵⁸ On the other side, as an oil territory close to Panama, and between Venezuela and Colombia, both governments see La Guajira as a strategic region, and since the late forties, the projects of the Indigenist Commissions impacted the Wayuu society. Designed in principle to look after Indian welfare, many of the governments' *indigenista* projects sought to replace indigenous initiative and involvement, rather than to support the indigenous initiatives. As time passes, institutions are established and programs for indigenous areas recursively appear. Until the late eighties, non-indigenous professionals in the Indigenist Commission made decisions; these were often permeated by a paternalistic note and characterized by little consultation with natural leaders.⁵⁹ At the same time, the Wayuu population used the state's tools for their own benefit. Both nation-states have invested great amounts of money, in a greater proportion than the demographic ciphers would comparatively indicate, as a strategy for protecting their borders. In the nineties the most heard slogan, both in Caracas and Bogotá, referred to the "border area integration."⁶⁰

In 1982, Dr. Humberto Fernández Auvert, the governor of the Zulia State, promoted the creation of a free market zone in La Guajira that still in 2005 is the

⁵⁸ They develop two types of trades. The first one is concentrated on selling in the market of the Filúos, of the small production exceeding like live animals, leather, art crafts and food for the immediate consumption, and the second one comprehends the commerce that comes from trading, which is considered illicit.

⁵⁹ Montiel, *Testimonio sobre la lucha y reafirmación étnica*, p. 22.

⁶⁰ Many treaties between Venezuela and Colombia, like the project to make a bi-national cultural center in Paraguaipoa, the educational treaty, and the border La Guajira cultural center that functions in Sinamaica draw from that period.

subject of strong confrontation between the Wayuu and the *Criolla* population of the area of Maracaibo. The governor's Ruling Project for a Free Market Zone for La Guajira (*Proyecto de Reglamento de una Zona Franca para la Guajira*) drew on the initiative of transforming the intense border commerce between Maracaibo and Maicao into an "engine" that would "develop" the Zulia State. To transform "smuggling" into "free commerce" was the project's aim.⁶¹ At that moment, the exchange value of the bolívar favored the sale of Venezuelan products in the Dutch Antilles and in Colombia.⁶² A long history of governmental development projects for this region had recursively failed and Maracaibo's governor proposed a free market zone that would be supported by the creation of a new urban center in the border. "Ethnic" tourism and commerce would provide the jobs for the indigenous population who would move from La Guajira to this new urban center. The *Fuerzas Vivas*, the Regional Economic Associations (*Organismos Económicos Regionales*) reacted against the governor's project. For them, by creating a Free Zone in La Guajira, "the migration of Guajiro population will invade the region." The entrepreneurs' association fears that "this invasion," "would have such enormous dimensions that it

⁶¹ "En relación al ingreso per-cápita de la población guajira, éste es uno de los más bajos de Venezuela y los precios de los bienes de consumo nacional son muy altos, por lo cual la población realiza sus gastos de consumo en gran parte de la región colombiana, lo que explica el bajo volumen de ventas que registran los establecimientos comerciales en la zona." CONZULPAN, Informe sobre la posibilidad e la creación de una Zona Franca para la Sub-Región Guajira. Documento, Maracaibo, 1982, pp. 5-9.

⁶² "De Venezuela hacia Colombia, las mercancías sujetas a la exportación son repuestos y artículos eléctricos de origen norteamericano y un conjunto de productos ensamblados en Venezuela; además se exportan algunos productos alimenticios de fabricación nacional, como las harinas industrializadas, las sardinas, los enlatados y bebidas, los productos avícolas, aceite comestible, etc., también en calidad de contrabando, **constituyendo éste el problema fundamental que presenta la región**, originado por la disparidad del poder adquisitivo interno y externo de nuestra moneda." CONZULPAN, Informe sobre la posibilidad e la creación de una Zona Franca para la Sub-Región Guajira. Documento, Maracaibo, 1982, pp. 5-9.

would flood the Páez County's possibility for absorbing the indigenous population."⁶³

The Maracaibo's Commerce Association (*Cámara de Comercio de Maracaibo*) felt the governor's project as a menace. In a letter from the group to the chair of the Venezuelan Presidential Committee for Colombian Border Issues, the entrepreneurs opposed the preferential regime that the governor's project proposed for the Wayuu merchants. They emphatically stated that the Wayuu's preferential regime would not benefit the indigenous population; it would rather benefit "the smugglers behind the indigenous population."⁶⁴ According to these businessmen, the governor's support of the indigenous population was the cause of previous developing plans' failure. The public letter of the entrepreneurs' union argued the need for taking into account national security reasons in order to oppose the project. Privately, however, no few merchants stated that the problem draws more on competing commerce spaces between national and indigenous businessmen than on drug-traffic or national security issues. In her manifesto, the Camara proposes an Integral Development Plan (*Plan de Desarrollo Integral*), which would produce "the best use of the resources of the region, the greatest welfare conditions for the Wayuu population, and the best integration between Colombia and Venezuela." The plan eliminates the Wayuu commerce and promotes the national state's "decided will to avoid the use of the

⁶³ "Repuesta al Proyecto del Gobernador" without date, document of the "Organismos Económicos Regionales," p. 17.

⁶⁴ Carta pública de la Cámara de Comercio de Maracaibo al Presidente de la Comisión Presidencial para Asuntos Fronterizos Colombo-Venezolanos, Septiembre 21 de 1989, p. 2.

Guajira Region as a bridge for the international scale traffic of drugs.”⁶⁵ Those in favor of the free market regime and those against it state that it drew on the need for protecting “national security,” and eliminating “drug commerce and capital’s flight to Colombia.”

At the same time that the Zulia state’s governor introduced his Free Market project, in Colombia, an also ambitious development project unfolds. “The joint venture of the Colombian Government Coal Co., CARBOCOL, and Exxon’s INTERCOR in El Cerrejón Coal mining operation was a three and half billion-dollar project.”⁶⁶ These two developing plans, while embodying the historical drama experienced by the Wayuu also generated active responses by the Wayuu populations.

In the mist of these changes, the women’s fundamental orientation and loyalty toward their indigenous society and their networks of kin gave birth to a process of ethnogenesis completely different from Gallegos’ politics of *mestiza* nation making. In La Guajira and in Maracaibo Wayuu *barrios*, houses, wells, cemeteries and gardens are still identified with series of uterine kin. The Wayuu women organized themselves for restoring the feminine centric traditions, a mobilizing identity that challenged the same traditions that they say will restore. The indigenous territory of La Guajira and the Maracaibo region suddenly saw these women organizing. They remake their communal houses, schools, medicine and laws. At the same time they

⁶⁵ Carta pública de la Cámara de Comercio de Maracaibo al Presidente de la Comisión Presidencial para Asuntos Fronterizos Colombo-Venezolanos, Septiembre 21 de 1989, p. 4.

⁶⁶ Carta pública de la Cámara de Comercio de Maracaibo al Presidente de la Comisión Presidencial para Asuntos Fronterizos Colombo-Venezolanos, Septiembre 21 de 1989, p. 4.

become teachers, doctors, lawyers, judges and politicians. Drawing on politics of identity that represent themselves as powerful women of a matrilineal society they struggled for restoring their Wayuu society, and in 1999 Venezuelan Constituent Assembly voted the indigenous peoples' ethnic rights. Many of the Alijuna and Wayuu are stunned, but many other Venezuelan indigenous populations joined the restoration of their societies in search of a second opportunity.

On the Same Earth (Sobre la misma tierra) is the title of Gallegos' novel about La Guajira. The oil producing region of El Zulia State and La Guajira share a geographical locus while overlapping conceptions of reality. The Wayuu women confront the oil engineers and technicians, while at the same time they look at their cemetery and waterholes. They organize for achieving a better reality for their ethnic group, while at the same time they reposition themselves within the ethnic group and the nation. The various definitions of development used by politicians, engineers, economists and planners all have in common the metaphor of growth as found in living organisms. For this metaphor, which Gamio and Gallegos used, development is above all organic. Development is in the genes, has a direction, grows and matures, and is irreversible, in the sense that adult organisms do not regress into childhood. All organisms have the purpose of surviving as individuals and to perpetuate them as a species. Last, but of much importance to the notions of development, growth implies structural differentiation and increasing complexity. Using this schema to construct change, it is only "natural" that societies should "grow" and "develop," and that the Wayuu would focus their efforts on modernizing their society. Similarly, the

disappearance of the Wayuu “less adapted” society is only the “natural” consequence of the survival of the fittest.

The Wayuu women use the development metaphor, which like other cognitive models co-constitute reality. Men and women’s relation to development are not the same.⁶⁷ The Wayuu population (like President Chávez’s administration) deconstructs the modern notion of development. A new definition based on growth, but also on local cognitive participation through political participation of the population at large constitutes the national as well as the new ethnic project. Such epistemological and political redefinition is not easy. The metaphor of growth has such deep roots that questioning the tacit goodness of “development,” as consecrated by the very technocrats and politicians who construct the models of development, makes one suspicious of irrationality. As for Gamio and Gallegos’ notion of evolution, the contemporary notion of development has a long history that has incorporated it into many and opposing currents of western thought.⁶⁸ For Gamio and Gallegos, progress needed “knowledge of Indians and a new balanced *mestizaje*” in order to form a homogenous national state. For Gallegos, progress was measured in the growing advancement of the productive forces. This evolutionist faith in progress, while very much alive at present in Venezuela, is questioned both by the indigenous

⁶⁷ The transformation of society can demand a halt in economic growth when, for example, the environment’s carrying capacity is reached. Yet, for industrial societies and their dependants today it would not be viable to collectively return to dwelling in small scattered settlements and living off gathering and hunting, nor could use of electricity and, increasingly, computers be stopped. Indeed, the enormous structural complexity and interdependence within and between societies today makes it chimerical to attain the “simplicity” and “easy going” pace of our grandparents’ lives.

⁶⁸ Ideas about development are some of the oldest in Western thought, but only in the 19th Century development and growth appear identified with notions about progress in thinkers like Comte, Spencer and Marx.

movement and the government of this oil producing country. In both the Wayuu and the Venezuelan nations, the forward march of progress created obstacles instead of “development.” The Wayuu and the national state’s nightmare of diminishing returns from the earth leads them to confront the inevitability and the goodness of oil-based development growth.⁶⁹ Drawing on the ambiguities stemming from the national-ethnic brotherhood and the complicated patriarchal chains of power relations within the continent, the Wayuu women empowered themselves while simultaneously being central figures within both contemporary Wayuu ethnogenesis and Venezuelan neo-national liberation Bolivarian Revolution.

⁶⁹ Development notions found in Western social sciences, anthropology included, are fundamentally a product of western thought. Today, development notions make part of a system of ideas, beliefs and values shared by both specialists and lay people in Western societies. They are part of Western culture and, in that sense, they are foreign to other societies, particularly, indigenous small-scale societies. Furthermore, the social dynamics of change and accompanying values that forged the ideas of development have little to do with “undeveloped” societies.

B. Contesting Modern Development through Organizing

Introduction

How did the Wayuu come to shift from the *indigenista* perspective to the indigenous women's view of development? Until recently, the Wayuu responded to modernization by forming indigenous organizations and participating in two main political parties, Rómulo Gallegos' [Acción Democrática \(AD\)](#) and Rafael Caldera's ([COPEI](#)) Catholic party. Since the 1940s, the Wayuu have drawn on *indigenismo* in order to interact with the national society. As Nemesio Montiel points out "The indigenous or traditional organization exists, and regulates domestic relations. However, the dynamics between indigenous and non-indigenous groups at the global level, and more specifically at the commercial and labor level, call for an instrument valid for both realities without the indigenous populations losing their own culture. Since the 40s, the Wayuu sought a structure or way of channeling these challenges, worries and expectations."¹

Montiel, a long-term activist in the Wayuu peoples' struggles, explains, "the indigenous movement is born alongside the peasant and trade union movements."² A grassroots publication narrating the Wayuu's struggles in Maracaibo states that in past times, "some Wayuu arrived from La Guajira, settled in Maracaibo, and built

¹ The birth of the indigenous movement also corresponds to national efforts for strengthening the civil society.

² Nemesio Montiel, interview with Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, August 1998.

their *ranchos* in *terrenos baldíos* bordering the city limits which were of no interest, in that moment, for anybody.”³ The “past” reproduced by this narrative hides a crucial moment of the Wayuu peoples’ history. They settled in “Tierra Negra,” which were empty terrains that in a few years became an ethnic *barrio* space within the city of Maracaibo. It was a refuge space for those who escaped from their hard lives in La Guajira as well as in the *haciendas* of the southern region of El Zulia State.⁴ After the *barrio* Tierra Negra became a Wayuu urban space, finance speculation expelled them and made them move to the 5th Avenue. An oil company then installed its administrative offices there, again pushing them off again from these new lands. The story of expelling the Wayuu from where they installed became a pattern, both throughout the peninsula as well as in Maracaibo.

In 1940, in order to stop this process, “some Wayuu leaders” traveled to Caracas. They appealed to the national government. They sought support in the capital to negotiate with the local power. They requested the right to settle in a space in the city of Maracaibo from which nobody could push them out. However, the expression “some Wayuu leaders,” which I naturalized in this narrative, hides a story that needs to be told. The figure of the indigenous *caciques* was disappearing simultaneously to the modernization of the political life of the country. The indigenous peoples’ incorporation into the politics struggles against the in turn

³ Interview with Carlos Atencio, Maracaibo, August 1998.

⁴ Other indigenous groups, the Bari, the Yucpa lived in these regions and this colonizing process of the Venezuelans has been done by slave Wayuu slaves, as it can be read in the archives, literature and documents or through the readings of contemporary Wayuu journals.

dictators produced their political inclusion while retaining their cultural exclusion from the national state. As a result of these modernizing changes, at the end of the forties, the practices of making the Wayuu slaves and transforming them into indebted workers began to disappear.

José de los Santos Montiel is known as El Cuya. In Wayunanki, “El Cuya” means “good man” (*hombre de bien*, in Spanish). In 1952 he founded the first *indigenista* committee of El Zulia State.⁵ The caciques’ extinction had opened up space to a new leadership stemming from lower social status Wayuu men and women who had migrated to Maracaibo. A new stage in their social movement had begun.⁶ With the death of the caciques José de la Rosa Fernández (El Torito Fernández) in 1969 and El Cuya in 1978 “the long lineage of the Wayuu caciques was extinguished.” A new generation of Wayuu leaders that conceived a different

⁵ José de los Santos Montiel (El Cuya, que en Wayuu significa “hombre de bien,”) acompañó al Chino Julio en la lucha por el Barrio Ziruma. El Cuya nació en 1914 en la población de Castilletes y era hijo de Eleazar Montiel Paz (no Wayuu) y Asunción Polanco, de la casta Uriana, quien era la partera de las mujeres de su marido y adoptaba los niños nacidos en el hatu para que se criaran junto con sus propios hijos. El Cuya fue interprete de la lengua guajira en la Comisión Indigenista de Maracaibo. En 1952 “ayudó” a fundar (Junto con el Br. Aquiles Aspino Curiel, Monseñor Rincón Bonilla, Héctor Rodríguez Boscá y Francisco Cupello la primera Comisión Indigenista del Zulia, el 12 de agosto de 1952. El Cuya fue palabrero, es decir abogado Wayuu, en La Guajira durante más de 35 años. En la década de 1930-1940 el Cuya Montiel acostumbraba acompañar a menudo al cacique José de la Rosa Fernández (alias El Torito Fernández) de la casta Uriana, también. Entre los hermanos más conocidos del Cuya figuraban Roberto Montiel, quien durante más de 40 años ha sido líder en las demandas de los indígenas para que se respete la Ley Wayuu en la península, Aurora Montiel, diputado al Congreso Nacional representando La Guajira, María de los Ángeles Montiel del Poeta, Rosa de Silva, Nemesio Montiel Polanco, a quien llamaban “El Pacificador” debido a que había intervenido en varios pleitos entre las castas guajiras, logrando llevar la paz y Edilia Montiel de Montero. El Cuya tradujo junto con Marichón Uriana, destacada cantante y artista Wayuu el Himno Nacional de Venezuela, el Himno del Zulia, y algunas gaitas zulianas.

⁶ El Cuya vivió durante varios años en el barrio Ziruma donde fue comisario de policía y posteriormente se fue a vivir a La Guajira, en el hatu sembrado de cocos, llamado Dividivi, a 7 kilómetros de Sinamaica. También trabajó durante varios años en la Empresa Nacional de Salinas (Ensal) como fiscal de Salinas de Sinamaica. Cuando Rómulo Gallegos viajó en 1941 a La Guajira, donde escribió *Sobre la Misma Tierra*, fue hospedado por El Torito Fernández, cacique también de la

articulation of the Wayuu society to the Venezuelan nation emerged. They had other ideas and expressive means, which they had acquired in schools and universities. The anthropologist Nemesio Montiel Fernández, the social worker Noelí Pocaterra, the journalist Enrique Semprún, the professor Renato Montiel Polanco and the linguistic Edixa Montiel mark a second stage of the Wayuu social movement. They are close to the leaders of the 1950's and 1960's, but they do not follow their *indigenista* strategy.

“From Tierra Negra to Tierra Nuestra,” is the expression that the Wayuu use to narrate this transition. In 1944, a Wayuu delegation went to Caracas to contact Presidente Isaías Medina Angarita (1941-1945) directly. These leaders had decided to end the errant lives of Wayuu throughout the *barrios* of Maracaibo. José de los Santos Montiel, Ana Isolina González, Isabel González, “El Chino Julio,” Ana de Bohórquez, and Zenobia Fernández travelled 800 km. to obtain lands for their people. On October the 12th of 1944, as a symbolic gesture representing the changes in the political modernization of the country, which for the first time in its history had universal elections, the local government founded the Urbanización Ziruma. This was the response to the Wayuus’ petitions to the national authorities. The regional government constructed 140 houses in a northwest sector of Maracaibo. This alliance between a new Wayuu leadership, which did not identify with the *caciques*, and a temporary coincidence between the regional and the national governments, which were attempting to modernize the state, led to the success of the Wayuu mobilization.

casta Uriana. En esta estadía estuvieron presentes José Leonardo Fernández, Germán Pocaterra y El Cuya Montiel. En esa época también se tradujo al Wayuunainki la letra del joropo “Alma Llanera.”

Traditional party channels were the tools that supported this success. In fact, the governor of Maracaibo carried out the orders of the central government and promised them an area within the city that the Wayuu called Tierra Nuestra “Our Land.” Since 1944, Ziruma became the Wayuu space in Maracaibo, yet they did not receive any individual or collective property title.⁷ In the seventies, when Ziruma became a Wayuu ghetto space, el Chino Julio pointed out that “maybe to construct Ziruma had not been a good strategy.”⁸ Lawrence Watson-Franke’s anthropological work on Ziruma follows Oscar Lewis’s *Los Hijos de Sánchez*’s pattern, and confirms Julio González’s worries on the Wayuu’s poverty. A feminist reading of Watson’s ethnographic work on the sexual life of the Wayuu women living in Ziruma, confirms Watson’s belonging to Gamio’s brotherhood, although his protestant and Anglo background differentiate him from Gamio and Gallegos. He collected detailed data and made statistic calculations comparing U.S. and Wayuu women’s experiences of orgasms. On the other hand, Julio González, (El Cuya), belongs to the Wayuu men’s brotherhood. He is a leader of a colonized group. While Watson is a married anthropologist (whose wife made significant contributions to his understanding of the Wayuu matrilineal society), El Cuya was an indigenous man. He opened up a space for the Wayuu men and women in Ziruma, but he also opened up a space for Wayuu

⁷ At present, Chino Julio González is remembered as the leader of this process, and her nieces, Carmen and Gladys González continue his trace. El Chino Julio was a maternal uncle of Segundo González, the father of Carmen and Gladys.

⁸ El Chino Julio nació a principios del siglo XX, me contaron en Caracas sus dos sobrinas Gladys y Carmen. Su raíz familiar era de la casta “Uriana” y fue traído a Maracaibo a la edad de diez años. Desempeñó diversos trabajos para ganarse la vida. Fue un apasionado de la filosofía y se dedicaba a conversar con los jóvenes sobre Marx y Hegel. En muchas oportunidades proclamó su inconformidad con el sistema político lo que le a veces le granjeó persecución política.

women's reinforcing themselves. "Before he died he sought the most poor of the Wayuu women living in Ziruma and he gave to her and her children his house."⁹

Wayuu's faith in indigenista national institutions

In 1947, drawing on 1940 Pátzcuaro Pan-American *indigenismo*, a group of Venezuelans founded the national *indigenista* chapter in the capital of the country, Caracas. In 1952, the National Indigenista Committee sent to Maracaibo a new committee in charge of making a diagnosis of the Wayuu barrio of Tierra Nueva.¹⁰ As a result of these *indigenistas'* reports, in 1958, the government of the Zulia state donated the Ziruma lands to the Public University of Maracaibo, as if the lands were still empty. The university embodies the ambiguity that the refuge areas represent. The gesture put at stake the Wayuu stability, while it also provided them stability. Years later, in 1963, the same Zulian financial group that since 1940s has been interested in Wayuu lands in Maracaibo attempted again to expel them. The Wayuu, who acquired university support, still had their barrio in Ziruma, but their precarious

⁹ On January 2003 I interviewed his brother, nieces and nephews. His brother Segundo González narrated me his life in Los Olivos, a well-established Wayuu barrio of Maracaibo. Through his memories I confirmed what archives, and literary and anthropological works suggested on poor Wayuus' lives as slaves until 1940's. Segundo González' narrative while contradicts some aspects of the Wayuu traditional identification with braveness and freedom also shows crucial interstices for understanding contemporary Wayuu women's significance within current ethnic revival.

¹⁰ In 1955, drawing on an order of the executive power of the Zulia state, the local authorities burnt 64 ranchos in Ziruma. At the same time, in Los Olivos, the place where Julio González' brother lives at present, 1050 indigenous peoples were also expelled from the barrio. The intervention of the Comité Pro-Defensa del Guajiro, a committee that stemmed from El Patronato, avoided the Olivos' houses to be burnt. This committee is today narrated as part of the Wayuu social movement history within a double rhetorical strategy. On the one side, it reinforces their will for struggling, while at the same time it is narrated as a stage whose limits led them to the Wayuu independent organization.

situation became evident when they found themselves expelled again from Ziruma. The struggles continued. After an intense campaign for the property titles, the El Zulia legislature recognized the indigenous claims to the land. Nonetheless, the regional executive has always denied the application of the legislative order, and at present Ziruma continues to be a symbol of the urban Wayuu population still claiming to be truly recognized as citizens with rights to be urban landowners.

During the 10 years that the Marcos Pérez Jiménez dictatorship (1948-1958) lasted, indigenous people's activities were severely restricted.¹¹ The Venezuelan government exiled key leaders to Colombia. In 1959 the Venezuelan people overthrew the dictator Marcos Pérez Jiménez. The work of the Catholic-based Patronato and the AD-based Comité pro Defensa del Guajiro finished.¹²

Pérez Jiménez had initiated a fellowship program for young Wayuu men and women. In 1964, some of those who had graduated drawing on the support offered by this program founded a new Committee for the Defense of Guajira. The slogan of the committee was "for the full incorporation of the Guajiro to the national life." They also requested recognition and equal treatment of the Wayuu people from the national government. The committee pursued assimilation objectives. As Pocaterra underlined while I interviewed her in 1998, the committee was created drawing on Alijuna views, "a western conception looking for making of the Wayuu citizens with full

¹¹ During the dictatorship period were also severely restricted the activities of the workers' unions, peasants' leagues, and political parties.

¹² Hernán Pocaterra, Noelí Pocaterra's father, was the only exiled Wayuu during the dictatorship. He went to Colombia, and during those times, exiled Venezuelans who were struggling against the dictator have been able of passing the border and getting safe into Colombia thanks to Hernán Pocaterra's contacts and activity in the region. Antonio Gómez Espinoza, *Historia del Distrito Páez*, (Maracaibo: Publicaciones Venezolanas, 1982), p. 94-96.

rights, as any other Venezuelan citizen, without taking into account their different culture.”¹³ The committee’s venue was established in the Ziruma barrio of Maracaibo, and the committee obtained a budget of one thousand bolívares from the regional Legislative Assembly.

The lands have increased enormously their value with the extension of the city of Maracaibo and the nearby construction of the university. Ziruma consolidated the Wayuu presence within the capital of El Zulia, which is the Venezuelan State that produces 70% of the oil. At the same time, new and many Wayuu *barrios* have developed throughout the city of Maracaibo. Privately, many Marabinos (Maracaibo’s settlers) say that they want to diminish the Wayuu presence in the city. They hope that Ziruma’s degradation and ghettoification will make the Wayuu abandon their downtown *barrio*. These Marabinos assume Ziruma’s ghettoification within the most valuable lands of the capital as a temporary social cost that they happily support if it would guarantee “the Wayuu’s definitive disappearance from the urban landscape.”

According to Pocaterra, a second stage in the organization of the Wayuu began in the sixties, and finished at the end of the seventies. This step was characterized by the indigenous faith in the institutions of the national government to face the problems of the indigenous peoples. From the 10th to the 12th of October of 1969, “the first convention of Professionals, Technicians y Guajiros Leaders was held

¹³ Noelí Pocaterra, interview with Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

in the city of Maracaibo.”¹⁴ Pocaterra has been the first chair of the association. The Comité changed to “El Zulia Association of Indigenous” (Asociación Indígena Zuliana,) and promoted the Second Convention of Guajiros Leaders, Professionals, and Technicians on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th days of December in 1971.¹⁵ A document published by the convention argued for the creation of the Venezuelan indigenous peoples’ ethnic rights. “We pronounce ourselves in favor that the Consejo Nacional de Fronteras will take better care and maintenance of the border while avoiding embarrassing or conflictive situations that will put in danger the sovereignty of our territory.”¹⁶

After the convention, the committee’s mobilization as indigenous peoples was deeply weakened by the political activity of the parties. Indigenous leaders committed to the political parties confronted each other about controlling the organization. The committee lost a great proportion of its board members as well as of its budget. A debate around the need for staying apart from the main parties, meaning not to allow adscription of the indigenous movement by the two political parties, opened up among the Wayuu. During this stage, some leaders promoted an independent position, without links to any party, struggling only for the interests of the indigenous peoples. This logic implies the argument of “indigenous solidarity.” Other leaders argued that it was necessary to create organizations according to specific affiliation lines, i.e.

¹⁴ Nemesio Montiel Fernández, *Movimiento Indígena en Venezuela*, (Maracaibo: Ediciones de la Secretaría de Cultura, 1992), p. 22.

¹⁵ Montiel Fernández, *Movimiento Indígena en Venezuela*, p. 28.

¹⁶ Quoted by María Eugenia Villalón, article on the border and the 1999 constitution.

specific organizations Wayuu, Yukpa, Bari, etc. A third group of leaders insisted on the inter-ethnic solidarity for struggling for the common interests of all the Venezuelan indigenous peoples.

On 29th July of 1972, the Federation of Indigenous of the Zulia State (Federación de Indígenas del Estado Zulia) was constituted.¹⁷ In 1978, the Civil Association Indian Movement for the National Identity (Asociación Civil Movimiento Indio por la Identidad Nacional, MOIIN) was created. Arcadio Montiel and Noelí Pocaterra have been the main promoters of the last initiative. According to Noelí Pocaterra, the objectives of the MOIIN were:

- 1) To struggle for the defense and recuperation of the occupied lands and natural resources of the indigenous peoples; 2) To struggle for the protection of the indigenous natural medicine; 3) To promote capacitating of indigenous leaders; 4) To study the indigenous history; 5) To maintain culture, information, and experiences' exchange; 6) To make known the indigenous wisdom and education; 7) To promote indigenous law projects; 8) To promote the creation and functioning of a National Indigenous Organization; 9) To provide solidarity to the struggles of the other indigenous peoples in any part of the world.¹⁸

In 1979 emerged the intra-party struggle again. While the Indigenous Association of El Zulia State organized an indigenous conference in October of 1979 in Paraguaipoa, the governmental Christian Democratic Party organized a conference for the same date in Puerto Ayacucho, on the southeastern border of Venezuela. The MOIIN made awareness-building a priority, and it played an important role in

¹⁷ Nemesio Montiel, *Testimonios sobre la Lucha y la Reafirmación Étnica*, p. 33.

¹⁸ In 1998, Noelí Pocaterra mentioned the following achievements of the MOIIN: 1) The establishment of the National Indigenous Organization (CONIVE); 2) The promotion of the creation of the Cultural Paraujano Movement in the Laguna of Sinamaica; 3) The organization of the National Indigenous Meeting in Paraguaipoa in 1979; 4) The promotion of the constitutional reform for the indigenous peoples.

creating consciousness among the Wayuu, as well as among other indigenous communities in the country, of the need to construct an independent movement.¹⁹

Becoming an Indian movement

The MOIIN pointed out that it was necessary for each indigenous community in Venezuela to organize themselves according to their own model of organization. At the end of the 1970s, indigenous movements of the different political tendencies began to get together. This new trend stemmed from the indigenous movements' lost credibility in *indigenista* and party organizations. At the same time, the Venezuelan left changed its guerrilla focus to a "mass" perspective, and looked for alliances among the indigenous population. As a result, indigenous young peoples in Maracaibo organized a front of the Socialist League (Liga Socialista).²⁰ This front in Maracaibo disappeared some years later, while in 1979 the "Front for the Defense of the Guajiros' Rights," was founded. In 1980 this group became the "Front for the Defense of the Indigenous Rights."

