POR IMAGINACIÓN Y AMOR – EL PERMANECER DEL PADRE MEXICANO A DISTANCIA
FOR IMAGINATION AND LOVE – THE PERMANENCE OF THE MEXICAN FATHER WHO FATHERS AT A DISTANCE

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ABSTRACT

MARTA SÁNCHEZ: Por imaginación y amor – el permanecer del padre mexicano a distancia
For imagination and love – the permanence of the Mexican father who fathers at a distance
(Under the direction of George W. Noblit)

In this dissertation I explore the lives of Mexican fathers on both sides of the México-U.S. border with attention to the fathering practices of U.S.-based fathers in the New Latino South (Kochhar, Suro, & Tafoya, 2005) who father at a distance of time and space from their children and spouses. In-depth interviews with fathers, mothers and children reveal that Mexican families create new ways of being a family in the "U.S.-México transnation" (Boehm, 2008) and work to ensure that the family remains a site of hope, courage, imagination and love. U.S.-based fathers embrace various dispositions, practices and strategies to be involved affectively with their children across borders, thus redefining the 'father as provider' construct. Cross-cutting themes include the desire to give children "un futuro" by providing them with a home and an education. Utilizing a Chicana feminist framework, I explore how fathers work within and beyond dominant ideologies to create libratory spaces. This meta-ideologizing (Sandoval, 2000) helps fathers reclaim their right to father, work, imagine and love. Implications for México include understanding that the father's contribution is much more than economic (Navarro, 2008); re-establishing local economies to stem migration flows; facilitating dialogue within schools to support children parented at a distance; and strengthening family, education and social policies to create a birth to university pipeline. The U.S.

should reexamine federal immigration law with regards to family reunification, pathways to citizenship and support for safe and humane circular migration. A readjustment of U.S. foreign policy towards México is necessary in trade and security. In order to prevent the further destruction of local economies, free trade agreements that are more favorable to corporations than to the people of both nations must be amended. U.S. military aid that threatens México's sovereignty must be reconsidered. Research is needed in both countries to understand the pedagogical needs of the transnational child whose presence will increase as globalization continues to produce split-households (Glenn, 1983). Finally, the pedagogy of the Mexican immigrant father is one of imagination and love; this is an important pedagogy in times of social erasure of the family.

Para Guadalupe A. Sánchez, un papá extraordinario, inspirador, inteligente, cariñoso y de gran capacidad de trabajar, imaginar y amar—un hombre siempre presente aun a través de la gran distancia entre el vivir y el morir.

For Guadalupe A. Sánchez, an extraordinary father, inspirational, intelligent, affectionate and with a great capacity to work, imagine and love—a man ever-present, even across the great distance between life and death.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION, TERMS, RATIONALE and STUDY CONTEXT

What would the oligarchies of the world do without hard working people? What would they do without the honest? (Field notes)

This dissertation is about Mexican immigrant fathers who live, work and father at a distance (Salazar-Parreñas, 2001) in the New Latino South (Kochhar, Suro & Tafoya, 2005) while their spouses and children remain in México. I interviewed three groups of individuals. Two of these were members of families living in split-household families (Glenn, 1983). The three groups were Mexican immigrant fathers living and working in North Carolina and whose families live in México; Mexican children and mothers residing in México and whose fathers and husbands, respectively, live and work in the United States; and Mexican fathers living in México with their spouses and children.

Although the focus of the study is on Mexican immigrant fathers, my rationale for including the other participants was to gain a better understanding of the fuller context of the lives of the North Carolina fathers. I wanted, through the eyes of the fathers who remained in México, to conjecture what might have become of the lives of the men living in North Carolina had they stayed in México. When I decided to interview children in México of Mexican immigrant fathers, I did so because I wanted to learn how children experience and form ideas about their father and family without the physical presence of a father as a signpost. When I spoke with mothers whose husbands were working in the United States, I wanted to know about their parenting experiences in the physic absence

of the fathers. I somehow thought that these diverse actors could help me tell the 'full and complete' story. Of course, there is no full and complete story—a lesson of qualitative methodology—but I nonetheless gained a deeper understanding of Mexican fathering and the Mexican family through the stories told from the multiple perspectives of diverse men, women and children who form part of this study.

As I struggled to bring these various stories into conversation with each other, what became clear was the vulnerable state of the Mexican family, which must survive, thrive and continue to evolve amidst increased neglect by the state and an aggressive more global and mobile capitalism. This is evidenced by diminished support for public education and job creation; an increased climate of accountability within the educational system, similar to the phenomenon seen in the United States with the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), that in México has resulted in children leaving middle school without being admitted to high school because of low test scores; increased violence due to a failed war on drugs; the dismantling of unions resulting in a loss of labor rights and employment benefits gained through years of labor struggles in the first part of the 20th century; and changes in agriculture that included sharp increases in the price of seed, fungicides and pesticides that have made it prohibitive for families to raise crops for household consumption. México's 49 free trade agreements also leave farmers, the working poor and the merchant and middle classes thrashing about in an unbeatable competition against subsidized, tariff-free imports backed by wealthy multinational corporations that operate with the protection and cooperation of México's ruling capitalist elite.

In the United States, the fathers who are here supporting their families in México are faring no better. Facing aggressive and racially retrogressive immigration laws and a changing economy, their movement around the communities they live and work in and their ability to send money home at the same levels as when they arrived, have been severely curtailed by a climate of citizen and police surveillance.

Shortly, after I moved to North Carolina, the U.S. Mexican immigrant population along with other immigrants and citizens, participated in massive acts of engaged citizenship through marches in several major cities of the United States. Peacefully taking over miles and miles of urban landscapes, the marchers carried banners and signs asking for a reasoned approach to incorporating the undocumented immigrant into U.S. society. Babies in strollers guided by their moms, high school students still in uniform, fathers with toddlers propped high above on their shoulders, pregnant women, abuelos and abuelas, mariachis, labor leaders, and teachers and countless others marched and chanted, "El pueblo unido jamás será vencido" [Together, united, the people will never be defeated] and "Sí se puede" [It can be done, or 'Yes, we can!' as it was translated by the Obama administration]. Businesses owned by or employing immigrants were asked to shut down on those days in solidarity with immigrants, and many did. The men I would eventually interview worked in just such a place. I remember shortly after the marches a father, whom I would eventually interview, remarked that the customers 'no les gustó que uno hiciera eso porque hasta dejaron de venir' […didn't like that one would do that (close the restaurant) because they even stopped coming]. Business did slow down for them, according to at least three workers there.

On a national level the media criticized the marchers on several fronts which included, carrying the Mexican flag instead of the American one; participating as citizens without being citizens, and for making a demand. I remember feeling a sense of pride in the undocumented population for showing the rest of us what engaged citizenship in a democracy should look like. Gálvez (2010), a New York-based researcher studying social movements among the undocumented, captured the moment this way in her observations of the political action of members of a church-based network called Asociación Tepeyac de New York,

> Members of these organizations join together as *immigrants* and in defiance of the undocumented status many of them share. As such, they develop a mode of being, of situating oneself with respect to the state and society in the United Sates and in the broader multinational globalized sphere that neither assumes assimilation nor the seamless maintenance of ties to the homeland.
>
> Instead, it is an activist, enfranchised identity…this transformation has implications for notions of citizenship. While much writing on immigration assumes that citizenship is a condition that begins after the bestowal of the juridical attributes of belonging, I argue…that Mexican immigrants are engaging in political, activist activities which enhance their sense of well-being in material, lived and symbolic ways even while their juridical status remains unchanged. This kind of citizenship—broader, more performative, and more agential than the strictly juridical classification of citizens—is necessary to all other rights projects, both in the realm of formal citizenship and in other areas of social life. (p. 4).

As accurate an interpretation of the events of 2006 and 2007 that I believe Gálvez makes, unfortunately for the fathers in this study and countless other individuals in the U.S., the community the fathers work and reside in disagreed, and their wages saw a decline while media criticism and law enforcement scrutiny seemed to increase. Nonethless, I linger on Gálvez's comments not only because she 'gets it,' but because she offers a way to understand what I have sometimes thought of as 'fathering in

unauthorized spaces,' which is the case of the Mexican father. That is, unauthorized fathering is also an 'enfranchised and agential stance' assumed by the Mexican fathers in this study on both sides of the border, and an important model of fathering in this moment of persistent attempts to socially exclude them and erase them as vital members of family and community through erasure in the economic structure of México.

My conversations during participant observations and interviews with children also shed a light on the importance of the custodial parent, usually the mother for the children whose fathers were in the United States, and how she talks about the father's physical absence. All of the children I interviewed knew that their fathers were working in the United States and said that they were working there because there was no work for them in México. When I asked the children to tell me about their families, they all included their fathers in the description, even those who admitted not speaking with him on a regular basis or having had any contact by letter or computer. I thought about Anderson's (2006) notion of imagined communities, and I wondered if this was one way to understand the robustness the idea of "family" seemed to have with these children. Anderson introduces "imagined political community" (p.6) to discuss how the idea of "nation" is created in the minds of individuals who may or may not have any sustained contact with one another, and who have diverse experiences yet nonetheless see themselves as "contemporaneous actors in the same story" (p. 39). In these cases, with younger children, it was the mother who created this simultaneity for children through what I came to hear as a discourse of 'the caring father,' one told by younger children in formulaic ways, while older children seem to give a more nuanced account. I will share more in subsequent chapters.

Definition of Terms

El norte. "El norte," or "North" is how many of the people that I encountered during this study, participants and non-participants, referred to the United States. Popular culture, through music and films, reflect the ubiquity of this term among those who live or are from México and other neighbors to the south (e.g. El Norte, a film about siblings from El Salvador who journey to the United States in search of a better life). I use it interchangeably with the "United States."

Immigrant. The term "immigrant," when applied to Mexicans who cross the México-U.S. border might be accurate in strictly legal terms, but viewed through a critical historic analytic becomes much more polemic. The war between the U.S. and México of 1847, which eventually would result in the loss of more than half of México's national territory, has been widely criticized as an unjust war against a weaker neighbor to the south (Acuña [1972]2010; Zinn [1980] 2010). Places like Arizona, Texas, New México, Utah, Nevada and California are considered northern occupied México by a broad spectrum of people (e.g. Rodolfo Acuña, historian and regarded as the father of Chicano studies; political commentator Juan Andrade of the Southwest Voters Registration Project; songwriter Dave Jacquet; critical scholar and academic, Luis Urrieta). This particular understanding of the region is appreciated by others as well. For instance, a visiting student from China and friend of mine, unsettled by what he saw as the limited vision and hypocrisy of "Free Tibet" demonstrators marching at Duke University's campus during his studies there, said he shouted to the crowd, "Free Arizona" and "Free Texas" and argued with individual protestors that these territories are an analogue to Tibet. There is much more to be told here, well beyond the scope and

purpose of this section. I introduce the discussion simply to say that I agree with this critique, and when I use the word "immigrant" in this document, it is simply asß cultural shorthand to evoke the notion of nation-states while being fully aware that many nation-states claim the authority and legitimacy of their borders on completely illegitimate and, yes, criminal actions. I also use the term "immigrant" to differentiate it from "migrant," a term that has a very specific meaning related to visa-holding, seasonal farm laborers from other countries and to U.S. citizens who work in agricultural fields and migrate from one site to the next. However, I do use the word 'migrate' instead of 'immigrate' as 'immigrate' implies documentation.

Illegal immigrant versus undocumented immigrant. In 2004, the term "illegal immigrant" was more aggressively introduced to the general public by the Associated Press (AP), a body that sets the guidelines for what constitutes appropriate speech and text forms in U.S. media. Local activists (e.g. NC ADELANTE education coalition) petitioned members of media to replace the term with "Undocumented Immigrant." The response from media was that "illegal immigrant" was twofold: they were following AP guidelines in using this term, and the term could be shortened to "illegals," thus saving valuable print space (G.Meyer, personal communication, 2010). Some have argued that "illegal immigrant" is the most accurate, because immigrants who enter the United States secure fake documents that allow them to work or drive here as if they were 'legally' documented (e.g. Newton, 2008). Following this logic then, U.S. citizens who break laws could be called "illegal citizens," and undocumented immigrants could be "legal immigrants" if these forged documents 'legalize' individuals in the eyes of employers and law enforcement. Bacon (2008), on the other hand, inscribes the word "illegal" with

a sense of the marginal. He argues that it "describes a social reality—inequality" (p. v), and explains that it has little to do with the minor civil violation of being in the United States undocumented; rather, it has to do with an imposed "social and political status" (p. v). Bacon traces one use of the word "illegals" back to Woody Guthrie, the famed singer-activist and songwriter. Through a newspaper article in a small town newspaper, Guthrie learned of a plane crash that was carrying Mexican immigrants back to the border. The newspaper article reported the names of the pilot and border patrol agent aboard the plane, but the immigrants remained nameless. Bacon writes that even the death certificates stripped the men of their identities by simply listing in the 'name' field the word "Deportee." Outraged, Guthrie wrote—"Some of us are illegal, and some are not wanted," the line in Guthrie's poem that catches Bacon's attention (p. 83). Bacon wants to reinscribe the word with this meaning that evokes the lack of acceptance and recognition of the Other as a fellow member of the community (p. 83).

In the past, I have used the term "undocumented immigrant," because I believe it communicates the precarious situation these individuals are in, and it reflects their true status: powerful business interests, U.S.-México trade regimes that displace workers from México only to rehire them at low wages in the U.S., and a high level 'looking the other way' tacitly "authorizes" immigrants to be in the United States. The "hacerse de la vista gorda" [turn a blind eye], as Emilio López, a father in this study, notes, establishes highly permeable borders in order to allow the necessary number of low-wage workers in and make businesses profitable. However, these men and women are not given the documents to reflect their "authorized" status. Of course, the poor in both the U.S. and México find it difficult to pay for documents such as birth certificates and state identification cards, a

fact that U.S. voters' rights advocates raise during discussions about demanding a picture identification card at the voting booth. In México, an estimated 10 million Mexicans cannot afford such documents, and are, therefore, "undocumented" (Méndez, 2011).

The discussion can be broadened; for instance, the "illegal alien" as a subject position emerges or is constructed by the adoption and implementation of restrictive U.S. immigration laws established shortly after World War I (Ngai, 2003). Globalization, as the practice of el capitalismo rapaz, or predatory capitalism, also produces the illegal subject. Through the making of massive diasporas, globalization simultaneously criminalizes those looking for a better life (Bacon, 2008). Because México has more free trade agreements than any other country in the world, with nations as diverse as Australia, Israel, and Germany, México will continue to face a trade imbalance that does not bode well for Mexican workers and their families, and we will see more undocumented workers in the United States.

I believe undocumented immigrants are individuals who exercise their human right to construct a better world for themselves and their families by using migration as their primary strategy. I reject the use of the adjective "illegal" to talk about any human being; I understand Bacon's (and Guthrie's) expressions of solidarity, but I believe these are outsider understandings of the term and the term itself is an etic.

Split-household. The split-household family as a family structure was first labeled so by Glenn (1983) in her analysis of Chinese immigration patterns. Chinese families physically divided the family unit as a way to overcome barriers that limited their ability to raise and educate their children, help their aging parents, and provide an overall sense of well-being to their family members. In the split-household family model,

Glenn explains, this division is characterized by a reassertion of traditional gender roles with regards to family functions. Two separate physical spaces inhabited by diverse family members are established. Production and consumption are the functions of one adult family member, always male in the early Chinese experience, who travels far away to work, earn money and thus provide for his family through remittances. The family remains in the ancestral home. There, the woman and other family members engage in the tasks of reproduction, socialization and consumption. The triumphant element, though ironic given the physical absence of the adult male family member, is that the family is able to stay 'intact': "The family would remain an interdependent, cooperative unit, thereby fulfilling the definition of a family, despite geographical separation" (p. 39).