¹⁹ In 1981, the MOIIN sent Noelí Pocaterra to Colombia to talk to the Wayuu on the impact of the Cerrejón coal project. According to Noelí Pocaterra, Remedio Fajardo (Colombian Wayuu, chair of Uribe normal school, and also a member of the MOIIN in Colombia) organized the "Yanama," (word that in Wayunanki means "collective work") in order to struggle against the problems that the indigenous peoples were living. The Yanama received funds from the Exxon (transnational firm associated to the Cerrejón Project) when the firm hired Remedio Fajardo as the chief of public relations. With these funds, la Yanama bought houses, water tank-trucks, and promote bilingual education. At present both leaders have different political positions, as it can be observed following Remedio Fajardo's political trajectory in the journal Wayunanki. Interview with Noelí Pocaterra, Maracaibo, July 1998.

²⁰ Maracaibo's activist women leaders stem from this organization of the Liga Socialista.

In the 1980s, new modernizing dreams accompanied the exploitation of the coal mine of El Cerrejón, in the Colombian Guajira, and the project of the Free Zone, in the northern part of the Maracaibo Lake. In 1982, Venezuela suffered its first devaluation in more than forty years, a step affecting the border commerce conducted against the Venezuelan nation state's interests. The devaluated money favored the exportation of the Venezuelan welfare state's oil-funded products to Colombia and the Antilles. This year also marked the country's entrance into the International Monetary Fund's politics. During this critical period, and drawing on the implementation of various social and economic projects for the region, the plans for making the Wayuu the guardians of the country in this zone acquired a great visibility.

In June 1981, the Venezuelan Indigenous Confederation (La Confederación de Indígenas de Venezuela) was founded and the direction of the Indigenous Affairs of the Education Secretary "began a series of assemblies where the indigenous populations participated." The meetings were held throughout the country to implement the 478 Decree on the De-centralization and Formation of Committees of Citizen Participation (Decreto 478 de Regionalización y Conformación de Comités de Participación Ciudadana). This project of nationally organizing embraced the entire national population, while establishing specific participatory principles for the indigenous citizens. On June 6th 1981, the First Assembly of Indigenous Participation of the Zulia State was installed. The resolutions of the Assembly focused on the

problems between the National Guard and the Wayuu women.²¹ The participation of the indigenous peoples within the electoral process as an effort for “seeking allies in order to insist on the definition of a self-determined indigenist policy.”²² At the beginning of the 80s, according to Pocaterra and Montiel Fernández, the Venezuelan political parties were interested in the indigenous vote while introducing the indigenous peoples in their administration plans. The document elaborated by the Department of Indigenous Affairs (Unidad de Asuntos Indígenas) of the party Acción Democrática, treated the indigenous issues in the following terms: “The native population, as a consequence of the campaign of folkloric and psychological capture, which was expanded by the radio stations which were broadcasting from the border of the neighbor countries, at-present deforms its own personality of the indigenous while loosing its ethnic identity, while absorbing alien values in relationship to our nationality.”²³ During the same electoral campaign, the political platform of the political party “Movement toward Socialism” (Movimiento al Socialismo, MAS) approached the indigenous issues as follows: “The socialist government will recognize the presence of the indigenous nation and its territorial integrity that actually affected border situations, and will promote trilateral agreements between the government and the ethnic populations in order to diminish tensions while promoting

²¹ “Resolución número 7: Que el Gobierno Nacional continúe con las actividades tendientes a superar la fricción que existe entre los guajiros y la Guardia Nacional,” Montiel Fernández, *Movimiento Indígena en Venezuela*, p. 51. This document states that “[d]uring the last years the indigenous peoples have pointed out to stop to be instruments and to assume the direction of their own communities,” p. 53.

²² Montiel Fernández, *Movimiento Indígena en Venezuela*, p. 60.

²³ Montiel Fernández, *Movimiento Indígena en Venezuela*, p. 64.

a better coexistence of the peoples in the international community, and this has to be achieved without negatively affecting the Venezuelan State upon its territory as well as with that of the neighboring countries.”²⁴ The theme of sovereignty is present in the socialist platform. This has been the greatest discursive tool against indigenous’ autonomy, as Villalón observed in the discussion of ethnic rights in the 1999 Constituent Assembly. In 1993, the former Maracaibo cultural secretary states: “Now that everybody talks about drugs and extraction smuggling, it is opportune to tell the government that only with an indigenista and border coherent policy it is possible to recuperate La Guajira.” In large part, the MOIIN is responsible for the background work supporting the foundation of the National Indigenous Organization of Venezuela (Consejo Nacional de Indígenas de Venezuela, CONIVE) in 1989.

Education and generation’s effects

At the end of the 80s, after the *caciques*, *indigenista* and party leadership entered in crisis, a new generation became the Wayuu men and women defending the indigenous population’s rights, although there were still few indigenous who acceded to the university. On May 14, 1988 an article in Maracaibo’s main journal, *Panorama*, pointed out that, “a university census provided evidence of 350 Wayuu students in the Universidad del Zulia, although the census estimates that there are more indigenous students.” The Wayuu student, Carlos Oberto Pocaterra says in the article that, “ethnic shame among Wayuu students led them to hide their ethnic origin,” but Oberto Pocaterra adds, “little by little we increased our pride of being

²⁴ Montiel Fernández, *Movimiento Indígena en Venezuela*, p. 67.

Wayuu. The young women began to use the manta, and people began to understand that it is possible and necessary to call oneself ‘Guajiro’ and be proud of this name in order to be respected as such.”²⁵ The following day, the same journal continues its editorial line and transcribes a message titled “Indigenous Students of LUZ will Fight Against Racism and Ethnic Shame.” The journal reported the students’ voice and narrates that the objective that the Indigenous Student Association seeks adapting their student organizational forms is “for the defense of the indigenous peoples’ elemental human rights, and to re-affirm the indigenous condition within the university context.” This association, which was founded in October 1987 by university students of the indigenous ethnic groups Añú, Wayúu, Yucpa and Barí, and “those who drawing on the process of *mestizaje* have blood links to the Añú, Wayuu, Yucpa and Barí” contests racial and cultural discrimination “within the university and urban environment against the indigenous student and the indigenous population.” It also seeks “to substitute the collective to the individual interest by propitiating a domestic democratizing process drawing on the participatory model of the indigenous people.” Carlos Oberto Pocaterra, Jesús González, Edixa Montiel and Susana Johvanovich, student members of the association, declared that they also had the purpose of “recuperating the regional ethnic culture that along time and due to the ideological charge implanted by the Conquest has been lost, while we have adopted foreigner costumes and behavior patterns.” The group organized “workshops, courses, exchanges and other activities that would contribute to the formation of the university indigenous students, while giving them fellowships to study within

Venezuela and abroad.” The article explicitly established that the association would be aware of the commitment that these students would have with the indigenous community. Their objective was “to group all the indigenous superior education students in order to preserve the cultural identity of the indigenous pueblos, while in addition to study and reinforce the value of different indigenous university activities, ethno-history, social organization, art, philosophy, alimentation, costumes, language, among other things.” The association shaped a dialogue with each one of the university presidential candidates to know the candidates’ opinion in regards to the indigenous students of the country. They asked the support of the university authorities to organize, in 1988, the first Indigenous Students Congress.

The Pan-American dimension of the 500-years’ memories

During the nineties, the indigenous movement of Venezuela was divided by a great number of organizations representing the interests of groups that worked together while maintaining their specific political and organizational perspectives.²⁶ The Venezuelan Indigenous Parliament (Parlamento Indígena Venezolano) has its national venue in Maracaibo, and as a political-social movement it includes deputies at the federal and regional levels of those states that have indigenous populations (Amazonas, Anzoátegui, Apure, Bolívar, Delta Amacuro, Monagas, Sucre, Merida,

²⁵ Jan, “En la Tierra y en el Aire,” *El Panorama*, May 14 1988, pp.4-12.

²⁶ Among the main groups of the groups of El Zulia: MOIIN, a non-governmental organization with international links; Yanama Guarero, which became independent from the Colombian Yanama in 1990, and receives the support of the Guana Church, which has a party affiliation (AD); Movimiento Cultural Paraujano, which works for the restoration of the Paraujanos of the Laguna of Sinamaica; Parlamento Indígena de Venezuela, affiliated to the Parlamento Indígena de América.

Trujillo and Zulia). The first meeting of the movement took place on May 15, 1990. The visit of Pedro Martínez, who was the president of the America's Indigenous Parliament (Parlamento Indígena de América) constituted the occasion for the first meeting. In 1992, the 500-year activities promoted the Indigenous Movement. In the border town of Paraguaipoa, between Colombia and Venezuela, the indigenous population enacted the Bi-national Encounter of the Wayuu Culture (Encuentro Binacional de la Cultural Wayuu), from the 27 to the 29th of October of 1992. In this meeting, the participants declared that the indigenous population would seek their "self-administration." The meeting touched the themes of indigenous sovereignty and bi-nationality.²⁷ In 1993, the depute Ember Iguarán, a Wayuu indigenous was its president. With a pan-ethnic perspective, the meeting declared that the movement struggled for restoring lost indigenous values. It supported projects like the bilingual education center of the Ben Posta missional group in Cojoro, but it insisted that these projects needed to involve indigenous professionals. It also supported the Venezuelan Oil Company's projects within the indigenous communities (schools, lunchrooms, cultural workshops).

²⁷ I quote the parts that will result significant in relationship to the Constituent Assembly of 1999, where Noelí Pocaterra voiced the ethnic population of Venezuela: The Governments of Colombia and Venezuela necessarily have to respect the sovereign decision of the Wayuu people of maintaining its ethnic and territorial unity, beyond the political and administrative decisions of both states. 1. (...) the Wayuu nation, reaffirmed by us as an "Ethnic-Territorial unity" without borders; on the contrary, our people has been invaded by both Venezuela and Colombia countries. We have occupied our territory for thousand of years while sharing the traditional ways of social, cultural, economical and political convivial, according to our own conceptions of life. (...) 4. We ask to the Venezuelan Government the explicit recognition of the Wayuu territory, actually divided between the two national states. 8. We ask to the two Governments: Colombia and Venezuela, that before planning, designing and executing any health, education and general welfare plan, it needs to ask the Wayuu community's participation as well approbatory position in relationship any decision to be made on their behalf." (...) 37. The geopolitical territory of La Guajira will elevated to the category of nation-state with administrative and territory autonomy.

Indigenous representatives of all the Venezuelan political parties and movements are members of the indigenous parliament movement. Since its foundation, the organization sought that the government create a new institution in charge of the indigenous affairs, with an appropriate budget and with direct links to the regional executive power and to the president of the Republic. Its task paralleled the one of the Indigenous Parliament of America (Parlamento Indígena de América). This organization was formally founded in Managua, Nicaragua, between the 29 and the 31st of August 1988. It stemmed from the August 1987 Ciudad de Panamá Resolution, which was passed by indigenous legislators of the Americas who gathered for the first time. Its objective was to struggle for the interests of the indigenous peoples of the Americas. According to its foundational statements, which were published in Caracas in 1991, the Parlamento Indígena de América “struggles against indigenous peoples’ marginalization”.²⁸ Each date of October 12th marks a new anniversary of the invasion of America, and this “meant the beginning of a long period of pain, anguish, and suffering for the indigenous peoples of the Americas. The Parliament made the decision to promote the suppression of the 12 of October from the list of the positive civic dates and official holidays in the countries of the Americas and advocated the subsequent termination of the celebrations held on this date. The importance of the fifth centenary of “discovery of the Americas” comes from its rejection of “any celebratory activity, which only offends our peoples and continues promoting the indigenous peoples as tourists’ objects.” The budget of the

²⁸ Parlamento Indígena de América, *IV Encuentro de Legisladores Indígenas de América*, (Caracas/Venezuela: Reimpreso en la imprenta del Congreso de la República, 1991), pp. 61-71.

Parliament comes from the donations of the governments, indigenous organizations, and volunteers.

In the 90s, three main different trends manifested themselves within the Wayuu indigenous movement: i) Assimilationist, which looked for the adaptation to the national culture and to the abandonment of the indigenous language; ii) Separatist, which avoids any contact with the national culture, iii) Inter-cultural. Nemesio Montiel stated that among the Wayuu movement, a group of Marxist leaders were opposed to the Ben Posta project (aforementioned, i.e. the missionary project that established a school in Cojoro). According to Montiel, for these people “everything that has to do with the western culture is bad.”²⁹ In 1993, Noelí Pocatererra stated that the name of “Marxist” has been a label applied to those who do not agree with the party policy of the politicians.”³⁰

Parallel to the rise in Wayuu organizations, indigenous peoples participated in political parties. Since the 1940s, the main political parties of the country, COPEY and AD, have built strong support bases amongst key leaders in the communities. As Raúl Fernández, a Wayuu leader in a suburb of Maracaibo explains, building alliances with political parties and seeking their support is necessary. “If we do not have allies with political parties that approve budgets and laws in Congress, what are we going to do?”³¹

After the 1995 administrative reforms, the new leaders mainly belong to the divisions of the counties Mara, Paez and Insular Padilla. Since 1989, when the

²⁹ Parlamento Indígena de América, *IV Encuentro de Legisladores Indígenas de América*, pp. 61-71

³⁰ Pocatererra, interview with Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

Venezuelan nation state promoted the de-centralization of the state, the counties favored the Wayuus' insertion into a new political-territorial subdivision established by the national state. The possibility of participating in electoral processes in order to administer the new counties where they live led to strengthening their leadership. These new leaders have their antecedents in the 1940s transition from *caciquismo* to *indigenismo* (El Torito Fernández, Chino Julio, el Cuya, among others). Since these primal times, the Wayuu leaders established a very strong relation with the institutions of the state. Many of them have been part of the national politics through the two traditional main parties, but at present times the party spectrum is larger and some leaders belong to A.D., COPEY, MAS as well as to new organizations as the Fifth Republican Movement (Movimiento Quinta República, MVR) and the National Union of Workers (Unión Nacional de Trabajadores, UNT), among others. In the border community of Kusi, two women leaders expressed that “in the electoral campaign, COPEY functioned with Alfonso, UNT with my brother, and A.D. with Maria Isabel. ... El Chene Romero was the candidate of the V República. Esterbina collaborated with this party, although it lost...”³² Isabel Palmar, a Wayuu women leader of Kusi, refers to her friend Eleodora and says: “She worked with COPEY, I worked with AD and my sister worked with Chávez.”³³

³² Eleodora Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, December 2002.

³³ Isabel Palmar, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, March 2001.

Segundo González

The transcription of some of the interviews that I did to the Wayuu women and men responds to my intentional discursive strategy. Instead of introducing them in an appendix at the end of the manuscript or summarizing and evaluating the key ideas and their significance in the text, I prefer to provide a literal transcription of the Spanish speaking Wayuu women and men that I interviewed. I attempt to provide agency and respect to the Wayuu, avoiding transforming them into my informants. Segundo González is the man whose voice I transcribe in this section. Examining the interview through Sandoval's methodology of the oppressed, the dynamics of the interview (which can be observed more clearly in the videotaped interview that I did in February 2003) show how this 87 year-old man contested Venezuelan society as well as my empowered role as interviewer.

Segundo González is a Wayuu man of African descent, as her daughter Gladys named him, who lives in Los Olivos since the 40s, when this Wayuu barrio was founded. El Cuya, the Wayuu man who is remembered as the founder leader who of Ziruma, was his maternal uncle. Segundo González has experienced all what documental, literary and ethnographic sources told about the Wayuu. His life synthesizes what the archives, journals, travelers' diaries, anthropologists' reports and novels have written about twentieth century poor Wayuu men. By transcribing Segundo's words, I try to provide an alternative to these inscriptions of the Wayuu. Nonetheless, I am also inscribing the Wayuu lives. My main source of information has been my participatory observation work, an anthropological methodology that transforms the ethnographer in a positivist instrument legitimating the recollection of

data. To avoid this authorial strategy, I try to see in Segundo González's words a powerful life history. To contrast authorial attitudes to Gamio's authoritarian scientific knowledge I followed the same strategy with Noelí Pocaterra.

Segundo González represents an exception within many other Wayuu men and women that I interviewed. He posits that he chose the Alijuna way of living. However, throughout the entire interview, a *mestiza* identity emerges. He never mentions the Wayuu as conquered or defeated peoples. He constructs strategic periphrasis to avoid constructing subaltern representations. His words are very cautious and provide an answer to Spivak's question on the possibility of subalterns to speak. After talking for approximately 45 minutes in front of a camera and videotape, Segundo answers a question that I make him about his relationship with political parties. He emphatically states that he has never been involved in politics, that he has never been a protester. Neither him, neither his son in law, neither me believed the veracity of these words, but he wanted that I transcribed them.

His *mestiza* identity leads him to state that he gave the opportunity to his daughters of exercising their agency. All of them chose their husbands, while he also states that "any wife is as any woman." During occasional moments of silence, one of his sons in law, Mervin, who is Carmen's husband, directs the interview by formulating those questions that the Wayuu expect the anthropologist to do. Mervin always wears a T-shirt with the icon of the Federación de Campesinos de Venezuela (Peasants' Federation of Venezuela). He married Carmen González, a Wayuu woman who is Segundo's daughter, and he decided to become Wayuu. In Maracaibo, I always met Mervin at the González's family home in Los Olivos. He put a small table

with a plastic tablecloth in the garden of their house, and occasionally he sells candies and cigarettes to the neighbors. To meet his wife Carmen at their house is almost a miracle. She is always involved in activist commitments that make she always be traveling throughout La Guajira, El Zulia State and Venezuela. In 1997, I met Carmen González for the first time. She was a leader of a *barrio*'s organization seeking for governmental funds for a Wayuu artisan organization that later founded a Spanish-Wayunanki bilingual school. Today she is still a Wayuu woman leader. Now she receives a governmental salary for accomplishing her activist dreams.

After I finished my fieldwork in La Guajira in March 2003 and I began to do my homework in San Diego, the importance of kinship relationships for the Wayuu way of making politics became evident for me. I realized that kinship crossed all their stories as well as all my contacts that led me to specific interviews while erasing other potential voices. Without I noticed it, while I was living in La Guajira, the majority of the Wayuu people's voices that I transcribe are crossed by their kinship organizational principle. The voices that I decided to directly transcribe Noelí, Carmen, Gladys and Segundo belong to the same Wayuu Uriana clan.

S.A.: How did you come to Los Olivos?

S.G.: I was young I worked in the haciendas, when you earned five reales each day. The hacienda where I worked was close to the Moján's rancho, and on Saturdays I went to sleep at their house. Once Rodriguez León said to me, "Nephew, in this hacienda you are killing your life, this does not work for fucking anything, let's go to Maracaibo. Why don't you leave the hacienda?" And I went to the Moján's rancho, which was in the 29 km. Then I got a job in the airport in Maracaibo. I earned five

bolívares each day. It was around the year 1943. At that time, around ten o'clock in the morning, my stomach always made noise because of my hunger. I worked seven months in the airport, with a pick. It was also necessary to build trenches. Well, and one morning, on Monday, a señor asked me how much did I earn, and he offered me a new job where the dead people are dismembered. They paid 9.50 the day. I know that department as the palm of my hand. Then, one Saturday I asked for a leave permit, and they gave it to me. I also worked in the company of electric power earning 12 reales. But there I had trouble with the foreman: "Come on the second of January in order to report you in the department."

On the second of January, my brother told me, "Come on, let's go and look for a new job." Around 10 o'clock, my brother and I went to a rancho, and we were looking around for a job when they asked us what were we doing, and we answered them that we sought work. "Ha, Ha. We couldn't find any job. You are not going to find one." When we are entering into the camp, a fat foreman, el señor Marcial, says, "What a great coincidence, the two men that we need come right there." They gave us rice, platano, coffee, and at one p.m. we left. I worked there for 26 years, and after 26 years, they didn't retire me, but they fired me. Somebody stole my stuff in San Jacinto when I worked as a plumber. I wrote and read. An older señorita taught all the children. She sought a notebook, she put me to sweep, and while I was working for her she taught me to write and to read. Nobody knew that I knew how to read and write.

Segundo's son in law, Mervin, interrupts and asks him to tell me about how he (Segundo) avoided becoming a slave.

S.G.: I walked with my two bunches of platanos. And a young señor tells me, “Chinito, I’ll give you one bolívar if you to take off these two cluster of platanos from the canoe for me.” But el señor Rafael seems that he already knew the trick. When I entered into the canoe, and they took off the chain, this señor, Rafael, says, “Don’t move that canoe!” And Rafael asks me, “Which one was the señor that offered you a bolívar for the cluster of platanos? “Look, give a bolívar to the chinito, and come with me.” Rafael took the young señor to prison. If I had said anything to Rafael, they would have taken me in the canoe. And at that time, the one who was taken, he died there, and nobody found him, nobody returned his body.

Mervin, Carmen’s husband asked again to Segundo, if he can tell the joke about the Wayuu slaves.

S.G.: They beat all those that made trouble with the plain part of the machete. And they had a dungeon and a bough. A bough means a piece of wood with two holes, they open it and put the feet, and they close it with a key. They slept like that, lying down with the legs like that. During Gomez and Isaías Medina Angarita’s governments the Wayuu were slaves. Rómulo’s government ended with all that vaina. There were only canoes, there were not roads.

S.A.: How is it that the Wayuu arrived there, to the haciendas of the south?

S.G.: They cheated them and they told them that they would have a job. And when they put the Wayuu in the canoe, they took them slaves. There was a Wayuu whose name was Seramer, and another one, I don’t remember now his name, they passed away many years ago, somebody made them drunken, and when they were drunken, they put them into the boat. But a chance made the boat break down, in San

leave me dead. I will go with you.” And they fled to La Repelona. Ricardo Gurazú was around them, he was keeping young sheep, and a young kid in a small loincloth passed close to him, and he marked the hot iron in the kid’s buttocks. When the kid’s mother saw that, she ran away to the wilderness since they arrived to La Repelona. They stayed at my home for two weeks to see if the police would capture the Wayuu man that marked the kid, but he did not come. Then they took the young Wayuu to Don Luis Valbuena’s house, and he took care of him, and he kept the kid with him. Because at that time, Don Luis had a good house, and when he saw me he always asked me to go to his house to sleep. “Don Luis, it seems that today you cannot sleep.” I said this to him when I saw his candle in the night. “Yes Segundo, I am thinking in things. What can I do? When I saw the kid I decided to open up a trial against him, but they could not put the glove on him.” Imagine that the el cacique El Torito was the brother of grandmother. And once we went to visit him, as if he was part of our family, El Torito, and he dispatched us under a tree. The rich people ate inside. Can you imagine? I looked at the poor servants, because El Torito had male and female servants. They sucked the bones and lick the plates. So, I am of Indian race, but when they are mean people I make them trouble. Their law is not for me. Mervin asks him to tell about the Wayuu law.

S.G.: Imagine that I have a daughter who is not married. And a rich Indian comes. He comes with a palabrero. And the palabrero says to me, “Segundo, how much do you ask for your daughter?” And the palabrero comes again when the afternoon falls down. And somebody puts there two hammocks, where I will sleep, and where he will sleep. At the daybreak, he makes, - - “Ha, Ha, Ha. Are you awaked? Fulano

sends me. That how much do you ask for your daughter?" But because I love my daughter. I will not oblige her to sell herself. I call my daughter and I tell her, "See, Fulana, Fulano asks you." If the young woman says, "Look, father, I do not want to get married." Then I go and I say "Look, say to Fulano that my daughter does not accept. That she does not want to get married." Well, few days after, the rich Indian sends again the palabrero. "Segundo, you need to pay me the scorn that your daughter made me. And you need to give him animals for the price of the young woman. But if it is I, I will pay him the price of the young woman. And afterward I will send another palabrero in order to him return me my money. And for the price of the young woman. Because I did not send anybody. The issue of the servants is in La Guajira. I do not agree with the Wayuu people. The Wayuu people have good and bad things. I do not agree with selling the daughters. There is the case, of a tall, young man called Irino Tasin. He is Wayuu. One day, it was my guarding day, on Saturday, no it was not on Saturday, it was on Monday. When I came from the barracks. He says to me, "Segundo, how many daughters do you have?" I say to him, "Many." "Are they good lays?" "These are not questions to make to me" "Look, sell me one." "And do you have any evidence that I sell my daughters? With these words, if I bring you to a law court, you will not run with good luck." "And what will you tell to your defender?" "That I did not want to sell my daughter." "But you the Indians, you sell the daughters" "Aha, because I am an Indian I will eat shit? You need to respect me, my family, and not play with me like that." On Tuesday I gave up the night guard. During the day I worked in the Victoria urbanization. They came with the truck and the compressor so that I would break the asphalt. When they came off from the truck they

said to me, “Hombre, father in law, I want to buy a daughter from you. “Since when?” And we began to fist fight. “Look Chacín, go and tell to Dr. Belford that I gave you a toletazo (beating) and tell him why I did that.” When I came back I sought the union representative, and I explained him why I gave a toletazo to Chacín. And Dr. Belford, who was the one who more made the orders, “Look Segundo, you made something that is badly done; you gave him a toletazo in his ribs and not in his face.” They suspended him on Friday. They fired Chacín, because he was rough, and he did not respect his mates. “You can retire.” “You see Chacín, the only enemy that I have it’s you. The day that I would appear left dead in one of those sidewalks, if something happens to me, you would be investigated. And do not provoke me.”

S.A.: What does the Wayuu woman represent for you, Segundo?

S.G.: What does the Wayuu woman represent for me? A wife as any other one. I prefer the law from here. But the Wayuu man, he has the woman as a servant. She has to bring water, wood, cook, take the animals to graze. They buy the woman in order to have her as a woman and as a servant. Now, I do not do that. Because I already chose. I lived here with my wife who has ten months that she already passed away. When would a Wayuu man make a house like this one to his wife? Never. He would only build a small palm ranchito (shack). And I say to my children that this house is not mine but that it is theirs. Because at any moment I will bury the cachos (horns), and what will I take? Nothing. What do I bring when I came? Nothing.

S.A.: How did the Wayuu live when you were young, Segundo? Was it different from now?

S.G.: How did the Wayuu live when I was young and how does he live now? There were not fields like now, there was only stone. They made chicha (corn beverage) to drink and they stored the rest for another other day. It was a very difficult situation. But then the forest helped you. Because there were not towns or houses, only virgin wilderness. In La Repelona there were tigers and there were many rabbits, iguanas, armadillos, ant eaters, and they ate all these animals. And also they knocked down the wilderness in order to sow corn and yucca. And now it is not like that. Now they live in big houses and they have servants and all that. They pay a salary to a servant in order to be served. Can you figure? When somebody dies, the animals that he left, these animals are sacrificed in order to give food to the visitors in the funeral. In order to grow the animals where he goes, those animals are sacrificed. The dead man takes them with him. A dead man had me fucked for six months. Some times, when I was falling asleep, I was turning and turning in the hammock. Once I saw that he was in Mervin's bed, and he left through the window. And I saw him again, and he ran away by the door. And then he came one night with a very clear light, and I saw half a blurred figure, and then I saw an entire figure, and I sat in the hammock .He could be at a distance like from here to that plant. And then I tell him, "In the name of all-powerful God, if you are a spirit, tell me in what form I can take you off from your grief, but if you are an accursed spirit, go and pay your debt in hell, and do not go hang on scaring those who are alive." And he did not answer me, so, as I had a cane to hammock me, I stood up and I gave him a toletazo, and he disappeared. I was not afraid. And at the following night, he came back. The light was dim, I saw his legs, but I did not see his face, but when I called Mervin, in order for him to also see the

spirit, he disappeared. Then I had a dream that told me to beg to God. Kneel yourself, and ask God to make the angels to scare him away. And that was it. I came down from the hammock, and I kneeled, and I asked all-powerful God to help me and to scare away that bad spirit, which was mortifying me. I asked him with all my faith and devotion. And more. That was all. And that's how God saved me many times. Once I was drowning in the Lora River. I went to the river to fish, and I was almost ready to come back, and at the moment that I began to return I fell in and tried to swim and nothing, and I could not swim, and I tried to arrive to a plant in order to rest, "All-powerful Señor God. I leave my life in your hands." And I let the river carry me. But I stumbled with a wire. I hung up like a bat. I swam more than one hundred meters hanging up on the fence. And what was that? God that saved me. The same god of the Wayuu is the god of the Alijunas, but what happens is that the name of the Wayuu God is Malewia. And they also believe in the Devil, the Devil. They believe that God had a mother, María.

S.A.: Can you please tell me about the origin of the Wayuu?

S.G.: Do you want to know about the origin of the Wayuu? They do not really know where they exit from, but they tell the joke, the elder people of before times tell a joke, and they say that when God came to the Earth, the Wayuu woman was picking up dates, and then God called her and told her, "Come here, I will teach you." And then the Wayuu woman, told him. "Leave me picking up dates in peace," and she did not pay attention to him. And they tell that's why the Wayuu did not go ahead. The Wayuu were dispersed. But if the Wayuu peoples would be united, with military

barracks and vainas (masculine sexual organ), never the Spanish people could never...

S.A.: Do you want to say something else about your life, Segundo?

S.G.: About my life? All what I have to say is that my life is my work. When I worked in the hacienda, OK, one worked in the hacienda from six to six until the wilderness darkened. Then I worked in a hacienda in the coast of the lake. It was called El Taleron, of Antonio Perez; only Wayuu, only Wayuu. Around the hacienda there was moat that we could not leave. When the sunset the corporal arrived. He did not pay for what the Wayuu did. But thanks God that Palmarito there was a civil authority called Jesus. They call him Chuchu as a nickname. The Wayuu had a large debt. "You have a lot of debts." "Let's go." "A Saturday I asked my for my bill. They negotiated me. They paid me. When the night arrived the Wayuu began to sing in Guajiro. When everybody was snoring. Let's go, let's go. Walking the total night we arrived at sunrise at Palmarito. I looked for El Senor Chuchu. "Sí, we come running away from El Taleron because with that huge bill that we couldn't take it off. And they don't pay us what we do in the day. But they charge us three reales for every day of eating. Send us to Maracaibo." "Look, disgracefully that hacienda belongs to the county of El Zulia. If it would have been part of Merida, I could have ordered for the owner or who is in charge, and he would have to pay the days to the poor Wayuu." Then when the boat arrived, a certain Barboza. "look Barboza, bring these Wayuu for me, and you throw them away in Maracaibo for me, and don't credit the passage." "I have worked in the coast in the Encontrado river, in Santa Barbara I am 86 years old

in the month of July I will have 87 and I say that I will arrive to the 100 years old because I do not have yet any intention to die.”

S.A.: Have you be involved in politics? What do you think about politics?

S.G.: I do not have any opinion, because as my uncle Julio said, every head is a hole, and every head think as it wants. That’s what I say. Once I asked to him, “What do you think Julio, which is the best political party?” “I cannot tell you,” he answered me. If I would exist at that age when the Spanish came, I would have gathered a group, an army. Had the Wayuu not been divided, because they were dispersed all around the territory, and the Spanish men ... And we the Indian, we also are brave. We the Indians we have arrows and macanas. But if we would have been united, the Spanish could not have done what they did.

S.A.: Have you ever belonged to a political group?

S.G.: No I never was a protester.

S.A.: Do you relate the struggle against the Spanish people to contemporary fights?

S.G.: In my opinion, we are better now. Because now the government promotes equality. In El_Panorama journal they said that Chávez is son of a black and an Indian, and that the place that he occupies did not belong to him. And I say, “And it is not the black also a Venezuelan? Is not the Indian also a Venezuelan? Is not the blond also a Venezuelan? As a Venezuelan I also have the right to order. The Indian, the Black, we all are Venezuelans, and as Venezuelans, we have the right to order.

S.A.: What do you think about contemporary indigenous movements?

S.A.: I do not think anything. Because you know that with my blindness and deafness I do not participate in anything. And they can be saying nuisances, and I believe that I do not hear them. Because I do not hear them.

C. New *Mestiza* Citizenship

I think that we live in two worlds. Eh ... we need to not forget that we belong and we come... that our origin is not in the Spanish world while in the Wayuu world, but yet, as I told you, we cannot take too much distance or isolate us, we need to be conscious that we are very immersed in this other society, that is the dominant hegemonic society, dominant between breakers, no.
Edixa Montiel¹

Introduction

Wayuu women activism began in Maracaibo. Living between the regions of Maracaibo, the capital city of the El Zulia state, and La Guajira for many generations, the Wayuu people have known how to maintain their culture and their customs while at the same time transforming them. The Wayuu women are citizens of Venezuela, workers of the oil-producing region, and women of their bi-national ethnic group. They embody a mestiza identity which is the fruit of the cultural confrontation between La Guajira and Maracaibo. To examine their activism challenges homogenous conceptions of citizenship. Their story as activists will open up a space for understanding how the Wayuu women leaders have recently repositioned themselves both within the ethnic and the national society.

The Wayuu women construct their mobilizing identity by drawing on their society's feminine organizational principle. At the end of the decade of the seventies,

¹ Edixa Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracibo, July 1998: "Yo pienso que nosotros vivimos en dos mundos. Eh...no debemos olvidarnos de que pertenecemos y venimos...de que nuestro origen está no en el mundo español sino en el mundo Wayuu, pero ya tampoco, como le decía, no podemos alejarnos demasiado ni aislarnos, tenemos que ser conscientes que estamos muy sumergidos en esta otra sociedad, que es la sociedad occidental y dominante, dominante entre comillas, no."

after the death of the last Wayuu *caciques* and the Wayuu social movement 's disenchantment with modern *indigenismo*, the Wayuu women found in their traditional identity a powerful legitimating tool that empowered themselves as the reproducers and preservers of their society. At one hand, they mobilized as Venezuelan indigenous women and as citizens and workers of the hegemonic nation state. How did the Wayuu feminine organizational principle interact with the Venezuelan indigenous citizen-subject identity? By what means do these women exercise power in order to pursue their objectives? What forms of institutionalization do they utilize? How do they view the effectiveness of their methods and the likelihood of the results? How do the Wayuu women subvert the *indigenista* identification? Do their strategies of power enrich the citizen-subject and the citizenship definitions at the core of the contemporary debate on neoliberal free markets' tension between democracy and fascism? What can we learn from them about the female citizen-subject formation within globalization contexts.² Finally, who are they? The question regarding the role of the nation state and the international civil society and global free market crosses their experiences.

The core of subject formation within modern societies is the pursuit of direct participation. Fernando Calderón does not only refer to the traditional definition of citizenship, he also refers to the producer-actor's properties such as the capacity for self-determination and representation in regards to requests and interests.³ The

² The "producer-actor" in Alain Touraine's words that are simultaneously "actors" and "subjects."

³ Fernando Calderón, Martín Hopenhayn, Ernesto Ottone, *Esa esquivia modernidad: desarrollo, ciudadanía y cultura en América Latina y el Caribe*, (Paris: Unesco; Caracas, Venezuela: Editorial Nueva Sociedad, 1996), p. 9.

relationship between the logic of identity and female subject formation as reflexive and reproductive historicity is the point at stake. To identify themselves as Wayuu women challenges both the indigenous and the national society's female identities, while it opens up multiple questions about how their mobilization (re) produces power relations. It is within the perspective of examining how the Wayuu women experienced their activism within the contemporary process of ethno genesis of their society and the re-foundation of the Venezuelan nation state that I study their social movement. They struggle for their gendered and cultural recognition within the ethnic and Venezuelan societies' contemporary processes of community making, which stem from the contestations of the particular to the universalizing normative of globalization.

I am interested in learning how they exercised their citizenship. The experiences of citizen-based indigenous women's activism cannot discard the theme of female subject formation, while the theme of their subjectivation cannot discard the theme of citizenship. The Wayuu women actor-subjects that contest exploitation and domination are the expression of both a national state and an indigenous culture which informs their actions and shapes their subjectivity. This is the reason why their identification is multiple, but is not fragmented. In Sandoval's terms, the Wayuu women are radical *mestizas*. Within their social experiences, they confront power relations that subject them, and against which they rebel, using strategies stemming from the very process that individualizes them.

How does female subject formation work for the Wayuu women leaders?

Gender and ethnic relations are not easy. Democracies constructed around the nation, ethnic groups constructed around tradition, and social movements constructed around politics of identity often draw on women's roles as women to introduce them in the new community. In the case of the modern nation-state, the sophisticated circumstances that shape the Wayuu women's ethnic struggles as national work- and citizen-subjects and as indigenous women operate simultaneously as processes of differentiation and of homogenization. As happened with the *indigenista* politics of assimilation, the will to create a homogeneous ensemble where all citizens recognize each other as exchangeable citizens and producers/consumers is imposed on everybody to the detriment of each one's singular identifications within the nation state's politics of community making. This has been the case of the indigenous populations of Mexico as well as Venezuela. In order to become modern they needed to assimilate a way of doing things alien to themselves. But women had a specific space within these politics. Gamio introduced women as reproductive bodies within his *mestizaje* politics. Pan-American *indigenismo* reduced indigenous women's participation within this homogenizing process to mothering the national new mestizo subject. I now ask how indigenous women position themselves within the ethnic and national discourses embodied in the 1999 new social contract of Venezuela. I argue that the Wayuu women appropriated the Republican and *indigenista* gendered identification of indigenous women and overturned it, both within the indigenous and national spaces.

Different cultures have re-emerged on the face of the universalizing model of globalization. The Wayuu activist women embody their agency through two overlapping models of subjectivation, the national and the Wayuu. They embody a double cultural movement. Within their associations in Maracaibo, they affirm themselves as subjects who identify with while defending their indigenous culture. Within the national sphere, they introduce the need to recognize difference. They identify themselves as Venezuelan indigenous women. The Wayuu women behave in an ambiguous and *mestiza* way. Drawing on their reconstruction of Wayuu women's traditional reproductive roles, they mobilize as indigenous women and as citizens of the national state. Their political strategy enriches homogenous epistemological and political forms of democracy.

Drawing on traditional conceptions of modern democracy, primarily characterized by equal peoples' elections of their representatives, the Wayuu women organized in order to "restore" their society. At the same time, they have repositioned themselves as women within their society, which they depict as distorted by the *Criolla* society. The modern notion of politics is directly related to the citizen's participation within the election of representatives. The notion of politics more generally accepted within the traditional field of political science, as Max Weber states, is extraordinarily vast and comprehends all types of activities that one executes toward the direction of influencing what at present we name as "the State."⁴ I will follow a Venezuelan jurist's modern conception of politics. Pedro Bracho lives in

⁴ Max Weber, *Le savant et la politique*, (Paris: Plon, 1959)

Maracaibo and he is profoundly linked to the Wayuu as well as to the Venezuelan Bolivarian Republic's contemporary process of national and ethnogenesis. In his text *Estudio Comparativo de los Gobiernos*, Bracho describes the Venezuelan State's juridical understanding of the political order. "Politics is the human activity that in juridical terms orders human social life. The government of men in an organized community derives from this notion of politics, which consists in actions executed with the intention of influencing, obtaining, conserving, extinguishing or modifying power, the organization or the ordering of the community."⁵ Bracho, drawing on Gramsci and Habermas, differentiates between the government and its actors' activity from the activity of the citizens that he qualifies as "social." The oil producing condition of the Venezuelan national state makes hyper-visible that in this case, the articulation between the state formation and the private spheres generates an extremely blurred and *mestiza* identification of the political and the social spheres, as Touraine has established for South American populisms.

The complex socio-political interaction between Wayuu women leaders and the national political order makes it inconvenient to draw on classical conceptions of the political, like Weber and Bracho's. The indigenous women's bridging role between the clan, the *linaje* and the nation does not fit into scientific political formulations. Giddens offers an interesting conception for understanding the effacement that the Wayuu women's organizing represents for Weber's political theory. Giddens states that, "political power" presupposes a "dialectical control"

⁵ Pedro Bracho, *Estudio Comparativo de los Gobiernos*, (Maracaibo: Universidad del Zulia, 2001), p. 10.

between simultaneously autonomous and dependent individual or collective contexts of interaction.⁶ By articulating Giddens' way of conceiving political control to Foucault's microphysics of power, we can open up an operative space for examining the Wayuu women's repositioning within the indigenous social movement, as well as to examine the women organization's use of resources in order to consolidate their agency within contemporary ethnic and neo-liberation processes of community making. Pateman helps to understand the power relations behind the inscription of the national and ethnic nations, and the crossing hierarchies that men and women, as fathers and mothers of the patria, experience at the refoundational moment of the *mestiza* nation.

The articulation between the Venezuelan national state's oil production and the use of the land generated a specific way of identifying the territory and its resources for the exercise of modern citizens' sovereign rights through the state's channels. The Wayuu leaders, both women and men, explicitly propose a new citizenship in order to interact with the national state. According to Touraine's notion of power, political actors (who are individuals, collectivities or institutions) try to use their power, which he understands as their will of influencing through participation. Political actors seek to define the direction of the political practice enacted by the state and its agents. How these actors attempt to influence the state delimits citizenship's dominion. Thus, instead of thinking about subjects identified by belonging to specific national states, the Wayuu women are *mestiza* citizens who

⁶ Anthony Giddens, *The constitution of society: outline of the theory of structuration*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984).

construct learning identities in process. The capacity to produce effects through commitments, consensus and negotiations are the political actions enacted by the Wayuu women leaders. Their gendering constructions bridge the ethnic group and the nation. As mothers of children who, according to their matrilineal identity, will always be Wayuu, the Wayuu women do not require the homogenization of the liberal democracy in order to (re) produce the ethnic as well as the national new *mestiza* subject. Exchanges can be done (and are done) by the Wayuu women through negotiations that are politically structured through “love” to their children who are often the fruit of *mestizaje*. According to feminist studies, capitalist modernization’s irruption within matrilineal societies has most devastating effects than within other contexts. How do Wayuu women address these problems?

Drawing on the articulation of these conceptions of power and examining social movements through Touraine’s historicity implies the possibility of a new relation between the actors that belong to the social sphere and the political system. The Wayuu women have embodied political actions in order to restore their imagined previous world both within the functioning of their society and the decisions of the state, while repositioning themselves as powerful women. Their experiences integrate the political dimensions of Sandoval’s and García Canclini’s proposals of reacting against neo-liberal globalization through “love” or “hybrid cultural consumption.”

From 1997 to 2003 I made a concrete study of civil associations in Maracaibo where the Wayuu women participate. In 1997, I was not interested in examining those associations whose members were only Wayuu women. On the contrary, I was interested in those associations where women or men of other indigenous and *Criollo*

groups could also participate. I was especially interested in these differences because of two reasons. On the first hand, it would propitiate me to understand similarities and differences between participants' activism. In fact, while observing the predominance of certain objectives within diverse forms of groupings, I was interested in correlating their objectives and their way of interacting both within the groups and in relationship to the national and regional state's institutions. In 2000, I changed my research strategy. I decided to compare and contrast these civil organizations with the Venezuelan Indigenous Wayuu Women Network (WWN). From 1997 to 2000, these two organizing spheres, the civil associations and the network, were separated, while between 2000 and 2005, the presence of the WWN blurred the civil associations' previous formal limits. The network became a social movement at the very core of the Wayuu's process of ethnogenesis throughout the Zulia state, and throughout the national state as well.

Conducting social research within the Wayuu population required me to make explicit the differences. I decided to open up the difficulty with all the women and men that I interviewed and with whom I worked. We agreed that to acknowledge misunderstandings would be my starting point, a premise that often allowed for the bridging of awkward complicities through laughter. Many informal gatherings accompanied the systemic research of the information that I am now writing. We spoke of life in the *barrio*, the problems with the Guardia when passing through the border with their merchandise that would be informally sold in the mercados. We chatted on how every day it becomes more difficult to acquire the raw materials for weaving their products. I took notes publicly, and placed the tape-recorder in a visible

and accessible space while interviewing them. Since January 2003, I decided to introduce a concrete manifestation of my own motherhood by having my son Pablo make all the videotapes that support this dissertation. The participatory research work in Maracaibo was extended by two travels to the Alta and Media Guajira in the Colombian and Venezuelan sides of La Guajira. Carmen González's invitation let me make these travels in December and March of 2003.⁷ "So that you can see and tell it there, in the United States. So that you can explain them," Carmen told me.

In order to select the women, that I interviewed from 1997 to 1999 and with whom I exchanged opinions and experiences in relationship to the Bolivarian process from 2000 to 2003, I took into account three characteristics: to be women, to belong to the Wayuu nation, and to participate within a civil association.⁸ From 2000 to 2003, I specifically worked with the personal story of three of these 17 women. This research gave birth to a qualitative more than to a quantitative ethnography.

Drawing on my activism with Venezuelan women, and on my professional experiences both with the university and the bi-national governmental politics as well, I approached the members of the associations (re) membering a common and shared space. Many of us lived in the Maracaibo *barrio* of San Jacinto. When visiting El Zulia, I have always stayed in this *barrio*. My friend Mabel, with whom I shared activism in Uruguay that led us to be exiled in Venezuela, lives in San Jacinto. Mabel

⁷ During this period, Venezuela lived the pressure of a three-month oil company workers and industry owners' strike for overthrowing the elected president Hugo Chávez.

⁸ Age, formal education or birthplace has not been taken into account, although my research made me afterward believe that these features constitute significant variables. I have been especially interested on approaching both the board members as well as the more flexible membership of the associations, while at the same time I differentiate their opinions. From 1997 to 1999 I interviewed 17 Wayuu women. This numeric limitation was imposed by my researching schedule, by the difficult transit conditions of La Guajira, or simply, because of unpredicted conditions every day.

is at present time a professor of some of the young Wayuu women that I interviewed in 1997 and that are in 2005 graduate students of the Department of Political Sciences of the Universidad del Zulia. They are regional leaders and occupy both Wayuu and Venezuelan relevant political positions. While crossing the street that separates Mabel's house from the public telephone, I often saw Zenaida's nieces and nephews playing; she knew if Mabel or I were at home by noticing if the old Malibu was parked on the street, under the shade of a tree. These relationships changed when in August 1998 I told them that I would go to study to the United States. In December 1998, when I went to Maracaibo after the Ethnic Studies program at UCSD already accepted me, the Wayuu women that live in the *barrio* of San Jacinto showed a great interest in my stories about U.S. ethnic relations. However our previous friendship suddenly was blurred by an ambiguous interest in "the other U.S. ethnic." Their explicit rejection of anthropological researches of their society has always been a statement marking any research of them. Only my exotic condition as an exiled Uruguayan woman working as they, to achieve a doctoral education, allowed from 2000 to 2003 some sort of collaboration. At the same time, when in August 1998 they knew that I would travel to San Diego, the Uruguayan Sandra, who until that moment was a political exiled woman welcomed by Venezuelans, became a U.S. sponsored anthropologist, and things did not work the same way.

Indigenous women's forms of making politics: weaving, selling, and dreaming

Women were present within the 1940s struggles for the creation and bettering of the *barrios* Ziruma and Los Olivos. But in the 1980s they appeared as the central

subjects of many merchant mobilizations. The great number of Wayuu women who were and are street vendors can explain through quantitative arguments their visibility within Maracaibo merchants' associations. However, their presence within this movement can also be understood through the Wayuu's history. In fact, while the Wayuu women have always been involved within the regional and national indigenous movements, they have especially participated within two great types of organizations: (i) the struggles for the *barrio* and (ii) the struggles for the recognition of their professional activity.

According to the regional chief of the Venezuela Neighbors' School, Carlos Atencio, a great number of these associations or *juntas* have lost their 1970s relative autonomy from the government and political parties. In the 1980s, the leaders of these originally independent associations belonged to or were influenced by Venezuelan political parties. "There is not any study on these neighbors' associations, but according to the founders of these movements, 70% of these groups are at present times penetrated by political parties."⁹ In order to differentiate themselves from the older neighbors' associations that in the 1980s and 1990s were represented as captured by the political parties, many of the leaders of the new groups founded civil associations. "In opposition to the neighbors' groups, civil associations are less

⁹ The asociación civil differentiates itself a very little from the neighbors associations. The fundamental differences can be found in the juridical terrain. The former are guided by the Civil Code, while the latter are guided by the Constitution (Art. 70) and by the No. 1 Partial regalement of the Organic Law of the Municipal Law. By drawing on the Civil Code, the civil associations provide more flexibility to the individuals' activity within the association.

politicized in terms of political parties' influences within their activities. That's why now some look more for the civil associations."¹⁰

The neighbors' groups and the civil associations have different legal forms of organizing and functioning. The neighbors' associations became part of the state's links with the Venezuelan barrios while the individuals organizing and functioning in the civil associations draw on specific individuals' preferences. The civil associations made an explicit principle of their independence from the state and the political parties. The neighbors' associations, which need to follow explicit constitutional rules, distribute their roles through vertical power relationships that relate the group to a specific state-led legal and spatial order. Within the neighbors' associations, there is pyramidal structure with a chair, which has plenty of power and makes the main decisions, and an executive board. Other members have a decreasing influence on the decisions. As their name expresses, the civil associations often draw on the firm will of their membership for remaining independent of political parties and work through more horizontal relationships. In addition, the nature of the civil associations does not limit their objectives, as happens with the neighbors' associations, which act according to pre-established legal objectives that the state controls.

My initial 1997-98 research made a preliminary census of the civil associations of Maracaibo where Wayuu women participated. This step led me to the street vendors' civil associations as well as to the WWN. Which are the relationships between these Wayuu women leaders and the identity-based socio-political

¹⁰ Carlos Atencio, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

participation that characterizes “new” social movements? How do the civil associations differentiate them from the state-led neighbors’ associations?

I will first introduce the field of action and the denomination of these groups.

The merchants’ civil associations are interest groups where the Wayuu women constitute the majority of the membership. In the WWN, on the contrary, women organize themselves for restoring their society while searching for the nation-state’s recognition of the Venezuelan indigenous’ rights as indigenous populations:¹¹

- ACCIUP: Civil Association of Independent United Merchants of Las Playitas.¹²
- AUCIEZ: Unique Association of Indigenous Merchants of the Zulia State.¹³

These two associations are organized drawing on professional and quotidian activity of the Wayuu women. They stem from the long history of indigenous efforts for the acceptance of their commercial activity in Maracaibo. In 1997, their objective was to organize the merchants in defined spaces. They also sought to have the Wayuu street vender recognized as formal merchants within the city. They looked for ending their ambulant activity. In order to pay for the commercial fees and the place where the market was established, the members organized themselves without any lucrative means. Maintaining cleanliness, policing, and bettering the services of the market required their organizing. They struggled for all the workers’ rights and for juridical help for the merchants who became the owners of the spaces that they occupied for

¹¹ A second step of my research led me to additional questions correlating the Wayuu migration to Maracaibo to these leaders’ understanding of their female restoring roles within the Wayuu society. I attempted to answer to this question on my chapter on the Wayuu social movement.

¹²Asociación Civil de Comerciantes Independientes Unidos de las Playitas.

¹³Asociación Única de Comerciantes Indígenas del Estado Zulia.

years. Their venue was located in the market, which is in the old center of Maracaibo that at present is in the southern area of the city. The members of AUCIEZ were not only Wayuu women. Marabinos and Marabinas (understood as Alijuna by the Wayuu people), Colombians, Lebanese and Syrians, are also part of the association. At the beginning, when it was founded in 1996, the association was composed only by Wayuu women. They were the greatest number of merchants. In 1999 they were only 37, a decreasing number in relation to the 70 Wayuu women that were members of the association at the moment of the creation of the group. This trend showing diminishing numbers of Wayuu women within the association can be understood, among other reasons, as the result of the decision of some Wayuu women to move and set down their business at the new center of Maracaibo. They believed that they would sell more merchandises in the new business district. When they moved, non-Wayuu merchants established themselves in the old market and became members of the association.

- ASOMEVICAR: Civil Association for Bettering the Environment of the Virgen del Carmen barrio.¹⁴ In June-July of 1998, an association already functioning in one of the greatest Wayuu *barrios* of the county of Ildefonso Vásquez got registered as “ASOMEVICAR.” The association was founded drawing on the slogan “Only those who dream have the possibility of constructing realities,” which was directly informed by the Zapatistas.

¹⁴ Asociación Civil de Mejoramiento de Viviendas del Barrio Virgen del Carmen.

- ASOVETE: Neighbors Association of the Terepaima *barrio*.¹⁵ It was formed between 1984-1988, while looking for solving the different problems of the *barrio* of Terepaima.

The two latter associations are *barrio*'s organizations. Their main objective was to look for bettering their living conditions, provide basic infrastructures to the *barrios*, and organize the community around these struggles. They stem from neighbors' and community integration programs promoted by the government for the population of the entire national territory. Within a period of ten years, the groups became autonomous from the state-led organizing. Drawing on the learning, examples, and support, which the experiences of the neighbors' associations provided them, their membership separated from the state in order to negotiate with the state. Their members are women or men, Wayuu and not Wayuu.

- CDC: Civil Association of the Club of Ladies of Cujicito.¹⁶ This association also belongs to a *barrio* of the County of Ildefonso Vásquez. Their objectives were to organize cultural and sport activities, to support the government health programs, and to struggle for water and light infrastructures in the *barrio*.

- CSBC: Civil Association of the Health Committee of the Catatumbo *Barrio*.¹⁷ This organization was founded on July 1993, also at the county of Ildefonso Vásquez. Their main objectives were the defense of the health rights, the incorporation and participation of the community in public policies, the protection of the environment

¹⁵ Asociación de Vecinos del barrio de Terepaima.

¹⁶ Asociación Civil del Club de Damas de Cujicito.

¹⁷ Asociación Civil del Comité de Salud del Barrio Catatumbo.

and natural resources, and the restoration of indigenous and popular medical practices.

These two associations mobilize for the barrios' health. The two groups have in common that their members were only women and that they privileged the struggle against diseases and epidemics. The Club of Ladies of Cujicito organized at the beginning around cultural and sport activities. Only three women (two Wayuu and one Marabina) comprised the club. After March 1997, the women focused their efforts around health issues, while attempting to become the new neighbors' association.

- JALINAYA: Indigenous Association of Wayuu Art.¹⁸ This is an association that defended traditional activity of Wayuu women, as well as general values of the Wayuu population, in a broader sense. Their aim was the revaluation of the Wayuu ancestors' knowledge, history, myths, and values. They also looked for the self-administration of the Wayuu artisans, while understanding their art activity as a means for reinforcing their Wayuu identity. They also sought the promotion, creation and functioning of Wayuu traditional art schools. The members of JALINAYA were not exclusively women. While the organization functioned in Maracaibo, its action extended all along the peninsula Guajira.

- RMIW: Civil Association of Venezuelan Wayuu Indigenous Women Web (WWN).¹⁹ In 1996, their first venue was established in Maracaibo. They defined their field of action all around Venezuela and beyond the national borders. They supported

¹⁸ Asociación Indígena del Arte Wayuu.

¹⁹ Red de Mujeres Venezolanas Indígenas Wayuu, WWW.

the communities in their efforts for organization around women's and children attention and to maintain the Wayuu culture. As Pocaterra signaled, their foundational document defines "51 objectives which represent more a conductor line to be followed, a general view to adapt to the more compelling needs, as health, for example." In 1998, the network had 24 coordinating women, each one of them responsible for a specific program. In terms of concrete achievements, in 1997 they organized a popular cantina in one Wayuu barrio of the county of Ildefonso Vásquez. The cantina also approached the health problems of the county's Wayuu children. The group greatly engaged extensively with a cultural project for restoring the women's role and their weaving art.

But which are the actions and participation of the Wayuu women within these associations? Drawing on the Wayuu women's words, on the narration of their life's stories and on their experiences within the associations, we can discern the organization's formation process, the reasons for their foundation, and the ways in which women understand and enact their relations to the political parties and the regional and national state.

The women I interviewed label the political parties as "liars" or "corrupted." They describe the behavior of the members of the political parties with scorn. Seeking autonomy from them appears as a point of honor for all those interviewed. "Then, you know that always politicians are attacking the benefits and they deviate them to other places. We are those who struggle for the safety of the barrio and that the resources

really go to the barrios.”²⁰ By participating in an autonomous way, the associations sought to defend themselves and the rights of their respective communities, to be certain that the benefits that are allocated in the name of the communities will actually come to them. This differentiates them from party influenced organizations and their distance from the political parties is often expressed by the use of the personal pronoun “they,” to refer to them, while the pronounced use of the “I” and the “we” name themselves as members of the association or individually. “Oh man, I am not with them! They offer us ... they come to the *barrio* and tell us that they are going to help us. But everything is a huge lie. They never, never, help us. Look, I’ll tell you. When we went looking for him, he negated that was there. He negates him to us! No, no ... and that’s how it always works. Then, it’s not good for us to be with that party because they are liars.”²¹ It does not matter to which organization they belong; the Wayuu women have the same discourse. This disengagement from the parties does not mean that each woman does not have her preference for a political party, or that their personal stories are not profoundly engaged with the state. Often one sister participates with one party, her with another one, and so on. The goal is to cover all the possibilities that the national political system offers to improve their projects. Commercial, artistic, health or education issues, which belong to the sphere of women’s quotidian life, of their lived world, constitute the organizational axes of their associations.

²⁰ Fátima Martínez, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

²¹ Nira González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

The second trait of their participation within the association was related to their capability to denounce their problems and to transform these denunciations into institutional decisions. From 1997 to 1999, the associations did not organize many demonstrations. On the contrary, they enacted the direct denunciations, and the women directly went to those state institutions' officials in charge of solving their claims. They used personal contacts to make their petitions.

Each one of these associations coalesced around the more urgent difficulties that each community felt. Denunciations often led to the members' mobilizing outside the county as well as out of El Zulia state and the city of Maracaibo. Their struggles often acquired national visibility through the regional and national media. In this sense, the two merchants' associations were exceptional. Their main demands focused on the recognition of informal workers' rights. The Association of the Guajiro Market, AUCIEZ, achieved a space for their stores in the northern area of Maracaibo. ACCIUP, located in the center of the city, managed a similar framework. It struggled for the acquisition of the land where the market had operated for more than ten years. ACCIUP called for legislation: "I ask the government to intervene, to the legislators, the deputies, the senators, who are those who know more, in the county of Maracaibo, that are those who know how much does the land cost if they take into account that the buyers already have 15 years in the land that they will buy."²²

²² Ana González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

The other associations mainly sought the implementation of welfare politics. In the case of health, for example, the associations mobilized in order to realize the social and political promises that already existed in the paper. They sought services as well as the right to decent houses, roads, water service, and education. One demand centered around a popular cantina promoted by the Health Committee of Catatumbo. “At the beginning there were 20 kids. There was not more capacity, and the entire community kept a little bit of what they had in their houses. But we see that others could do that, like the State, the government, the county. Therefore we went to the county, which understood us and gave us a gift of 20.000 *bolívares*.²³ This allowed us to increase the number of kids that we assisted and to feed them twice a day.”²⁴ The community went ahead to achieve the permanent support of the regional state. In 2000 they obtained from the regional institutions the necessary products for making the children’s arepas, something that they could not have maintained constantly for a long term by themselves.

The cultural association JALIANAYA sought to achieve the foundation of a Wayuu school for restoring the Wayuu culture and arts, which show a decreasing trend within the urban environment. The association pressured the El Zulia state institutions responsible for the citizens’ welfare politics. These new Wayuu schools would also solve the economic problems of street venders who became the teachers. While this situation is related both to men and women, it implied women’s possibility for repositioning their traditional roles as educators and mothers. This last feature,

²³ In 1997, 20.000 *bolívares* were approximately 40 dollars.