Apostándole a la familia mexicana [Betting on the Mexican Family]

> El padre mexicano se encuentra en un momento de cambio social que en manera acelerada parece estar terminando con fuentes tradicionales de desarrollo personal y de la familia, y en el cual protagoniza y empeora la situación el cierre de espacios laborales. En algunos casos, esta realidad lo arrima a migrar a EU en condiciones precarias, tanto como son el irse sin capital y con deudas a las personas que conforman el red de traficantes de seres humanos, así como irse sin documentos para entrar a Estados Unidos o para poder trabajar ahí legalmente.
>
> Otros padres que permanecen en México se exponen a la posibilidad del desempleo permanente o eventual, situaciones por las cuales se les dificulta sumamente el poder cumplir con las obligaciones, metas y los deseos de proveer casa, comida, atención médica, estudio, y esperanza a sus familias. Es decir, que no importa si el papá se queda en México y busca la manera de sacar a su familia adelante o si éste mismo migra a Estados Unidos para lograr la misma meta, en ambas situaciones se encuentra en un momento de acoso radical a la familia y en el cual tiene que continuamente redefinirse como padre de familia y ser laboral.
>
> [The Mexican father finds himself in a moment of social change, which in an accelerated manner, is ending with traditional sources of personal development and of the family, and in which the closing of work opportunities dominates and worsens the situation. In some cases, this reality pushes him to migrate to the United States in precarious conditions,

> like going without money and indebted to the people who comprise human trafficking networks, and going without documents to enter the United States or to be able to work there legally.
>
> Other fathers that stay in México expose themselves to the possibility of permanent or temporary unemployment, situations that make it extraordinarily difficult for them to fulfill their obligations, goals and desires to provide casa, food, medical attention and hope to their families. That is, it doesn't matter if the father stays in México and looks for ways to help his family salir adelante or if he goes to the United States to achieve the same goal; in both situations he finds himself under a moment of radical harassment of la familia and in which he constantly has to redefine himself as father and worker.] (Abelardo, father and psychologist in Mexico, during 'member checking').

A través de una series de entrevistas con padres de familias de los dos lados de la frontera entre México y Estados Unidos, presento aquí las experiencias de hombres mexicanos que trabajan por amor a sus familias y por vencer las condiciones que intentan a borrar a la familia como base fundamental de la sociedad mexicana y sitio de amor, esperanza y valor. [Through a series of interviews with fathers on both sides of the border between México and the United States, I present the experiences of Mexican men who work out of love for their familias and to overcome the conditions that attempt to erase the family as a foundation of Mexican society and as the site of love, hope and courage.]

Origins of the Study

"Mira, Marta, ellas son mis hijas." [Look, Marta, they are my daughters.](Emilio López, U.S.-based father)

The ideas for this story/study began several years ago when I was having lunch at a Mexican restaurant in North Carolina, where I had moved with my family to begin my doctoral studies. Our waiter, Emilio López[1], whom we had come to know from several previous visits there, showed us a photograph of his two daughters. The wallet-sized image was of two smiling girls, with dark friendly eyes like Emilio's and long black hair

[1] All names of individuals, towns, schools, counties, and workplaces have been changed to pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants. Country and state names have been left intact.

that draped toward the front, over their shoulders. Both wore long-sleeved, loose-fitting tops that were embellished with tiny rhinestones arranged in swirling patterns along the neckline. The two girls looked like many young girls in the United States. I asked about their ages and what schools they attended. Emilio said that they were 9 and 12 and lived in México with his wife and went to school there. The living arrangement Emilio described was not unusual. According to the Pew Hispanic Center (2011), one in five, or 20%, of all Mexican-born men ages 30-44 are in the United States. The age-range suggests that they are likely to be fathers. Mexican male migration to the U.S. has been the most prevalent pattern of México-U.S. immigration, even as the feminization of the labor force is evident in Mexican female migration rates to the U.S., that have also been quite high[2].

In my own experience, throughout my childhood and into adulthood, Emilio's story of co-parenting (Pribilsky, 2004) and fathering at a distance (Salazar-Parreñas, 2004) was familiar. One of my uncles had migrated to the United States without his family. With his earnings here and the careful management of this money by my aunt there, they were able to put their six children through higher education. Two of their sons attained doctoral degrees, one in education and the other in engineering. The other children completed their university studies and are "licenciados" or 'licensed ones,' a reference to their university credentials.

I also had male cousins who had embarked on the same project as my uncle, and I knew many other men and families just like Emilio and his family that were and are part of my life. I should note that this alternative way of fathering and being a family is again

[2] In the same age-range of 30-44, 15% of Mexican-born women are in the U.S (Pew Hispanic Center).

changing; data from the Mexican National Survey of Occupation and Employment, 2006-2010, show that migration out of Mexico, which is overwhelmingly to the U.S. (97% of out-migration from México is to the United States), declined by 60% during the period that the idea for and the implementation of this study took place.[3] This means fewer Mexican nationals are coming to the U.S. Emilio was part of the 1990s migration wave, and his journey started when his life as a delivery truck driver in a large Mexican firm unraveled in the aftermath of a job-related accident. Mounting debt and an inability to supplement his disability income "lo arrimó" or 'moved him toward' a difficult decision. After a series of phone calls to his wife's cousins in México and the United States, Emilio, a father from the second largest city in México, found his way, first to Atlanta, and then to a town with a population of less than 10,000 in the New Latino South.[4]

I would hear more about Emilio López's life, and about Carlos Sotomayor's, Alfredo Ramirez's, and Andrés Rueda's, all of whom also migrated to North Carolina, and who, with the exception of Andrés, work in the same restaurant. They all gave vivid accounts of their work histories in an increasingly "neoliberalized" México and spoke of their diminishing value as workers and the resources they once could marshal to survive. Their accounts suggest that the information these fathers had for navigating tough economic circumstances came from friends, family members and acquaintances who

[3] Passel & Cohn (2009) cite declining job opportunities in the U.S and stricter border enforcement on the U.S. side for this sharp decline of out-migration from México to the U.S. On the Mexican side, economic growth within México has been cited for stemming the out-flow. Something not mentioned but perhaps also contributing to lower rates of migration to the U.S. is the intense narco-violence plaguing border towns and widely-publicized reports of the discovery of mass graves containing migrants heading north.

[4] Thus labeled in a now classic demographic report by Kuchar, Suro and Tafoya (2005) and published by the Pew Hispanic Center, to refer to the exponential growth of the Latino population in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Arkansas and Alabama that took place between the censuses of 1990 and 2000.

themselves had migrated to and found work in the United States. Seen from this perspective, there was a certain inevitability about these fathers' presence in North Carolina.

Research on migration has focused on the macro-processes that create what are called push factors in the sending nation that send the poor, the unemployed or the underemployed, to richer nations to serve as low-wage workers, and pull factors in the receiving country that create a need or desire to migrate (e.g. Portes & Borocz, 1989). Pull factors include the lure of a stronger currency in the receiving country that makes the exchange rate attractive to migrants from countries with weaker currencies. The exchange rate was a point of consideration for two of the four fathers, but only after the decision to migrate was made. What Sassen (1995), who challenges the push-pull argument, has observed about the importance of one's social network as being more influential than push-pull factors, was evident in the lives of these men. Sassen notes, for instance, that having 'a cousin in New Jersey' exerts more influence upon the decision to migrate than the exchange rate. This certainly was the case for the fathers I interviewed in North Carolina.

At the same time, I wondered why all Mexican fathers would not migrate to the U.S. After all, times were difficult for everyone. Even with 10% of the entire Mexican population living in the U.S., the question seemed valid. I wanted, therefore, to learn about the lives of Mexican fathers who remain in México and how they make a living and parent as men who are present in their homes and have daily physical contact with their children. I had understood this model of fathering and family as the normative one, and one that I privileged because of how I was 'fathered' as a child and into early adulthood.

For the Mexican arm of the study, I traveled to México to interview fathers who work and live with their families in Mexico and found that they too had a social network of friends, family members and acquaintances who helped them navigate difficult times. The network these fathers had, however, emphasized the importance of seeking out local work opportunities, social service programs to help with the family economy, and educational opportunities for themselves as adult learners that could help them stay competitive in the ever-tightening labor market. Their social networks also warned them about the perils of migrating and leaving their families behind 'sin la cabeza' without 'the head'. This resonated with some of the fathers who had themselves at one time tried their luck in the U.S. as immigrants or who had been raised at a distance by fathers who worked and lived in the U.S. Although I will not employ social network theory to interpret my findings, certainly an early lesson for me from the fathers in this study is that the type of decisions we make about which opportunities to seize—or even perceive as being available—has a lot to do with the circumstances we face and what people whom we know or trust share with us about their own experiences.

Why Mexican Fathering?

Mexico, even with its declining rates in out-migration in the last four years, has 12.7 million Mexican-born immigrants living here, 55% of whom are undocumented (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009) and are more likely to be male and more likely to be married (Pew Hispanic Center). At the same time that economic conditions in the United States made it favorable for Mexican immigrants to migrate across the border, employment opportunities in México from the early 1990s began to decline dramatically for adults, both young and old, and those without a formal education. In this decade, the

North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was introduced and institutionalized, and the neoliberalization[5] (England & Ward, 2010) of the Mexican economy, a process started in the 1980s, long before 1994, the year NAFTA took effect in México, was well underway. Although Mexico has seen a $37 billion trade surplus since NAFTA's inception (Williams, 2004), 47% of Mexican families continue to live in asset-based poverty[6] (CIA, 2011). México's other free trade agreements mentioned above further define México as an export-driven, import-dependent economy. The recent global collapse of financial markets revealed México's vulnerability, when its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) plunged as the demand for exports dropped along with the value of assets (CIA, 2011). Moreover, earlier reforms did away with gains made in the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Th death of "el campo" as an agricultural project and site of work has occurred. Between 1910 to 1934 over 100 million hectares were distributed, from which 30,000 ejidos, or parcels were formed, giving work to over three million heads of household (Warman, 2001). Article 27, folio 8201 of the Mexican Constitution, introduced in 1934, codified the achievements of the Agrarian Reform, won in the aftermath of the 1910 Revolution. Article 27 institutionalized the ejido system. However, in 1992, another reform was introduced, virtually ending the ejido system of collective farming and bargaining and converting small-scale farm workers into petit bourgeois

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[5] Governments and corporations engage in processes of neoliberalization (England & Ward, 2007); this is distinct from neoliberalism as an end state or status. This process is by free trade, privatization and deregulation, and has the potential to create "countertendencies" as policies and practices are introduced in graduated, deliberate ways that result in uneven development across temporal and spatial fields (p. 253).

[6] According to Brandolini, Magri & Smeeding (2010) comment, "…we see asset-poverty as capturing the exposure to the risk that minimally acceptable living standard cannot be maintained should income suddenly fall, whereas income-poverty refers to the static condition where income alone is insufficient to maintain this standard. Following this distinction, an asset-based measure can be understood as referring to "vulnerability" more than "poverty" (World Bank, 2001, p. 139).

landowners under ‘el dominio universal,’ or ‘private ownership.’ The ‘campo,’ rarely the source of any family’s sole sustenance, nonetheless, had historically provided many families with a second source of food, work and income.

Mexican economist and researcher, Ibrahim Santacruz Villaseñor (2005), notes that ‘neo-liberal governments [of México] have focused on structural reforms that have limited the ability of the Mexican economy to create jobs. By prioritizing the economic liberalization of the Mexican economy, privatizing 1,200 state-owned companies and deregulating the national legal framework, the neo-liberal model is now able function with more ease’ (Wharton School of Business, 2005).

While this may be good for transnational capital, it does not bode well for workers. Andrés, a North Carolina-based father, in talking about his job experiences in México, knows that having a job in México does not mean that one will have it for long. In his hometown in the state of Guanajuato, he worked at Galletas, a large transnational corporation manufacturing cookies and other baked goods that can be found in any Mexican supermarket both in the U.S. and México. Andrés worked there for two years and was then let go. A year or so later, he was rehired and then let go again within two years. He said this revolving door in industry is common, even at places like Galletas, where workers still can count on labor union representation. Andrés described how this practice of firing and rehiring was discontinued when an even more radical model was ushered in of, first, hiring new crews and then having an external contractor hire permanent temporary workers:

> MS: ¿Pero fueron muchos recortes …? [But were there many cuts?]
> AR: Lo que pasa es que hacen el recorte…del personal y al día siguiente ya vuelven a contratar otro puño de gente. [What happens is that they cut staff, and the next day they they hire another handful of people.]

MS: Ah.
AR: Entonces este, a muchos no los dejaban hacer antigüedad. [So, they didn't let many of them acquire seniority.]
MS: ¿Que tan seguido hacían eso? [How often did they do that?]
AR: Ahorita ya, ya no lo hacen…los que tomaron planta ahí en la fábrica…se quedaron de planta ahí, ya tienen su puesto seguro…[Right now they don't do that anymore. The ones who took a permanent position there…they stayed as permanent—de planta—employees, [and] have a secure post.]
MS: Sí. [Yes.]
AR: Ahorita ya los que van entrando nuevos es por contratistas…los contratistas cada cinco, seis meses hacen cambio, renuevan contratos, ya no los dejan hacer, antigüedad para nada, para…evitar problemas de que sindicalismo, de que antigüedades…vamos, hasta para evitar, ¿Cómo se llama?...la jubilación o pensiones. [Right now, the ones (employees) newly entering are through contractors…every five, six months they make changes, renew contracts; they don't let them [the new hirees] acquire seniority any more for any reason at all, to…avoid problems like trade unionism, seniority…you know, to avoid even, what is it called?...Retirement or pensions.].

Andrés's experience as an employee in México is not uncommon. Santacruz Villaseñor (2005) comments that Mexican companies, indeed, are not interested in preserving workers' rights. In order to diminish these, he asserts, employers have technical shutdowns, deny workers their salary, or they implement deep wage cuts and justify this by telling workers that these measures make it possible for them to keep their jobs and/or pensions. This impacts both unemployment and underemployment in México. In fact, although the Mexican unemployment rate in 2010 was estimated at 5.4%, underemployment may be as high as 25% (CIA, 2011). This has led to growth in the informal sector and in the underground economy. In my travels throughout México for this study, the informal sector was fairly active in the places that I visited. Many families at night converted the streets into corridors of curbside eateries and generated income by selling home-made antojitos and refreshments from their kitchen.

Diverse actors, such as the Zapatistas in Chiapas and INEGI, México's Institute of Statistics and Geography, contest the 5.4% unemployment rate as too low of an estimate (Centro de Análisis Multidisciplinario, 2010). INEGI noted that the unemployment rate for 2005, which also hovered around 5%, should not be taken as the final determinant for the need for jobs in México, "De ahí que la desocupación… For that reason being unemployed is not, nor tries to be, the measure that expresses how many people need to work in a given place and time, nor does it indicate how great the deficit is of labor opportunities" (Centro de Análisis Multidisciplinario, 2010, p.9). This is because the unemployment rate reflects only the numbers of the chronically unemployed and active job seekers who in a month's time have not found employment; it does not take into account the unemployed who have given up looking for employment (Centro de Análisis Multidisciplinario, 2010).

The Socio-Political Context of the Study

Learning about the social context of fathers' lives of course matters. For the U.S. sample, this meant asking fathers questions about the circumstances that contributed to their decision to migrate to the United States as well as how they were faring in their new homes; for the México sample, the questions included how they 'make it' in an economy that is in a continual downturn and which seems to seek their erasure. Times, then, are extraordinarily difficult on both sides of the U.S.-México border, and yet the fathers in this study demonstrate over and over again their ability to reclaim their space within and for family through imagination, responsibility and hard work. I am not an avid reader of Tolstoy, but I do agree with his thoughts on work and love, and which resonates with Sigmund Freud's theories of the importance of being able to work and love; Tolstoy

observed in a letter to a friend that, "One can live magnificently in this world if one knows how to work and how to love" (Troyat, [1967] 2001, p. 158). The fathers in this study know how to work and love, and this is what enables them to reclaim the magnificence in their lives and to author new selves as caring and loving fathers in "unauthorized" spaces. For them, work is love.

My goal is to make this magnificence and the strategies fathers use more apparent to those of us, including myself, who still operate with normative notions of family. It is, therefore, for me, a difficult story to tell. Their lives are marked by many ironies, the first of which is that the fathers in this study take extraordinary measures to be able to do ordinary things, like work, buy their children shoes, get a haircut for themselves, and feed and educate the family. It is in many ways a "bigger than life" story, with human acts that defy reason and make these men into heroes, and, on the other end of the spectrum, of intervening public discourses that vilify or demonize them or ignore them altogether. In this dissertation I attempt to faithfully represent fathers so that we see them as they represented themselves during the interviews and other fieldwork.

Competing Narratives on Mexican and other Latino Immigrants

A sea change has occurred in how Mexican immigrants such as the fathers in the U.S. arm of the study, and now more frequently other Latino immigrants, including women and entire families, are represented in the media, and by politicians, leaders and the public at large. For instance, after conducting a thematic analysis of analysis of 229 articles and 111 letters to the editor related to Latino and immigrant issues that were published in one medium-sized newspaper[7] serving a North Carolina community with a

[7] This data results from my review of the *Greensboro Record and News*, of articles and letters to the editor about immigration written between 1990 and 2007. The articles and letters span a period of 17 years,

recent increase in its Latino population, I found that there were mainly three public narratives that were being circulated in the media of the New Latino South. One narrative put forth the view that Latino immigrants were hardworking, family-oriented individuals who came to the United States in search of a better life for themselves and their loved ones. Incorporation, or the "degree of embeddedness immigrants achieve in the receiving society" (Korineck, Entwisle, & Jampaklay, 2005, p. 780) is also part of the narrative. In this first perspective, incorporation of immigrants into American society includes a pathway to citizenship. With policy implications that suggest full and legal incorporation, this view reasserts America's identity as both a generous nation and a nation of immigrants, as it is enshrined in the Statue of Liberty.