²⁴ Amelia Martínez, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

which draws on women's traditional roles as educators and mothers can be observed within all these associations. The Wayuu women draw on the equal rights discourse of citizens in order to legitimate ethnic mobilization. They seek equal right to work and own property, to secure health care and education, to education, to acquire basic services such as water, electricity or transportation. Citizens' rights are specifically claimed, according to the field of action of the association, depending on whether they speak as the Wayuu, as workers, as women or as *barrio* resident. The association justifies their pronouncements and claims on the basis of the total population's equality. The case of the WWN illustrates this last feature. The network struggled for the formulation of a new *indigenista* law. At the beginning of president Chávez's administration they mobilized in order to achieve Wayuu Women Network's participation within the process of constitutional reform. The WWN requested new laws asserting the legitimacy of ethnic rights for the Wayuu the other indigenous communities. These objectives were achieved by establishing alliances with other indigenous and women's social movements, as well as by personal relationships with the government leaders. Again they avoided the mediation of political parties and privileged direct contacts.

When contacting government institutions, the women members of the associations did not participate in the same way as the political parties did. Those who represented the community in this mediation were the leaders of the groups. The leader was chosen by the community that she was going to represent. This leadership did not imply that the other members of the association do not participate. The group as a whole supported the leader's interventions in the public space, and when any

member had public access in their own every day environment, they spoke up. The leaders developed different grades of responsibility, but at the same time their leadership needed the recognition of the other members while becoming formalized through elections. Usually working hard earns a leadership role. “Here we made a revolution, because we did not agree with the previous association, then through this revolution I was born as the leader of all the merchants, and through this leadership I thus arrived here, to this office.”²⁵ The presence of a leader, often the one who began the organization, does not limit the working participation of the other members. The mobilization plans that they executed in the name of the group were the result of agreements and power relations among themselves.

While the members recognized that the state was not able to resolve many of their complaints, they pushed it as much as they could, while simultaneously they looked for alternative solutions. They requested interventions from members of different institutions, which could be governmental or not, in order to generate changes in the ways things were done (or not done). The necessity of organizing and mobilizing for achieving one concrete objective demonstrated that something was not working. The participation of the association implied the decision of organizing and mobilizing for finding a solution to these problems. But at the same time, it meant the decision to push forward the state institutions in order to go beyond their bureaucratic practices. In the process of organizing and mobilizing, the members of the association learned how to influence different types of institutions more efficiently.

²⁵ Natividad Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

How did the associations act in terms of influencing for social change? Their mobilizing organization for bettering their *barrios* or professional spaces (in the case of the informal merchants) implied a change in the public representation of each specific group. This representational change modified the power relationships between the group and the social environment where it acted. Thus, their organizing for specific issues led to the transformation of their political identification, in individual or collective terms. The WWN organized an event for the presentation of the Wayuu children that have not been registered at the civil authorities of the state's offices. This mobilization required the WWN women to explain both to the Wayuu and non-Wayuu population the importance of this civil step for these children. The objective was to give them the opportunity of potentially enjoying the rights of all citizens. The Wayuu women have appropriated this action of registering their children on the state's files, which can be understood as the point of departure for citizen subjectivation, in order to promote the ethnogenesis of their own society while at the same time repositioning themselves as powerful Wayuu mothers both within the indigenous and the national society. When the association of the Virgen del Carmen *barrio* tried to obtain the consolidation of roads, it shared the critical conditions of all Maracaibo citizens when the rain season comes, but it especially emphasized the critical conditions of the *barrios* where the Wayuu and other poor population live. When the associations of merchants mobilized for bettering their professional space, they also influenced the general opinion of these workers and of their working place usually seen as dangerous. Their success called for the mobilization of other peoples that learned that it is possible to be successful. "Then the other women of the *barrio*

saw that through their actual means they would never achieve to obtain twice a day food for their children. It is simple. They saw that the only way to make this work was by collaborating, and they came back to the *cantina*. Now they are participating.”²⁶

At the same time, their actions made it possible for the association’s members to behave as interpreters in relations with other institutions of the city. These groups often do not receive any funding from external sponsors. The Catholic Church cooperates with the Wayuu women’s organizing efforts by providing the essential means for the first mobilization. Often, after this initial moment, the members of the organizations separated from their original mentors, while maintaining good personal relations. The church can be decisive by providing the financial means for a project. It also developed workshops that the women often cited as factors that marked their mobilizing identity.

But mobilizing generated a learning process that substantially changed their original commitments. The self-organization of the Wayuu women promoted their direct intervention within social and political spaces. At the same time, this practice led them to bridge negotiating spaces between the state and the Wayuu society. By mobilizing for contesting social injustices they position state agents in a dependent relationship toward the associations. This created a negotiating space that, as time passed, modified the agency of the Wayuu women in relation to the ethnic and the state authorities. What can be understood as indigenous women’s subordinated petitions or as neo-liberal adjustments of social organizing, which assume the

²⁶ Nira González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

responsibilities of the state, became the opportunity that the Wayuu women kept in their hands. They approached the state institutions through a quotidian lens. A welfare struggle that directly involved the same populations that made the diagnosis became a political step that re-introduced the political within everyday practices. Nira, who belongs to the Ladies Club, said that “in my house, as an example, works an oral re-hydration unity group. We assist sick kids who have diarrhea problems and these kinds of things.” This program of Social Development, funded by the local state and a European NGO, has been facilitated by the support that the women of the club provided for its installation and implementation in the interest of the whole community.

Which were the conditions that pushed the transition from *indigenismo* to indigenous women’s social mobilization? Social mobilization stems from the problems that the population confronts, but does this mobilization always lead from the organizational and action level to the political empowerment of the women or the community? While the Wayuu women mobilized at first around a social problem, they insisted on the indigenous feature of their interventions. Behind their struggle for participating in order to better their living conditions, they demonstrated the specificity of indigenous exclusion and discrimination. The Venezuelan society rejects the Wayuu, as Isabel expresses. “But the indigenous populations were relegated as a second class citizen, and if we look to the woman, she is the last one to be taken into account.” “I hope that we could have ... that we could live better. I do not know how it could be, like a person, like human beings, but right now we are, for the other people, the people, we are like animals.” This discrimination against their

culture and their female condition led the rejected Wayuu women to group together in order to struggle the most efficiently that they could against everyday situations. Drawing on their will for being independent of the state, these associations were different from those of the 70s and the 80s. However, they also looked for direct contacts with the state and to receive as Venezuelan indigenous populations the same benefits that all Venezuelans deserve. On the 17 women that I interviewed, 11 among them had participated previously within different associations or movements, which could be the previous neighbors' associations, indigenous movements, peasants' organizations, church circles or political parties. However, all of them insisted on constructing a different way of contesting for their community. At the same time, those women participating for the first time in an association said that they did not do it before due to the political parties' mediation. For them, the parties made it impossible to achieve concrete benefits.

By acting beyond the political parties and unions, and entering in direct contact with the government's different institutions and private organizations, the Wayuu women reveal their will to modify the political order, a step that can be seen as the affirmation of a new type of citizen subject that parallels other new social movements. However, this is a very tricky statement. Venezuela has a long history of making politics through personal relations. While citizen subjects should be interchangeable homogenous human beings, the political culture of Venezuela has never believed or adopted this liberal democratic statement. Nevertheless, within a different conception of exchange and of democracy, which simultaneously looks for equality and difference rights, these women's personal contacts with the

representatives of the state acquired a subversive character. In Maracaibo, the Wayuu women have worked within civil and neighbors' associations, but in 1996 they founded the WWN, which according to its founding leader, "is a project that we had since long time ago and that was in a latent state, and that in 1995, at a special opportunity, could constitute its promoting team, and in 1996 we decided to register our statements ... but it is a very old idea."²⁷

The Maracaibo WWN was founded on 22nd of February 1996, at a meeting of Wayuu women professionals (teachers, merchants, lawyers, etc.) and students. They paralleled the U.N. organizational principles that the Venezuelan women social movement also embodied. Twenty-four women were chosen to co-ordinate the organization. Each person was put in charge of a distinct subject area. These included communications, music, identity documents, border-zone, research center, education, basic services and environment. As a new social movement's horizontal structure was adopted, no single person was in charge, apart from a general coordinator legally responsible for the organization. The legal document for registering the organization states 51 objectives.²⁸ Basically, the objectives cover the many dimensions of the indigenous peoples' struggles, and the net added a special focus on women and children's issues. However, the objectives laid out must not be taken as an indication of the organizations' platform of action. By mentioning many objectives in the legal

²⁷ Noelí Pocaterra, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

²⁸ These cover a wide range of issues including: (1) representing Wayuu women members of the network in front of public and private organizations, (2) contributing to recognition of indigenous rights in constitutional reforms, (3) promoting capacity-building of Wayuu women from childhood, (4) increasing Wayuu women's presence in decision making positions, (5) promoting and struggling to maintain indigenous women's role in transmitting culture and advising the family and (6) strengthening ethical and moral values of the family and community in general.

documents, the women secured that the network would not be prohibited from working on them in the future, just in case they would need to incorporate new mobilizing areas.

The coordinators held regular meetings to define the goals of the organization and their responsibilities. To make known their culture to a national audience or to occupy positions where they could be capable of promoting the Wayuu culture is often the first step for becoming a leader. Wayuu people who acquired public recognition drawing on their skill of Spanish speaking and writing headed the workshops. The coordinators also participated in workshop-seminars on different aspects of the Wayuu culture. The workshops aimed at filling up possible gaps amongst the coordinators, each having different backgrounds and relations to their culture. Some coordinators have a lifetime experience of defending and promoting their culture. Others, in the process of becoming professionals (lawyers, teachers, engineers) have rejected their Wayuu identity and background. There are also university students who value their culture, and want to keep and promote it while going to the university. Coordinators were also encouraged to attend meetings held by national or regional organizations on social policies and programs. In general, a priority was put on building Wayuu women's capacity. Time and again, emphasis was put upon the importance that Wayuu women be informed of state policies and initiatives. Once the structure of the Maracaibo network was in place (with regular events - happening at least weekly), the more prepared and dedicated coordinators started to hold meetings in other Wayuu communities.

The task of the Maracaibo coordinators, who referred to themselves as “*facilitadoras*,” as also the national women’s movement did and does, is basically to promote the multiplication of women’s organizations. In this early stage, the Maracaibo WWN was the heart of the network, responsible for initiating women’s organizations in other Wayuu communities. The general objective was to mobilize a larger number of Wayuu women, and constitute organizations similar to that of Maracaibo, although adjusted to reflect local needs and visions. With time, the Wayuu women constructed a network that in 2003 functioned as a whole, while separated from the Venezuelan women’s movement. Each locality addressed their particular needs through the means that they disposed. This dynamic changed drastically, when Pocaterra became the second vice-president of the Venezuelan National Assembly. The 1999 Constitution recognized the right to be respected as national citizens with customs, cultures and legal systems different from the national ones. The image of the indigenous representatives to the National Assembly Constituent, which was reproduced by all the media, signaled that the Venezuelan society embedded great changes from 1961, when the previous Constitution was approved, until 1999 when the Assembly declared the multiethnic constitution of the Venezuelan nation. The Wayuu women affirmed their indigenous identity by the making of a weaving. All Wayuu women who belong to the network publicly perform this weaving identity while evoking what the WWN is working towards. Weaving is women’s traditional occupation and it refers to the closeness, grandeur and unity expected within the WWN. By January 1997, a total of 80 Wayuu women network units were established across the Zulia state.

Emergence and expansion of the WWN

The emergence and rapid expansion of the WWN needs to be explained because its popularity is in many regards surprising. As a researcher carrying out fieldwork in the 70s wrote, “Guajiro women do not effectively develop efficient networks outside the altered but still dominant traditional kinship system to help them cope with their new environment.”²⁹ Watson-Franke explained the absence of women’s networks on account of the following:

Living in a matrilineal society, Guajiro women are born into a support group. Through birth they acquire the right to be a part of a group which is actually defined through them. They do not have to work at it. The pattern is predefined. This experience is consolidated by a strong matrilineal tendency in the residence pattern. It may be that the total reversal of this situation, that the city is too much of a shock to their predefined expectations to allow them to bond together again but on the basis of a totally different principle. This would imply a structural change, and, as I have argued earlier, changes of such a nature generally take a long time unless they are forced upon peoples.³⁰

My own analysis suggests that the Wayuu women have a role inside their clan that promotes their mediation between the Wayuu and the national society. Drawing from the presentation made earlier of what the anthropologists understand as the role of women’s exchange among men for the construction of the social, within the “traditional” Wayuu society, the concept of women grouping among themselves would be foreign to them at least in two ways. In the first place, women from

²⁹ Lawrence Watson-Franke and Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke, *Interpreting life histories: an anthropological inquiry*, (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1979), p. 105.

³⁰ Lawrence Watson-Franke and Maria-Barbara Watson-Franke, *Interpreting life histories: an anthropological inquiry*, p. 106.

different clans do not regroup among themselves. According to the Wayuu law, the person inviting is responsible for the well being of his or her guests. If something happens during the time together or on their way to the meeting point, the one inviting is accountable. When involving people from two different clans, reaching an agreement between the two parties can be quite costly. As one woman explained, "It is better to organize within the same clan, because each clan has their own secrets. There could also be a problem in a meeting and it is your responsibility. If something happens on their way you are assuming a responsibility, and you must respond for that person."³¹ However, in present days, the majority of Venezuelan indigenous populations live in urban spaces where gender relationships construct their women identity on the basis of their shared needs, even though belonging to a different clan could represent a handicap for their grouping. In the second place, it is not customary for women to be at the forefront in the public sphere. Women are seen as traditionally occupying a leading role only within the family boundaries. Why are women coming together at this point in time? Why is breaking away from tradition now acceptable? Or more generally, how does one account for the emergence of the WWW?

The WWN is in part a response to dissatisfaction. Political parties and indigenous organizations, for instance, have paid little attention to indigenous women. In the final document of the meeting of the Wayuu nation in Paragauipoa in March 1992, no specific mention of Wayuu women is made. The 47 recommendations cover a wide-range of issues from traditional medicine, bilingual

³¹ Silvia Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

education, recognition of Wayuu territory and language, participation in governmental programs, and promotion of arts and crafts. This document is quite representative of Wayuu organizations' preoccupation until the middle 1990s. There is the frustration and general feeling that indigenous support is usually wanted solely for election purposes. Politicians visit the community and make promises in exchange for political support; once the elections are over they forget their commitments. As indicated in the following remark, political parties are not viewed as an effective voice: "If we do not speak for ourselves, nobody will do it for us. Political parties do it only for votes. We interest them only for a moment."³² Thus, many Wayuu feel political parties do not represent them.

In my view, the emergence of the WWN indicates something more profound: it constitutes a new approach to the contemporary challenges of the Wayuu people; it reflects women's desire for another approach, one entirely distinct from political parties and indigenous organizations. If the WWN has this significance there are other factors, apart from dissatisfaction with traditional responses, which account for Wayuu women's responsiveness to the WWN. An important pre-requisite for the WWN is the changes in Wayuu traditions that have taken place as a result of women's greater contact with the dominant society. This has created an environment favorable for the WWN. This is part and parcel of the "opportunity" necessary for the emergence of a social movement.³³

³² Chiquinquirá Zárraga, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

³³ Charles Tilly, *Big structures, large processes, huge comparisons*, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1984).

Significant changes are occurring as a result of women's involvement in the dominant society. Most importantly, Wayuu women are occupying new positions; and in the meeting of cultures, percepts are being modified. These processes happened independently from the WWN, but supported its emergence. Generally, as a result of contact, indigenous women's status declines. Despite this, some Wayuu women have been extremely active and outspoken. There are a number of models of successful Wayuu women. Their role must not be underestimated. Women who trade goods from Colombia to Venezuela constitute important figures.³⁴ Their role is somewhat two-sided: in many ways their work goes against Wayuu ways and the impact of their work on society is criticized, but at the same time they are admired for their ability to confront the dominant society. In this sense, tradeswomen stand as an example, showing Wayuu women are capable. As an ex-tradeswoman explains, "The rest of the population admires the tradeswoman for her work, for how she talks. They say she has lots of money, because she knows well the Armed Forces and speaks Spanish well."³⁵ As the tradeswoman is mainly involved in petty trade, she does not make lots of money as such. But in the eyes of her people, her material success stands out. Other occupations of Wayuu women include political positions. It is interesting that in 1998 three of the nine councilors of the municipality Paez on the Venezuelan-side of the Wayuu territory were women as well as almost all the candidates for the local authorities of August 2005 local elections. A number of women are also active

³⁴ I do not have any data on the number of trade women. Based on observations and interviews, there seems to be a large number on the border of Columbia and Venezuela.

³⁵ María Pocaterra, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

in political parties. In general, a large number of Wayuu women professionals with university degrees, this includes lawyers, engineers, and university professors, set the Wayuu apart from other indigenous peoples.

In the interviews carried out with tradeswomen and professional women, I found that they strongly identify to the Wayuu people. Success in the dominant society does not require rejecting one's Wayuu identity. As one tradeswoman said, "One can do commerce and remain Wayuu. If one wants to, it is possible. It is not because one starts talking with the Generals that one stops being Wayuu. The women can maintain their customs. The Wayuu women's leadership helps her in her commerce. It makes people respect her." To become successful in the dominant society at the cost of one's culture is regrettable: "There are Wayuu women who have changed because of the penetration of civilization. However, I do regard our culture highly, and by all means, we must maintain it. As a representative Wayuu, I try to inculcate this idea, especially in schools. I think that through our culture we maintain our values, and also it is true that a number of Wayuu as they become professional refuse to wear the manta."³⁶ Successful Wayuu women have impacted Wayuu society to the extent that some women consider their status has improved from the past. As the woman prefect of the Paez municipality explains, "The Wayuu woman has always played an important role because we are a matrilineal society. The Wayuu woman is trained to play an important role in society...before a woman's participation was limited to her own clan. The woman was considered, but not in public organizations.

³⁶ Zenaida Rodríguez, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

Today, there are councilor women who play a function within their family as well as the larger community. The good thing now is that women participate and are no longer submissive. The woman struggles to have a position in society. She tries to go to the university.”

Parallel to the emergence of an increasing number of Wayuu women in the dominant society, Wayuu precepts are being modified. “To ask a service in the Alijuna world the women can intervene or whoever can do so. But always remembering that in our environment for resolving a big conflict, a death of family member for instance, the Wayuu women should never sit down to dialogue with people from the other family because she will never be considered.”³⁷ When interacting with the other society, Wayuu women undertake traditional roles. One woman, for instance reports being chosen to act as a *putchipuu* upon the accidental death of her uncle in Perijá (within the Zulia state but outside the Wayuu’s traditional territory).³⁸ Ramona is a *putchipuu* recognized by the Venezuelan state. In Maracaibo, she works solving Colombian and Venezuelan Wayuu ethnic, as well as Wayuu-Alijuna legal conflicts. Her daughter studies education at the university of El Zulia and she desires to become a Wayuu teacher in La Guajira.

We also see some Wayuu women question certain traditional customs. In the past, Wayuu men were allowed to have many women; today this is less accepted. “The Wayuu man was allowed to have two or three women. For the Wayuu women that was normal. I think there was respect because the man would always tell the

³⁷ Gladys González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

³⁸ Isabel Palmar, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, March 2001.

woman --look, I have another woman over there, the day she'll come you will talk to her as though she was your friend. Today, the Wayuu woman does not accept this. At least, I am a Wayuu and I would not accept it because of my studies, my changed views. For the same transculturation we do not accept it.”³⁹

Cultural Subject's Formation

The Wayuu women leaders draw on their female identity within the ethnic group and on their worker and citizen subject identity within the Venezuelan national state in order to intervene within the dominant society. Worried about their own direct environment and the insertion of the Wayuu people within the modernization process, they mobilize as Venezuelan Wayuu women. How do they mobilize? While politically acting within the national society, the Wayuu women affirm that they belong to a group for whose recognition they struggle. This struggle for recognition draws on their common experiences. Women's centrality for constructing the Wayuu past, present and future positions them as central for the survival of the group as well as of the national society under global contexts. The Wayuu women look for the recognition of their identity that is being attacked by the effects of the national society within their own one. As Wayuu women they mobilize for restoring their communities. The WWW illustrates this mobilization around sensitive problems that target issues as health and education, which are directly related to the reproduction of the culture. At the same time, within their own group their female role is directly related to the biological and cultural reproduction of the group.

³⁹ Betty Morales, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, December 2002.

The network promotes the revaluation of indigenous medicine.

JALIANAYA, where Carmen González is an activist, promotes the Wayuu artisans. Through a project within a school in a *barrio* in Maracaibo, González teaches cultural practices that go beyond weaving. The education school's first objective, primary and secondary grades, accomplishes also Wayuu affirmation. Within the popular *cantina* of Catatumbo, the kitchen required some adaptations in order to adjust to the Wayuu cooking practices. "We need to maintain and diffuse the Wayuu culture because the Wayuu culture would not remain buried. We want to transmit it from generation to generation, to our children, to our brothers."⁴⁰

Through the merchants' associations, the Wayuu cultural action becomes also part of the struggle of the totality of the membership. While at a first sight the commercial activity is not strictly promoting what the Wayuu women understand as their original ethnic traditions, the Wayuu identity became a crucial issue. While crossing their markets, the Wayuu culture is omnipresent. At the end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty first centuries, Wayuu women's dresses, *la manta*, the practice of weaving, and the permanent use of the Wayuunankee is present all along the roads of Maracaibo. However, to maintain their culture within the market space was not an explicit aim of the merchants' associations. It became one unexpected effect of the Wayuu women's activism. When asking one of the Wayuu merchants wearing *la manta* about what it signifies for her, she told me that the *manta* is a mark of their great value and the affirmation of their ethnic origin as well.

⁴⁰ Carmen González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, August 1998.

“Nobody can tell me not to wear my *manta*. Take it off! It is forbidden! Never. Ah! One is free and that’s what culture is.”⁴¹ The *manta* is female, really the mark of their culture. Their struggle is also directed to the restoring of their role within the Wayuu society. To participate is to affirm themselves as Wayuu women. According to Lucía, the name of the association expresses this intention: “Jalianaya, is a drawing, a small drawing, a small design, it is like to say the mother of something, the small head of something, yes, it is the initiation of something.”⁴²

Through these associations, the Wayuu women position in a first line the significance of their role, of their functions. They reaffirm their maternal power as central for the Wayuu culture that has diminished as a result of the contact with the Venezuelan society. By investing themselves with the traditional roles that they themselves reinforce, they come to embody the transmission of their culture. But their activism also embodies the teachings that they received from the national context and that they adapt to their indigenous conditions.

Dellanira and Chiquinquirá are two Wayuu women who reject their ethnic identity. They do not place in the first line their Wayuu origin. Dellanira, without denying her Wayuu origin struggles for a *barrio* where Wayuu and Alijuna live together. She does not systematically recall her indigenous identification. Chiquinquirá, on the contrary, rejects her Wayuu origin. She states that she feels herself more Venezuelan than Wayuu. She, as also Dellanira has done, have abandoned the *manta* and wear the *Criollo* dresses, they do not speak Wayuunankee

⁴¹ Sylvia Medina, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, August 1998.

⁴² Lucía Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, August 1998.

to their children while they speak it in a few circumstances with the other members of their family. Their cultural action is closer to Venezuelan popular culture than to the Wayuu one. This behavior could be explained by the fact that they were born at Maracaibo. But this is not the only reason why they do not identify as Wayuu. In fact, other Wayuu women who also were born in Maracaibo wear the *manta*. However, Dellanira and Chiquinquirá represent a great proportion of Wayuu women living in Maracaibo.

How do the Wayuu women leaders embody a *mestiza* identity? They use the civil association and all the legal means that are available to them. Through the merchants' associations as well as the WWN and the different neighbors' associations, the action of the state is often demanded. In order to establish their markets, affirm indigenous rights or secure the primary services of any city inhabitant, the Wayuu population utilizes a classification system that has been imposed on them, but of which they appropriate the functioning and advantages. Within their will to maintain and defend their difference, the Wayuu women look for the recognition of their matrilineal system, and they appeal to this same system that they are contesting in order to achieve their right to work, to health, and to education. "We need to be very clear about which are the good things that we will take from another culture. Mmm... Because it does not yet mean that we will isolate. That's a different thing."⁴³ Edixa uses modern communication means for benefiting the Wayuu population. Through her interventions in radio programs where she is the

⁴³ Edixa Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, July 1998.

reporter and the TV producer, she restores the Wayuu culture. “The media, especially the radio, I see them like ... a power. No, it is not like a power, but like a means through which one can achieve power, through the use of our language, isn't it? [...] That's why it is very important, according to my experience, for us, the indigenous peoples to appropriate these media and especially to use them, and not that they use us. To really use them.” There are things that need to remain as they are, and there are other things that one cannot take with one because they are not any more proper for the time, according to the context when and where they have originally been done.⁴⁴ Dellanira and Chiquinquirá have retained those elements of the Wayuu culture that for them represent a benefit within the *Criolla* culture. “Then I say ‘no,’ I say ‘no,’ my life is not ... is not for being like this. It is rather to develop my person, civilizing me more than what I already am. Then, I do not know ... what I want... I find it more ... more life in this side of civilization... Yes, I see more beauty in it, indeed, because to be there always inside..., because sincerely I ... you know, I have not done my self to be like that ... to be more civilized.”

This greater rejection of the Wayuu culture is more marked in Chiquinquirá than in Dellanira. The latter is married to a Wayuu man, and unlike Chiquinquirá she lives with her mother, a woman who is closer than her daughter to the Wayuu traditions. Chiquinquirá remained alone with her two children within a *barrio* where all ethnic origins gather, while the majority of the population is Wayuu. When knowing that I was going to her house for the first time she wanted to wear, for that

⁴⁴ Lucía Montiel, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, August 1998.

occasion, the *manta*, as she told me, so that I can keep a good image of the Wayuu women with me.

Along their identification discourses, the Wayuu women belong to a group to which they identify, and use the pronoun “nosotros (us),” and they use the same “nosotros (us)” for other identifications. They embody a plural identity within a society where the cultural realities overlap while subjects displace themselves within them. They are *mestizas* in Sandoval’s terms. The Wayuu women strategically identify themselves as indigenous women, and at the same time as part of this indigenous group. But as women, they look to provide value to those behaviors that are proper to women within the group, and different from those of the men. As activists, they use everyday life for mobilizing. Within their space, the women can secure to the public sphere of men through the interstices of their informal grappling with the important decisions. “Regarding the woman, we the Wayuu women, we have been higher since we have mobilized.”⁴⁵ Throughout the civil associations, the Wayuu women who invest themselves as citizens look for recognition simultaneously in relation to the Wayuu and the Venezuelan worlds. They identify as women who transform their close environment and the national society. Through their participation within the associations, they are building a new form of *mestiza* citizen.

At the same time, they are simultaneously the expression of tradition and present, and provide a perspective of the future. An annual and regional manifestation can illustrate what I say. Each November, the city of Maracaibo receives peoples from all the regions of the Zulia State to celebrate the Virgen de la Chinita. The

⁴⁵ Fátima González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, August 1998.

population celebrates their *santa patrona*, La Chinita. This virgin, who disposes of a church on her honor in downtown Maracaibo, joints for three days Wayuu, Afro-Venezuelans, Colombians, Creole and other population groups of the region. This virgin belongs to the indigenous tradition. Her physical features are those through which the indigenous population represents her. The Chinita is also marked by the Spanish and *Criollo* legacy. A Catholic church is the celebration space. Here also come black peoples who displace around the Maracaibo area with their black Saint, San Benito. During some days this virgin and San Benito embody a cultural identity where the *zambo*, *mestiza* and the Wayuu populations recognize themselves.

D. Recognition and Enactment of the Indigenous Rights

Introduction

Noelí Pocaterra was elected as an indigenous representative to the 1999 Constituent Assembly by the National Extraordinary Congress of Indigenous Organizations that took place between the 21st and the 25th of March in Ciudad Bolívar. This was a very troubled event. Approximately 400 representatives of the 34 ethnic groups that live in Venezuela represented 300,000 indigenous peoples. They first defined the profile of the eventual indigenous constituents that would be proposed to the National Assembly. At the same time they defined the thematic axis that organized the indigenous' claims: the recognition of a pluricultural and plurilingual society and the right to have a collective territory. In this congress, Pocaterra stated that this right to "the geographical space that is under the historical, cultural, and political influence of a pueblo, allows the pueblo to make decisions on the natural resources in order to define their use and disposition. The territory is associated to our ancestral knowledge, our customs. 'Territory' is a key concept in recognition of the Indian pueblos' rights." She also made public to the congress, as well as to the media that were transmitting the event to the country, "that the recognition of Indian pueblo's Cosmic Vision is related to our cultural rights." "The right to health," constituted the final words of Noeli's intervention in the Indian Congress electing her to the National Constituent Assembly. In addition to the election of the three indigenous representatives that will be present at the constituent

assembly, the Indian Congress of Ciudad Bolívar also stated that the aim of participating within these national political institutions was “the recognition of indigenous right to self-government and to their free determination through territorial and political organizations which are properly indigenous.”¹

Guillermo Guevara, a male Jiwi leader talked after Pocaterra. He also related territory to indigenous populations’ ancestral knowledge of medicine and health. He pointed out “that life exists in these territories, life which is not only for those who live there, but for all the Venezuelans and for the entire world.” Guevara continued his intervention saying that, “in these territories there are resources that we should protect that are of great importance for humanity.”