A second narrative storied immigrants as neoliberal subjects. Emphasizing immigrants' importance to the viability of the U.S. economy, their incorporation required that they be given *temporary* legal status with permission to work as the economy dictated it. This temporary stay should be extended to males and exclude family members, such as spouses and children. This gendered 'temporary worker' approach to the incorporation of immigrants is informed by neoliberal policies and practices in which the worker has limited labor rights and restricted pathways to fuller societal incorporation. This view reasserts America's self-understanding as one of the world's richest countries and a global business leader.

In these two narratives, Mexican fathers are positioned as noble individuals who come here to support the family back home. A new public discourse on Mexican

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beginning in 1990, shortly after IRCA was passed, and into 2007, which saw the implementation of 287 (g). The code 287 (g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as part of the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRAIRA) of 1996, allows for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to deputize local law enforcement officials, thus granting them authority to deport individuals.

immigrants and immigration was gaining traction, however. This new discourse was changing the way we as a society would begin to think and talk about Mexican immigrant fathers, and which has caused bigger problems for fathers like Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo, and Andrés. This third narrative that I found was that immigrants were viewed at best as a burden to society and pilferers of public coffers; at worst, they were positioned as thieves who had "broken into" the United States. Their incorporation requires that they be identified as lawless criminals who must be punished through a three-prong process identified by Derewicz (2010), a local immigration rights attorney, of detection, detention and deportation, thus reasserting America's identity as a nation of laws.

The Nativist Moment

When I met Emilio, this last narrative had taken hold of the region, framing the discussion and influencing policy about how immigration and immigrants should be viewed and treated, impacting law enforcement, the general public and media (Derewicz, 2010). This view was emboldened by the application of section 287g of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1996. Section 287g allows for Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to enter into agreements through a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), with local law enforcement agencies, including state, county and municipal police, to put into effect immigration law as part of their daily enforcement activities. Allowed under this law are checking a person's immigration status during a routine traffic stop, incarcerating undocumented individuals while awaiting deportation and transferring individuals multiple times to deportation centers in other states. These facilities have come under fire for several abuses and for being run like prisons rather

than holding centers. Investigative reports have uncovered instances of intimidation by detention center staff and of sexual assault of female detainees (Hinojosa, 2011).

A 2007 report from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, shed a light on the abuses in several of these centers. The report made special mention of the T. Don Hutto Detention Center in Taylor, Texas. Hutto, like many other such centers, is operated by Corrections Center of America (CCA), a management firm that also operates for-profit prisons. The advocacy groups remarked on Hutto's practice of separating young children from their mothers at bedtime, calling it 'inhumane,' and petitioned for the closing of the center, which they likened to a prison (CBS, 2007; 2009).

In México, while conducting the Mexican arm of this study, I interviewed fathers that were well-informed about recent anti-immigrant U.S. legislation and the detection and detention practices impacting Mexicans living in the United States. They expressed concern and shock about how this could happen in a country they viewed as being somewhat tolerant, even welcoming, toward Mexicans. Roberto Salazar, a father of two, expressed his disapproval of Arizona's controversial SB 1070, a law which makes it a misdemeanor crime not to have on one's person documents indicating a legal right to be in the U.S. At the time of the interview, the law had been passed but was to take effect in the coming weeks,

> …Que quieren sacar una ley que, que todo el que anda indocumentado allá, que no tiene sus papeles, se le va a tratar casi como a un criminal…¿Verdad? Entonces, pues no dejan de ser…conocidos de uno y amigos y todo eso, y pues uno también pide por todos ellos. Y uno ve mal esa ley…
>
> [...That they want to pass a law, that anyone who is undocumented there, who doesn't have his papers, will be treated almost like a

> criminal…Right? Well, they're acquaintances of ours and friends, and all of that, and well, one also asks on all of their behalf, and we see that law as wrong.] (Roberto Salazar, a father based in México).

The county in which the U.S. arm of my study takes place has been a "model" for other counties and states for its implementation of 287g, which is similar to Arizona state law SB 1070. Officials in this region have aggressively used the law to deport individuals for minor traffic violations or for things like "fishing the Haw [river]" without a license (Derewicz, 2010, p. 41), something the law was not designed to do.

I realized that in this narrative of the burdensome, criminal immigrant, men like Emilio were completely invisible as workers, and most certainly as fathers and family men. I also knew, as anyone who had even a casual interest in the topic would have surmised, that he and others like him would increasingly become more vulnerable to being persecuted—at the same time that their humanity as fathers was rendered invisible, their presence in the U.S. was now being seen as spurious, or worse, constructed as a crime.

Mutually Exclusive Places to Be

> La mayoría de las casas que hicieron los que se fueron a trabajar allá están vacías [The majority of the houses built by those who left to work over there are empty.] (Rulfo, a father in México)

The father on the U.S. side were increasingly caught up in what Sassen (1996) calls "opposite turns of nationalism" or the dual process of the denationalization of economies—one turn—and a renationalization of politics, the second turn. Salazar-Parreñas (2001a) has interpreted it this way: the denationalization of economies is the "multinational production and circulation of goods, labor and finance" (p. 1131). In denationalized economies, goods, *some* labor and finance move easily across borders and

operate in a postnational realm. That is, big commerce like Ford, Monsanto, and McDonald's sell and move in a world without borders. Laborers might find that their countries have special arrangements with receiving nations for seasonal work, such as migrant farmworkers who tend the tobacco fields and corn and cucumber crops of North Carolina. Other laborers discover that the border is permeable when there is a labor demand. Either way, labor becomes denationalized through the relocation of corporations or the displacement of the worker in his/her native country who must then migrate to work.

The latter turn is a reassertion of nationalist sentiments that are expressed through nativist discourses and movements, such as challenging birthright citizenship or promoting and legislating English-language monolingualism in a pluralistic, democratic society such as the United States. For Mexican immigrant fathers living and working in the United States, these opposite turns of nationalism situate them in contradictory spaces and accentuate an insider/outsider status: they are both highly desirable low-wage laborers from afar that participate in restructuring the U.S. economy and fuel the economies of their home communities in both informal and formal ways (see David Fitzgerald, 2008), and they are an equally undesirable presence who have been assigned a marginal non-citizen status, a phenomenon first observed by Salazar-Parreñas (2001b) among Filipina domestic workers in Rome. This double articulation of immigrant labor to commerce and notions of nationhood has been eloquently summed this up by López (2007): 'We wanted workers, not people.' But, people did come, and this is what I hope to show.

What the fathers in this study have shared with me 'talks back' to and disrupts these painfully shortsighted discourses that do not represent the full humanity of Mexican immigrant fathers or the project they embark on when they make the move to migrate to the United States, or 'el norte,' as everyone in this study referred to this country. Their voices stand as an alternative archive, or counterstory (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993). It was important for me to learn about what it means to father at a distance of time and space in times of social and economic exclusion.

The Fathers in México

El gobierno no lo puede ayudar, lo único que va a ser es aventarlos al otro lado, pero allá también, es lo mismo.
[The government cannot help one; the only thing they will do is throw you to the other side (the U.S.), but over there, it's the same thing.] (Carvajal de América, a father based in México).

Fathers who remain in México are also complexly situated in contradictory spaces. Their presence is deemed critical for keeping families together, but they are increasingly being excluded from work opportunities and 'aventados al otro lado' [thrown to the other side, meaning the U.S.] as José Carvajal de América, a father in México, remarked. Together with their families, they also increasingly face the effects of the "colombianización" or the 'Colombianization' of México as the former president of Colombia, Ernesto Samper Pizano remarked in 2010, noting the increased trafficking of drugs originating in México. More recently, the term has been used by Mexican public intellectuals (e.g. Carlos Fuentes) to critique Plan Mérida, a 2007 initiative to address Mexican drug trafficking militarily with $1.5 billion U.S. dollars. The plan is almost identical to Plan Colombia with similar results of increased narco-violence, that if not directly affecting the fathers in this study has heightened a sense of insecurity among

them and left them asking how to protect their children from the violence and increased drug use among Mexican youth.

The fathers also expressed concerns about the closing of the admissions process to preparatoria, or high school, that at the time I was there, was requiring students to 'qualify' for a high school education. Students had to pass a middle school exit exam in order to be admitted to high school in the first round of cut-offs. Other concerns included reduced public spaces for at the university level and increasing fees even at the elementary level; threats to rural livelihoods, an overall decrease in employment opportunities, and threats to labor rights. For instance, because of widespread age discrimination in the workplace, individuals over the age of 35 are not employable (Hawley & Solache, 2007)[8]. This labor practice is in violation of Article 123 of the Mexican Constitution, which guarantees minimum employment protections to all workers, and Article 56 of Mexican Federal Labor Law prohibiting age discrimination; it is, nonetheless, a common one (Interview data 2010-2011; Cattan, 2010; Dickerson & Mandell, 2006; Hawley & Solache, 2007; Mandell, 2006). Those who do have employment are experiencing diminishing buying power because of the methods used to determine overall inflation rates. The rates are manipulated to reflect levels lower than actual ones. "Cifras maquilladas" (Miguel, 2011), or fixed numbers, impact the salary wage increase Mexican workers can expect as raises are pegged to inflation rates in a 'cost of living' calculation (Miguel, 2011).

[8] U.S.-origin transnational firms also participate in age discrimination. USA Today on September 23, 2007 featured an article with a chart showing ads placed in Mexican newspapers by American firms seeking Mexican workers for their México-based branches. Ads placed by Mars, Office Depot, Blockbuster, General Motors, Marsh & McLennan and Kellogg's all specified an age range, of which the maximum age indicated was 37 at Marsh & McLennan. The 'lowest' maximum age was 26 at Kellogg for the position of junior sales representative.

Living and Working in the Time of NAFTA

Solo necesita uno tener el capital.
[One only needs to have the capital] (Carvajal de América)

México has other problems that contribute not only to unemployment but also to continued migration north. As a nation rich in oil reserves, uranium, gold, silver, coffee, cacao, and other resources, México, nonetheless, has a rate of growth of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) that ranks 16 out of 20 in Latin America, and which was reported at being 4% for 2011. This rate of growth was lower than that of the region's poorest nation, Haiti, even before Haiti was hit by the devastating 2010 earthquake (CEPAL, 2011). At the same time that growth has been slow, in 2008, México lifted its protection of staple crops and food that feed Mexican families and sustain many farmers, farm workers and others who work the fields. The final phasing in of NAFTA in 2010 flooded the Mexican market with subsidized, cheap yellow sweet corn from the United States, "50% of which comes from genetically modified seed" (Rosenberg, 2007).

This has slowly ushered in the demise of one important source of food and supplemental family income for many workers in the service sector, such as teachers and state office clerks, who rent out parcels to grow what they need for their families; and the only source of income for subsistence farmers, because the price of native seed and other farming supplies, such as pesticide and fertilizer, were increased to a level that many could no longer afford. Pascual, a life-long farmer in his mid-70s and who as a younger man had been a union leader and supporter of the agrarian reforms set forth by the 1910 Mexican Revolution, explained it this way as he examined the emerging ears of corn in his crop, "La semilla la traen de Holanda, el abono que por allá de Estados Unidos, la herbicida, pues uno ya no sabe ni de donde, y todo bien caro que ya ni uno [como

ranchero] ni las familias podemos sembrar [The seed they bring from Holland, the fertilizer, from over there in the United States, the herbicide—well, one doesn't know anymore from where, and everything is so expensive that I [as a farmer] nor the families can farm." (Field notes). Over dinner with him, his family and other farm families, conversation turned to a pending decision they would soon have to make about whether voting to sell the ejido [communal farmlands gained as an achievement of the Mexican Revolution of 1910] was the right decision to make in light of the diminishing returns of farming.

The economy of small-scale farming may offer better returns than ejido farming, because of its potential to fill household pantries, but the start-up costs can be steep. In the ranchería where Luisa and her husband, José Carvajal de América, live, opportunities abound for families to sublease small parcels. The Carvajal de Américas outlined the costs below, which they had recently checked, motivated by Luisa's father, who had offered to let Luisa and José use a parcela [parcel] on his land for free. A parcela is any farmable land on an ejido that is less than 5 hectares (about 12 acres) in size. Renting or subleasing can vary in cost because of location, but the price can range from $150,000 pesos to $500,000 [the peso to dollar exchange rate at the time was 10:1]. in the part of Jalisco where Luisa and José live. For Luisa and José, the parcela was 1/5 of an hectare and was being offered to them for free for the season. There were, however, necessary expenditures awaiting them in order to be able to use the plot of land for farming:

Table 1

Cost of Farming on a parcela (1/5 hectare, approx. 1.2 acres) in the Valley of Jalisco, 2010

Expenditure	Amount in Mexican Pesos for 2010 (10 Mexican Pesos=1 US Dollar)

Use of parcela	$0
Seed for maize	$1500
Fertilizer for 3 applications	$9000
Herbicide for 3 applications	$9000
Total	$19,500

In U.S. dollars, to farm this parcela would cost $1950, which José pointed out could be recuperated in the first crop, if the weather, weeds and pests cooperated. "Solo necesita tener uno el capital" [One only needs to have the capital], he said. Luisa works 6 days a week for $50 pesos—$5 dollars—a day as a doméstica (domestic worker), carrying out daily chores in the home of an elderly aunt. With one day's earnings, she can buy one kilo of beans and 1 kilo of tortillas (about 2 pounds of each). For three more days of earnings, Luisa can purchase enough oatmeal, rice, pasta, two types of fruit and two types of vegetables for her entire family for almost the entire week. She is feeding her family with her earnings.

José typically earns between $500 and $600 pesos a day ($50-$60 US) as a master albañil [bricklayer or construction worker], of which he usually splits in half with an assistant (it is a common and expected practice for an albañil to work with an assistant). However, construction work is not steady in the ranchería[9] or even in the nearby town. José would have to leave for the big city to have a fixed schedule, but there he would be able to work for a large construction company with its own competitive wage scales and age-restrictive practices. He would also have to pay for extra living expenses. José explained why construction work is a stop-and-go *and* stop enterprise where he lives:

[9] A ranchería is a settlement with fewer than 2,000 inhabitants as defined by INEGI.

> Aquí no se puede porque [trabajar continuamente] pues aquí viven del trabajo…los maestros o los que se van al norte a Estados Unidos, juntan sus ahorros, y hacen una parte de su casa, y luego ya para uno…después hacen la otra parte, y si ellos no tienen dinero, le para uno y se queda sin trabajo, y dura hasta un mes. Gracias a Dios, también sabe uno del campo.
>
> [You can't do that here [have continuous work] because, well, here, people make a living from working. Teachers or those who go north, to the United States, save their money and they build one part of their house, and then you stop. Later, they build another part, and if they don't have money, you stop, and you're left without a job, and that can last up to a month. Thank God that I also know something about farming.] (Carvajal de América).

When there *is* work, however, sometimes his wage drops below the $500 pesos ($50 US) he is currently earning. In one instance, he was hired at $40 pesos per meter of work. He and his assistant could tend up to 10 meters a day, sometimes more, depending on the task. Although the agreed amount was $60 pesos per meter, José said the wage was lowered when 'gente de otro lado' [people from somewhere else] arrived and expressed a willingness to work for $40 pesos per meter. On the farm, he can earn about $60 pesos a day for 10 hours of work. However, when it rains, construction and farm work is scarce for everyone. As I heard Luisa and José lay out the economics of their life, and remembered that they were raising 4 children, the idea that one day they would be able to farm the parcela Luisa's father offered them seemed very far-fetched indeed[10].

La narco-guerra

[10] In indigenous communities, the situation worsens with the introduction of genetically modified corn. In Oaxaca, where indigenous communities have been fighting against the proliferation of transgenic corn that infiltrated their crops in 2001, 35 organizations declared themselves against legal provisions that were set up to allegedly protect this fragile cereal grain, but instead would allow for the seed's full entry into Oaxacan agricultural communities and require storage of the seed for future planting. Now, fragile indigenous economies and an equally fragile way of life that centers on millennia of cultivating autochthonous maize are both in peril (Hernández Navarro, 2011).