After the meeting in Ciudad Bolívar, an intense struggle for the representation within the next National Constituent Assembly spread within the indigenous movement. Participation of traditional parties and the Catholic Church fueled the political differences among the indigenous leaders. The legitimation of the three elected representatives was the legal face of this fight. The national government was preoccupied by the possibility of the emergence of an indigenous conflict with dangerous consequences for the region of Maracaibo Basin, the Colombian-Venezuelan border, and the Panamanian region. In the case of the Wayuu and the oil region of the El Zulia state, the exportation of the Colombian violence to Venezuela is an enduring specter. Borders and territories are delicate extremes, and they are still more delicate when the border is an oil production region that connects the Caribbean

¹ Lino Meneses Pacheco, Jacqueline Clarac de Briceño, Gladys Gordones R. (editores), *Hacia la antropología del siglo XXI*, (Mérida: CONICIT-CONAC-Museo Arqueológico-ULA, CIET-ULA, 1999).

to the Pacific Ocean and to the United States. In this case, the same military officials that in 2002 eventually initiated a coup against President Chávez funded the transportation of approximately one hundred Wayuu to Caracas in order to promote indigenous demonstrations in the capital of the nation against the recently elected president.² The memories of the U.S. intervention in the 1902 Panamanian secession from Colombia, and the creation of the Misquitos Indians' conflict in the Sandinista revolution are specters haunting the Bolivarian revolution due to the potential dangers that Wayuu Colombian-Venezuelan binational condition leaves open.

When the Wayuu arrived in Caracas and the links between their leadership and the opposition officials of the military force were made public by the media, President Chávez assumed the problem directly in his hands. He made Marisabel de Chávez, his wife, who was also a representative at the Constituent Assembly, the direct mediator between himself and the Wayuu peoples. Since that moment, negotiations became invisible, while the Wayuu, who traveled to Caracas in opposition to Chávez, did a 180-degree turn and became active supporters of the President.

Gladys González is a Wayuu women leader of the Uriana clan. She is one of the two women who belong to the Indigenous Wayuu Women Network (WWN) who

² U.S. mediational, political and funding support to military leaders opposing the Bolivarian project is recursively blamed as an international interference on Venezuela sovereignty. Among the evidence that the supporters of the Chavista project introduce is the permanence and training that these insurgent military receive from the School of the Americas as well as their acceptance within the territory of the U.S. although the juridical demands that Venezuelan government follows against them. See Eva Golinger, *El Código Chávez, Descifrando la intervención de los Estados Unidos en Venezuela*, (La Habana: Ed. De Ciencias Sociales, 2005).

lives in Caracas.³ She participated in a 1999 occupation of the Electoral Center⁴ that looked to pressure the national authorities. The acceptance of Pocaterra's election as one of the three indigenous representatives to the National Constituent Assembly was their objective.

From December 2002 to March 2003 we shared many days together, sometimes at her home, sometimes at the Indigenous Affairs Department in the fourteenth floor of the National Education Ministry building. At the beginning of the month of December, I met her when she returned from Oaxaca. Gladys, as well as other indigenous women of Venezuela participated in the first congress of Indian women of the Americas. Their travel was funded by a combination of regional and national monetary resources.

Acknowledging the problematic power relations inherent in the interviewing dynamic, Gladys and I opted to make an alliance. During my stay in Caracas, she shared her activities with me while I promised that her voice would be in my dissertation. She said, as did her sister Carmen, "Tell them there, in the United States, the way the Wayuu experience the Bolivarian Revolution." Every day, for three months, she emphatically reminded me of a new point that she wanted me to

³Gladys González organizes the Wayuu as well as other indigenous populations of the capital of the country, especially the indigenous students. Noelí Pocaterra is the other indigenous leader that lives in Caracas, while during the weekends she travels to La Guajira, where the majority of the Wayuu live.

⁴The National Electoral Center (Centro Electoral Nacional, is the institution that organizes and legitimates national, regional and local governmental elections. While the political process of founding new constituent national principles was going on, the National Electoral Center belonged to the previous political order. This institution became "the" point of the national conflict. Its voice had the capacity to promote or reject other political reforms.

introduce, while sometimes she made concrete proposals on the way I needed to organize my dissertation.

Gladys González: During the National Constituent Assembly we cheated the National Electoral Center, she told me, which did not allow us to stay there. It threw us away from its spaces, but we wanted to know the decision that the institution would make on the legitimation of our representatives. We didn't know where to sleep. We didn't have money. Even Guillermo Guevara didn't have money.⁵ We bought some bread, and I told them that we should stay there and sleep on the carpet, without even a restroom. What would we do outside, in the square, where anybody could attack us? I took hold a package of cigars and told to the woman of the electoral center that was spying on us, "Look, we indigenous peoples, we are going to make a decision and we need to call our ancestors." And she answered me, "O.K., stay here." This woman did not leave. We waited, and she didn't leave. She stayed there because she wanted to listen to our conversations. So Nelly, a Wayuu woman, began to say, "We are going to name all our ancestors, but we cannot guarantee you what would happen because if the ancestors arrive here, we don't have control of them." Can you

⁵ Guillermo Guevara was also an indigenous candidate to the National Constituent Assembly. He was related since many years ago with the political institutions of the nation state, a condition that provided him of resources usually denied to other local indigenous leaders. As an illustrative example, the indigenous women always thank the middle class women's movement for supporting their travels to Caracas, the capital of the Republic. These reports can be read in the *Revista de Estudios de la Mujer* of the Central University of Venezuela, and it is important to notice that the amount of the funds for traveling never arrived to more than fifty dollars. In order to be fair, it is also important to notice that foundational and worthy leaders of the Venezuelan women's movement, although being elder women, also traveled by bus for more than twenty-four hours for activist reasons. The expression "middle class," can be confusing, In fact, two leaders of the same movement could receive the same salary as university professors, but their family situation provides a different value for the same amount of money. One of these professors will always travel by airplane, while the second one will always travel by bus.

imagine it? We were in a closed room and we lighted all the cigars. The woman left and said, “O.K., remain here, if you want to.” And we extinguished the cigars, and went to sleep.

Once Gladys begins to tell “chistes” (“jokes” is the word that the Wayuu use when they speak in Spanish and decide to narrate something) she does not stop. She continued telling me other circumstances when she cheated the government’s authorities. However, she seriously interrupted her chistes to tell me,

G.G.:But the indigenous peoples love Chávez. When we were in the First International Congress of Indigenous Women of America, it was just the second of December 2002, the day when the escualidos were running all over against Chávez and that marked the beginning of the national strike.⁶ In Oaxaca, in the Congress of Indigenous Women, I worked the spiritual part. We made a great fire with a lot of wood and we continued to throw essences into the fire. This was in Oaxaca, in Montalbán. Then the indigenous sisters of the whole world, from Africa, Canada, we all held our hands, and we asked for a special desire. And I said: “I now call my ancestors, our grandparents that are in the north, in the south, in the east, at the heart of the space, for the Venezuelan president Chávez. Because he didn’t only liberate Venezuela, he would also liberate all Latin America.” It was a so beautiful an

⁶ President Chávez used the term “escuálidos” in a 1999 Sunday morning TV program addressing the entire nation. The President used the word “escualidos,” which means “squalid”, to evoke the lack of truth that the media were portraying. In fact, through the TV images one would be led to believe that millions of Venezuelans were against President Chavez, while election through election the majority of the population voted eight times during four years in support of his project. Blindness of the elites in regard to the others was the point at issue. Since the first moment that the President used the term, it became part of the ideological vocabulary of the times, meaning those Venezuelans whose main dream was to make of Venezuela a U.S. replica of the American way of life, and who traveled to Miami or conspired against the President when the electoral numbers impeded to accomplish their desires.

experience! Everybody knows about Chávez. We, the indigenous people have assumed the goal of informing the entire world that Chávez has behaved more than correctly with the indigenous peoples.

BECOMING ETHNIC IN ORDER TO BECOME (POST) MODERN

The Wayuu are indigenous peoples with great institutional relationships within the national society. The history of their social movement showed how much they have always interacted with the state. However, in the last decades, accompanying the national changes that globalization fueled in the region, a new Wayuu leadership emerged who draw their prestige on the narrative of the Indians as the original inhabitants of the now menaced national territory. Those that once the nation state pushed out from the main territory and made them invisible by *mestizaje* politics or putting them out of the hegemonic view, overturned this discourse, and introduced themselves as the guardians of the menaced national material and symbolic borders. These leaders served as mediators with the governmental institutions, while repositioning themselves within the changes that globalization promoted in this oil producing nation state.

In the case of the Wayuu, the majority of these leaders did not come out from the indigenous kinship system, and at present do not represent a defined Apushi. In fact, the Wayuu have re-defined their political relationships within their own society as well as within the political administrative national space. Although the political organization and the juridical system of the Wayuu continues solving intraethnic and

some times also interethnic conflicts, the relationships with the nation state led them to reconfigure their political way of acting.⁷ Within the bridging roles between the Apushi and the nation, the Wayuu women created a fertile interstice in order to empower themselves through the conjunction of the Wayuu and the national traditional discourses. They draw on the centrality of women within the Wayuu matrilineal and the Venezuelan matrifocal societies while constructing a mobilizing identity that empowered them. The menaces that neo-liberal globalization imposed to Venezuelan and Wayuu territories became their point of departure for opening up, through their traditional role as mirrors and guardians of the nation, new mobilizing spaces. Drawing on the negative changes that modernization and development imposed to the indigenous gender relations, these leaders struggle for restoring what they constructed as their ethnic traditions and their women's role within this traditional society, which according to them, adjudicated a predominant place to women. Wayuu men leaders, who have always oscillated between the warrior confrontation and the feminizing identities when needing to relate to the nation state, find a solution to this dilemma which the sexual politics of the identity-centered decolonizing movement placed them. As Alí Fernández, a Wayuu leader who works with young indigenous (Yuckpa, Bari, Anhu and Wayuu) in Maracaibo in Paraguaipoa, said to me: "I feel that Noelí perfectly represents me as a Wayuu man within the Venezuelan National Assembly." Noelí Pocaterra mobilized her as a mother in a continuous process of giving birth, giving birth both the Wayuu and the

⁷ Weidler Guerra Curvelo, *La disputa y la palabra: la ley en la sociedad wayuu*, (Bogotá: Ministerio de Cultura, 2002), p. 1.

Venezuelan societies, an identification that leaves to Wayuu and Venezuelan men as well an untouched paternal role within the re-birth of their respective new nations.

At present times Wayuu women leaders participate in the national society as council members, deputies in the regional and national assembly, and have been candidates under different political parties. They often assumed a bridging political role as active members of one Apushi and within the structure of the state. While the Wayuu are not a monolithic political front, their ethnic community perspective always predominates at the moment of making decisions that are related to their indigenous rights. In the journal *Wayuunaiki*, which covers both Venezuelan and Colombian Wayuu news, “Richard Mansen reveals the Sacred Scriptures of the Wayuu.”⁸ At the same time, a special number of the same journal which titled it “The Great Wayuu Nation, Venezuela and Colombia: 510 years of Cultural Conquest,” reported a celebrating act in the Rómulo Gallegos Cultural Center in order “to commemorate the encounter of two worlds.”⁹ It is significant to bear in mind that at the same time in Caracas, Noelí Pocaterra and other sectors of the indigenous movement overturned this celebration. They named it “The Day of the Indigenous Resistance,” while symbolically burying the rest of the Cacique Guaicaipuro in the National Pantheon together with the remains of Simón Bolívar, the father of the

⁸ *Wayuunaiki*, Año 3, No. 49, Maracaibo Subregión Guajira, Febrero de 2003, pp. 1-7 “After a research hard work, at the end it has become real the dream of many, among them of the north American Richard Mansen, anthropologist of the Linguistic Summer Institute in Dallas, responsible of great part of the translation of the Sacred Scriptures to the Wayuunainki language, which is original to the Wayuu ethnic group, and would be distributed among Venezuela and Colombia.”

⁹ Anthropologist Nemesio Montiel Fernandez, Cultural Chair of the University of the Zulia State, “Alitasia, Acto de Reafirmacion Étnica y de la Soberanía Nacional,” *Wayuunaiki*, Año II, No. 46, Maracaibo Subregion Guajira, October 2002, p. 4.

Venezuelan Patria. Pocaterra introduced Gaucapuro, an indigenous Teque warrior, as well as all the indigenous men's heroic resistance within the history of the nation state and the hemisphere as Indians, not as indigenous. In this ceremony, indigenous representatives of the hemisphere came to Caracas to consolidate the ritual of the restoring of the Indian roots of the continent. Globalization opened up a space for emerging coincidences among hemispheric, national and indigenous counter-globalization identification politics. Women's roles as women were the bridge connecting latent identities.

The adoption of a new Constitution by countries like Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Venezuela can be understood as the juridical translation of the changes that Latina America (and *indigenista* politics) lived since the eighties when the neoliberal politics stressed the region. It is very interesting to think why the indigenous ethnic rights appeared for the first time in these new constitutions.¹⁰ How does the constitutional recognition of the presence of the indigenous population, which embeds particular rights, led to the democratization of the political life, the social transformation promoted by specific processes of modernization and to a new conception of the nation state? These interrogations, as well as those that trace the consequences of these innovations are worthy to be done.¹¹

¹⁰ For the new Brazilian constitution and indigenous rights see Julio M. G. Gaiger, *Direitos indigenas na constitucao brasileira de 1988*, (Sao Paulo: CIMI, 1989); Manuel Carneira de Cunha, *Os Direitos do Indio*, (Sao Paulo: Brasiliense, 1987), and of the same author, "L'Etat, les Indiens et la nouvelle constitution," in *Ethnies*, No. 11-12, 1990. An entire chapter of the Brazilian Constitution is dedicated to this theme. In one of the first articles, the Colombian Constitution establishes the pluriethnic and multicultural character of the nation.

¹¹ See for example Christian Gros, *Colombia indígena: identidad cultural y cambios sociales*, (Bogotá: ed. CEREC, 1991); "Derechos Indígenas y nueva constitución en Colombia," *Análisis Político*, May-August 1993, pp. 8-25.

Within this narrative, since indigenous representatives are part of the National Constituent Assemblies, Latin American nations which became multiethnic cannot be seen as were seen before. The indigenous or black populations now have access to the national institutions while publicly rejecting the genocide that their disappearance through *mestizaje* implied. This means that the entire history of the country changed. The civilization discourses on the work of missionaries, tradesmen and Republican officials become treated as ethnocide. These are questions related to the historical changes that interact with the Pan-American *indigenista* versus the new Pan American ethnic politics that need to be answered in order to arrive at the central question of this dissertation. How are sexual politics related to these changes of ethnic-based community making politics under neoliberal contexts? I make a different question than Latin American male intellectuals who often relate the openness of ethnic politics to the democratization of the political life.

The long road to the Constituent Assembly

The purpose of this section is not the description of the Venezuelan social movement that led to the 1999 National Assembly Constitution.¹² More than studying the new Constitution, I am interested in understanding how the indigenous communities, particularly the Wayuu one, were capable of making the election of their own representatives. In my opinion, the answer needs to be sought within two directions: i) the changes that the indigenous movement enacted since the seventies,

and that I described in the above sections, and ii) the changes on the nation state that the Bolivarian project embodies. A universalistic way of framing the research question of this last part of the dissertation makes invisible two main facts: the neo-liberal globalization effects leading to the emergence of the Bolivarian project, and the agency that indigenous women took from this conjuncture.

Many theorists and historians of social movements recognize that, against their prevision by the intellectual researchers, during the last two decades, women and indigenous movements have been among the most significant mobilizations in Latin American countries. Many reasons are introduced in order to explain the great visibility that these movements acquired. Demography reversed the secular tendency of indigenous populations' decreasing numbers. Under globalization re-configurations, the indigenous world opened to regional modern borders. In addition, new generations of indigenous peoples had access to formal education, and at present are new emergent leaders. At the same time, some aspects of modernization make it difficult to support old forms of subordination and domination that previously were accepted as natural state of things. The United Nations and international NGOs now support the indigenous way of live. (Post) modern critical approaches to development have provided visibility to the ecological values of alter-native ways of (re) production. However, if the indigenous agency is not seen as central to this struggle, these facts do not explain and strengthen the originality of the indigenous movement. The indigenous social movement could not have emerged without the affirmation of a positive identity. Within the context of this dissertation, it is important to bear in mind that in Venezuela, indigenous and the nation state's reactions against neoliberal

neocolonization stem, among other things, from the menace that globalization represents to the nation's territory. Oil and land are part of Venezuelan, Wayuu, and women's identifications. This specific framework opened up a space that led to the conjunction of indigenous women's and Venezuelan warrior men's mobilizing identities. A complex combination of gender and identity politics opened a privileged angle to see, denounce and react against a symbolic and material racialization of the hemisphere. The visibility of hemispheric power relations put at stake the recognition of both indigenous and nation states' rights—rights to a territory, to forms of self-government, to sovereignty, to environmental resources—which are perceived as essential for the reproduction and the transformation of the indigenous as well as national communities.

At present, the indigenous mobilization has the positive will to become part of the national society, while retaining its specificity. At the same time that it rejects the violence of the national order that discriminates against the indigenous populations, this movement also looks for an integration that implies the access to a different modernization than the hegemonic one. The indigenous communities mobilize their integration into modernization while evoking their otherness. They organize themselves in order to improve their living conditions and develop their production. However, their struggle draws on a different conception of exchange. The market that they propose is marked by concrete social values that link the individual to the community instead of abstract economic or civil values.

In fact, the Venezuelan national state is part of the changes for which the indigenous movement also struggles. From a descriptive point of view, it can be

easily observed how the Bolivarian Movement and the Indigenous movement walked and walk together. Even more, the Bolivarian movement opened up a space that led to the fortification of the indigenous movement. There is a dialogue between the two political projects, which although it has not always been easy, has led to the creation of new laws that promoted the restoration of the indigenous societies. The Wayuu, in Colombia as well as in Venezuela, have become “ethnic” within the frameworks of both countries’ last constitutions. Colombia was the first South American country that signed the 169 Convention of the OIT “on indigenous and tribal peoples of independent countries” which ends with the Assimilationist perspective of Indigenismo.¹³ In Venezuela, the Constitution of 1999 expressly states that the indigenous peoples are cultures of ancestral roots (Article 126).¹⁴ Hence, the Constitution of 1999 has recognized the ancestral presence of indigenous peoples in Venezuela. Drawing on a linear view that links the indigenous people to the national citizens contesting globalization, Venezuela is more than multi-ethnic; it became an ethnic nation in relationship to the new global order. In addition, the new Constitution also states that the indigenous peoples are a constitutive part of the national history.¹⁵ Article 119 of the Venezuelan Constitution of 1999 establishes that the State shall

¹³ Law 21, March 4th 1991.

¹⁴ Article 126 states: “Los pueblos indígenas como culturas ancestrales forman parte de la Nación, del Estado y del pueblo venezolano como único, soberano e indivisible. De conformidad con esta constitución tienen el deber de salvaguardar la integridad y la soberanía nacional. El término pueblo no podrá interpretarse en esta Constitución en el sentido que se le da en el derecho internacional.” Constitution of 1999, supra note. 82.

¹⁵ This national re-foundation implied a 180 degrees shift from indigenismo and the previous national identity as well. It has been strongly resisted by many Venezuelans. Indigenous ethnic rights resulted from years of struggles and at present constitute a contested space for domination as well hegemony.

recognize the existence of indigenous peoples and communities, their social, economic and political organization, cultures, customs, languages and religions.¹⁶ All indigenous peoples that I interviewed between 1999 and 2003 recognized the limits of the Constitution, and of the Venezuelan State's weakness for enforcing and making accountable the new legal order. Nonetheless, the indigenous activists also emphasized the force that their ethnic legitimation gave to their movement. In fact, until 1999, Venezuelan legal texts denied the existence of indigenous peoples as ethnic societies sharing the same territory.¹⁷ The constitutional recognition of their existence meant that all the indigenous groups living within the boundaries of Venezuela are recognized as distinct communities, with distinctive cultures and organizations. National security and borders' preservation were the main arguments both in favor and against the approval of indigenous populations' ethnic rights.¹⁸

In legal terms, such recognition is, by itself, a big step forward in the fight for indigenous peoples' rights. However, there are other consequences stemming from

¹⁶ Article 119 textually establishes: "el Estado reconocerá la existencia de los pueblos y comunidades indígenas, su organización social, política y económica, sus culturas, usos y costumbres, idiomas y religiones, así como su Hábitat y derechos originarios sobre las tierras que ancestral y tradicionalmente ocupan y que son necesarias para desarrollar y garantizar sus formas de vida. Corresponderá al Ejecutivo Nacional, con la participación de los pueblos indígenas, demarcar y garantizar el derecho a la propiedad colectiva de sus tierras, las cuales serán inalienables, imprescriptibles, inembargables e intransferibles de acuerdo a lo establecido en esta Constitución y la ley." Constitution of 1999, *supra* note 82, art. 119. It is important to mention that when the Constitution of 1999 refers to the State, it is including the Executive, Legislative and Judicial branches of both the Federal and Provincial Governments, and also the rest of public institutions, including municipalities.

¹⁷ In a general sense, it can be said that the lack of recognition of their existence, and therefore of their lands, cultures, traditions and uniqueness, has accelerated their acculturation as racialized and exploited workers in the Zulia state. See G. Morón, *A History of Venezuela* (London: George Allen, 1964) pp. 24-26.

¹⁸ María Eugenia Villalón, The process of construction of the Venezuelan nation-state as well the process of ethnic revival of the indigenous peoples was the point at issue when the National Constituent Assembly approached the point of the indigenous rights.

the recognition. First of all, when the Constitution establishes that the state shall recognize the existence and culture of the indigenous peoples, it means that they legally constitute distinct cultures within Venezuela. Therefore the *indigenista* perspective disappeared in order to open an ethnicist perspective. After these changes, the indigenous peoples have rights as Venezuelans and as members of indigenous communities as well. They have the right to be protected against attempts to integrate them into the larger society.

In other words, the right to the survival and preservation of indigenous cultures stems from the fact that they are recognized as distinct cultures within Venezuela. This is why Article 119 includes the recognition by the state not only of the existence of indigenous peoples, but also of their political, economic and social organization, their languages and religions, and their cultures and customs. Once it is acknowledged that within a society there are distinct cultures with features different from those of the larger society, then it must be accepted that these populations have a right to preserve their cultures and traditions.¹⁹

However, it is important to bear in mind that the self-government right vested in indigenous peoples is limited by and can be exercised only within the Venezuelan system of law. Article 126 of the Constitution, states that indigenous peoples are part of the nation state and people of Venezuela are defined as sovereign and indivisible. This article may be interpreted as denying self-governing rights. When asked about

¹⁹ How could they preserve their culture as well as the national state borders without property rights on their lands? As María Eugenia Villalón emphasizes in her article, this has been the main indigenous people's recognition difficulty, which, in the Wayuu who live in El Zulia, the Venezuelan state that produces 70% of its oil, acquired greater geo-political dimensions.

this point, both Venezuelan jurists and Wayuu women and men answered me that this means that self-governing rights are limited by the Constitution and laws of Venezuela, and that these rights can be exercised only within the boundaries of each indigenous group's "habitat," the term that the National Assembly adopted after the longest of its debates.

But these legal changes have a much more complex dynamic, than the frozen meaning that the analysis of the articles shows. On February 2003, while traveling through La Guajira, Carmen Gonzalez, Gladys' sister, and other Wayuu activists constantly made jokes on whom among them will be the next governor of El Zulia State. Carmen said, "The new structure of the juridical system, of the state, is something positive for us because our situation changed. Now we are not any more marginalized, excluded or exploited by the state. Now we have the right to express to the four winds how we want to make our State, our communities. For us, this is the fruit of the new politics of the state."²⁰

In their "habitat," they are absolutely sovereign. It is possible to say that the new Constitution has created a de facto type of federation, a new institutional order, which the previous state has been promoting through the self-reforming process of La Reforma del Estado. The Constitution has created a new legal government in Venezuela, which has its own areas of jurisdiction and powers, but which is also limited by the Constitution and the laws.²¹ As a consequence of these overlapping

²⁰ Carmen González, interview done by Sandra Angeleri, Maracaibo, January 2002.

²¹ The scope of such indigenous jurisdiction is set out in Articles 119, 121, 1223 and 125 of the Constitution of 1999.

institutionalities, new alliances transcending the domestic Wayuu order of exchanges have appeared. Public charges, military jobs, successful merchants and activist leaders, both Alijuna and Wayuu interact between the clan and the state institutions, promoting dynamic and pragmatic emergent leaderships.

Along with self-government rights, Article 125 of the Constitution of 1999 states that indigenous peoples have the right of political participation, and that the State shall guarantee indigenous representation in the National Assembly, and in the provincial and municipal legislatures where indigenous communities live. Indigenous peoples have the right to group representation in the legislative branch of each level of the Venezuelan government (national, provincial and municipal levels). This constitutional provision has already been applied in the Electoral Law,²² which regulated the national elections held on July 30, 2000. The articles 6, 7 and 8 of the Statute establish that indigenous peoples are allowed to elect three members to the National Assembly, to the Provincial Legislative councils and to the Municipal Councils through their traditional methods of decision-making.²³

The significance of this legal framework comes from the Constituent Assembly justification of these rights. Venezuelan indigenous peoples' collective rights stem from the fact that they were the original occupants of current Venezuela territory. Thus, these rights are not determined by the characteristics that define their

²² Estatuto Electoral del Poder Público.

²³ It is important to notice that the members of the indigenous ethnic groups, like individual Venezuelan citizens, have had political rights since the promulgation of the first Venezuelan Constitution in 1811. What they have acquired in the Constitution of 1999 is their right to participate in politics as a group; they have been granted the collective right of political participation. The

distinctive cultures. It does not matter whether the distinctiveness of some traditions or customs of their cultures were developed after their contact with European societies. On the contrary, such contact might have had decisive effects on indigenous cultures that now form part of their distinctiveness. In this sense, the new “ethnic” condition of the Venezuelan indigenous populations is more similar to Native American situation within the U.S. ethnic model than that of the Chican@s. The 1999 constitution establishes benefits for the indigenous peoples and gives them prerogatives in relation to the pluricultural state. The achievement of these changes has been evaluated while the process goes on, and the Wayuu are using it in order to insert their ethnic group in an efficient way within the socio political system of the country while emphasizing the construction of their ethnic identity. In addition, they have been able to arrive very quickly to key administrative positions in the administrative conduct of the national state.

In 2000 Mexico, Gamio’s patria, ethnic politics displaced *Indigenismo*. The nation state’s new legal frame asserts that it defends the ethnic condition of the indigenous communities. While it is true that since 1968 a critical anthropology in opposition to *indigenista* anthropologists emerged, and it is also true that since 1994 the public emergence of the Zapatista movement opened an alternative option for indigenous populations, it seems to be also necessary to take into account the specific Venezuelan historical context. In Mexico, the nineties marked the end of Cardenas’ project, which sought to Mexicanize the Indians by transforming them into

indigenous group representation in the National Assembly can be easily outvoted given its number (three of 165), and this is not the core of their argument on the significance of this reform.

indigenous peoples. It seems that in Mexico the crisis of the national developmental model led the state to accommodate itself to a heterogeneous and segmented neoliberal society. In Venezuela, with Gallegos' patria, the situation is completely different. The absence, in the past, of a strong *indigenista* politics, was a signal, among other ones, that the state did not need to enact a strong intervention in order to control the indigenous populations. In 1970, the date that according to Pocaterra's words marks the emergence of the first indigenous congress, the Catholic Church still had the right to administrate the lands of the missions, all along those large spaces of the national territory where the majority of the indigenous people lived.

Changes from *indigenista* to ethnic politics within Gamio and Gallegos' patrias coincide on their surfaces, but they do not correspond to the same foundational reasons. In opposition to the Mexican case, in Venezuela, changes in identity politics do not imply renouncing a national project, which never had the same importance that it had in Mexico. After the war of Independence, the Bolivarian nationalist project was defeated by the conjunction of the national elite and the international interests, supported by the force of the imperial weapons against a nation that almost expired due to the *caudillos'* confrontations during the nineteenth century. A second nationalist peak was victorious during the formation of the Venezuelan modern nation state, when Gallegos became the first Venezuelan president elected by universal and secret vote. It seems that the attempt to intervene on the large territories inhabited by the indigenous populations was not a great concern of the state.

The indigenous communities took refuge in areas that, with the passage of time, became particularly conflictive for the nation state. Contemporary recognition

of an indigenous territoriality and of communitarian authorities, in conjunction with a plan for supporting these regions, can be understood as a response to the requirements of the indigenous movements' mobilizations. But it can also be understood that the Venezuelan nation state has to grant an indirect control of these regions. International pressures are supplementary elements intervening in the constitutional promotion of the foundation of a multi-ethnic nation. During the 1999 National Constituent Assembly, the indigenous populations positioned themselves as the guardians of the national territory in order to gain the sympathy of the Venezuelan population. A strategic alliance between a nationalist state and the indigenous populations has favored the increasing presence of the indigenous social movement.

The Wayuu Organize as Ethnic

The indigenous incorporation into the nation as "ethnic cultures" breaks with more than one hundred years of the nation state's centralization. However, the reform of the Venezuelan state is a process that has its own history while overlapping these changes on the country's indigenous politics. Since 1999 the State recognizes and protects indigenous populations, and the new constitution adds that the cultural identity of the nation is founded in the diversity of its cultures, cultures that need to be considered as equal and worthy of respect. The main demand that the indigenous movement took to the National Constituent Assembly, ethnic rights, was not part of the legal order of the nation state. The nation is not any more formed by a people of citizens, abstractly understood by their rights and duties: the nation is now composed by ethnic groups that do not share the same culture, same language, the same forms of

social organization, the same history. And the national state has the mission, for the first time in its history, of recognizing this diversity, defending it, and organizing it. It seems important to bear in mind that the base of this incorporation stems from the condition of the indigenous populations as the original inhabitants of the territory. In addition, and paradoxically, the acceptance of the multiculturalism of the nation is a derivative character that reinforces the centralizing power of the state at the very moment that it declares itself as multicultural.