Finally, the narco-guerra, or war on drugs, has claimed the lives of tens of thousands of Mexicans (estimates vary from 40,000 to 50,000 from December 2006 to September 2011 and recently up to 90,000). There is no popular support for what has been called “Calderón’s war,” referring to Mexican president Felipe Calderón, and what is widely perceived as a high-cost tactic for Calderón to establish broad executive power. Further suspicion arises from the fact that the war is funded by U.S. dollars through Plan Mérida, or the Mérida Initiative, which funnels money, equipment and training to the tune of $1.5 billion U.S., $1.3 billion of which was given to México and the remainder was distributed among Central American nations (Congressional Record, 2008; Ribando Seelke & Finklea, 2011). More worrisome is that the initiative gives unprecedented rights to U.S. law enforcement agents to operate freely on Mexican soil. U.S. bureaus such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) have an increased and open presence operating from several offices within México, including on La Avenida Reforma in México City, a street laden with historical symbolism and meaning and which had enjoyed a privileged status as a uniquely Mexican space.

The militarization of the country is also evident. A cab driver in México City, for instance, said to me, as we drove by several tan-colored army trucks with soldiers carrying what I later learned were FX-05 "Xiuhcoatl" semi-automatic assault rifles, “Look what he [Calderón] has done to our country.” In addition to this “voice of the people” commentary of which I heard more, there had and continues to be criticism in more formal venues about México’s loss of sovereignty to the U.S. through the Mérida Initiative, including in the media, in México’s rich tradition of political cartooning (see Figure 1), and in academia. In Figure 1, the caricature is of Mexican president Felipe

Calderón Hinojosa in military uniform standing in a puddle of blood. Mexican statehood is his "reward" for implementing U.S. policy to fight drug-trafficking in México. The feminine hand that applies the star to Calderón's forehead is not the traditional Uncle Sam. Instead, it represents U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. Clinton visited with Calderón the day the caricature was made, but her early and frequent comments regarding México, that it was on the verge of becoming a "failed state," unleashed angry remarks and high-level protest against U.S. interference in México's internal affairs (e.g. Krauze, 2009). The inscription on the bottom of the caricature mourns the passing of indigenous rights activist in Oaxaca, Padre Samuel Ruiz, and icon of the Mexican Left, Fausto Trejo Fuentes. They were fierce critics of the narco-guerra, and their deaths coincided with but were not a result of recent drug-war related violence.

Figure 1: By Rafael Barajas, or "El Fisgón" [The Snoop] from La Jornada, January 26, 2011

Massive protests against this U.S. funded narco-guerra have been another way to express anger and discontent. Critics highlight the narco-guerra's high casualty rate, higher than that of Iraq or Afghanistan during the height of those wars (Martinez & Saldierna, 2010; Smith, 2011). Organizations such as No+Sangre (No More Blood) and Reporters without Borders have campaigned against this bloody war. Most recently, well-known Mexican poet, Javier Sicilia, organized several marches after his son, who was tortured and killed along with six other university students, became another narco-guerra casualty.

Proceso, a leftist magazine in México, has called the narco-guerra and related legislation that limits civil rights and liberties (e.g. indefinite detention without being charged when taken in for questioning; declaring all crime and deaths as part of the narco-guerra thus warranting no further investigation) in México 'a U.S. invasion poco a poco,' or little by little. A special report by journalist Jorge Carrasco Araizaga (2011) confirmed *Proceso's* analysis. Carrasco Araizaga interviewed Robert Bunker, a researcher at the Strategic Studies Institute at the U.S. Army War College. Bunker's comments were featured under the headline, 'El imperio busca otros enemigos…en México' [The empire seeks other enemies…in México'], and included this statement in reference to delinquency and crime in México:

> …[organizaciones delictivas] son mucho más que eso. Son delincuentes *insurgentes* [énfasis añadido] que de facto están ganando poder vía campañas de violencia y corrupción"
>
> …[they (criminal organizations) are much more than that. They are delinquent *insurgents* [I've added emphasis] who are de facto gaining power through campaigns of violence and corruption."] (p.1).

Bunker adds that Washington's "strategic considerations" have changed toward its southern border, and these changes will be reflected 'slowly but surely'. It doesn't seem all that slow to me. The Obama administration announced its plans to implement in México the same counter-narcotic strategies used in Afghanistan (Brooks, 2011), which have nonetheless resulted in higher levels of poppy cultivation than when the region was under Taliban control (Healy, 2011). Early in 2011, Obama nominated Earl Anthony Wayne, who formerly served as U.S. Deputy Ambassador in Afghanistan, to be México's new ambassador. Wayne's nomination was confirmed by the United States senate in July of 2011 and approved by México shortly thereafter. This, combined with the fact that Bunker, a prominent researcher from a key U.S. military institution[11] with a global reach and whose purpose is to support U.S. military actions throughout the world, uses the word 'insurgents' to talk about cartel kingpins, suggests a positioning of México similar to that of Iraq, Afghanistan and other middle

[11] The U.S. Army War College is a very selective college that serves high-ranking military officials, civilians and international leaders, offering coursework, access to research and preparation for joint-military operations on a global scale through political-military simulations. On its website it says it "inspires and serves strategic leaders for the wise and effective application of national power." The Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) within the College aims to support this same population through its Art of War department, Regional Strategy and Planning initiative, and Academic Engagement program. My guess is that México is of special interest in the Art of War department, because of the department's focus on helping those government's that are transforming their armies. SSI just issued a report on the last 5 years of the military's transformation in México. Written by Mexican researcher Inigo Guevara Moyano, the report (2011) informs that the Mexican government is capacitating local police to act as a replacement force for the military. This is an ambiguous statement—does this mean that the police will be trained to respond to perceived threats with the same degree of power, force and autonomy as the army? That is, is this a militarization of the police force, or is this a sending back to the barracks of the military, in which case this would be a demilitarization of the country? Guevara Moyano offers a scarier third option: the police will become a much stronger actor in society with greater capacities to exert force, and, insisting that only the army can deal with organized crime, Guevara Moyano observes that the country will nonetheless have many pockets where the crime is beyond the capacity of the police force and militarization will, therefore, be necessary (p. 15).

eastern countries, in which any activity not conforming to the United States' "strategic considerations" can be constructed as insurgency and terrorism.

In México, there are some initiatives through México's Secretary of Social Development, la Secretaria del Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL), tantamount to those offered by the Department of Health and Human Services in the United States, but these barely offset the deleterious effects of poverty and joblessness that many families continue to face. The families I interviewed in México mentioned "Oportunidades," a relatively new program for low-income families. The families that participated in this program said a qualifying criterion was to have a child in the household who was entering secundaria [middle school]. As it was described to me by parents of middle school children, Oportunidades consists of a cash scholarship to be spent on the middle school's child education, according to the discretion of the family. Additionally, if the family qualifies, a subsidy is given to purchase a basket of food for a family of four at a deeply discounted price on a weekly basis. Oportunidades was implemented in 2003 to address issues of social inequity and historical neglect of marginalized groups. The program combats poverty by providing opportunities for personal development through adult basic education and economic support for families living in poverty. These opportunities are offered through the inter-institutional coordination of services at a national level.

With a broad-reaching agenda to serve

> cada mexicano, sin importar la región donde nació, el barrio o comunidad donde creció, el ingreso de sus padres, pueda tener las mismas oportunidades para desarrollar sus aspiraciones a plenitud y mejorar así sus condiciones de vida, sin menoscabo de las oportunidades de desarrollo de las futuras generaciones.

> [every Mexican, without regard to the region in which he was born, the neighborhood or community in which he grew up, the income of his parents, might have the same opportunities to develop his aspirations to the fullest and improve in that way the conditions of his live, without infringing upon the opportunities of future generations.] (SEDESOL, 2010, p. 2).

Oportunidades hopes to level the playing field for many Mexican families. Although families were appreciative of this type of support, at least three parents said they would rather have a job that paid a living wage than be receiving financial and food aid (Field notes). A strong criticism of such programs in México is that they are vulnerable to exploitation by politicians. A common practice is to engage in 'el cohecho' a type of political bribe that requires families to declare political party affiliation and become card-carrying members before being able to apply for this and other programs. Oportunidades has tried to mitigate this by paying families the cash scholarship and food assistance directly. Having grown up in Chicago, notorious for corruption and where the dead, the unregistered and the underage have voted, I know how devastating these arrangements can be to communities. Although 'el cohecho' is punishable by law, during elections, its use becomes more prevalent. The 'cohecho' functions as a form of clientelism. Within clientelism, not only does the state rely on the 'cohecho' to remain in power, it defines itself as a patron rather than as an entity that upholds a certain social contract with its citizens. Rather than offer education and employment as ways to move masses of people out of poverty, the state promotes an array of social programs that prevent the decline into deeper levels of poverty but does little to advance the leveling of the playing field for families. I could see how families might be oddly complicit in their own economic oppression because of what one presidential candidate has called the 'trafficking of people's misery' by corrupt politicians and administrators.

Intimate Terrorism[12]

Del norte…y mexicana

I feel deep sorrow about these events. I am a U.S. citizen by birth, but I am mexicana, and México is my country, too. What is happening in the United States with Mexican immigrant families is equally troubling. For me this is "intimate terrorism" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 42). I do not feel safe in any setting any more, even as I live with some privilege in this country and have always been received with great warmth and genuine affection in México. There is another level in both societies where terror resides, kills and destabilizes. It operates under the logic of neoliberalism and national security and marks everyone as a suspect. It turns the body against itself (Anzaldúa) and allows a brown person—both here and there—to become 'illegal.' It destroys nature and indigenous knowledge—the foundation of local economies and ways of life—and leaves children hungry and makes mothers old and fathers brave. This terror separates families, creating virtual orphans, to satisfy the needs of the market and the ideology of a broken yet politically powerful and militarily mighty, all-consuming state.

A recent report (2011), for instance, by the Applied Research Center found that 46,000 Latino parents had been deported from the U.S. from January to July of 2011; the resulting "shattered families" include 5,000 children who are now in foster care because their parents have been deported to México and other countries. Perhaps, I have been recruited into some sort of postnational space that the immigrant fathers in this study create as they father, make family and build nation from a distance, or perhaps I am redefining what it means to be an American as I claim interest in and loyalty to two

[12] Anzaldúa uses the term in another context; I appropriate it here to point out a sense of deep violation of home.

nation-states, but what happens to México and Mexicans on both sides of the border matters deeply to me, and I think that the future of children separated indefinitely from their parents because of deportation and/or migration will have a profound impact not only on them but on society and the region (see the "Official Apology" on Mexican Repatriation of the 1930s). I fear that as U.S. policy toward México continues to be framed by the discourse of regional security and the policies and the economics of neoliberalism, all enforced by the military industrial complex, future migration from México will not be labor-related but related to increased state violence. To wit, asylum statistics from the Executive Office of Asylum Review (2006-2010) show a sharp increase in asylum requests from México since Felipe Calderón became president in 2006 (see Figure 2). Prior to that, in the 1990s, there were zero requests (Kan, 2011, p.2). I was unable to verify all of Kan's data and the Executive Office of Asylum Review did not desegregate data by country for asylum requests received, only for cases granted. However, among those granted asylum, no cases from México were listed. Although not all Mexican asylum seekers[13] are fleeing the drug war, those seeking asylum to escape drug violence have been referred to as "narco-refugees" (Kan, 2011).

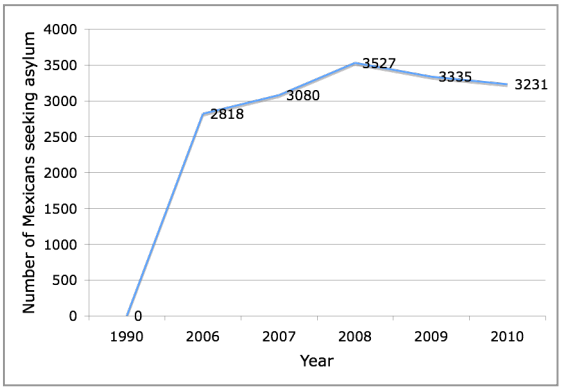

Figure 2. Number of Mexican nationals requesting asylum from 2006 to 2010.

[13] Asylum-seekers are located within the country they are seeking asylum; refugees are outside of the country awaiting resettlement.

For these reasons, I believe that hearing from Mexican fathers has never been more critical. Their voices and experiences can infuse the discussion on immigration and on U.S. - México relations with a sense of urgency, humanity and approaches that prioritize 'apostándole a la familia mexicana' [betting on the Mexican family] as Abelardo put it, a father and psychologist working at the Desarrollo Integral de la Familia (DIF) [Integral Development of the Family] and at the school I visited in México, and where I listened to many fathers, mothers and children.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: INTERSECTING FIELDS

The literature I consulted for this dissertation is both broad and narrow: ample literature is available on the discrete components of interest of this study. However, few studies have looked at the intersectionality of Mexican immigration, globalization, transnationalism, parenting, fathering and child development, or a combination of some of these constructs. The field in the U.S., in general, has begun to be more inclusive of fathers themselves in research that once relied on mothers as "proxy respondents" for them (Mitchell, See, Tarkow, Carbrera, McFadden & Shannon, 2007), and has only recently become more diverse with the inclusion of Latino fathering in a U.S. context (e.g. Lamb, 2005). In México, I was able to visit book stores affiliated with institutes of higher education (e.g. Bonfil Batalla Institute of Anthropology), and together with the Mexican-based vendor for the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill libraries, searched catalogues and collections for books focusing on families in the U.S.-México transnation (Boehm, 2008), and again, found a paucity of work there.

The literature that addresses Mexican fathering and families within transnational split-household families, or the U.S.-México transnation, is quite small with only a handful of researchers describing and discussing the lives of these families. Specific to Mexican fathers who parent at a distance, the work is even more narrow (e.g., Bustamante & Alemán, 2007; Navarro, 2008). There is research that examines the lives

of Latino fathers' parenting practices, and in one case, included a comparative sample in México (Behnke, Taylor & Parra-Cardona, 2006); literature on parents who parent at a distance among other ethnic groups and/or from a different country of origin (Salazar-Parreñas, 2001a, b, 2005, 2008; Pribilisky, 2004) or another gender (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2007); and research that includes both mothers and fathers (e.g. Dreby; Laihe et al., Salazar-Parreñas; Pribilisky). Finally, there is unpublished but publicly presented comments on the concern for Mexican split-household families, with a gaze toward the fathers who migrate to the United States (Mummert, 2005).

There is, of course, vast literature on immigration itself; this includes sociological perspectives (e.g. Portes, Wallerstein) that emphasize the dynamics within a system's framework that produce the "immigrant subject." The discussion here ranges from pointing to economic realities that create an interest (in the Marxist sense) in the individual to migrate, to social networking models that use weak and strong ties as the analytics to understand reasons and patterns of migration. Anthropological perspectives capture an almost "in progress," cinema veritae quality of the migration experience (e.g. Gil), which situates us squarely on the social, economic, cultural, political, geographic, familial and personal landscape of immigrants' lives and journeys. Demographic perspectives track the migration flow from sending to receiving communities and examine these with regards to gender, age, geography and socio-economic status, among other indicators (e.g. the work of the Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Geografía, or INEGI; Pew Hispanic Trust). Additionally, there are psychological perspectives (e.g. Laihe, et al.) that examine psychological well-being among children (e.g. During my research in México, I was given access to the libraries of a regional office of el Instituto

de Desarrollo de la Familia, or DIF [Institute for the Development of the Family], and I found that their work mainly addressed psychological stressors among children in these families).

Finally, there are historical perspectives addressing U.S. state and local immigration policies vis-à-vis México and their articulation to demands for low-wage labor for agriculture and commerce (e.g. research on the Bracero Program). Within all of this, there is literature that focuses on migration and other that focuses on transnationalism (e.g. Trueba; Levitt), or the set of relationships and living arrangements that take place across borders in México and the U.S., facilitated by the ability to travel back and forth but not necessarily determined by this (Machado-Casas, 2009).

The 'Father as Provider' Construct – A Historical View

Fatherhood historically has not always existed as a construct nor was it linked to biological paternity. Tracing the various transformations of paternity and fatherhood in the West, Gillis (2000) describes a trajectory in which as late as the 19th century fatherhood required men to have a household; that is, men could be biological fathers, but without being property owners, they were excluded from the rights and obligations of fatherhood (p. 228). Children born to landless fathers were given into the care of households headed by men with land. These patriarchs accepted the children as full members of the household, along with their biological offspring. Gillis concludes that fatherhood was the privilege of propertied males.

Gillis further argues that one fatherhood construct, that of 'father as the breadwinner' (p. 227), was an invention of the rising middle-class. This configuration of fatherhood, that had its genesis in the 19th century, became widespread in the mid-20th

century and linked fatherhood to marriage, paternity, and masculinity. Gillis argues that this 'breadwinning' father marginalized fatherhood, because it moved male generativity out of the home and onto the factory floor or office (p. 229). What resulted was a male provider who was very much estranged from his children observes Gillis. Fatherhood's latest transformation, he notes, is the result of a "capitalist economic restructuring under globalization," which has given rapid rise to what he calls "fatherless families." I see this creation of a 'good father' construct as narrowing the definition and role of the father. This could be one way to view the Mexican transnational family, except that I argue that the fathers in this study remain invested in their families, and in contrast to Gillis's analysis of becoming estranged from their families as a result of being on the transnational 'shop floor' 3000 miles away, it is this shop floor that brings the fathers closer to their families. For the fathers in this study, as I hope to show, work is love. As one man whom I do not profile here but who was part of the study stated, "We are happy here not because we are cooped up in this place working 16 hours a day, 6 days a week. We are happy because of what doing this means for our family, that it allows us to give them what they need."

Although Gillis develops his ideas based on European and American socio-historical developments and experiences, his comments on the 'father as breadwinner' are relevant to this study, as are his comments on fatherhood and globalization. For instance, Gillis points to working-class fathers' commitment to fulfilling the demands of the breadwinner fatherhood model, in spite of increased difficulty in providing for their families because of diminished employment opportunities caused by globalization. This same adherence to a subjectivity that links fatherhood and masculinity to being a provider

is prevalent among the Mexican fathers in my fieldwork and served as their primary motivation for journeying across the U.S.-México border in search of employment.

Parke (2004) points out several important trends in the father literature, which until the late 90s was virtually non-existent as studies focused mostly on mothers. These include studies that examine the impact of fathers' hormonal levels on the father-child relationship, or the re-biologization of fathers; the cultural embeddedness of fathering; the assumption that fathers are essential to children's socialization; reproductive technologies that expand the routes to fatherhood; the link between fathering and men's development; and studies that examine intergenerational aspects of the father's role.

Prior to Parke, in 2000, two important examinations of U.S.-based fatherhood emerged. Spurred by the changing pattern of family composition and parental roles, as well as demographic changes within the United States, Cabrera et al. take a socio-cultural, life-span approach in examining the father-child relationship through a selective review of the literature. literature. Marsiglio, Amato, Day & Lamb (2000) also conducted a selective review in order to examine the "prominent theoretical, methodological, and substantive issues" (p. 1173). I include a discussion of these because of their importance in the field.

Cabrera et al. point to the ongoing evolution of the "father ideals" (p. 127) in which the relationship of the father to the family and the child has a movement toward intimate involvement with the family and which change relative to the mothers' greater involvement outside of the home:

> We have seen an evolution of father ideals from the colonial father, to the distant breadwinner, to the modern involved dad, to the father as co-parent (Pleck & Pleck, 1997). These ideals have been accompanied by four trends: women's increased labor force participation, the absence of

> many men from their families, the increased involvement of other fathers in children's lives, and increased cultural diversity in the United States (p. 127).

Cabrera et al. track these phenomena for their the impact on the family and/or the father-child relationship. In this selective review of the literature, they identified three bodies of work that focused on the dimensions fatherhood, child outcomes and pathways of influence (p. 130). 'Dimensions of fatherhood' studies asks about the activities that fathers are involved in with or on behalf of their children, and father's accessibility, engagement and responsibility vis-à-vis their children; research focusing on child outcomes looks closely at emotional interactions between the father and child as well as child responses to paternal involvement and non-involvement; pathways of influence studies ask questions related to fathers' indirect and direct influences on their children. The authors assert that very little is known about the impact of non-residential fathers' involvement with their children, except "when it is measured in terms of child support payments" (p. 130), which has a positive impact on children.

Highlights of findings in this review include the increased involvement of fathers in intact two-parent homes, from 30 to 45% of involvement with their children to 67% in the span of three decades, a change that is relative to the mother's salary; an increase in the number of non-residential fathers, which the authors refer to as in "absent fathers" (p. 128); and the need to reconsider normative definitions of fatherhood in response to the increased cultural diversity of the country.

Marsiglio et al. identified four broad categories in the father literature: theorizations about fatherhood as a cultural representation, examinations of fatherhood's cultural embeddedness and diversity; examinations of how the various dimensions of the

father-child relationship impact child outcomes, and examinations of the actors involved in the constitutive processes of the development of a father identity (p. 1173). The authors outline theoretical and methodological issues, which include reconceptualizing 'fatherhood' as something fluid and changing rather than as a stable identity (p. 1178) and attending to issues of reliability related data gathered through observation.

More relevant to the present study is their discussion on the relationship between the father-child relationship and child outcomes. In this meta-analysis of the research, the authors found linkages between a fathers' economic support and child well-being. Overall, a father's income is positively related to child well-being in two-parent households; among non-resident fathers, they found that nine of 12 studies examining this relationship reported,

> positive and significant associations between the amount of child support paid by non-resident fathers and aspects of children's well-being, including school grades and behavior problems at school (McLanahan, Seltzer, Hanson, & Thomson, 1994), reading and math scores (King, 1994), and years of educational attainment (Graham, Beller, and Hernandez, 1994; Knox and Bane, 1994). (p. 1183)

"Positive father involvement," as defined by time spent with the child and having a non-coercive authoritative parenting style (versus coercive authoritarian), is beneficial to the child (p. 1183), a finding consistent among minority populations as well.

Both meta-analyses include discussions of non-resident fathers, but limit their discussion to studies of divorced fathers. This suggests that in the 90s, the conceptualization of a non-resident father was synonymous with a divorced father.

The Father's Contribution

Research conducted in the United States on fatherhood shows that there are gender- and role-specific contributions that the father makes to the parent-child

relationship and to a child's development, including children's school performance (Nord, Brimhall & West, 1997), school readiness (Gadsden & Bowman, 1999), math readiness (Fagan & Iglesias, 1999); and children's vocabulary development (Panscofar & Vernon-Feagans, 2006). Ortiz (2004), for example, reports that Latino fathers contribute, in varying degrees, to their children's literacy development through storybook reading based on the fathers' own level of education (p. 171), but they use other strategies embedded within recreation, work, church, home and school to promote literacy. I do not examine these types of relationships in this study, but I did meet with and interviewed a school psychologist in México who alluded to affective challenges children face in split-household families and which the emerging literature in México on this topic attributes to the dislocation of normative understandings of family because of the migrating father.

Minuchin (2002) theorizes that a father's contribution is influenced by other family members in the same way that he influences theirs. That is, for example, the time a father spends with his child will be influenced by the time the mother spends with him.

Immigrant Fathers Living with Their Children

Roer-Strier, Strier, Este, Shimoni & Clark (2005) focused their study on immigrant fatherhood and identified three trends in the fatherhood literature: fathers' presence that focuses on describing and examining the impact of fathers' physical and emotional absence on children; fathers' involvement that begins to recognize the affective contributions fathers make to their children's lives and focuses on fathers' positive impact on child outcomes; and examining the meaning of fatherhood, which questioned received notions about fathering and promoted an understanding of fatherhood as culturally and historically embedded construct. Their binational study

examined all three trends through 54 interviews with diverse groups of fathers who were immigrants/refugees living in Israel and Canada. The fathers had preschool-aged children and lived with their children.

The primary research question was the perception of fatherhood among the participants amidst cultural change (p. 315). Roer-Strier et al. found that the fathers expressed commitment to, concern for and a sense of responsibility toward their children; they saw themselves as providers but also as engaged in guiding their children toward a better future. Their involvement with their children consisted of providing for them as well as helping the children negotiate the new cultural context. The amount of time they could spend with their children was related to hours spent at work. Some fathers understood fatherhood in their new homes as a process of helping the child preserve the culture of the country of origin while others guided their children toward rapid assimilation. Finally, with the exception of one group, fathers felt that immigration had created many opportunities, including being able to provide for their families through employment and enjoying higher degrees of safety, all cited barriers and challenges, which included a fear of the loss of parental authority.

González-López (2004) offers an emerging framework of 'regional patriarchies' to understand the Mexican immigrant father's disposition toward their daughters' sexuality, specifically, their virginity. The study took place in Los Angeles, California with fathers who had lived in that city for at least five years and who had migrated from the Mexican state of Jalisco or México City. González-López's findings indicate that fathers integrate "regional expressions of fatherhood and masculinity" (1118) and draw from their experiences both prior to migration and from their experiences in the

communities they reside in within the U.S. to form expectations about their daughters' sexual lives. Fathers differed in the norms they established with regards to their daughters' sexuality "based on the gender inequalities they experienced before migrating" (p. 1124). That is, fathers from rural Jalisco were more likely to raise their daughters to refrain from premarital sex, whereas the México City fathers were less concerned with this. These regional patriarchies, argues González-López, situate Mexican immigrant fathers between tradition and modernity. Articulated to economic well-being, the rural fathers know that their daughters have limited possibilities within those settings and an out-of-wedlock pregnancy would truncate their future. Fathers bring that understanding to the urban neighborhoods they live in, and fear that their daughters will get mixed up with undesirables. Urban fathers, on the other hand, operate within the logic of prevention through "protection and care" to guard against pregnancies and disease (p. 1127). Regional patriarchies challenges the notion of a uniform expression of fatherhood and reveals the dynamic, thoughtful process fathers undergo as immigrant fathers and the constitutive nature of navigating new geographies.

Transnational Fatherhood

These studies focused on various dimensions of fathering from a distance, that included fathers' purpose in migrating, fathers' changing subjectivities, the changing expecation of fathers and theoretical considerations related to transnational fatherhood. I present some of the highlights in this rich but narrow field.

Navarro (2008) examines cross-border fathering among Mexican fathers who initially migrated to the United States alone, with plans to bring their family later. Navarro, building on Erikson (1985[1950]) and Dollahite & Hawkins (1998) to create a

generative fathering framework, emphasizes fathers' generativity through which "…adults try to attain a favorable balance of creativity, productivity, and procreation over stagnation…" (Navarro, p. 33). Going beyond a deficit model of fathering, Navarro suggests that this model sees fathering as work or a process rather than "a social role resulting from a changing socio-historical context" (p. 33).

Mummert (2005) and Dreby (2006) examine gendered patterns of parenting among Mexican immigrant parents working in the United States and who maintain transnational households. Mummert, focusing on Mexican transnational parenting, which she defines as "…arrangements in which childrearing activities belonging to the realm of production and reproduction of the family are scattered across national borders" (p. 2), describes the changing perceptions of the physically absent Mexican migrant father. Although Mummert does not expound upon the reasons why fathers have prolonged separations from their families in México, she notes that fathers have come under increased criticism by spouses, priests and their own children (p. 6). She points to changing conceptualizations of what fatherhood and the "ideal paternal figure" (p.6) are. The once sufficient paradigm was that of the adequate "provider." Now, Mummert argues, the 'good' father must send money on a regular basis, offer advice and guidance to children and support to his wife through frequent phone contact, visit as often as possible, and resist all types of vices (p. 7).

What is unfortunate about this reconceptualization of fatherhood among Mummert's informants, is that many Mexican fathers who have migrated to the United States do not have the immigration status that would allow them to return "as often as possible" to bond with their families. Nevertheless, Mummert concludes that 'physical

presence and closeness to their families have become requirements of fatherhood' (p.6). While Mummert is one of the few researchers to pursue an analysis of the Mexican immigrant father's experiences, her principal focus is on Mexican immigrant mothers, who represent a growing population (.7% of the unauthorized immigrant population are unauthorized Mexican female immigrants who are in the United States without their husbands or children per Passel & Cohn). Still, Mummert's research on fathers is echoed by my fieldwork in North Carolina, in which some fathers have shared stories of crisis and discontent in their relationships to their wives.

Mummert's exploration of structural realities that actually force the paradigm of transnational parenting on immigrants is poignant. She offers as an example the case of Mexican female workers who migrate to North Carolina with H2A visas (temporary guestworker program) but who are not allowed to travel with their families (p. 10). She further cites the Canadian FARMS program that requires Mexican male applicants to be married while preferring that Mexican female applicants be single mothers (p.10). Along similar lines, Bustamante & Alemán (2007) call out the racialization of this process among this same population, because these policies "explicitly preclude—by law—the integration of *racialized* groups from developing countries into U.S. society" (p. 3).

Dreby (2006) reports that 82% of children in a Boston study among Mexican migrants had been separated from their fathers at some point. In fact, the Pew Hispanic Center found that transnational fathering was most common among Mexican fathers in major American cities. Absent fathers, unable to spend time with their children, are perceived as "padres de cheque no más" [fathers only by check] (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994:67 in Dreby, p. 19), as they become identified solely by their role as providers

(Dreby). Dreby found that this radically narrow characterization of the father who fathers at a distance can have negative consequences when that father suffers unemployment. Unable to send money to his children, he disappears from the relationship for the duration of his joblessness. The jobless Mexican immigrant father sees himself as lacking honor through his failure to provide.

Not solely focused on fathers, a 2006 study that examined the lives of Mexican migrants nonetheless found that, indeed, Mexican migrants are primarily engaged in what the authors called, "economic transnational activities, such as sending financial remittances, and investing in land, business and properties in the home country" (Stodolksa & Santos, p. 633), this means that there is a certain reality to "padres de cheque no más." Because immigrant fathers' daily lives are consumed by making investments in their countries of origin and attending to financial matters there, their actual finances for themselves in the host country are quite limited as is the time devoted to other aspects of fathering beyond providing.

Pribilisky (2004) challenges the notion that male spousal migration to the U.S. leads to abandonment of the spouse. His findings of research with Ecuadorian immigrants to the U.S. and their wives in Ecuador suggest that couples approach transnational family arrangements with a disposition of 'aprender a convivir' [learning to live side by side] . By redefining their roles and relationships as well as family life, couples are able to establish positive conjugal relations and co-parenting activities. The couples relied on phone and internet communications and on the woman to manage the flow of remittances. Fathering at a distance presented the most challenges, and fathers engaged different strategies, from reasserting cultural values like 'respeto' to exhibiting more

flexibility. The fathers, although unsettled by some of the parenting challenges and sad about the affective distancing between themselves and their children, nonetheless felt they were good fathers because they could give their children a future, something that was not a possibility in Ecuador.

Child Outcomes

The literature describing or questioning the impact of parental migration on children's development has focused on children's social-emotional development, children's attitudes toward the migrating parent, and children's changing kinship relationships.

Drawing from survey data examining migration and family well-being from 1509 Mexican households in which families with children under the age of 15 were included, Lahaie et al. (2009) found that households in which the migrating parent was the caregiver of the child, the child's probability of developing behavioral and/or emotional problems increased. If, however, the migrating parent was the non-care-giving spouse, the father in this study, then there was a 61% decrease in the odds of the child dropping out of school. Overall, the children who fared the worst academically, emotionally and behaviorally were those in families in which the caregiver-spouse migrated. The authors suggest that greater effort must be made to increase job opportunities in local communities in the sending countries to decrease the economic need to migrate, design immigration policies that decrease the separation of families, and increase the availability of family support systems in México, such as early care for young children.

Extant work in this field suggests that there is something different about the transnational child, parent, and family that unsettles normative views of family, national

identity and nationhood (Salazar-Parreñas, 2005). Moreover, although adult members of transnational households deploy normative understandings of family when deciding to migrate without children for employment, that is, they make difficult decisions for the good of the family, they nonetheless challenge cultural and historical formations around gender, parental authority, and parenting roles. In Salazar-Parreñas's (2005) study on Filipino transnationals, for instance, it is the fathers who stay behind and parent the children as their wives migrate to Europe, the United States, and the Middle East for lucrative positions as health care or domestic workers. The father eschews the nurturing role and refuses to do basic household chores, thus creating a household in which he abdicates his role as the custodial parent. What can result is what Salazar-Parreñas calls a "dismal view of transnational households" (p. 53).

Salazar-Parreñas gathers insights about children's conflicted feelings towards the absent parent who in some cases is the father. Recognizing the tremendous advantage their parent's absence has given them, they struggle with the ability to establish intimacy during moments of temporary reunion. In the absence of joint experiences in which intimacy can develop between parent and child, what the children are left with are feelings of embarrassment and a sense of their being a 'gap' (p. 71) between them and their parents. I came to understand this 'gap' as an artifact of the diverging ontologies that had developed between father and child, in which commensurability had been compromised as these two individuals were developing in two different temporal and spatial realities. The notion of the 'gap' has been echoed in my fieldwork by fathers who have reported a "change" in their children to speak of a loss of familiarity and intimacy with their children.