One of the questions stemming from these changes refers to the legal effects resulting from the recognition of the existence and distinctiveness of indigenous peoples. How have the Wayuu implemented these legal reforms? Their movement promoted bilingual and bicultural education through the Mission Guaicaipuro, with the recognition of Wayuu populations living in Colombia, and the recognition and protection of their habitat, which the Wayuu are negotiating within the region of both national states.

It is first necessary to emphasize that the entire national project changed, and that President Chávez's identification as a *zambo* promoted a national subject different from the one of Gallegos' times. In fact, the collective rights of the 1999 Constitution promoted the organization of the Wayuu as Wayuu, in opposition to Gallegos's model that promoted the organization of the Wayuu within A.D. However, both organizational systems overlapped, and while they prefigured the emergence of a different type of Wayuu leadership, at present a mestiza way of organization articulates the Apushi, the parties and the Bolivarian revolution. Eleodora, who lives in Kusi, an indigenous village on the border between Colombia and Venezuela stated

in 2003: “Here there were not associations, but after the approbation of the Constitution the organizations began to be done, because it was heard that all the resources that would come from the central government would go to the hands of the neighbors associations.” The traditional political class, which for forty years controlled the distribution of the resources generated by the oil, no longer had access to the regional and local budgets. However, in order to organize a new distribution of the oil income based on redistribution to those previously excluded from the political system, it became necessary to orchestrate a great organizational effort. The Wayuu women have a long history of non-party organization. Drawing on the Wayuu woman’s biological and cultural reproduction role, they entered in the Bolivarian revolutionary with the advantage of their previous experiences and a privileged gender identity that incarnated both the Wayuu and the national defense of the territory menaced by the importance that oil acquired during the last decade.

The indigenous groups’ participation will vary in accordance with their particular circumstances. At the same time, how do national collective rights do justice to their particular culture and circumstances? For example, the Civil Code establishes a whole regime for marriage and kinship that is framed in accordance with the moral and social standards of the larger society of Venezuela.²⁴ However, this regime is strange to the Wayuu whose specific customs related to marriage and kinship do not coincide with those established in the Civil Code. At the same time, the Wayuu marriage constitutes the main organizational principle of this society.

²⁴ See Código Civil de Venezuela, *Official Gazette* dated July 26, 1982, No. 2990.

Marriage and kinship are very important to make sense of their family life and their ethnic identity. Nonetheless, for the Wayuu the marriage rules established in the national Civil Code would imply not only a complete change to their ancestral customs but also a great menace for their survival. To follow the marriage and kinship rules of the Civil Code would entail for the Wayuu losing their particular way of producing and (re) producing their culture.

While the Wayuu population has great internal confrontations they always maintain a strong unity in relation to the nation state. The creation of new indigenous territorial spaces, the instrumentation of the Wayuu juridical order, the double national citizenship and the protection of the environment provided concrete points around which Wayuu women and men worked hard to restore their identity. Within these national and ethnic changes, the Wayuu women movement developed an outstanding participation within the Bolivarian Revolution.

Integrating citizenship to kinship, or the learning process of socio-political activism

Since its origin in the decade of the forties, the Venezuelan indigenous mobilization was able to achieve positive results in terms of education, and labor and political spaces. These successes entailed the negotiation of their ethnic identity with the national political system. The traditional Catholic Church and AD were the two main institutions where the Wayuu organized themselves as souls or as national citizens and peasants. Within the decentralizing process of the Venezuelan nation

state, in 1988, some Wayuu leaders presented their own candidates, but always under the structures of the two Venezuelan main traditional parties, AD and COPEY.

In more current times, the Constitutional reforms integrated them to the political order as ethnic communities, once their leadership achieves a political position within the regional legislative or political powers, the borders blur between the state, the parties and the ethnic communities. Leaders that were elected as indigenous representatives, accomplishing the new ethnic norms, took personal decisions and became activists of their political parties. The contrary situation was observed, when drawing on political alliances, where non-indigenous political activists replaced indigenous representatives at the regional or national institutions. A more illustrative example is the case of a Wayuu lawyer, who in order to be accepted as an official indigenous defender required an anthropologist's confirmation on her ability to litigate in the native Wayunainki language.

While President Chávez's proposal looks for the formation of a national social movement, indigenous leaders still acted out their role as clients of the state. Changes come on the shoulders of the old political practices, where geographical distances presented a great obstacle for the leaders' communication with La Guajira and Maracaibo. However, when the state funded their travels, provided them cellular telephones, letting them use the trucks of PDVSA, and opened for them the national institutions, like schools or elderly nutritional programs where they were previously rejected, the movement flowered all along La Guajira. The WWN, which began its work in Maracaibo in 1996 and expanded its activism to El Zulia State in 1998, already worked with indigenous women of other ethnic groups in 2002, as well as

with the indigenous immigrants, workers and students who live in Caracas. The relations with the army still have great importance for the Wayuu population. Soldiers often accompany, and protect activist women from paramilitaries through La Guajira. However, in the distant border regions impediments also exist to the organization of emergent leaderships, especially when the emergent leaders are rich Wayuu men trading between Venezuela and Columbia. The written legislation does not guarantee their rights, and while at present there are two high-ranking Wayuu officials in the National Army, Wayuu trading women or domestic workers in Maracaibo and the *haciendas* continue to receive menaces from the guards that still conspire against President Chávez. The act of violence is empirically different from the menace of violence, but from the perspective of social movements' mobilization, their paralyzing effects can be very similar in personal and collective terms.

The National Government gave great visibility to the indigenous movement by naming Pocaterra as the second Vice President of the National Assembly. This gesture limited the abuses done by the national armed forces, but it did not stop them. However, indigenous and women's agency received a great support. Indigenous representatives are now at the highest political level of the state. Indigenous peoples legislate on those themes specifically related to indigenous politics. At the same time, those indigenous organizations, which before the Bolivarian Revolution were privileged by the previous party system, saw their bureaucratic power reduced. Indigenous senators and deputies of the National Assembly now mediate between the national and regional governments, and their communities. Pluriethnic regional councils, where social and political activism overlapped, began to be substituted by a

different type of activism. Work that generated from the grassroots through the government is crucial for the new projects that have appeared all along La Guajira. The Wayuu women's movement, which in 1999 was a grassroots activism supported through Pocaterra's political contacts, has changed. Those women that before Pocaterra's becoming part of the National Assembly went all along La Guajira promoting the construction of schools, students' bus routes, health centers, water sources, land committees, elderly houses or children meals, now learned the language of the national politics. They attend El Zulia University graduate courses on political sciences, anthropology, social work, public finances, etc. First they learned to negotiate with the regional governor those state projects that the authorities directed to the Wayuu districts. At present, they elaborate the scope of the projects and the governor negotiates their plans with them.

Within this learning process, it is significant to observe two important aspects. One has to do with those leaders that attempt to establish relationships with the state from within the traditional clan organization. The second one can be named as a new leadership. These two types of leadership developed a supplementary relation of competition that was positive for the Wayuu population. Those leaders who are closer to an Alijuna political authority or to a Wayuu leader with a governmental position increase his or her personal position within the community. As a result of this dynamic, the Wayuu women who traditionally have accomplished functions external to the kinship system have empowered them within both the Wayuu and the regional society. In Kusi, a border Wayuu village of La Alta Guajira, Isabel Palmar has a charge, which is paid by the Alcaldía Páez, in the County of Maracaibo. She is in

charge of problems with the community water supplies. This allows her to systematically receive a salary, to be a link between the village neighbor-citizens and the local institutions of the state, and, more significantly for her personal re-positioning within the network of local power relations, to control the water in her community.

Gladys, the Wayuu woman that told me how she cheated the Electoral National Counsel, is also an example of the complexities of this Wayuu women emergent leadership. She lives in Caracas with her husband, Antonio, a Kariña indigenous leader. They live in the house of a Catholic organization named “Causa Amerindia,” a Catholic institution that comes from the indigenous social movement of the sixties. Gladys’ and Antonio’s is more than a humble house. It could be said that although it is placed in a lower middle class urban space, both its logistics as well as the way its inhabitants share the space is very similar to other Caracas’ *barrio* or rural family spaces. It is a two-floor house situated on the western area of Caracas without any furniture except the kitchen artifacts and the meeting space with a huge table and a dozen of chairs. Caracas’ spaces have been always polarized: at the west side of the city the poor people live in the “*cerros*,” and at the east side live the middle and high classes in the “*colinas*.” During the three-month strike, the East and the West embodied two different and in confrontation nations. The subway workers did not follow the call for a strike, and this transportation corridor between the two spaces remained functioning.

In March 2003, I traveled with Carmen González, Gladys’s elder sister all along the Venezuelan Guajira region. Carmen is an indigenous leader that has

participated since the 1960s, as a member of the Venezuelan Communist Party, both in rural as well as urban struggles. Carmen invited me to La Guajira, and she gathered the resources that each one of us had. Her first objective was to celebrate “El día del niño indígena” (The Day of the Indigenous Children). This celebration is the cultural appropriation of “El día del niño,” which in Venezuela corresponds to the Catholic Epiphany Day when children receive the gifts that the Three Magic Kings brought to infant Jesus. Carmen said that she had “a debt” with the Wayuu children of a land committee, and she felt the responsibility of organizing a party for them. She brought notebooks and pencils to the party, her Alijuna friend Margarita brought paper decorations. Carmen asked me to bring some fruits, cookies, and candies for the children of the committee. The children’s party and the meeting of the committee with the Defensor de los Derechos Indígenas would coincide. Gladys also wanted to finish the organization of the future “educational mission.” President Chávez, paralleling again Lázaro Cárdenas’ *indigenista* measures, named these education projects for adult illiteracy, “missions” (Misión Robinson, Misión Vuelvancaras, and Misión Guacaipuro, which is the specific mission targeting indigenous populations), and articulated these education objectives with financial and technological support. The task is to develop small entrepreneurial agents and cooperatives, a significant strategy of the Bolivarian Revolution’s “sustainable development” model. At that moment, Mission Guacaipuro did not yet exist, but Carmen was informed by the journals of this possibility. She took the initiative, and prepared the future mission.²⁵

²⁵ Within the contexts of Mission Robinson, President Chávez himself taught elder peasants to read and the national TV showed his lessons, while the Cuban video that the teachers used for these

Carmen made the first contacts with non-Wayuu students who were committed to teach the peasants to read and write to the thirty Wayuu women, men and children that had been occupying 50 *hectareas* of land for two years in a camp at La Guajira. The Institute of National Land Possesion (*El Instituto Nacional de Tenencia Agraria*) told the Wayuu to install their tents in a corridor of very productive lands, which are contiguous to a dam. Venezuelan legislation does not allow the occupation of lands close to public sources of water. The legal owner, who possessed property papers, pressured the Institute in order to dislocate the Wayuu. This meant that the conflict of this Wayuu committee was with the institution that supposedly was created to support the recuperation of their lands. But Carmen, always going ahead to the institutional bureaucracy, already had in her mind how to solve the problem. The Wayuu committee will be named, as she proposed, the “ecological guardians” of the dam.

I worked with the Wayuu social movement before Chávez’s presidency, and I wanted to compare and contrast activists’ efforts under different political circumstances. Robinson is a Wayuu artist who was elected by the regional government of El Zulia state as the defender of the Yucpa, Bari, Añu and Wayuu indigenous peoples. Six adult peoples accompanied Carmen in the travel. Robinson is the Defender of the indigenous peoples in El Zulia. His position is new. It was created by the 1999 Constitution. The Defender of the Indigenous peoples stems from Lázaro Cardenas’ *indigenista* organizational institutions. A crucial detail that differentiates *indigenista* from indianist politics: Robinson is a Wayuu leader. Betty is Robinson’s

purposes generated an intense national debate on the disadvantages on overlapping Cuban and Venezuelan experiences.

wife. As all Wayuu women belonging to the WWN, she always dresses in her *manta* and weaves typical Wayuu figures as a double symbolic gesture of cultural revival. To weave was a Wayuu women's tradition that almost disappeared among young Wayuu women, until the WWN restored the pride of its practice. But more significantly, to weave represents for Betty, and the Wayuu society as well, the activity that she, as a spider Wayuu woman, needs to enact in order to restore their indigenous way of living. Margarita is a woman who lives close to Carmen. She is deeply involved, although always identifying herself as an Alijuna, with the Wayuu struggle. Roberto is a Columbian man who is Robinson and Betty's neighbor. He shares their activism while he received 10 dollars for driving for three days through La Guajira; a project that destroyed his 1977 Nova car. The car died on that travel. I was there with my son Pablo who made the videotaping thanks to the invitation that Carmen made to me in January in Caracas. At Gladys' house we had an informal meeting to talk about the huge 23rd of January demonstration supporting President Chávez during the business-led strike.

We left Los Olivos, in Maracaibo, soon in the morning. Before taking our road to La Guajira, Robinson, the defender of the indigenous rights, assisted some Wayuu who were in the Maracaibo jail. He, Carmen, and Betty explained to me their judicial system, which does not have jails and draws on the retaliation principle. Roberto drove his car from six o'clock in the morning until we had our first meeting with a Wayuu land committee at noon. We continued to our next meeting that would take place in an unknown location. An "ultramodern" truck driven by two members of a group named "Los chinos ricos" (the rich Chinese) guided us. Robinson, Carmen

and Betty already had a meeting with them. They were waiting the visit of Robinson to solve some problems with the armed forces, which were not allowing the Wayuu community to organize their small village according to the new ethnic rights that the Wayuu now had. Once this meeting finished by providing to *los chinos ricos* the contacts that they needed to make in Maracaibo, Robinson was informed about a Wayuu community that suddenly found that a legal proprietor, meaning a man with property papers in his hands, closed the access to the only and scarce source of water of the space around where the Wayuu community lives. The rights of the children of a bilingual Bolivarian school, an initiative of the Ministry of Education that provides two meals to the students while learning in morning and afternoon sessions of school, were the main justifications of the complaint, while the privatization of the water in the deserted area was also a great source of concern.

The conversations between the Wayuu activists and the members of the communities that they visited were in Wayunanki, their native language. I observed what went on and had access to the content of the conversations only when Robinson, Carmen or Betty had the opportunity to provide a summary of their decisions to me. Therefore, informal talks inside the car were my main spoken language sources. Venezuelan's are very proud of their sociability and it is a characteristic of the national identity. Rumors spread that the computer programs for the Venezuelan market are designed for a group orientation. True it or not, everybody believes it. Seven Venezuelan adults in a single car rarely share a moment of silence. When a magical moment of silence came, Carmen, Gladys Gonzalez's elder sister, took advantage of the opportunity. Carmen expressly asked to videotape her. When Pablo

focused on her, she loudly proclaimed to the camera, as well as to the book that she took for granted that I would write once back in San Diego, that an Indian will be the next president of Venezuela. The words of this scene haunted me since this germinal moment, and I began to try to understand their meaning. What did Carmen mean when stating that an Indian would be the next Venezuelan president? Wayuu Women's support to president Chávez is a well-known fact. It is more than that. It generates many critiques from outside of their social movement that since its foundation, in 1996, made claims of principles of their independence from political parties. President Chávez does not belong to a political party but is promoting the organization at the grassroots level of the entire country. As a result of this politics of the state, an eruption of organizing can be observed all along the territory of the nation. The construction of an ample national movement which draws on diverse and multiple grassroots organizing efforts in dynamic and confrontational relationships between them, the regional and the national state characterize this moment of the Revolution. The WWN is one among this great number of organizations. It is a repeated and naturalized its claim that Venezuelan indigenous populations do not embody ethnic separatism. Their political rhetoric draws on their identification as "defenders of the borders." Simón Bolívar is one of their foundational fathers. He proclaimed the Wayuu nation as independent from Colombia and Venezuela, and he placed the capital of his Bolivarian project, La Gran Colombia, in the Wayuu territory, the city of Río Hacha.

However, acknowledging these herstories, Carmen's words proclaiming that the next president of Venezuela will be "an Indian," made me reconfigure the

research question. The objective of my dissertation, as I mentioned above, is to capture the history of the Wayuu women's movement. I am interested in providing evidence of the importance of sexual politics within contexts of de-colonizing community and nation making. To evaluate the contributions and limitations of Chicanas and Garcia Canclini's proposal of *mestiza* and hybrid social movements' identity politics in order to simultaneously enter and exit from modernity under global contexts is part of the same research line. After listening to Carmen's words, my work required again a turn of 180 degrees. If I wanted to narrate the story of the WWN from the perspective of Gladys and Carmen Gonzalez's, from the Uriana clan, I needed to understand what did Carmen mean when telling the camera that the next Venezuelan president would be an Indian.

At the end of March 2003, I went back to San Diego to do homework after being for three months doing fieldwork. In Venezuela, since 1999 the state promoted the emergence of a new national subject while displacing Gallegos' modern *mestizaje*. Pocaterra and Guevara pronounced the words on the importance of defending the land within the Constituent Assembly that enacted these changes. Territory, ancestors, Cosmic Vision and health guaranteeing the ethnic group survival were the arguments supporting their claims for indigenous peoples' right of self-determination. Venezuelan neo-national liberation and indigenous movement's mobilizing identities are identical. They coincide in giving birth to an imagined community that does not follow the pattern of neo-liberal globalization, while globalizing contestation to liberal modernization. The 8-time referendum voted chief of the state of an oil producing country, the matrilineal indigenous women of the

border region where a great proportion of Venezuela's oil lays, and an immense number of grassroots groups work together for the emergence of a (post) modern endogenous project. They are radical *mestizas* struggling to simultaneously enter and exit of modernity. They are citizens of a nation that linked their rights to be ethnic to the state's right to be sovereign in opposition to globalizing pressures. They are women giving birth to *mestiza* children who are the fruits of love and of rape. They introduced the erased face of the political within Sandoval's love and Garcia Canclini's hybrid cultural consumption of citizenship. They learnt how to achieve the state's support, which increased indigenous women's power within the arid region of La Guajira while providing more possibilities to the reproduction and survival of the Wayuu. The Wayuu women as well as the country's (post) modern identity draw on the defense of the nation from the globalizing process that requires oil to reproduce itself. Venezuela's female name embodies a feminized third world nation state where the national warrior men provided the opportunity to women to reproduce the menaced nation. Drawing on this process, the women of the Wayuu as well of the national society repositioned themselves as the mothers of the radical *mestiza patria*. The intersection of ethnic and racial politics within the Venezuelan decolonizing national project opened up a space for women of the new *patria* organizing the defense of the nation. While this is a tricky space for women, it is also true that after experiencing and knowing the power that we have to make use of the national income coming out from the land's resources, it will be very difficult to transit a regressive road toward the private space of the public man. To be simultaneously the mothers of the sons of the Republic and the daughters of the matrilineal Wayuu opened up a

space that seems difficult to be closed without women's contesting the attempt to let them out of the birth of a Latin American indigeneous/endogenous nation.

V. Almost a Conclusion

We have a hope in a future life.
This is what has been awakening this process.
Noelí Pocaterra.

This dissertation has explored the fertility of “*mestizaje*” and “hybrid cultural consumption” as citizens’ mobilizing identities along the Americas. I contrasted a national masculinist versus an Indian womanist conception of community making. I compared two Latin American identity-based movements. One of them, the Mexican Revolution, occurring at the beginning of the twentieth century, the second one, the Wayuu women social movement occurs at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The main objective of the project was to provide visibility to the importance of sexual and racial politics for modernizing governmental projects, based on the strategy of constructing democratic alternatives to neoliberal free markets’ civil societies. In other words, through different spaces and times, I disserted on modern and (post) modern the role of women within racializing political economies of populations in the Americas.

The general research question of the dissertation sought to explore the cognitive and political contributions and limitations of Sandoval’s “radical *mestiza*” identity politics in (post) modern U.S.- America and Europe, and of García Canclini’s “cultural consumption” in “hybrid” Latin America. The evaluation of the politics of “*mestizaje*” and “hybridity” as identities characterized by differentially positioned citizens’ proclivity to construct alliances and to express their choices through their consumption was the point at stake. Indigenous women’s agency, within decolonizing

national projects, constituted the privileged research site. By focusing on indigenous women within the politics of nation making of two Latin American information states, the dissertation sought to explore the significance that the inclusion of women as “mothers of the patria” has for the women and for information nation state’s revolutionary expectations of nationalist decolonizing processes. At the same time, this strategy has a symmetrical while opposite goal within the context of the continent. A hemispheric cascade of power relations among racialized and gendered citizens of different nation states has made visible the restructuring of race and gender as organizational principles of the neo-colonial free market-based democracy that is promoted in the Americas under contemporary globalization.

I did my documentary research in the Latin American anthropological foundational texts. The exploration of “the other,” as the object of study of the science of anthropology provided evidence of a Pan-American U.S.-American led racializing project since the beginning of the nineteenth century until present days. Within the cascading effect of hemispheric power relations, Latin American anthropologists searching their admittance as modern men within the international brotherhood, found in their differentiation from “Latin American others” a strategy which led to their recognition as scientific peers. As a Latin American academic woman, I decided to do my ethnographic research within those “others” that led to Latin American men’s recognition within the male intellectuals’ brotherhood. I studied the social movement of the Venezuelan Wayuu women. My participatory observation has been in Maracaibo --in the barrios of Los Olivos, Ziruma and the Parroquia Ildefonso Vázquez-- and in La Guajira, --in Cojoro, Kusí, and Los Filúos--

where I traveled several times since August 1997. During the summers of 1998, 2001, and 2002, and from December to March 2003, I have shared my time with the Wayuu women activist leaders whose voices I transcribed in the dissertation. My objective was to examine if the idea of *mestizaje* and hybridity, as Sandoval and García Canclini developed them, was part of the mobilizing identity of the Wayuu women. I compared the place of Indian women within the *indigenista* politics of the Mexican Revolution to the place of the Wayuu women leaders within the nationalist politics of the Bolivarian Revolution. The feminist perspective of the Chicanas' radical *mestizaje* and the cultural hybrid consumption of García Canclini have been the articulating conceptual axis. During my research, a new intriguing question arose. I formed my ideas in regards to the Indian women of the Mexican Revolution through Gamio's life and words and through the memories of the granddaughter of the father of Latin American scientific anthropology. But I formed my ideas about the Wayuu women through personal contacts. All along my dissertation, I felt a great ambiguity in regards to the best means for representing the latter to a U.S.-American audience. I thought that the women that lived in El Zulia were subordinated as women and as Indians. But they emphatically said that they were powerful Venezuelan and Columbian Wayuu women. They never represented themselves as poor victimized Indian women of the third world. They never accepted the "third world" label, and when referring to a world ordering, they state that they belong to the "first world," insinuating that they were the first inhabitants of the Americas. In the dissertation, as an in-formation student, I was pressured to "identify" those whom I investigated. I decided to use the terms that the Wayuu women use for their self-categorization.

But, behind their voices, my power of translation is always present. Does this fact imply only an empirical problem or is it an additional academic challenge? However, while writing the conclusions of my research, the haunting specter of how to represent the Wayuu women became a new question. Why do the Wayuu women decide to mobilize as indigenous women? Why do they struggle as women and mothers of the Venezuelan and Wayuu patrias? Why do the Wayuu women follow the national system of gender and racial classification? The understanding of the matrilineal features within the patriarchal Wayuu society (while I leave the focus on the patriarchal and matrifocal Venezuelan society for a next research) emerged as a crucial challenge.

As I said in the introduction, systems of classification define objects, create identities, and relate each one to each other, often regulating the relations among these classes. But classificatory systems are not politically neutral. They cannot be separated of an order and power system that governs subjects and actors. The mode of being of the objects that are ordered through cultural classifications and the principles that govern such order are intertwined. By examining the relationship between the racial and sexual systems of classification and the structure of domination, it became visible how Mexican indigenous women identities have been built through the anthropological scientific power informing the national state's welfare *indigenista* and *mestizaje* politics. By reflecting on how the Wayuu women mobilized as indigenous women I hoped to have illuminated how the forms of domination are accepted and simultaneously used in their own benefit by indigenous women acting in a culturally informed national and continental political system. My starting point

understood that race, gender, and *mestizaje* could not be abstracted from the rhetoric where they emerge. Race and gender are imminently political, are intertwined to “*mestizaje*,” which is a powerful sexual technology of subjectivation in the Americas.

In the case of Post-Revolutionary Mexico, Indianness was and is a language of difference. Color and cultural differences mark and rationalize hierarchies of privilege and benefit, as well as consolidate labor specificities. Both race and gender were directly referred to the bio-power of the revolutionary Mexican state. This was evident in Gamio’s *mestizaje*. His masculinist conception behind a discourse of abstract citizen mobilizations jeopardized the democratic vocation of the Revolution’s politics of nation making. The Mexican Revolution’s masculinist politics of nation making promoted a state-led *mestizaje*, which would be the pre-condition of modern Mexico, but that re-inscribed class hierarchies through the sacrifice of the Indian women. A new *mestizo* citizen emerged from the Indians’ revolutionary movement. The qualitative new paradigms of democracy, which the Mexican Revolution encapsulated at the beginning of the twentieth century evaporated in order to give birth to the new Mexico. Women were introduced in the new nation-state as the sacrificed mothers of the new *mestizo* citizen. Indian men were identified as bloody insurgent warriors and the fathers of The Revolution. They became “peasants” of the institutionalized revolution as soon as the political system cannibalized their armed participation transforming it into their inscribed representation.

As it can be observed in the case of the Mexican Revolution, racial discourses have often been used in Latin America with the intention of hiding diversity and inequality while appealing to the “integration” between pueblos in order to construct

a homogeneous and centralized modern nation state. Gamio epitomizes this discourse when stating that to construct the Mexican nation and the Indo-American modernity it was indispensable to eliminate the obstacle of the ethnic heterogeneity. Indian women were the bodies that would give birth to the *mestizo* Mexico and Indo-America. For him, for post-Revolutionary Mexico, and for the Pan-American *indigenista* project homogeneity was a desired goal that would be achieved through the Indian woman and the white man. Assimilation was the task to achieve. Mexico and South America's *mestizaje* is part of the strategy for creating the imagined community of Latin America. But *mestizaje* has been used by post-revolutionary Mexico and Latin America at least in two different ways. On the one hand, it has been used as a liberating force contesting the colonial and semi-colonial ethnic categorizations; on the other side, as a state-led discourse for the formation of a country and a continent that look for the creation of an ideal and abstract citizenry, it attempted genocide of the indigenous population. Both options use women's bodies for accomplishing their goals. Sandoval drew on the liberating force that *mestizaje* represented within the Mexican Revolution and introduced it as a subversive methodology into the binary racial system of the U.S. and Europe.

In Mexico, racism is intense. Although it is directly related to the repression and control of women's sexuality, at-present the Mexican indigenous movement has redefined and used the concept of "race" in a very intelligent manner. Zapatista women, *desfachadas y deslenguadas*, without wearing the mask that always hides the face of subcomandante Marcos, are voicing their movement as Indian women. Similarly to the contemporary Zapatista indigenous women, in Venezuela, the Wayuu

women, in addition to overturning the *indigenista* racial identification, have appropriated their gender ascription to their own benefit. These women successfully used both versions of the Mexican Revolution understanding of racialization.

García Canclini has displaced the production-centered political economy framework of the national Mexican Revolution to a (post) modern global perspective of hybrid cultural consumption. He has correctly pointed out that globalization of culture has opened up a crucial opportunity for the same movements that struggle against the negative effects of globalization. García Canclini writes on Latinoamericanos (sic) looking for a space within the (post) modern global world without differentiating between men and women, and without introducing (re) production within the political economy of production-consumption. His conjectures on the significance of global cultural consumption in contemporary processes of citizen subjectivation have an immense value. He foresaw that Latin American social movements would appropriate the discourse of equal rights embodied within neo-liberal markets' rhetoric, which in truth belies its own foundational myth. However, from a general perspective, it can be said that García Canclini did not take into account that any economical or political practice of consuming and voting are co-constitutive of the civil society. The latter tautology legitimates capitalist production and consumption while being also involved in guaranteeing the conditions of (re) production of its existence. Masculinist inscriptions of nation making are blind in regards to the influence that women's sexuality has within ethnic-based politics of identity and nation making. The Venezuelan Wayuu women social movement has been capable of appropriating the national state's abstract cultural-consumer and

citizen-subject discourse. While coinciding, in this sense, with García Canclini's "hybrid cultural consumption" perspective, the Wayuu women have contested the author's masculinist understanding of a consumption-based political economy of culture which does not bear in mind the reproduction of power relations and the war against life that capitalist political economy implies.

The Wayuu activist women have mobilized the totality of knowledge and power at their disposition. Generalizing, their mobilization drew on other women, the family, their kinship, the state, the school, the associations, the barrio, and the community oriented values of the Wayuu for constructing a tradition that assigns a crucial role to women in order to guarantee the survival and reproduction of their nation. But the Wayuu women did not only draw on the social orders related to production and consumption, as it does the political economy that the methodology of hybrid cultural consumption proposes. The Wayuu women's emphasis on exchange by love and commitment toward their society is incommensurable with García Canclini's market-based paradigm, which evokes the Marxist framework of abstract and alienating work.

Children and elders are the priority within the Wayuu women activists' organizing efforts. Children guarantee the future, and elders guarantee the continuity by transmitting their way of living to the new generations. The survival and reproduction of the Wayuu culture draw on the political work that they constructed as the proper tradition for Wayuu women. While García Canclini's idea of hybridity introduces the possibility of economical practices embodying differentiated meanings of alternative exchanges, it erases the nation as well as women's (re) productive

power. In this sense, following Sandoval, the Wayuu women social movement is “*mestiza*” and “love” is their methodology.

Hybridity and a production-based paradigm of cultural consumption do not fit into the female-centered biological and symbolical identity that the Wayuu women re-constructed under global contexts. Within the Wayuu society, exchange is done through holy stones, jewelry, cattle and national money, and within national and transnational contexts, the Wayuu men and women have developed very efficient modern mercantile skills. While women’s positions within these domestic and transnational practices of exchange are ambiguous to my western reason, there is no doubt that their bridging performance between the Wayuu, the national Venezuelan society, and the inter America indigenous movement have positively repositioned themselves as women within their society, and as consumer-citizen-subjects within the Venezuelan national state as well. At the same time, they emphatically reject a feminist commitment while reproducing their tradition that emphasizes male/female complementarities.

The Wayuu women social movement has created a system of concepts where the notion of “*mestizaje*” is not admitted. They elaborated this epistemological and political system in order to provide sense to their experiences as indigenous women while simultaneously taking into account different meanings of exchange. Their notion of political economy introduces consumption and (re) production into the same framework. They organized as women giving birth to an ethnic community within a neo-national liberation revolution that looks for an endogenous modernity of an oil producing territory that draws on indigenous populations’ and Venezuelan nationals’

relations to the land. The Wayuu women mobilized for restoring their society. Reconstructing a traditional Wayuu woman identity and introducing themselves as women who give birth to an indigenous society, they repositioned their community as well as themselves within the Venezuelan Bolivarian Revolution, which is also looking for an alternative modernity. According to the U.S. - American ethnic model, the Wayuu as well as the nationalist Venezuelan would be an essentialized *mestiza* society. But the Wayuu women never use the word “*mestiza*.” They identify themselves through their mothers who are those who are always mentioned when they want to mark the ethnicity of a person. Their matrilineal principle makes of any children of these women a Wayuu. As Pocaterra’s words celebrating woman’s reproductive power show, love for their *mestiza* children, who can be the fruit of rape or love, promoted their mobilizations side by side with the Wayuu men. Until recently, these men had been warrior *caciques*, enslaved and indebted Indians, as the written words of Gallegos and the oral words of Segundo González show. In opposition to the homogenizing proposal behind Mexican or Venezuelan modern national mestizaje and the neo-liberal democratic (post) modern radical *mestiza* identity, the Wayuu women social movement’s construction of their matrilineal centrality became their instrument of local/global mobilizing identity. The construction of their matrilineal tradition provided women with a mobilizing identity capable of promoting their organization as citizens and consumers of a state, which is not their nation, and to reposition them as powerful reproductive women within the Wayuu patriarchal society. The women’s love for the Wayuu children articulates them as women citizens committed to the survival and (re) production of their

society. They questioned the production/consumption political economy framework by embodying a woman-centric population political economy strategy.

The Wayuu women movement disrupted the homogenizing tendency of liberal democracy, while maintaining the revolutionary content of the struggle for equality. They overturned the French revolution words of fraternity, equality and justice and promoted the reproduction of their society based on a radical Wayuu women identity, which does not leave any option for conceiving their children as *mestizo* sons of the brotherhood. Their emphasis on the survival of the community does not make of women the sacrificed victim who erases the violence behind the foundational moment of the community. By making of the Wayuu women citizens the organizational principle of their culture, this ethnic community making strategy has simultaneously empowered the Wayuu women, the Wayuu society, and the Venezuelan neo-liberation Bolivarian revolution.

Sacrificial original violence on women, which the study of Gamio's *indigenismo* within the context of the Mexican Revolution so evidently made visible, nonetheless, is still present. The Wayuu women appropriated the discourse of maternity at the ethnic, national, and transnational level. The indigenous *caciques*' disappearance after the fifties provided an opportunity to them while supporting the consolidation of the Wayuu women social movement. And they captured it. But within regional, national and hemispheric spaces, the *caciques* and the fathers of the patria are still very powerful. The dangerous relationships between racial and sexual politics within neo-liberation de-colonizing politics are still invisible for the Bolivarian revolution. Contesting and pushing over masculinist strategies of nation

making, modeled on Gamio, Gallegos, or Chávez's examples depends of how Venezuelan indigenous women will weave and inscribe their agency as gendered and racialized cultural (re) producers and consumer-citizen subjects of Venezuela, a country that recently identified itself as a multi-ethnic nation state. These women have been capable of transferring transnational and domestic institutional resources to the Wayuu and other indigenous populations of Venezuela who at-present experience a process of ethnic revival. Their mobilizing identity as citizen mothers of the ethnic nation and of the new Venezuelan Republic has reproduced their traditional women roles while repositioning them as powerful citizen activists.

But if the dissertation research made visible the contributions and the limitations of García Canclini's "hybridity," it also made visible the importance that an invisible premise behind Sandoval's "radical *mestizaje*" mobilizing identity has. Sandoval, as a woman of Mexican ancestors living in U.S.-America identifies "radical *mestizaje*" as the methodology of the U.S.-America and European (post) modern social movements. Drawing on the myth of The Mexican Revolution's new mestiza citizen, she names "radical *mestiza*" the mobilizing identity of U.S. women of color who constructed a social movement of differently positioned women while drawing on their experiences of bridging cultures. Sandoval's emphasis on the cultural sphere does not correspond with indigenous women's sacrifice within the new *mestizo* revolutionary Mexico and with the surviving priorities of the Wayuu women. More importantly, the author's erasure of the constitutive role played by the political and epistemological relationships between the north and the south impedes any contact between the third world of the post-modern first world and Latin

American indigenous third world. The Venezuelan Wayuu women have transnational affinities with the U.S. Native Americans. While participating in the same world and regional congresses that the Chicanas do, they do not coincide with their “third world” project. Frequent contacts are necessary for constructing an environment favorable to alliance building among different positioned transnational consumer-citizen subjects, and Sandoval’s world divisions do not promote these encounters. While acknowledging the difficulties for finding the words capable of expressing non-hegemonic conceptions, to speak in terms of “first world” and “third world” does not facilitate the dialogue between U.S.-America and Latin American indigenous women. The Wayuu women reject the third world identification while on the contrary they identify themselves as the first Americans. But their critique to the third world denomination does not refer to the hierarchy implied in the “first” versus the “third” world. It rather argues that their experiences are in opposition to Sandoval’s *mestizaje*, which draws on her classification of the planet into different and incommensurable “worlds.”

The Wayuu women’s organizing for the restoration of their nation provides a fertile view for making a strong critique to theories that divides the universe in economical, social and political pure and separated social abstract orders as well as into different and unconnected worlds, a perspective that Sandoval’s “radical *mestizaje*” attempted to solve. The intention of the dissertation was not to discuss what the academy of the first world can understand about indigenous and women’s Latin American social movements. Its objective was neither to examine the generalized uses of the term “*mestizaje*” within U.S.-America. In fact, while

“*mestizaje*” and “hybridity” have become ubiquitous terms that can be adjusted according to contingent needs, the Wayuu women surf between Venezuelan and Colombian indigenous mobilizing identities. Mobilizing as national consumers and citizens, they achieved their ethnic rights and, in the case of Venezuela, the Wayuu women activists articulated their indigenous traditions to the Bolivarian’s endogenous project. For them, transnational, national, and ethnic identities coincide. They experience globalization as a second opportunity for the indigenous women giving birth to an alter-native modernizing project.

For these women, there are Wayuu and Alijuna peoples, and there exist indigenous while not ethnic rights. The intention of my dissertation was to provide visibility to the significance that sexual politics have for ethnic-based decolonizing revolutionary efforts, like those of the Mexican and the Bolivarian Revolutions. In my arguments, I am attempting not to repeat historical mistakes. Sandoval’s “radical *mestizaje*” reflects the constructions of otherness done by the U.S. academy, which also García Canclini reproduces. García Canclini ignores the Chicanas’ long term theorizing on *mestizaje* while naming his methodology “hybridity” and minimizing the theoretical relevance of the (post) modern debate of the U.S. ethnic academy; Sandoval’s Chicana-centric historicity leads her to ignore the specificities of Mexican and Latin American *indigenista mestizaje* and its conflictive relations to a U.S.-America led Pan-American project. However, both of them refer *mestizaje* and hybridity to an essentialized Latin American identity.

Sandoval points out a fundamental difference between the nostalgic use of history by the first and the third world. The Wayuu women, as well as the Venezuelan

state, make a use of a history that can be understood as nostalgic, but that can also be understood as the intentional construction of traditions for mobilizing identities of citizens of alter-native modernities. The U.S. women of color activists' experiences led Sandoval to theorizing on *mestizaje* as the methodology of U.S.-American and European (post) modern social movements. Her notion of postmodernism, as "the cultural logic of late capitalism," supports her radical *mestiza* subjectivity, which according to the author could disrupt the cannibalizing feature of the postmodern cultural logic. The Wayuu women deconstruct Sandoval's definition of *mestizaje* within post-modern cultural contexts, which the author, as well as Jameson and Touraine, consider that only characterize contemporary and non-recent industrialized nations. The methodology of postmodern activism is, for Sandoval, the skill of cultural translation. Only the erudition and the theoretical intelligence of Sandoval enable a positive appreciation of her theorizing efforts. However, from a Latin American national or indigenous perspective, her effort for pointing out that the third world is radically different from the first one puts at stake her theorizing achievements. Her "will of otherness" led her to establish the U.S. women of color cultural translation skill, which is the basis of her proposal of the radical *mestiza* identity, as the methodology of heterogeneous (post) modern decolonizing social movements of U.S. – America. This epistemological operation has political consequences. While her intention is to promote the visibility of a third world in the first world, it has the un-expected effect of fragmenting the world into many worlds. On the contrary, my approach of the hemispheric racialization re-connects these worlds.

From the aforementioned perspective, Sandoval and García Canclini's *mestizaje* and hybridity reveal a colonized and colonizing logic, to say it in postcolonial terms. These two authors affirm, in opposition to the Wayuu women's words and practices, that Latin American racial formation is *mestiza* and hybrid; they affirm that decolonizing social movements' methodology is radical *mestizaje* and cultural hybrid consumption. To examine from which research site and for whom are they writing has been a valuable effort. If for Sandoval U.S. women of color are third world women of the first world, and if for García Canclini the heterogeneous Latin America is hybrid, from where do they see this reality as *mestiza* or hybrid? Couldn't it be that it is from an implicit binary notion of a non-*mestiza* identity, which they adjudicate to the modern world? Is it not from the modern rationality that *mestizaje* and hybridity are perceived as the "other" of the modern subject? These are rhetorical questions. Sandoval's use of the U.S. ethnic model and García Canclini's use of hybridity operate from the will of shaping the difference. They essentialize it, while simultaneously setting up a step that could make possible the international view of the emergent political paradigms of democracy that indigenous women and their endogenous strategies are enacting in their other America.

The Wayuu women embody one of these emergent paradigms. They appropriated and re-articulated the opportunities that the universalizing discourse of equal rights among equal abstract consumers and citizens provided to them. The cultural consumption of citizenship has provided positive strategies for struggling against the negative effects of globalization through the same means that the neo-liberal ideology promotes. And in the Wayuu women's case, the interests of the

Wayuu women, indigenous social movements, and Venezuelan neo-liberation nation state coincided.

(Post) modern research sites see Latin America from its cultural products, without any spatial or historical reference to contextual power relations. By constructing a matrilineal traditional identity, the Wayuu women have made use of a transnational notion of citizenship while displacing through their practice of historicity a nostalgic use of history. At-present, *mestizaje* and hybridity are legitimate metanarratives that speak to the north representing Latin America. And even more significantly, Sandoval's third world *mestizaje* veils the connections between "pure" and "*mestiza*" and "hybrid" places and times.

The Wayuu women activists' experiences and words contrast to Sandoval and García Canclini's *mestizaje* and hybrid cultural consumption, which are recognized paradigms for admitting contemporary Latin American epistemological practices within the U.S. academy. The Wayuu women's experiences offer a strong resistance to fit into the classifications that Sandoval and García Canclini have elaborated. Sandoval did not take into account the hemispheric history of *mestizaje*, and subsequently she is blind in regards to the use that the Pan-American U.S.-led project did of the nationalist Mexican politics of *mestizaje*. Her specific articulation of *mestizaje* genealogy and archeology led Sandoval to erase that the fathers of the Mexican patria gave birth to the mestiza citizen through the Mexican women's wombs. Separated from its historical context and converted into a (post) modern methodology, "*mestizaje*" makes invisible what Latin American indigenous movements understand as one of the strongest pre-political violence imposed on

indigenous men and women. Sandoval overturns this hegemonic discourse while reinforcing the separation of the planet into worlds, an operation that does not facilitate the construction of a transnational radical *mestiza* inter-American mobilizing identity.

The Wayuu women have always experienced the foundational violence of *mestizaje*, but instead of accepting it, they reject the ethnic as well as the feminist identification, which they do not incorporate into their cognitive system. They tell the story of their struggles as Wayuu women who are mothers of Wayuu children (that are considered *mestizos* by the U.S. ethnic model), and they state that they became activists in order to avoid the dissolution of their communitarian values. But Sandoval and García Canclini construct a reader and a spectator of *mestizaje* who is part of the self-defined first world. If Sandoval wants that the (post) modern first world could appreciate Latin American symbolic and residual hybrid products it is necessary to explain a little bit, to this first world reader, how the heterogeneous Latin America is. The use of *mestizaje* within the U.S.-American or European third world produces closed cultural spaces which are incommensurable and do not touch each other. The third world of the first world and the “other” third world seem to live in different worlds. Here it becomes evident the irony of naming “world” to the different parts of the geopolitical construction of the planet.

It is then worthily to ask what does the “third world” is. The authors built a third world that, although it is not homogeneous, and Sandoval and García Canclini’s *mestizaje* and hybridity are expressions of how the authors emphasize the differences, seems that can only be understood from a unique angle. Their third world erases the

meaning of *mestizaje* and hybridity in other times and spaces of the world. In addition, it also erases the epistemological and political connections between the Americas while smoothly introducing Latin American globalized academies into the U.S. These two authors embody the geo-historical constructions of “the other” that have been elaborated from central positions of knowledge, while also showing how the Euro-centric conscience, which has constructed itself as the self in opposition to the other, endures when race and sexual politics are ignored as constitutive of the process of classification.

These two constructions are based in the historical experience of colonization, and Sandoval’s radical “*mestizaje*” and García Canclini’s “hybrid cultural consumption” are inscribed in the paradox of questioning the constructions of the other done by the western culture through the legitimating power of the occidental academy. These circumstances have significant implications. As this dissertation attempted to do, the meaning of *mestizaje* and hybridity has to be discussed under the perspective of the colonizing experiences within the Americas. *Mestizaje* and hybridity correspond to the construction of otherness from a non-*mestizo* or hybrid space, and Latin American elites have incorporated it as an identity in relation, contrast and opposition to the western views. *Mestizaje* and hybridity seem to Latin Americans like García Canclini or U.S.-American mestizas like Sandoval, as the affirmative form of representing the other. These identifications seem to embody the essentialized Latin American culture. In addition, they fit with the counter-utilitarian discourse that posits us outside the mercantile rationality of the modern world. They appropriate the European word attempting to overturn it. But, through the

legitimizing geo-political divisions between the first and the third world, “*mestizaje*” and “hybridity” shape the approbation of the U.S. and European view.

While during the cold war period, the national state was a positive value promoted by the Pan-American project in order to blockade the international project of socialism; at-present the free-market model proposes an opposite model. Nationalism and national states are demonized as un-democratic forces that avoid the development of the natural order of the markets. As well as when the military coups used the racial rhetoric in order to strengthen the state, contemporary Latin American reactions of the state against neo-liberal globalization also use the concept of race. The Wayuu women and their adscription to the Bolivarian Revolution advocate for the cause of the national state’s sovereignty while promoting the development of local power at the community level. The ideology of *mestizaje* dominated Latin American nationalism. But within politically modernization frameworks, “whitening” was identified with progress.

In Venezuela, the project of modernization of the state drew on the investment of the oil’s resources in industrialization, roads, infrastructure, health and education. The main governmental efforts were done in the cities, where the indigenus populations traveled to negotiate with the politicians their claims. During this period, as Gallegos’ literary and political work provides evidences, Indian women’s bodies were again the instruments of the *mestizaje* that would guarantee the national integration, civilization, and urbanization. The new Venezuelan citizen was conceived as a worker and a member of one of the two traditional parties. The capital of Venezuela, Caracas, was the main space of modernity and the focus of the national

development as well. Indian and black women continued providing the wombs in order to the national population become whiter.

But modernization has an inter-American dimension. While it could adopt a nationalist rhetoric, as the cases of Mexico and Venezuela have provided evidence, it has never been only a local project. Admittance and recognition as modern nation states was part of the story. Thus, the national racial systems, which domestically ordered identities by defining a hierarchy based on race differences, were also part of an international racial order. While a gradation system regulates Latin American racial order, a binary segregation principle organizes the hemisphere. This is an additional reason that explains why “*mestizaje*” has a different meaning for U.S.-American Chicanas, who seem to draw on the Mexican Revolution racializing discourse to construct their “radical *mestizaje*,” and why “hybridity,” a term which does not have the class connotation that “*mestizaje*” has, has been adopted by García Canclini. The Wayuu women also order “race” according to whitening grades, while the term “*mestizo*” is not used.

The Wayuu population did not like to talk about race in regards to themselves, and still less with a Uruguayan researcher. Their talks always refer to a pejorative use of race, and some times of ethnic difference, which identifies “the white color” and “the *Criollos*” as embodying a superior status. Phenotypic features are associated to notions of blood and ancestors, and they usually use subtle linguistic codes to avoid mentioning the colonial and enslaving memories. Racial mixture is for the Wayuu population (as well as for the Venezuelans) a sexual and gender issue which draws on white male power on women’s bodies. For the Venezuelan as well as for the

Wayuu women, the color of the skin or of type of the hair of the sons to whom they give birth as result of this *mestizaje* was often an interesting point in the discussions outside the interviews' contexts. Among the Wayuu women, these commentaries often constructed classifications through distinctions. In fact, the WWN constructed the Wayuu women as wearing the *manta* and always weaving, thus not to wear the *manta* or not to know how to weave excludes a woman from the category of Wayuu. At the same time, the dresses of the Wayuu women expressed their wealth or poverty. In the city of Maracaibo, this classification pattern through what is absent allowed Chiquinquirá to identify herself as a Venezuelan and not as a Wayuu woman. In this sense, the urban condition, the Spanish language, and race difference intersected each other, giving birth to a class system that has been part of the Venezuelan national identity.

To wear a *manta* and to weave are crucial elements that differentiate Wayuu women from other women. But these activities identifying the Wayuu women shape a classifying system that does not apply to the Wayuu men, who seem to have more access to the dynamic power of change and transformation without identifying them as Wayuu through their external appearance. The men's social mobility is linked to the state and to the values of the market economy as a strategy of social ascendance. Wealthy Wayuu men are often involved in the Caribbean and border transnational economy. However, the Wayuu women activists, as their social movement's foundational principles explicitly state, have been particularly and negatively affected by the impact of the capitalist economy within their society. Subsequently, they decided to organize as Wayuu women in order to restore their traditional society.

They understand that their situation as women was comparatively more powerful before the capitalist society influenced the matrilineal orientation of the Wayuu clans. In addition, by performing their traditional clan versus national society bridging role they have achieved a second empowering dimension.

The Wayuu women's way of performing within the Venezuelan national racializing system suggests that for the Wayuu it is possible to achieve social mobility, in opposition to the U.S.-American ethnic system where racial movement is impossible, except for those who want and can "pass." A Spanish speaking Wayuu man or woman who migrates from La Guajira to Maracaibo or other cities that are more distant from La Guajira are often compared to other recent rural immigrants, with a minor formal education and a less fashionable way of dressing. For these men, race and class seem to have a greater influence than the ethnic solidarity, which, on the contrary, seems to be so necessary for the Wayuu women. In La Guajira, it is frequent to find Wayuu mothers who married Alijuna men and who returned to their original clan where their traditions offer them and their children a more secure space. But as the story of the Wayuu social movement shows, education has also a great presence within Wayuu activist women. In general terms, it seems to exist a correlation between the chronological age of the person, the number of years of formal education and the date of migration to Maracaibo. Elder people do not often have formal education, while they are those who are consulted in regards to traditions. It also seems that at-present, more Wayuu women have acceded to the university than Wayuu men.

The synthesis of the Wayuu social mobility allows arguing that for the Wayuu population it is possible to break the racializing system of the Venezuelan elite, while this social mobility is gender differentiated. Geographical mobility overlaps to class and cultural consumption, and to gender roles. Like in the major part of Venezuela, those who are wealthy, situated in the higher level of the classification, are differentiated from the rest. Money and political positions place these men and women within this category. At the same time, the Wayuu accept the national classification of race difference, although they recognize its inequality, but they try to avoid discrimination through different means. Those Wayuu men that adopt the warrior identity try to mediate the effects of inequality and class domination as strong merchants bordering the national law norms on the base of their Wayuu specific legal system. In El Zulia and Maracaibo, the Wayuu law is felt as incommensurable with the national legal system, and is a symbol (for the Alijuna) of the Wayuu's unassimilation. However, the Venezuelan population of Maracaibo and the border constitute a historically articulated region. Wayuu politician men are not as wealthy as the merchants or as other homologous indigenous men. On the other hand, the Wayuu women's traditional bridging role led them to occupy many representative positions within the institutions that the ethnic rights legislation has created.

The way that the Wayuu women have appropriated the racializing and gendering system is related to the discourses of the state. Within the *indigenista* period, "the development of the patria" and the "Venezuelan responsible worker and good citizen" were the models to be followed. The indigenous men were peasants of the *haciendas* of the oil-producing region; the unions, parties, and church were the

institutions that canalized their political participation. The Wayuu women preferred to remain within the limits of their clans, while their men traveled forth and backwards from La Guajira to the *haciendas* of the southern part of the Maracaibo Lake. The Wayuu men who worked for the regional or the national state enjoyed of the guarantees that the minimum salary defined by the labor legislation, while rarely worked as vendors. When the government of Hugo Chávez quadruplicated the minimum salary as well as the retired peoples' pensions, the rural population in a general sense, and particularly the Wayuu who worked for the state had access to monetary resources that empowered them within their communities. The limits of commerce, one of the jobs that among the Wayuu's options provide them more benefits, are marked by the possibility of acquiring goods on lay-away basis and paying within a previously specified period. This is applicable to the Wayuu women merchants who buy clothes in Maicao and sell them in the Maracaibo markets. Before the 1998 election of Hugo Chávez, there was not control of the inflation, and the Wayuu women's business declined. Food sale was the only worth occupation. Everyday life led the Wayuu population to update the neo-liberal Colombian and Venezuelan politics and those that the IMF promoted as well. The inflation and the devaluation rates, which constitute the key point of their business, are common knowledge skills among the Wayuu. They measure their own class position in relation to the value of the Venezuelan bolívar and Colombian peso, and measure the lack of power of the respective national money by comparing the position of their country/patria in relation to the IMF politics and the U.S.-American dollar. The

reference for evaluating the tendency of their economical situation is always in relation to the neo-liberal global economy.

The Bolivarian politics has changed the points of social and economical confrontation, while opening the national incomes derived from the oil production to the indigenous population as well as to those other poor Venezuelans who were previously excluded from the benefits derived from the national oil rent. The Bolivarian revolution does not support the Euro-centric modernizing model, and the nationalist discourse of endogenous and sustainable development constructed a rhetoric related to the Indian alternative mode of articulation to modernity. At present, racial identity has been emphasized for redefining the new Venezuelan citizen. *Indigenismo* and previous governments used “whitening” for erasing differences, as Gamio and Gallegos show. Within the politics of the neo-liberation Bolivarian government, the Wayuu attempt to erase racialization differences through different terms. They conserve the categories of range and hierarchy of their Wayuu classificatory systems, while using the differences of the national system. Drawing on the nationalist ideology that emphasizes the Indian origins of the new Republic while promoting social mobility and change, the WWN, which emerged in Maracaibo, appropriated and benefited from the discourse of national citizenship and transnational cultural consumption. As Venezuelan national citizens, they organized for the restoration of their traditional society. As Wayuu women, they realized that the restoration of their traditional society, where the clan supports them while the husband abandoned them or is absent, as well as supports those who become old, is a

convenient resource. As mothers of indigenous Wayuu, they have a place in the Venezuela patria while coinciding in class terms with the Bolivarian anti-imperialism.

Pocaterra's narrative of her life uncovers how Sandoval's methodology of the oppressed embeds a scholastic world that understands itself as authorized to perceive, like Gamio and Gallegos also did, the world as a spectacle, far away and from the top, and to organize it as a whole for its cognitive use. Sandoval's perspective goes along the invention of a scholastic vision of the world, and García Canclini embodies one of the most perfect articulations of the myths of the homo economicus and the rational choice theory. Sandoval and García Canclini's scholastic conceptions lead them to introduce their thinking frame in the heads of the acting subjects, and to situate the foundation of their practices in their own consciousness that they project to (post) modern social movements. Pocaterra's words on her life will provide evidence that she as well as other Wayuu activist women make use of cultural consumption as an instrument of citizen subjectivation. However, they also emphasize the role of women for the biological and symbolical reproduction of the Wayuu. Self-interest, to which wrongly all interests are associated, is only one specific form that the sacrificed action of investment embeds. The more significant desires, needs, preferences, dispositions are endogenous and depend on a history that overlaps to the experiences. The Wayuu women's words on their experiences validate a political economy of population that takes into account reproduction of the community.

Supplementing these conclusions that refer to Sandoval's third world and García Canclini's production-based political economy of cultural consumption differences with the Venezuelan Wayuu, the next pages re-produce Pocaterra's life on

the basis of the transcription that I did of her own words. This final strategy of the dissertation attempts to offer a frame capable of providing a space for the Wayuu women that have decided to be the Indian mothers of an alter-native modern nation state in the new global order of the Americas. As organizers and facilitators of the cooperative politics for their society, which they constructed as centered in the feminine principle, they have a privileged place. They reinforce their reproductive power as teachers, employees of the state and merchants and consumers of the increasing economy of the region and the country. The Wayuu women and men see the new rights and the social legislation of the government as a great support. To have a salary provides them a stability never previously achieved. Now they organize as Wayuu under the pluri-ethnic constitution of the new Venezuelan national state, and work under the protection of the labor system, which, in addition searches an alter-native endogenous model of development.

The Venezuelan racial system has permeable limits and is open to mobility and change. However, the Wayuu women who migrated to the cities learned that although the geographical change, the achievement of formal education and a greatest level of consumption are key for social mobility. Their women condition is better within their traditional organization. In few words, the Wayuu women claim for a class and racial identity in concordance with the national discourse of alter-native modernity by defining themselves as citizens and reproducers of a country that changed its national subject. But at the same time, for them it is convenient to remain within the clan, a strategy that coincides with the Venezuelan project of contesting

neo-liberal attacks on this oil producing nation state by decentralizing the state power and empowering the local communities.

**A WAYUU WOMANIST POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MESTIZAJE
NOELÍ POCATERRA**

I am Wayuu and I was born in La Guajira, in an indigenous community. I had a strange birth because of the place where my mother went when I was in her womb.¹ We lived in a place that was called Mocomatira and my mother knew that her mother was very sick and that she trekked in a place close to Sinamaica.² When my mother received the news that her mother was sick, it seems that she had measles, she traveled by donkey for five hours, from my community where they conceived me, to some way say it, to Sinamaica. And my mother went there and she saw her mother. She went to her mother in law's house who did not love her because she considered her not the proper woman for my father. This means that she was a visitor. She went there to see her mother who was sick, but she never should have gone there. This is what she says. She knew that in that house she would be scorned. And although she

¹ In order to evaluate Noelí Pocaterra's narrative on the rejection that her female condition as well as her mother's law status within the Wayuu society see Victoria Gutierrez de Pineda, *Organización Social de La Guajira*, pp. 1-26, Olga Mejía M., *Conceptos de la sexualidad wayuu expresados en los mitos, leyendas y tradiciones*.

² Mocomatira as well as Sinamaica are Wayuu spaces close the Maracaibo basin. The distance between the city of Maracaibo and Sinamaica is 60 km., and at present the Añu indigenous group () live in Sinamaica. Wayuu and Añu peoples have different cultures. At present they collaborate in many projects. For example, an Añu family built the Yanama of Guarero, which is a community space that the Wayuu Women Web's promoted for children and grand-parents alimentation close to Los Filúos, the regional market space. The Añu people know how to construct houses with this specific region's environmental resources that the Wayuu do not share. Añu and Wayuu young women and men also work together in indigenous students' organizations and cultural groups.

knew that, she decided to go there. On that night she began to feel pain. And when she felt pain, she went to the wasteland.

- “It seems that I am going to give birth.”

She felt that she was not loved and that she could not make nasty in that house where she was not a welcome visitor, and she wanted to go to wilderness to give birth. She did not want to be in that house with her newborn son o daughter.³ She did not know what sex the creature would have. I was her first child. She did not wanted to soil with blood or to bother the people to whose house she went to visit her mother, and who did not love her. In addition, her mother was sick, she was very grave. Then, although she could not stand it more, and although she pushed and pushed, she felt that the birth got complicated and that she couldn’t give birth. She felt so bad that she did not have another alternative. She says that she thought of me,

- “It seems that my daughter or my son can die.”

She told me that because of the shape of the belly she thought that the creature that will be born would be a girl. She said,

- “No, I cannot do this to my daughter or my son. I need to go to the house.”