Lamb (2005) in the United States examines immigrant fatherhood as a potential field of study. Previously, Lamb (2002) reported on child outcomes among children in households with non-residential fathers. Examining the impact of divorce on young children, Lamb cited restrictive custody decrees and time-distribution plans' potential to limit the non-residential parent's access to their child (p. 181). The children f the fathers in Lamb's study, for instance, experienced grief at the loss of contact with the non-residential parent. Prolonged separation can lead to a child's maladjustment, and this is mitigated through more frequent contact and visits (Mullins, 2011 reports similar results). Although immigrant fathers usually do not leave their family in México under circumstances of divorce, the effects of separation can be the same. Lamb suggests effects can be lessened by the support the custodial parent offers the child, but contact with the non-residential parent is critical. Furthermore, cites Lamb, "When nonresidential fathers are fully and richly integrated into their children's lives, they appear more likely to contribute economically to their children's support, and this too is associated with benefits for children" (p. 179). Other research with non-residential fathers indicates that children's developmental outcomes indeed may vary, depending upon the quality of the relationship between the non-residential and residential parent (Baum, 2004; Dreby, 2006). In this case, mothers and others involved in parenting act as mediators in the relationship between fathers and children.

Conclusions

The literature reviewed here offers insights into fathering, but with few exceptions, is limited to non-immigrant fathers in the United States. Nonetheless, the findings in that body of work reveal a changing understanding of fathering, one that

includes involvement in the care-giving aspects of the father-child relationship and a persistent relationship between the father's provision of economic support and positive child outcomes.

Relevant to the present study is the work of scholars working squarely within the field of transnational fatherhood and fathering at a distance. What emerges from this body of work is that in spite of barriers and obstacles fathers who father at a distance face at structural, cultural, economic, social political, familial and personal levels, they along with their families engage several strategies to overcome, survive and thrive. These include redefining roles in which the mother assumes fiscal responsibilities in the management of the remittances and more affective 'interventions' to mediate the relationship between the migrating parent and the child, and expanding the fathers' repertoire of socialization and interaction dispositions and strategies with their children to address affective changes in their relationship.

CHAPTER 3

THE RESEARCH PROCESS

This chapter on methodology speaks to the participants, data collection methods and modes of analysis and interpretation, positionality (Murillo, 1999) and theoretical framework. Included is an excursus on translation, although excursus is perhaps a misnomer as I somehow find translation central to this entire project.

Who Are They?

This dissertation primarily tells the story of nine fathers; however, in total I interviewed or through participant observation, gathered the stories of 29 individuals. In México, I interviewed nine fathers, eight mothers and six children. In the United States, I interviewed six fathers. As raced, classed, and gendered subjects, the participants in this study have revealed to me how these arbitrary sociological constructs intersect and collude at times victimize individuals but that these same subject positions can co-opted by them to be used as strategies to survive, mobilize and thrive.

In México, I had hoped to recruit fathers for the study who had never migrated to the United States. Four of the fathers I interviewed, however, had previously worked in California, Oregon, Nebraska, Nevada and/or Texas. Some fathers, who themselves had not migrated, were sons of men who had. In the U.S. sample, there was one father whose father had also worked in the United States and had parented the son at a distance. The fathers whose stories are presented here serve as exemplars of the bigger sample. Using

ethnopoetics as the method of analysis and report, the mothers' and children's stories will be presented in one voice.

Of the fathers in México, two of the four who had lived and worked in the United States said they returned to México because they felt they were losing their family. One of these fathers, Frank, called his situation 'dysfunctional' because, he explained, "raising a family requires the presence of both parents." Of the mothers, one was a U. S. citizen and grown daughter of migrant farmworkers, who herself now migrated back and forth to work in California's tomato fields and canneries. She owned a large, sun-filled, well-furnished home in México and had entrusted the raising and care of her now teen-aged daughter to her husband and mother. She was ultimately excluded from the study, because she was did not meet the criteria set for mothers, fathers, or parenting thus revealing the restrictive and highly normative nature of the definitions I am working with in this study. (i.e. she unsettled several notions: the circular migration she undertakes on a regular basis unsettles the notion of a split-household; the status of 'father' as a gendered one; the sexist notion of "mother" not being able to be the head of a household in a two-parent home; and common understandings of citizenship and belonging.).

Highlighted here are the stories of nine men, whose experiences, reflections and actions are representative of the larger group and of distinctive fathering experiences that are within and expand the matrix of Mexican fathering. The U.S.-based fathers live and work in North Carolina and parent at a distance from their children who remain in México with their mothers. The fathers in México work there and live with their children and wives. In the Mexican sample, the fathers are from one city and four rancherías (settlements with less than 2,000 or less inhabitants per INEGI, México's institute for

statistical and geographical information) that are part of the same valley and experience with a strong form of latifundismo as the historical backdrop. In the U.S. sample, fathers live in two towns in North Carolina and all but one work in the same Mexican restaurant. Two of these men hail from small settlements in México similar to the rancherías that the fathers in the Mexican sample live in (per INEGI). All fathers in both sites ranged in age from 33-43, have at least one child between the ages of 7 and 17 and were employed at the time of the interviews. The fathers in this study invest time, energy, resources, imagination, work and will to access what Sandoval (2000) calls "libratory spaces" (p. 59). I first introduce the participants in this section and then explore their stories more deeply in following sections (See Table 2).

Four Fathers en el norte

> **Emilio López.** Desde que tuvimos nuestra segunda hija, ya fue cuando comencé a pensar seriamente en venirme para acá… todo se dio… por…familiares de mi esposa y escuchaba que tenían restauranes… de este lado y…que les iba bien. Y bueno dije, aquí no estoy haciendo nada. O sea…era la única forma de tener mi casa … pues, es este, ganando mi dinero yo mismo [no pidiéndolo prestado]. Y… fue por lo que… me hice el ánimo de venirme para acá.
>
> [From when we had our second daughter, that's when I started thinking seriously about coming here…everything fell into place…because of my wife's family, and I would hear that they had restaurants…on this side, and…I'd hear them say that things were going well for them. I said, well, I'm not doing anything much here. That is… it was the only way to have a house…well earning the money myself [not borrowing it]. And… that's what motivated me to come over here.] (Emilio López)

Emilio López is 39 years old and has lived in North Carolina for 11 years, first having migrated to Atlanta, where he worked for three years in a restaurant owned by his wife's family. He has two teen-age daughters, who, when I first met him, were adoring of their father, spoke with him frequently by phone and sent him pictures, gifts and letters

from México, often including his favorite snacks in the packages. Now, half a decade later, Emilio's 17-year-old daughter is a single-mother of one and rarely speaks with her father, refusing to come to the phone to greet him when he calls. The 15-year-old is equally evasive, and his wife, Teresa, has been insisting for several years that she would like a divorce. After trying to convince Teresa to stay in the marriage, Emilio finally agreed to the split on the condition that she pay for the court costs as the petitioner. They remain legally married. Emilio has made a quiet life for himself in North Carolina, with his place of employment as the axis of friendship and community. His employer and customers at the restaurant speak highly of him, often invite him to be part of their family celebrations and would help him in any situation.

> **Carlos Sotomayor.** En lo personal yo estoy acá para darle a mis hijas lo que yo no tuve, ¿me entiende? así de sencillo. Si yo no tuve una bicicleta ellas la van a tener, si yo ya no pude estudiar por falta de dinero, de recursos, ellas si lo van a hacer, porque yo puedo darles estudios aunque yo no esté con ellas…Ese es el sacrificio que vamos a hacer y el precio que tengo que pagar…estar lejos de ellas para que ellas puedan ser alguien en la vida.
>
> [Personally, I am here to give my daughters what I did not have, you know? It's that simple. If I didn't have a bicycle, they will have one; if I was not able to study for lack of money, of resources, they will be able to do it because I can give them an education even if I am not with them. This is the sacrifice that we are going to make and the price that I have to pay…to be far rom them so that they can be someone in life.] (Carlos Sotomayor)

Carlos Sotomayor, 35, is from the Mexican city of San Luís Potosí, a state capital with a population of over one million inhabitants. Carlos has lived in North Carolina for almost four years. He is married and the father of four children, all who remain in México. When I first met Carlos, he talked about being happy to be in North Carolina and have work. He smiled easily and examined the dark brick of the bulky fireplace in my

living room. When I complained about all of the space it took up, he said he knew how to rebuild it to make it sleeker and more contemporary. He listed all of the things he knew how to do, from baking bread, which he had learned in his brothers' bakery that he helped establish, to driving a large delivery truck—used to deliver the bread to stores—to high-end construction of custom homes, a skill he learned in México and which helped him gain employment with an architect in Dallas. Carlos is the father of four children; three school-aged girls and one toddler son. His wife, Elba, is a stay-at-home mom who is involved in the children's school and who manages the household finances in conversation with Carlos. Carlos and Elba use Nextel radio-type cell phones to speak every day several times a day. These conversations include the children. Carlos has even spoken with his daughters' teachers while living here. Carlos is multiply-skilled, like all of the fathers in this study, who defy the typical characterizations of immigrant workers as unskilled laborers.

> **Alfredo Ramírez…**yo tuve un trabajo anteriormente, allá en México…por cuestiones de que la empresa cerró, despidieron a todos los trabajadores y…en esos estaba yo y me tocó también…busqué otras opciones pero la diferencia de salario…era muy, muy, este, muy alta…a lo que ganaba. Ya después, pues no me ajustaba a mis necesidades…Y…estuve un tiempo trabajando en otro lugar, pero…no ajustaba mis necesidades y…se dio esta oportunidad de…venir para acá…Pero no, no estaba en mi, no estaba previsto, porque yo siempre he sido una de esas personas que para mi lo mas importante…es la familia.
>
> […I previously had a job, there, in México…Because the company closed, they let go of all of the workers, and…I was there, so it also impacted me…I looked for other options, but the difference in salary…was very, very, uh, very large. Later, well, it wasn't enough for my needs...And…for a while I was working in another place, but…it wasn't enough to cover my needs, and…this opportunity came up…to come here…but it wasn't, it was not planned, because I am someone who has always been one of those people for whom the most important thing is the family.] (Alfredo Ramírez)

Alfredo Ramírez is 33 years old, married and the father of one son. He is from the state of Veracruz but left there at the age of 18 to find work in México City, where he lived for most of his adult life. Alfredo worked as a supervisor in a plant that made polyvinyl chloride (PVC) tubing, the "poison plastic" widely used in construction. During Alfredo's tenure, the plant was purchased by Costa Rican businessmen who relocated the entire business to a nearby state. Alfredo made the move with the plant, working in the same capacity as a floor supervisor. Shortly after the move, however, the plant shut down, and Alfredo was left without a job. He, his wife, Alicia, and now 11-year-old son, Marcos, moved back to México City, where he quickly found work as a night watchman in a car dealership. The pay was too low, so Alfredo eventually made the decision to come to the United States to work. First, Alfredo and Alicia, went back to Veracruz where she could live in the house that Alfredo had built and where Alfredo still had family that in his absence could help Alicia and Marcos as needed. Alfredo remarks,

> "Logré construir una buena casa allá, más o menos en buenas condiciones, no tenía caso que mi esposa estuviera en México pagando renta teniendo una casa allá para poder habitarla, por eso decidimos que regresara a Veracruz"
>
> [I was able to build a good house there, more or less in good condition; it didn't make sense for my wife to stay in México, paying rent with a house over there that she could live in. That's why we decided to return to Veracruz.] (Alfredo Ramírez).

As the interviews progressed, I learned that the house was not completely finished and that the main reason Alfredo migrated to North Carolina was to be able to install plumbing so that Alicia and marcos would have running water and would not have to go to the well to fetch it. He misses his boy Marcos; he mentioned him often and longs to see him and says he wants his family to have 'lo necesario,' what is necessary. He

currently works as a busboy and server (person who brings out the meals but does not take orders or wait on tables) at La Fogata along with Emilio.

> **Andrés Rueda**. La mayoría somos casados…en México tenemos a nuestra familia allá…yo en mi caso soy separado pero atiendo a mis hijos, estoy al pendiente de mis hijos, de mis papás y más que nada es eso, estamos más que nada por ellos aquí.
>
> [The majority of us are married…in México we have our family over there…in my case, I am separated but I attend to my children, I am mindful of my children, of my parents, and more than anything, it's because of this that we're here, because of them.] (Andrés Rueda)

Andrés Rueda is 35 years old and the father of two boys ages 13 and 17. Both boys and their mother, Vero, remain in the ranchería where Andrés was born and grew up in, and the last place he lived in before leaving México. However, Nicolas, the 13-year-old, has shown a preference for being with Andrés's mother and father and often sleeps over at their house, while the 17-year-old stays mostly with Vero. Vero's decision to leave the marriage and Andres's sudden job loss made it easier for Andrés to migrate to the United States. Andrés's job experiences in México include working as a school janitor, being a line worker in a factory and collaborating on very modest, home-based entrepreneurial ventures with his now estranged wife. He is a musician at heart and has used this talent and skill both as a means to gain employment and to build community. In North Carolina, he is a member of the Spanish-language music ministry in local churches. On occasion, he along with his brothers who also live here, perform at wedding anniversaries or birthday parties. He currently works for a landscape company with large commercial contracts.

Cinco papás en México

> **Jesús Pérez.** Mi meta es de que pues mis hijos…logren una carrera. Ojalá y se pueda hacer, ¿verdad? porque con esta crisis va uno de mal en

> peor…la crisis ahorita, bueno, yo la veo, la crisis, en la compañía porque…no ha habido recortes ya últimamente, de gentes no, de salarios. Por ejemplo, te dan un aumento y a la misma vez al mes, a los dos meses, te quitan ese mismo porcentaje en clientes, en ventas y quedas al mismo nivel de salarios.
>
> [My goal is , well, that my children have a career. Ojalá—Let us hope—that it can be done, right? Because with this crisis, things are getting worse…the crisis right now, well, I see the crisis in the company, because…there have been no cuts lately of personnel but of salaries. For example, you are given a raise and at the same time, in one month's time, or two, they take away the same percentage of clients, in sales, and you stay at the same level salary-wise] (Jesús Pérez).

Jesús Pérez, age 37, is a father of three children, an 18-year-old, a 12-year-old and a 6-year-old. His 18-year-old, Carla, at the time of the first interview, was waiting for the results of her college entrance exams. Mexican state universities once had open admission as long as the student attended the university in his/her home state. In the past decade, entrance exams have been used by public universities primarily to address overcrowding in schools and by default have become a form of social stratification. By the time of the second interview, Jesús reported that Carla had not been accepted to the fine art photography program and that although he was very sad for his daughter, he had wondered how he was going to pay her room and board in Guadalajara, buy the requisite computer, graphics software and camera and pay for other expenses related to college life. When I asked what Carla's plans were now, he said she had gone to work in a factory and was going to save money as well as study for a retake of the exam. Jesús works for a transnational corporation as a district manager in a very modest home he built—literally—with his wife Mari, and his uncles. He seemed aware that he had become a sort of cog in the wheel, a neoliberal subject in a highly exploitative economy and understands that he has little room to maneuver if he wants to keep his job:

CS: Soy representante de ventas de una compañía transnacional.
MS: Ah, está muy bien. ¿Y es muy difícil ese trabajo?
JP: … se puede decir un poco estresante…Debe saberlo uno llevar.
MS: ¿Qué es lo que provoca estrés en ese trabajo?
JP: Pues se puede decir que en las metas que te piden día con día, este, tienes que cumplirlas, tienes que si quieres mantenerte ahí….Porque si no das los rendimientos no das, este, lo que te están exigiendo entonces pues llega el momento que te empiezan a hacer a un lado, el día que llega a haber un recorte, pues sales volando.

MS: Y, y a veces aun cumpliendo ¿verdad? pasa eso.

JP: A veces si. Solo una vez hace tiempo hubo un recorte y quitaron varias rutas y este, pues salieron varios compañeros….¿verdad? pues como te digo los que no le echaban muchas ganas, los que decían el 'ahí se va' pues todos esos fueron los que desecharon.

[CS: I am a sales representative at a transnational corporation.

MS: Ah, that's quite good. Is that very difficult work?

JP: Well, yes…It is, uh, one might say a bit stressful…one should know how to manage it.

MS: What is it that provokes stress?

JP: Well, one might say that the goals they ask of you day after day, you have to meet them, you have to if you want to stay there…because if you don't perform, give what they demand, then the moment will come when they start putting you to the side, and the day that there are cuts, well you'll go out flying out the door.

MS: And even if you meet the goals, does that happen?

JP: Sometimes yes. Just once, some time ago, there were cutbacks, and they got rid of a lot of routes, and well many colleagues were fired, right? Like I was saying, it's the ones who didn't put a lot of effort into it, the ones who said, 'Who cares?' Well, all of those were the ones they threw out.].

Mario Romero. Tengo un hijo y una hija. Ahorita tenemos una facilidad que tenemos casi, casi todo a la mano. Por ejemplo, en mi comunidad tenemos…lo que es desde primaria hasta preparatoria. Y ya tenemos la universidad aquí a la mano, a escasos cinco kilómetros…Entonces, eso es una opción…si mis hijos la quisieran…Ahora que si no quisieran…habría que apoyarlos hasta donde ellos quieran…Siempre y cuando las posibilidades lo presenten…Claro que uno va a estar dispuesto, porque, puesto que yo tengo este trabajo pero trabajo en otras situaciones también.