She saw herself in the obligation of telling her mother of what was going on. And I was born in the morning. When I was born --my mother says to me-- that I did not cry. I was born an 18th of September, and she says that she heard that a friend of hers

³ Noélí Pocaterra was narrating her life in Spanish. It is important to notice that she uses a feminist language differentiating sons from daughters while ordinary Spanish uses the male word’s termination in order to indicate the simultaneous presence of female and male subjects. Noélí Pocaterra repeats this language pattern in her public speeches, and when confronted with the grammatical need to use one or the other termination she uses the female one, a feminist behavior that is very uncommon (and criticized) in Venezuela.

that was there and who brought me out said that I was already dead. Somebody told this friend,

- "Take her out!"

She did not beat me a palm, as the Alijunas do. On the contrary, she took me out the room to breathe. And then the friend of my mother said,

- "Ah, she is a girl, and how beautiful she is!"

They considered me already dead, and at that very moment, when they were almost mourning me, I cried. I cried, and then they took me to my mother. It seems that they weaved me wool cap. They thought that I felt cold. In order to give me a little bit more warmth. And they laid me in what goes upon the donkey, until they put me in a small hammock.

Afterward, something very sad happened, but they told it me it, and because you asked me about my life, I need to tell you the true story.

My mother says that she asked to one of her brothers in law,

- "Look, please make me a favor, look for the father of the girl, look for your brother,

he is in town, in Sinamaica. Seek, seek him and tell him that his daughter was born so that he will come to know her." Then, he came and said to my mother,

- "Okay, yes, I will inform him."

Then, when he already was preparing the horse, because there were not trucks, the other brother said to him,

- "You are not going to use your horse."

And this makes my mother felt a great pain. And another brother of my father passed where my mother was, and when he saw me, he said,

- “Hay, what an ugly girl!”

- “Why?”

I asked my mother why they said that, and she told me that I was hairless, and that I was born with my eyes like two small lines.

- “Right when you were born, I herd that somebody said,

- “Hey, what an ugly girl!”

My mother says that it was very painful for her.

Well, what is true is that my father came afterward, two or three days later. He knew me, and then he left again. Then my mother went back to my house. I was born by accident in that place.

I remember that when I was four, five years old, my father was the first Wayuu teacher. My father went with a people, some siblings of his who lived in Maracaibo, and he was there as an assistant, or whatever, in order to assist the señor of the family. But they sent him to a small school. This let my father learn to read and write. He left La Guajira and went to Maracaibo when he was around 13 years old. He was already a grown up kid but he learnt to read and write.⁴ But in addition to this, when this señor laid in his hammock, he said to my father,

⁴ Among the many things that Noeli Pocatererra means by this narrative is that her father did not learn Spanish until he was 13 years old. She is also telling me that although her father’s social status was higher than her mother’s within the Wayuu society, he went to work as a domestic criado within a wealthy Maracaibo family.

- “Francisco, read me this book.”⁵

Then he read and the señor said to him,

- “No, this is not the correct way for reading. It must be a point or a full stop there.

Read it again.” And this señor became sort of my father’s teacher. And my father tells me that when he read literature and all these things to this man, the señor said to him,

- “Do you know what is this?”

Then the señor explained him,

“This part is this, and that means that.”

So my father learnt many things, with this señor.

When he was sixteen, seventeen years old, my father told this man that he would return to his home, to his mother’s house, that he was the oldest of the children, and that his mother needed him, that he felt nostalgic and wanted to go.

Afterward he knew my mother. He worked taking care of the cows, all those things, and because he had fourth grade primary school, he was the only one that knew to read and write, and they named him teacher in Cojoro.⁶ When he was teacher

⁵ The name of Noelí Pocaterra’s father’s is Hernán. Maracaibo’s criollos’s use Wayuu’s hammocks to sleep.

⁶ At present, in Cojoro, which is sited in the northern border point between Venezuela and Colombia, there is a bilingual school. It was a catholic “Fe y Alegría” school. Under President Hugo Chávez’s presidency it became a Bolivarian School. Among other things this means that the Wayuu children receive two lunches and a public transportation takes them from their Wayuu caseríos to the school for the whole day. The teachers are Wayuu and the Catholic Church’s presence has a significant weight within the educational process of the Wayuu children. The school, the church and the army share the same space. The army is there since the Conquest period due to the geo-strategic position of Cojoro. At present, this is a very dangerous and isolated place. While the presence of weapons and drug’s smugglers and guerrilla respect the school it is always recommendable to Alijuna people to be represented by Wayuu peoples when traveling through the area (as well as within all La Guajira).

there, in Cojoro, a supervisor went from the Education Secretary that was astonished by the school, the teacher, and who knows what else.⁷ The supervisor came and said,

- “I will send you to El Mácaro, so that you can study fifth and sixth grade in two months.”

There my father learnt how to make garden beds; he also learnt and knew those seeds that came inside envelopes, and he learnt how to use that technique for gardening.

Indeed, he is that type of man --the Wayuu and all indigenous men usually know to do many things with their hands, they have a great skill to do things. Then he came back with what he learnt, and when he arrived the second time to the school, he told the children,

- “Look, when the sun is always here, get away and come back later to the school.”

Because the children came riding a donkey, and they tied him under some trees.

These are the sort of things that some times mark one.

- “Well, go home to have lunch, and more or less, when the sun is there, in that place,

come back in order for me to give you the afternoon classes.” And that is how it was.

A few days after, my father realized, as he tells the story, that the children did not leave the school, and that they stayed there during lunchtime. And of course, we had lunch, and afterward we began to play with these other children. In the schoolhouse there were sand dunes, , there were coconut tree plantations, , we ate fruit, lycheenuts.

My father talked to the children, and he asked them,

⁷ This supervisor can be better understood as the Venezuelan local expression of Gamio’s Inter-American indigenismo. National Dictatorship, Maracaibo’s basin clientelar relationships, Wayuu social hierarchies, and the power of reading and writing in Spanish and Wayunanki are some of the points at issue.

- “And you, why don’t you leave?” Then the kids said,
- “We do not leave because of two reasons. First, because the sun is too hot for the hooves of the donkeys and they will burn themselves. It is better that the donkeys rest. And second, because we will not find any food at home. It is better if you give us the class of the afternoon, and then we leave.”

My father remembered the course, and the garden beds, and the seeds. And he began. Each day he dedicated one hour each of his classes in order to teach all of us how to work in a garden. He taught us how to prepare the land and to sow seeds. I knew, for example, the cabbage, carrots. We didn’t know that, none of the kids that were there knew these vegetables. So my father, who already ate those things when he lived in Maracaibo , he explained to my mother,

- “This can be eaten crude, and this needs to be cooked.”

I never liked the radishes, but we ate the other things, it was an obligation. Then, he took two of the elder male kids and he told them,

- “Well, now go to town, and sell what we have. And with the money that you’ll receive, you’ll buy this thing and the other one. And by this way, with these funds, the lunchroom began to be done. He called all the mothers, to make a meeting, and said to them,

- “My woman will cook, but she needs that the other mothers to come once or twice each day, or once a week to help to peel and to help to cut the vegetables, , to help to look for wood, to help to wash the dishes, all these things. And then you’ll have the right to eat, and the children also, and if the husband comes, and he cuts the wood, he also has the right to eat.”

So, it was, a community thing, and after six, eight months of going ahead with this activity, with this lunchroom, this self-administered activity, the supervisor from the Education Secretary came to visit us. And he saw what my father did. It was around 1941, something like that. Then my father told to that supervisor,

- “Look, I will create a lunchroom.”

And the supervisor said,

- “I’ll go to the Patronato of school’s lunchrooms so that they’ll send you food, because what you did has a great worth, and I can say this because I know a lot about these things.”⁸

My father went ahead with his vegetables, his garden beds, and now he did not have so much pressure to sell what the school harvested. Because there were months when there was nothing to sell; because it was not the moment, when the vegetables were growing up. He made many beds in order to always have something.

After this experience in Cojoro, my father entered into politics. While we were there, in the school, life was really happy. On the other hand, while the gardening went on, my mother also worked on arts and crafts. She was a great artisan, well, she still is. Of course, now she is 83 years old. They still live there in La Guajira.⁹ My mother likes to weave. My mother weaves. At that time she brought to Maracaibo city what she did in order to sell it. Before the threads were of cotton that

⁸ The Patronato was the specific indigenista Venezuelan institution in charge of the indigenous people’s assimilation.

⁹ While I was in La Guajira from January to March 2003, Noelí Pocaterra traveled from Caracas to La Guajira (one airplane hour or 12 bus hours) during the weekends. Wayuu peoples went to her house and she visited the region in order to be in direct contact with those that she represented at the National Assembly.

was harvested. When these threads began to disappear my mother knew new materials and she said,

- “There are some nice threads in Maracaibo, I will go for them.”

And she took us there. But she left my brother and me in a neighbor, a barrio that the government made for the indigenous peoples, that is named Ziruma. A friend of hers lived there, and my mother stayed at her house. And we, well, we liked the travel.

The travel was almost a complete day and a half, in the winter, and a complete day in the summer. There were no roads. We came in lorries, riding in the backside, because there were no cars, neither were there buses, there was nothing. That woman we stayed with had a grandfather; the son of this man was her father. And the señor was a beggar. He asked for handouts. And he lacked a leg and used a cane. We were very Wayuu --I do not remember his grandchildren, I have empty spaces in what I am telling you. I remember that when the man came from the street, we helped him with his bag. He sat down and opened his bag. Our curiosity was not with what was inside. We did not imagine what was inside. And I remember that he took out an apple, and that's how I knew the apple,

“Eat it, eat it, but with everything, with peel and all.”

I did not like it. An apple at those times, what was it to give an apple to a beggar at that age! And he also shared a piece of cake that he received; we liked it.

- “Did you like it?”

- “Yes, Yes.” And he gave us all the cake that they gave him.

In my life, I have been through sort of different places. Because my father entered in politics and afterward came the dictatorship. My father was pursued and

needed to go to Colombia. Then also my mother needed to go to Colombia. When this happened they sent us to a boarding school as pupils. So, we were in different places. They took us off from here, they took us off from there, and we experienced that anguish of poverty of been pursued, and that at any moment they could murder my father. Once they took him to Bogotá. I also studied in Barranquilla.¹⁰ Well, we felt all that anguish.

When my father enters in politics, they moved him from his job in La Guajira, and they send him to work in a different place. Although he only had a sixth grade, he was a man very dedicated to his school. They name him the main teacher of an Alijuna school of an oil field. We also lived in La Concepción, which is close to La Paz, close to the José Enrique Losada road, that is the avenue that goes along La Limpia Avenue to the house that they gave to my father. We did not talk Spanish, and he was the director of the Alijuna school. And my mother tells us that she laughed a lot because it calls her attention that we played with the children of our neighbors who were from Trinidad-Tobago. The children spoke English and we spoke Wayunenki, and we understood each other perfectly and we became friends. My brother was the one who most played with them.

Well, then, in the forties, because of my father's political persecution, if they wanted me to study they needed to intern me in Maracaibo in a school for poor girls. I believe that the name of the school was "Carmelita Morán." My father was in Colombia, my mother left me in the school and she returned to La Guajira. And then I

¹⁰ Barranquilla is the Colombian town where the majority of Acción Democrática's leadership went to exile. In this town, Rómulo Betancourt's (after Simón Bolívar and before Hugo Chávez's appearance in the scene, the second foundational father of the nation and the state) political project is named the "*Manifiesto de Barranquilla*."

became full of lice. There I never spoke, but one night, and Sandra, realize you the frustration that I felt from what happened to me. Suddenly, when I was at that catholic school, I began to like the religious life. I believed that I would be a nun. I went to mass in the mornings; I cleaned the corridors. The nuns put us to do things, and we did them. I was very disciplined. The school was Alijuna. At night, maybe it was nine o'clock, in those bedrooms where many girls slept, a mate asked me something, and I answered her. Just in that moment, a nun passed and whipped me with a belt, and that seemed to me so unfair! It was so painful because it was so unfair that then the idea of becoming a nun went off from me. I told what happened to my mother.

Of course, because at that time, I stayed longer in Maracaibo, and the people laughed at me, I felt great pain. I began to realize that they reject us. I began to feel this rejection when I was around 10, 12 years old. I remember a refrain that I never understood. Sometimes I put myself to think about it, but it was a refrain that I heard when I was ten years old, which said, "China Guajira, tira la piedra por la barriga," "Guajira Chinese, throw out the stone by your bell." I do not yet understand what do they wanted to say with those words.

After the experience with the nuns my mother, who always worked as an artisan, sent me to a school where I could study until sixth grade in Maracaibo. At that time, my father returned from Colombia and was again with us. At school, there were two turns. One was in the morning, and the other one was in the afternoon. I was the one ironing my father's clothes, and I do not know why he always used white linen clothes, and my mother starched them; she starched even his underwear. I learnt

to iron; actually, I iron very well. Every day I came back from school at five o'clock. One day it was my turn to iron, another day it was my turn to wash the dishes, another day it was my turn to sell. Because my mother was artisan, I went to some friends of hers' houses in order to sell her merchandise. Another day it was the turn to go and pick up the money. In Maracaibo one did not have any more that happy child life that we once one had in La Guajira. It was the study; it was the work.

Ah! Once my father brought me to Caracas; he brought a Wayuu group. I believe that it was in 1948, 1945. I do not know.¹¹ My brother and I, we were the children who danced. They brought many typical children from the different Venezuelan states. My brother and I, we danced in the Nuevo Circo of Caracas. When I came back to Caracas to study as a young woman, when I already was around 16, 17 years old, I saw some postcards with our photos.

After this period, I was in a family house, and of course, I did not see my mother. I needed to help to wash the dishes, help with the girls, help to sweep. But I thank that woman She gave me a space. That woman put me in contact with the welfare service. I was almost 15 to 16 years old.

I wanted to study law, I was always thinking in justice. I thought that if I studied law I would make justice. Therefore, I said to myself that I needed to study law. So, after that woman contacted me with the social service, my father told me that his political relationships could support my efforts to go ahead studying and he also put me in contact with a department of social service. My father was politically

¹¹ Noélí Pocaterra refers here to 1948 Nuevo Circo's Festival de la Tradición that I mentioned in the previous section as a crucial AD's political activity that while was a huge demonstration against the dictatorship it set down the framework for Venezuela's modernizing nation state making process.

persecuted, some times, he was incognito in Maracaibo and sometimes he was in exile in Colombia. He could not legally enter in Venezuela. I talked with a woman of the welfare department, and she told me,

- "I need to go to your house." My mother told me,
- "Well, sweetheart, I will give you three bolívares so that you can buy fresh fish, and when you arrive home, you will offer lunch to this woman."

And I remember that when that woman came to my house we did not have a table. At that time, we used tin lard cans that we turned down as tables. We had that table, and I made her sit down in the hammock. And she saw all that. And I told her that I wanted to study law. And she answered me,

- "All right, you want to study law." Then she said to me,
- "Do you know what you are good for? For you it works to study Social Work."

Do you know what? I do not remember what I answered to her.

- "And what's that?"
- "Well, see it like this. It is a career that teaches you a little bit of everything. You are going to learn a little bit of everything. You help a person, a family, and a community."
- "Does it work for me? Does it serve to me?"

At the end, she made me believe that I will study the career of social worker. I went for three months to the office that she told me to go.

- "Come tomorrow in the afternoon. Come next week."

The social workers' office was in Caracas and I traveled from Maracaibo in order to be admitted in the Social Workers' school. There was a residence there. It was a

technical school that depended of the governmental health school. At that time, it did not exist the Social Worker career in the Universidad Central. No, it was in La Casona. I lived in diagonal to the presidential house. Can you imagine? And the security forces were a block from the school. Imagine it! I knew all that life; I felt its terror; my family escaped from it. They were my closest neighbors in Caracas.

My mother accompanied me when the teachers examined me in order to be admitted in the school. They sent us in buses from Maracaibo to Caracas. We traveled for twenty hours. At that time, the ticket of a bus from Maracaibo to Caracas was 22 bolívares. My mother paid all that. And the social worker woman told me, because four other Alijunas came with us,

- “When you approve the examination, put a telegram.”

And she wrote it,

- “I approved test. I wait fellowship.”

It was the fifth of July, and my mother was looking at me.¹² I made my test, and afterward I had the interview. They told us that we need to return in another day, and they told me that I was in the list that passed the examinations. The other four Alijunas did not remain. And I remained. I received the news and I went to the telegraph in order to send my telegram. And they answered me that they lamented it a lot, but that I could not count on the fellowship. And I remember that I began to cry.

Then my mother told me,

- “Do not worry about it. I have some clients and here I have 300 bolívares.”

¹² The fifth of July is Venezuela’s independence day.

Only the residence was 150 bolívares each month.

- “Do not worry about it. I go, and I work, and I pay you for the residence.”
- “And how are you going to return to Maracaibo?”
- “I still have 30 bolívares.”

She put me in contact with some señoras who worked in the underground network here in Caracas.¹³ In the weekends, I visited and saw these women. Once, a man from the Ruiz Pineda family came, and the woman who took me off from the school dorms during the weekends, told me,

- “He is going to do something for you, and he will achieve a fellowship in La Esfera journal.”¹⁴

There was a journal whose name was La Esfera and it seems that the owner of the journal was a follower of the dictator General Marco Pérez Jiménez. But the son of the owner, who was a young man, was on the side of those who fought against Pérez Jiménez.

- “And the son is who will help you. He will give you a fellowship. But you need to do

¹³ This interview to Noelí Pocaterra was done in his office at the National Assembly in Caracas. Her department was in the ground floor of the legislative palace as it corresponded to the second vice-president to this institution. The Wayuu people, their dresses, hammocks, suitcases and languages occupied an area from which the poor population was banned before president Chávez’s administration. Indigenous presence within this space was an expression of the empowering process that the Venezuelan indigenous social movement experienced. Noelí Pocaterra’s secretary was Rosa Trujillo, an ecologist activist whose experience within women and environmental social movements bridged the indigenous population and the national and international political spaces. I interviewed her several times during my fieldwork.

¹⁴ Ruíz Pineda is remembered in Venezuela as a martyr. His youth and generosity are his most represented features.

a column at the end of each month.” It came to be that it was a medical advice column, and I did it. I could not inform anybody in the residence about this fellowship, and the woman students asked me where I went, and I could not say.

- “Ah, you will meet a boyfriend!”

After collecting my fellowship, I went to the bookstore, and I found some beautiful postcards with Wayuu peoples in them. The postcards were beautiful, with great colors. I began to realize that my mother’s photograph was there, in the postcards, that some aunts were also there, and that also I was there. The photographs were done when I when I came to dance to the Nuevo Circo, to the Festival de la Tradición, while I was still a kid. I bought plenty of these postcards. I spent 20 bolívares, which I believe was a huge amount of money. But it was after this event with the photos that I really passed through experiences.

The young woman who shared with me in the students’ dorm had a boyfriend who was a man of the National Security corps of the dictator. But I did not know that, and because I never went out with anybody, she said to me,

- “Look, negrita, one of these days, why don’t you come to hang out with us?”

I was already 18 years old, and I had two dresses that my mother bought to me when I came to Caracas to study. I came with my manta, my Guajira dress, but at school they obliged me to use my uniform. Then I had these two dresses that my mother bought, and she told me,

- “Look, the Alijunas do not want you to use the manta and they want you to always wear dresses. I will ask somebody to make you two dresses. One will be green and

the other one will be orange. They will be done with the same cloth but of different colors.”

The pleated fold dresses were made with a brilliant material. My mother told me,

- “These are for a party.” And she gave me shoes as a gift that I believe that were Chinese. The day that we had a party, I took a shower and I sat down and waited. The dorms were in El Paraíso, and the party was there. The señorita who took care of us in the dorms, she was a señorita from Puerto Rico, an already elder señorita.

- “Señorita Pocaterra, you have to dress yourself.”

- “I am already dressed.”

- “No, it cannot be.”

She called one of the girls and she asked her to help me. That’s how I learnt that Alijuna women have showers without watering their hair. They only water it when they wash it. I was there with my wet hair waiting for the party to begin. And then they told me,

- “No, look. This is not like that, we will put you hair in rolling-pins to change your straight hair.” The young woman had one of those machines where you enter your head to dry your hair. They wanted to make up me, but I did not accept that. They wanted to cut my hair. But that, I did not want it.

- “Where are your dresses?” In the locker, there were two dresses.

- “No, these are not dresses for a party.”

They informed the señorita that I didn’t have a dress. And I remember that they made me wear a party dress, and shoes, and of course, I did not look nice, and I did not move from my seat in the entire night. A professor invited me to dance.

- “No, I cannot. “
- “But, I’ll teach you; I’ll teach you. I am the music professor. Why don’t you want to dance?”
- “Because they put me too high shoes.”

In sum, I did not move from that place since every body left the party. Well, we pass through experiences like that one.

I did my studies, and when I was almost ready for graduating, when my mother was making a beautiful manta with which I will graduate, they expelled me. Because on vacations I always went home, and I saw everything that we experienced. I think that they expelled me when the TV first appeared, because I saw an internship’s advertisement for a school that is named “La Gran Colombia,” close to the barrio of El Cementerio. I applied to this internship and they sent me to have my internship there. When I was there, the urban demonstrations against Pérez Jiménez began. That happened in 1956. I was in politics because of my parents. I could not trust in anybody. And on the weekends, I saw some people, and the other students wanted to come with me some times, and I invented any excuse so that they did not come with me.

Acción Democrática was different from what it is now. They were people that suffered a lot. And I realized all what they experienced without being capable of saying a word. So, when I was in my job position in La Gran Colombia, I heard some young people singing the national anthem. There was a demonstration in the barrio, and the protestors entered in La Gran Colombia and began to sing the anthem. Then I

left my office and I went with them to sing. I put a black lace in my arm and I sang. Of course, when I came back to the dorms, nobody said anything to me, and when I arrived to school, where I studied, two men from the National Security corps waited for me. The chair of the school did not allow them to take me in prison. She told them that she would bring me to her house. And she did it. And do you know who that woman was? I do not know if she is still alive, Lila Ruíz de Monteroso. She was the wife of a great psychiatric doctor, and that man was my professor in the classes of Psychology. And he was the founder of the Mental League, and there are some institutions that keep his name. What is actually true is that she did not allow the National Security corps to take me in prison. I was around twenty years old. After eight days, she told me,

- “You are expelled! You need to leave Caracas. I will accompany you to the bus station. Take the trunk with which you arrived.”

My student mates were crying. I arrived to Ziruma, expelled. I believed that in four months I would have graduated. I did not know that my mom was at that house, it was the house where I always arrived in order to have news when coming from Caracas and going to La Guajira, and I stayed there. I found my mother embroidering, finishing the manta with which I would graduate. I lied to her and I told her that I came to Maracaibo to do special work.

- “For how much time?”
- “Well, only for a month.”

The following day we went to see my father in Colombia, in Maicao, in the border. I felt very bad, with that lie, with that worry. I decided to talk to my mother who had a

stronger personality than my father did. My father, because he was a politician, understood better this type of thing. The reaction of my father was to congratulate me.

- “Don’t worry. I am proud of you. You shall graduate. I will write to Rómulo Betancourt so that you can graduate. We will ask him where you would be able of receiving your papers.”

And he began to research how to help me to graduate. Some time later, this man answered him and he told my father to send me to San Juan de los Morros. And when we were preparing to go there, like month and a half after I arrived to Ziruma, a letter arrived saying that in Caracas the professors asked to the Education Secretary to allow my return, to let me graduate.

- “I am back!!”
- “Hola!!” They had fired the old woman director. When I returned I met a new chair.

When I told her that I would graduate with my manta, otherwise it would be a masquerade, which was terrible for her. My mother was still embroidering my manta. I forgot to tell you that when I was studying there was a man, an anthropologist. His name was Miguel Acosta Saignes, and that man knew my father. My mother told me to seek him. Then I found him. And I think that he became happy when he knew me, and he and he took me to his house where he lived with his second wife, to the Universidad Central de Venezuela, to his classes. In these classes, he asked me to teach his anthropology students on our way of life. And I said this and that. And afterward he explained the theory to the students. Kinship, for example, and I was the one who explained it. And I also visited him in the weekends. We still were in the

underground life; we did everything very carefully, and all those things. And in the year 1956, we began to do the Indigenist law, as we called it at that moment. I talked to him, and he wrote what I said. I returned to the residence, and sometimes I had dinner in his house. And while I studied the career of social work, I worked with Acosta Saignes in the indigenista law. When I graduated, he went. And also the son of the man who gave me the fellowship, the one of the journal, went. But the help of the fellowship was only for two years, because when I passed to third year, I forgot to tell you this, the director told me,

- "I want to ask you a favor. I want you, during the graduation ceremony, where they

invited a secretary of Pérez Jiménez with his wife, I want that you'll serve the champagne." I was very scared with the champagne. There was a man who served it, but I was the one who took special care of the secretary and his wife. Then, when it was around the fourth time, the chair of the school told me,

- "Sit down here."

She had her plans, the señora, and I felt fear. Leave the tray in the table. And I did like she asked me. And she told the Secretary,

- I want to introduce this señorita to you. This señorita is indígena. The only indigenous

woman that we have here, and the first one who arrives here. And she behaves very well, and she studies with a lot of sacrifice, and she has two years with us since her mother left her here."

She did not know that I was supported by the opposition.

- “And her mother works and helps her, but she still needs help.”

When she did that, five months of the scholar year had already passed. Then the secretary said,

- “All right, each month you can count on a fellowship of 200 bolívares. And I will see that you receive an amount that will comprehend all what corresponds to the months that already passed. I will make it to be approved since January.” Then they gave me the 1000 bolívares. And my brother always reminds me about this, and he teases me because next to the residence where we lived, here in El Paraíso, the chair of the school told me,

- Look, Noelí, you know that also I am a member of the feminine group of Pérez Jiménez. Any student of Social Work needs to be part of the female auxiliary group. That meant that we needed to have obligatory military practices and we needed to go twice a week to these practices. At that time the hippodrome was in El Paraíso, when I was in the parades of the fifth of July, I passed close to a bakery that was named Pastelería Vienesa. There were good things there, and I remembered the elder begging man that we met in Ziruma, but I did not have money. And that’s why when you compare to all what we have now! And I always remained with the desire of what that man gave us. When they gave me my first fellowship, what I first did was to go there. And it was a lot of money. And I ate very happy. I ate the one thousand bolívares, and I ate so much.

After this, I graduated and I went to see these two men, Ruiz Pineda and Acosta Saignes. And each one of them gave me 100 bolívares. And I appeared in El Nacional in the first page in 1956 and in the La Esfera Journal also, with my manta.

Drawing on this, Renny Ottolina saw me in the press, and he invited me to one of his programs in the radio. He came for me and at the end of the radio program, he brought me again to my residence.

When I returned again with my mother to La Guajira I could not have a job. Uff! I was looking for a job for one year. I asked to work in La Guajira. But a man told me,

- “Look Noelí, I will tell you the truth. I feel pity to see you like this. I don’t want to cheat you. Your name is in the black list.”

So, I went to seek refuge in the oil fields. And the National Security police took my mother, and continued that persecution against us. After I graduated, I went to Puerto Rico. I went to a congress. I saw its advertisement in the press. The theme that Venezuela kept to the congress was “Social Service and indigenous communities.” I talked to my new boss and I told him about the congress. I began working right now, and I only had three months on the position in the oil fields,

- “But Noelí, you began to work only right now.”
- “But for me it is important to go.”

And they gave me the ticket and for the sojourn.

When I arrive from Maracaibo to the airport in Caracas, the journalists interview me. All around me I saw teachers and other women of the government. I was not the official delegate. Then I met the wife of the consul and she gave an invitation envelope.

Then I told her,

- “Señora, I am not the official delegate.”

In Puerto Rico, I would not know where to go. And suddenly, that teacher who was from

Puerto Rico and who knew me from the residence in Caracas, who already had returned

to her country, she told me,

- “Hi, Noelí!”
- “Profesora!”
- “And to which hotel will you go?”
- “It would be great if you can recommend me a cheap place to stay.”
- “Do you know what we can do, if you don’t bother about it? I am the director of an institute for blind girls. You can stand there.” And I was more than happy. The man

who was the president of the congress –and because I was observing and I was always around there, this man told me, and he spoke and I did not understand. I went to look for a dictionary. And he asked me why I sat in the last row.

- “I will invite you to you sit in the first row, and I want you to participate.” At the next

day he sent for me. I was in San Juan, in Puerto Rico, in El Dorado. This was the name of the place. The man who came looking for me, I don’t know him. And we exchanged the password. I left with the man. And I arrived there. He told me,

- “Tomorrow there is a reception for the congress’ delegation.” His name was Muñoz,

Marín, I do not remember, and he was Rómulo's friend, "and I will ask to call for you so that you'll sit in the front, at his side."¹⁵

- "This Indian woman, how lucky is she!!!"

I sat between the governor and his wife. But that happened, and after that, I returned to Maracaibo. It was a very difficult life. I don't want to remember about these days. And I became pregnant. And I had my first son. Then, of course, I had an enamorado, and he told me,

- "We will marry me right now."

Afterward I knew this man, and I have two sons with him. He is Creole. He is magistrate of the national Supreme Court. We got married and now we have twelve grandchildren. But in terms of my personal life, that's what you asked me, my struggle also had an evolution. Then, you'll understand what does it mean this very moment, after all what I passed, all what I worked, the internships, the discrimination. When I got married with my husband, I began to study during the nights, and my husband's friend mocked me.

- "How could the doctor have married an Indian woman?" It has been a very hard life.

And the fortitude that my parents gave to me. Especially the one that comes from my mother, because my mother was also scorned, because my father was a man with forth grade education and at that moment he was like a wooer, then, he was sort of desired, and my mother who does not know how to read and write, would be too few

¹⁵ At the moment of interviewing Pocaterra, I did not know who was Munoz Marin. The dissertation research led me to know that he was

thing for him. Then I was scorned since I was born. I am still scorned. Then, of course, there are also other things; it is only because of Chávez that we could arrive here. The Venezuelan people are very racist.

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