> [I have a son and a daughter. Right now, we have the convenience that just about everything is nearby. For example, in my community, we have…from primary to preparatoria. And we now have the university around the corner, at a mere five kilometers away…So, that is an option…if my children would want it…Now, if they don't…we would have to support them as far as they want to go…as long as the circumstances allow it…Of course, we will always be willing [to support them], because I have this job, but I also work in other places as well.] (Mario Romero)

Mario Romero is a 40-year-old father of two young children. He works as a janitor in a middle school that is located in a ranchería noted for its yearly week-long festivities honoring its patron saint, its narco-bosses, the beautification of their streets, and its proximity to the relatively new satelite campus of the state's public university. Mario lives in the next ranchería over that hugs the side of low-grade hill. Mario teaches adult catechism and marriage preparation courses, facilitates baptismal and first communion talks with parents and godparents to be, and is on the planning committee for the patron saint's festivities of his church. He and his wife, Matilde, together with their children, do many things together. They tend fields, take walks in the surrounding forest, visit neighbors and relatives, or make food to sell. Matilde keeps all of the children's school assignments neatly stacked in folders along a shelf behind the entrance door of their two-room home. This small, tidy, perfect-square, split-horizontally-in-two home is divided by a wall with two door-less doorways, so the air circulates quite nicely when the windows are open. This is their second house; they rent out another house that they own, one only slightly less modest than this one, to strengthen their financial position. They live in this diminutive space, because they want their children to have an education. They have the land to build a larger home for themselves but will not break ground until they have purchased all of the materials. A six-foot pile of red bricks lines the path leading to

their current home; these will form the walls of the planned home. This plan-in-progess is also fungible—they can sell these items, the plot of land, the bricks—para salir de un apuro, to address any crisis. The bricks and the plot are both a plan for the future if nothing intervenes, and a back-up plan in case something does.

> **Roberto Salazar.** Pues mire, uno ya por esa parte referente a los hijos, en realidad que desde que uno se levanta hasta que uno se acuesta…todo lo que…consigue uno es para ellos porque uno…es de bajos recursos, no tiene uno…que lo hayan heredado, no es uno…de posición buena, entonces tenemos que cuidar el mínimo para que el día de mañana aunque sea, yo, mis planes, son de que esta casa por ejemplo, de ahí para allá no es…bóveda…es lámina ahí, ni está construída con varilla ni nada de eso, entonces mis planes son dejarles una buena casa. A ver…si más para adelante me busco un crédito para…arreglar esa parte, dejarla bien arreglada y al menos que ellos vivan cómodos…Vamos a ver la manera también si para estudiar tienen…la voluntad de estudiar y…a la necesidad que uno tenga, hay que darles estudio también…lo que uno les puede dejar…y…según las…oportunidades que tengamos, a lo mejor al rato Dios nos socorra más y les damos más de lo que uno piensa ¿verdad?
>
> [Well, look, regarding the children, in reality, from the time one gets up until the time one goes to bed, everything that one gets, achieves, is for them…because one is of limited resources, one does not have an inheritance, one is not in a good social position. So, we have to take care of the most minimial thing so that tomorrow, even if it's—me, my plans are, for example this house, from there to there is not reinforced…it's steel sheets, it doesn't even have steel rods, none of that, so my plans are to leave them a good house. Maybe later on, I'll look for credit…to fix that part, to leave it fixed the right way so that they can at least live comfortabley…We will also have to see how they can study…the will to study and…the need that one has [that might compete with providing an education], one must also give them an education…whatever one can leave them…and according to…the opportunities one has; maybe later, God will help us more and we will give them more than one plans to, right?] (Roberto Salazar)

Roberto Salazar, 42, is the father of two young children; Mili is a 4-year-old girl in preschool and his son, Juan, is 6 months old. Roberto and Sandra, his wife, had their children as "older adults," they say, after several years of fertility treatment. Sandra is a stay-at-home mom and Roberto works in the landscaping department of the nearby

municipality. The Salazars live in a ranchería, located on a former hacienda and the area's largest dairy producer. Roberto's grandfather was the last hacienda administrator and left each of his children, Robert's father among them, a home and a healthy bank account. Roberto said all of the children, with the exception of one uncle, squandered the money and the property. Roberto struggles to raise his family but, on his own, built the house that he and his family live in. He is multiply skilled, knowing a bit about electronics, construction, mechanics, music, and small home repairs. He provides el sonido [the sound] for parties and weddings.

> **Martín Rulfo**. Les hemos dado [a los hijo] estudio…es la herencia que nosotros le podemos dejar…a nuestros hijos porque no tenemos otra…Yo le digo a mis hijos que yo no tengo tierras para darles para que así estudien, que les guste el deporte y que se aparten de la droga y que estudien.
>
> […We have given them [their children] an education…it is the inheritance that we can leave…to our children, because we have no other…I tell my children that I don't have land to give them so that they study, that they like sports and that they distance themselves from drugs, and that they study.] (Martín Rulfo).

Martín Rulfo, at the age of 44, is among the oldest of the fathers I interviewed. He is the father of four children. His 20-year-old daughter found school to be too difficult and opted not to go to the university. She married shortly after finishing la preparatoria, and at the time of the interview, she had just had a baby. He has another daughter who is only three years old and two boys, one who will be going to middle school and one who is in elementary school. Martín comes from a family of self-taught musicians and is himself a musician. He likes to read and has a way of choosing words and modulating his voice as he narrates his experiences that is reminiscent of the great writer, Juan Rulfo. He repeated phrases as a way to bridge to earlier ones, and he mixed the mundane with the

shocking in such an unexpected and subtle way that it almost felt like stream of consciousness, also a hallmark of Rulfo's writing. One would have to listen to his voice, but this comment hints at his literary abilities:

> Todos vivíamos así, como era como un, pues no se como, eran casitas donde había tres personas, 'cabinas' es como le llamaban. Cada casita tenía tres personas y era un lugar grande, le llamaban el Palomar, y había más. Pero un domingo todos se quisieron así, como divertir. Trajeron todos cerveza. Había unas carreras a pie, otros juegos y por ahí, unos, ya iban tomados…enojados y con armas…Y mataron a un muchacho…Y yo también de ahí bajé bien asustado, y por eso le decía que yo a Estados Unidos no me voy…Porque lo mataron, y yo sentía miedo. En la noche sentía yo que, que sentía mal, me sentía mal porque pensaba que también a mi me iban a matar…
>
> [We all lived like that, it was like a, well, I don't know how. They were casitas [little houses] where there were three people, 'cabins' is what they called them. Each casita had…three people, and it was in a large place, they called it el Palomar [the pigeon loft], and there were more. But one Sunday everyone wanted to like have fun. They all brought beer. There were some foot races, other games, and there were some that were already drunk…angry and with arms…And…they killed a young man….And I came down, really frightened, and that's why I was telling you that I will not go to the United States…Because they killed him, and I felt afraid. At night I felt, I felt bad. I felt bad, because I thought they were going to kill me, too.]

As I listened to him during the three interviews spread out over the course of several weeks, I felt very unsettled about the 'desperdicio,' the waste of human talent that we seem to have grown accustomed to and that results from closing spaces of opportunity, places of learning, and communities where one can nurture a talent, develop a skill or pursue an interest. It also comes from subjugating knowledge and allowing only some to be knowers. Martín linked this to economic realities in having a similar insight but in another context:

> Hay…familias que son muy buenos estudiantes y también…no estudiaron, y yo digo –'¿Por qué, si ella es buena estudiante, porque no entró ahí a la prepa en Tala? ¿Si es de las mejores? Y yo me pregunto, le

digo –'¿Por qué nada más los que tienen más solvencia económica estudian?

[There…are families that are very good students and they also…did not study, and I say, 'Why, if she is such a good student, why didn't she get into la preparatoria at Tala, if it is among the best [schools]? And I wonder, I say to you, 'Why is it that only the ones who are economically solvent study?']

Juan Pérez. Jesús estudió los secretos ancestrales, pero no supo como explicarlos porque no los entendía bien. Por eso nos decía que tuviéramos fe. Pero ahora la fe se va explicar científicamente, la fe conciente, pero siempre va haber misterios, tienen que enarbolar la fe como antorcha, siempre apoyarse en la razón y la fe. El poder más grande es la fe en si mismo – aunque todo este en contra, nadie lo va a detener al que tenga fe… no puede existir un ser humano sin fe.

[Jesus studied the ancient secrets, he didn't know how to explain them because he didn't understand them well, that's why he told us to have faith. But now, faith will be explained scientifically, the conscious faith, but there will always be mysteries.

You have to enarbolar [hoist, lift] faith like a torch, always basing oneself on reason and faith. The greatest power is faith in oneself—even if all is everything is against [you], no one can hold you back if you have faith…there cannot exist a human being without faith.

Martín	44	4	Janitor in a public school, musician, farm laborer, waiter	Adult Basic Education
Roberto	42	2	Gardner in municipality, free-lance sound technician	Elementary School

Table 2

Demographic Data of Fathers in the Study

Name	Age	Number of Children	Occupation	Level of Education
U.S.-Based Fathers				
Alfredo	33	1	Busboy	Middle School
Andrés	35	2	Landscaping Worker and Fast Food Prep Cook	Middle School
Carlos	35	4	Server	Middle School
Emilio	39	2	Waiter	4th grade
México-based Fathers				
Jesús	37	3	Sales Representative in a Transnational Corporation	Middle School
Juan	42	4	Technical Assistant in Teléfonos de México	1 year of University Studies
Mario	40	2	Janitor in a public school, farm laborer, church worker, entrepreneur	Adult Basic Education

Juan Pérez is 42 and the father of four children. His two oldest live with their mother in Spain and the two youngest live with him and his second wife. He is a person who has found a way to be fully employed in a government company that pays well and be fully immersed in spiritual pursuits that integrate ancestral indigenous knowledge and wisdomw with new age currents. The unique cosmovision that emerges guides Juan toward reflection and a critique of consumerism. He lives, along with a community of like-minded people in a rural setting on a soft slope of a hill. They practice 'ancestral agriculture' with no pesticides, no heavy machinery that hurts the land, and use only heirloom seeds. More importantly they plant what they need for consumption and ceremonial purposes only. Juan's house is a large, bright, airy home with with modest furnishings made by local artisans, and as he talks, his children run and dash about screaming as they chase each other around the dinner table.

Positionality, Theoretical Framework and Representation

Positionality

I am mexicana, the adult daughter of Mexican immigrants who migrated to the United States over 60 years ago. My parents and stories about my grandparents have been very influential in my life, especially in teaching me about oppression and its articulation to language, ethnicity, race, and social class. At home, I learned that human suffering is rarely a random occurrence but rather the direct result of oppression, greed and corruption. I was taught to have an appreciation for history through the retelling of accounts by my father given to him by his father, who fought as a Zapatista in the Mexican Revolution of 1910, a fact I am very proud of. The importance of history as an analytic to understand the present moment was also conveyed through discussions of the

Black experience in the United States, the labor movement and the plight of farm workers.

There were examples from the international arena, and an early gift to me from my father was a copy of Mao's Little Red Book, *Quotations from Chairman Mao*, purchased in Chicago's China Town, as well as Mexican political comic books by Rius. I was encouraged to learn about Fidel Castro, Malcolm X, Benito Juarez and local civil rights activists as well. I was very young when Fred Hampton, a student leader in the Black Panther Party, was ambushed and killed by Chicago Police and the FBI a few blocks from where we lived, so this tragic incident remained unknown to me at the time. However, when I read about it as an adult, I understood with much greater depth what my parents were up against in trying to instill in their children a social conscious within a racialized society that felt and continues to feel that it is appropriate and necessary to "sacrifice the humanity of Black people" (Cook, Personal Communication, 2009) and of other people of color.

My parents were both sympathizers and tacit supporters of Black and Chicano activism but fearful of state oppression, a palpable presence in Chicago. They, therefore, emphasized protest through education, resistance through writing, and debating over marching. These were implicit and explicit messages delivered over a lifetime. For me, then, it is easy to see the migration patterns and immigration policies between México and the United States as both a symptom and a result of political and economic oppression and a type of suffering resulting from injustice.

> [Yes, when the Invasion of Anahuac—not *México*—and the rest of the continent—Cemanahuac—'happened,' it made Europe rise y la desgracia de Cemanahuac comenzó. In Rome, my parents and I stood before a plaque in Santa Maria degli Angeli e dei Martiri Basilica that

> read, 'Made with the first gold brought from the Americas.' In Seville, we were shown where Mexican and Peruvian silver and gold was kept after being unloaded at the coast in the centuries following la invasión.
>
> "This country's rich. It's rich—it's gotta lotta, lotta money, because it takes and takes and takes, from everybody it takes," says my mother in her broken English but sturdy thoughts to the white, American nurse upon whom she relies for care and who retorts with a silent, blue-eyed stare, but as she turns away, quietly says as if to herself, "Yes, this is a rich country...I—we…"
>
> These economies of extraction will not be stopped. Wallerstein said so. Yes, I have pre-colonial desire—it consumes my heart and breaks my thoughts. It contorts my brain and tumors my body. Why did these men –from afar—so, so afar—come? Why! Let us make our own mess! And yet, the dads in this study, they work. They make meaning. They build lives—their children's—their country's!!! And they give their children much more than a chance at survival, they reassert their right to be here—in this world that the Few want only for themselves.
>
> These dads tell their children, how great that you are alive and full of 'ilusiones' desires, dreams. How wonderful that it is my job to feed you. How wonderful to love you. These dads, they 'take and take' <u>back</u> the right to be a father. But do they know that? THEY: The fathers and the children? (Field notes, January 2011-January 2012)]

My positionality (Murillo, 1999) is thus informed by those early lessons at home and by my ongoing work within the Mexican immigrant community as a teacher and family literacy worker. This organic understanding of human suffering and injustice has found formal expression in qualitative research, Chicana feminist epistemologies, namely the work of Chela Sandoval (2000) and her discussion on differential consciousness and methodology of the oppressed, and anthropologist Bonfil Batalla's (1987) theorizations of "México profundo" and the non-colonial practice of everyday life.

Theoretical Framework

Chicana feminism. Chicana feminist thought as a research paradigm is primarily concerned with denouncing and interrupting oppression experienced by historically marginalized people of color. Immersion in the lives of the participants yields deep and intimate knowledge of their lives. Utilizing a Chicana feminist framework requires that I

1) expose and critique the conditions and structure of power and domination that negatively impact people of color; 2) explore the intersectionality of class, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender and other markers of difference in the daily lives of individuals to gain a holistic understanding of their experiences (Anzaldúa, 1987; Segura & Pesquera, 1992; Vasquez, 2006[1971]); and 3) problematize the role of the Chicana researcher in ways that unsettle the knower/Native (Russel y Rodríguez, 1998) or colonizer/colonized binary (Villenas, 1996).

Methodology of the oppressed. Evoking Anzaldúa, U.S. Third-World feminism, Barthes, Althusser and love in *Methodology of the Oppressed*, Sandoval (2000) takes on cultural theorist Fredric Jameson and his interpretation of the political within the postmodern moment (see Jameson, 1984; 1991: *Postmodernism, The Logic of Late Capitalism* and Sandoval, 1991: *U.S. third world feminism: The theory and method of oppositional consciousness in the postmodern world*). In the article, and later in the book, Jameson (1984) describes, as he sees it, the rupture with modernity that is postmodernism. Focusing on formal theories applied in art and literary critique and analysis, Jameson argues not for a linear understanding of modernity and postmodernism but rather for the notion that postmodernism is a "cultural dominant" (p. 55) that competes with modernism and that has penetrated all forms of cultural expression, including products of high modernism, which, without the context of modernity, lose all meaning. For Jameson, this context is political. To make his point he turns to aesthetics and draws comparisons between modern and postmodern painting, architecture and music. In his analysis of two paintings of shoes, one, a product of modernism, by Vincent Van Gogh, and the other, an exemplar of the postmodern, by Andy Warhol, Jameson

argues that the Van Gogh's "peasant shoes" [name of painting is "Work Boots"] evoke notions of labor, rural poverty, struggle, and a concern for social justice, while Warhol's slick, pointy high heels, although rife with references to commodity fetishism (p.62), nonetheless leave him searching for the political dimension in postmodernism. Jameson is horrified that the "world has become transfigured into a set of texts or simulacra" (Sandoval, p. 19) and has lost its radical past (Jameson, 1984, p. 70).

Depthlessness, a waning of affect (resulting from loss of subjectivity) (Jameson, 1984, p. 61) and fragmentation (instead of the modernist notion of alienation) mark the territory of postmodernism, a space that revels in the "death of the bourgeois ego = the end of the autonomous bourgeois monad or ego or individual" (Jameson, 1984, p. 65). He points to a grim future for the now decentered citizen-subject who is "trapped in hopelessness" (Sandoval, p. 26).

Facing a cluttered "hyperspace" in which subjectivities are disconnected from histories, Jameson fears the worst for the citizen-subject and cries out in desperation about "the incapacity of the human mind to give representation to such enormous forces" (Sandoval, p. 22). Pastiche, heterogeneity, and postliteracy or "a lack of controlling codes" (Sandoval p. 25) all define this hyperspace. It has been further described as a place where "there are no boundaries between nations and cultures…we struggle to locate ourselves" (Harnden, 1994). It is in short, this perceived loss of shared meanings that creates a type of Borderlands as theorized by Anzaldúa (2007(1987)), but where for Anzaldúa, the Borderlands open up possibilities through the formation of a new Mestizo consciousness, for Jameson it is a devouring, decentering, destabilizing space that exists

and is the stage where late capitalism plays out its destruction of the citizen-subject (to get a sense of what hyperspace is like, see Figure 3).

Figure 3:Postmodern hyperspace

I took this photograph on land that was formerly part of one of the nine haciendas in the region where I carried out the Mexican arm of the study. This natural spring was once used by the female servants of the hacienda and is now a swimming hole for the locals. The edge around the circumference of the waterhole was created by the placement of stone washboards that the women used centuries ago to launder the clothes of the hacendado and his family. The couple swimming arrived by motorbike; the horse wandered in without a rider. The idyllic setting and its current recreational use hide the long days of heavy labor of the women, the fear they might have had for themselves and for their own daughters, who could be taken by the hacendado even when betrothed to someone else, and the sorrow they felt for their men, who once defeated by the Spaniards, were moved to whichever hacienda required their labor. In spite of Indian uprisings, they were never free again and lived as slaves. This could well be a site of national mourning for the colonial terror the indigenous lived under, but the neocolonial moment has virtually all but erased that history. Additionally, in a very direct fashion, the hyperspace is defined by two distinct discourses represented by the horse (medieval chivalry, dark ages, the terror of the Inquisition) and the bike (modern freedom, convenience, Enlightenment, American car and mobility culture, the intrusion of global capital).

U.S. third-world feminism and differential consciousness. Sandoval reads Jameson's essay as a "eulogy and funeral dirge" (p. 23) to normative notions of identity and position within a social order that determines one's site of elocution. In an academic equivalent of "Been there, done that" gesture, Sandoval redirects Jameson to decolonial U.S. third world feminism and urges him to take heed: Third world subjectivities and subaltern feminism in reciprocal fashion have defined each other. This constitutive process *is* a political strategy and the site of construction of new technologies that serve as "an alternative and dissident globalization" (p. 21). A new consciousness emerges; this consciousness, affirms Sandoval, cannot be co-opted by the new cultural dominant. As I understand it, Sandoval is telling Jameson that the subaltern will show him and other first world subjectivities the way. After all, the colonial project was to disconnect third world subjectivities from their histories. In response, the subaltern (a subject place created by first world modernism and Imperial subjectivities), has created technologies and strategies for decolonization.

Sandoval's project, she notes, is to de-universalize Western thought and lay out more 'far-reaching processes of decolonization.' She thus outs Western rationality as a limited and limiting "ethnophilosophy" (p. 8). Methodology of the Oppressed (MotO), both the name of her book and the "love apparatus" that contains a "set of processes, procedures, and technologies for decolonizing the imagination" (p. 69), serves this purpose. Sandoval argues that the technologies of the oppressed have always been at work and are a forgotten "foundational plate" (p.1) that has slowly and quietly influenced "the history of U.S.-Euro consciousness" (p.1). Her goal is to follow this "theory uprising" (p.1), revealing the ever-present "oppositional consciousness" (p.2) that is "a

rhetoric of resistance, an apparatus for countering neocolonizing postmodern global formations" (pp. 1-2), such as global capitalism. In short, as one fellow seminar participant commented, "When Hegel was writing The Phenomenology of the Spirit [1807], there was no way he didn't know about my Haitian brothers' struggle for liberation [referring to the Haitian Revolution, 1791-1804]." That is, the subaltern has always been there as the oppositional, agentic force for change; it has always spoken but was silenced through appropriation by "hegemonic feminist theory and practice" (p. 43) of middle and upper class white women.

Although Sandoval is bold and almost dismissive of Jameson in her writing, she finds his basic question unquestioningly provocative: Where is the political in the postmodern? She is further troubled by the knowledge that even politicized subjectivities in resistance can be co-opted or subsumed by the social order.

The urgency as laid out by Jameson to identify the political and define "new forms of resistance and opposition" (p. 53) is apparent to her. She searches for a "more effective, persistent and self-conscious oppositional manifestations" (p. 43) of libratory practice. Similarly clear is U.S. third world feminism's protagonism in oppositional practice. In a Foucaldian move, she searches for its origins in the history of hegemonic feminism, and realizes that hegemonic feminism has made U.S. third world feminism "invisible by perception and appropriation" (p. 43). Reclaiming the history of U.S. third world feminism, which Sandoval explains is not "necessarily" feminist but a "history of oppositional consciousness" (p. 53), she describes how subordinated classes, such as U.S. third world feminists, have chosen from a repository (her term) of subjectivities and have repositioned these in order to redefine and redistribute power. These subjectivities are

"positionings" on shifting topographies (p. 58). For instance, in the 'equal rights' framing of oppression, the oppressed position themselves as the same as all others and claim that their inferior status is based on appearances alone. The oppressed clamor "for civil rights based on the philosophy that all humans are created equally" (p.56).

Repositioning and redistributing power both "enacts and decolonizes their various relations to their real conditions of existence" (p. 53). Historically, then, U.S. third world feminists "identified oppositional subject positions and enacted them *differentially*" (p. 53). Differential consciousness emerges as a "strategy of oppositional ideology" (p. 43) with powers that are "cinematographic":

> …a kinetic motion that maneuvers, poetically transfigures, and orchestrates while demanding alienation, perversion and reformation in both spectators and practitioners. Differential consciousness is the expression of the new subject position called for Althusser—it permits functioning within, yet beyond, the demands of the dominant ideology. (p. 43).

This functioning 'within and beyond' is the order of the day for the fathers in this study, and it is this particular aspect of differential consciousness that I will use as an analytic to understanding these fathers' narratives.

México Profundo. Anthropologist Bonfil Batalla (1996[1987]) argues that Mesoamerican civilization is not an artifact of México's past but a contemporary presence that permeates Mexican society and culture. It is the force that gives impulse to the continuity of México Profundo. México Profundo is the México that is produced by indigenous populations through the practice of every day life and includes their beliefs, millennia-long history, expansive culture, capacities and knowledge, and social organization. México Profundo exists as subjugated knowledge (Foucault's term used in another context) and remains hidden, oppressed, exploited and constantly contested as

legitimate by what Batalla calls México Imaginario [Imaginary México] (p 67). It is excluded from the national project not as an unknown, but simply as something that is non-existent. México Imaginario is real and represents the psychological, social, political and cultural investment that many Mexicans make in the dominant society, one that denies the existence of the contemporary and ancient Indian. Should it recognize him, it does so only to exploit him or exclude him from national projects and from a presence in modern México, or to cast him as a permanent subordinate in the social order (p. 155). México Imaginario is hegemonic, seeking to "subordinate the rest of the population to its plans" (xix). Because of its power within society to recruit individuals into its project, to be buttressed by media and to be legitimized as the 'real México,' México Imaginario has extraordinary power to limit the space of México Profundo (p. 129).

Bonfil Batalla points to three strategies that indigenous México uses to survive; he calls these the "paths" of Indian survival (p. 129) [Bonfil Batalla uses 'Indian' both literally, for the contemporary Indian, and figuratively, for "all the capacities accumulated and refined through centuries, all the cultural patrimony of México Profundo" (p. 67)]. These paths of Indian survival are forms of cultural resistance that insist on the control of cultural space and the right to make decisions. They include radical suspiciousness (p. 135), appropriation (p. 135) and innovation (p. 138). Linguistic resistance (p. 138) is part of this last path; Bonfil Batalla notes that although indigenous languages have been "systematically and brutally attacked," indigenous languages continue to increase in number and in use through the defense of domestic spaces where the family retains some autonomy and can foster, even rescue the native language.

Radical suspiciousness is the generalized presumption that knowledge from the outside world threatens the stability of the community. Bonfil Batalla explains that this does not have to do so much with the content of this external knowledge but the function it will have in the community. When the community accepts knowledge from outside and integrates it into its community, it creates a dependency that wasn't there before and relinquishes some of its autonomy. Bonfil Batalla offers the example of fertilizers and insecticides (p. 135) that might actually help agricultural endeavors within certain communities, but in accepting the introduction of something the community cannot produce makes it dependent upon the purveyor of those goods, the repercussions of which are endless. Hence, the suspicious disposition.

Appropriation is the taking over of foreign, imposed elements and making them their own. In this appropriation, the elements made their own be theirs in a way that allows them to have decision-making power over them and preserve their autonomy. Bonfil Batalla remarks that one clear example of this is the relationship of communities to the Catholic church. Using the various posts, such as those of treasurer and messenger, and take control of the church, leaving the priest in a subordinate position (p. 137).

Innovations are ongoing changes that ensure the survival of communities; some are minor, even appear to be insignificant, such as using a bicycle chain to sharpen knives (p. 138) and others more substantive in the realm of family and patterns of social organization. I see the fathers' project as one of expanding the social space of México Profundo.

Data Collection and Analysis

All participants gave verbal consent and allowed for the interviews to be recorded; verbal consent was also given on tape. All but two participants agreed to be audiotaped.

I think of this study as having discrete components loosely labeled 'pre-data collection,' 'data collection' and 'post-data collection.' I use multiple strategies within each component that include visual, narrative, ethnopoetic transcription and 'notes on notes,' or restoried field notes in order to understand, elucidate or strengthen a point. For instance, in the previous section I deployed a visual strategy to explain a theoretical concept. For data collection, I focused on interviews and participant observation. I attempted to conduct a focus group, but asking individuals to remain for the duration proved difficult, although they did respond to a survey that collected demographic data.

When I started this study, I chose person-centered ethnography (Linger, 2001) as a primary method of data collection, because it offered the participants and me as the researcher an opportunity to engage in a dialogue, and through that dialogue together construct meaning. I found that this was difficult to sustain. When I reread portions of transcripts, I felt uncomfortable with my recentering as the researcher—I felt too present, and this was sometimes evident in the flow of the interviews, where I would move from talking a lot to simply acknowledging what the interviewee shared. No doubt, there is a learning curve, but I am rethinking Linger and moving toward the methodology of testimonio, in which the researcher's role is more like that of a scribe. This move is further informed by my exposure to theorizations and critiques about the power differential that is embedded within research paradigms. Said (1989), for example, both

exasperated and incensed at the lack of reflexivity among accomplished scholars on this, wrote,

> Epistemological violence is committed when we think that we can invite people into dialogic relationships when we, as the researcher, come from an imperial state that commits atrocities in other nations and has such an entrenched network of power that it is never an equal relationship (p. 217).

Representation and Translation

La Malinche in the New Latino South: Translating with Angst and Glee the Gendered Experiences of Mexican fathers

> *"They called her 'the Tongue.' She deftly used it to translate from Nahautl to Maya and later from Spanish to Nahautl and Maya. They called her la Malinche, Malinztin, Malinalli, La India, Doña Marina…but never by her birth name, Malinalli Tenépal"* (From various sources; e.g. Alarcón, 1989; Brown & Dalke, 2008; Candelaria, 1980; Pérez, 1999; Restall, 2003).
>
> *"Usted no es de aquí—habla todo bien, las palabras, lo que dice, todo lo dice muy bien, pero no tiene el tono, la manera de hablar de uno"* [You are not from here—everything you say is correct, the words, what you say, everything is said very well, but you don't have the intonation, the way of speaking that we have] (Patricia, a mother in México, upon hearing me speak- Fieldnotes)
>
> This is a multiply situated dissertation. I have to speak within a certain discourse in order to speak to others within my discipline and to inscribe myself in it. But I want to speak with the men that spoke with me during hours of interviews, and this requires a different language, the one of my home, my family and the primary language I used to gather the information for this dissertation, Spanish. But it isn't just about phonemes. It is about being an insider and being known, and about being able to "slip imperceptibly" (Foucault, 1976) into a discourse, a community that embraces me. It's about remaining there and that—I don't want to just say everything 'right'—I want to have 'el tono'. (Notes on notes)

An ongoing challenge throughout my adult life has been assuming the role/position of translator/interpreter. Growing up, I never experienced this role as a neutral one, although I was not as conscious of this understanding then as I am of it now. At the time, what I felt was a responsibility to cast the speakers of Spanish in the best

light possible to the English-speaking target. Mignolo and Schiwy (2003) suggest that in such moments, there is an understanding of the hierarchy of languages, and by default cultures. They remark, for instance, on varying status of Spanish in the U.S., where it is the subaltern and in Latin America, where it is an imperial language, one of dominance and colonization (pp. 21-22). In my case, I came to learn that not speaking English was not just a language difference. It was a marker of *being* different in a society that I could then already perceive as one that was intolerant of difference. Through my careful translations, I sought to protect the people I loved from the harsh gaze of those who literally and metaphorically did not comprehend.

A professor of mine has called language "epistemology" (Mudimbe, class notes, 2009). Aside from its meaning tied to the philosophical inquiry of knowledge, I have come to understand this term to mean 'how we come to know and how we 'make' knowledge.' Indeed, Spanish was how I heard, spoke and knew the world until I started Kindergarten, when I added English to my linguistic and epistemological repertoire. Even after acquiring English, all was filtered through Spanish; all was mediated by Spanish; all was given meaning in Spanish. I came to know/be Spanish/in Spanish. When I learned English and was able to interpret for my family, I was interpreting from a place of love and deep belonging to a place with implicit and explicit messages about permissible degrees of belonging. I felt the seam; I knew it was there.

As an adult I received training that emphasized the invisibility and neutrality of the interpreter. I was taught, for instance, to maintain this neutral stance by asking the parties for whom I was interpreting to look at each other when speaking and to ignore my presence all together. I was instructed to stand in the middle and tilt my head downward,

avoiding eye contact to emphasize my role as a conduit rather than as an interlocutor or advocate. This physical detail of the interpreter's body made me think of the image of the Virgen de Guadalupe—the *intercessory stance*. It was a speaking without me that was aimed for—others' words and voices silencing and replacing any I might have. I never internalized this intercessory stance, and I remember willfully deviating from the English to offer a Spanish speaker more of a context and in this way influence his response. I was 12.

(Re)presenting the lives of the participants in this study forces me into that role of translating and interpreting all over again, except this time the move is linguistic and ethnographic (Behar, 2003[1993]; Maranhão, 2003; Said, 1989). [Perhaps] it is also epistemological. This dissertation situates me once more in the contentious space where this notion of the interpreter as a neutral conduit is revealed as myth. I draw from Mexican history and look to the figure of Malinche, as others have (e.g. Anzaldúa, 1987; Perez, 1999; Moraga, 2000), to present the tradition into which I again inscribe myself.

La Malinche

La Malinche was Hernán Cortés's translator. Her story is well known in México, and circulates orally, in Spanish chronicles of the Invasion/Conquest, in literature (e.g. Meza, 1985; Esquivel, 2006), and in scholarship and cultural theory in México (e.g. Paz, 1959; Pacheco, 1974; Glantz, 2001). In the United States, la Malinche has found a home in Chicana feminist thought (e.g. del Castillo, 1974; Messinger Cypress, 1991; Moraga, 2000) and is the protagonist in Mexican ballet dancer José Limón's masterwork, La Malinche (Seed, 2008). Her narrative goes something like this:

> 'She betrayed her people by becoming an ally to the invading Spaniards (Pacheco, 1974). She was born into an Aztec noble family and

> spoke Nahuatl. Upon the death of her father, Malinche was either stolen by Chontal slave traders (Restall, 2003) or sold to them by her mother (Candelaria, 1980; García, 1997). Eventually, she was taken to the Yucatan, where she learned to speak Maya (Candelaria, 1980; García, 1997; Restall, 2003).
>
> She was one of 20 adolescent girls given to Cortés and his army by the Chontal after being defeated by the Spaniards; when Cortés learned that la Malinche was bilingual (Nahuatl and Maya), he immediately enlisted her as an interpreter (Candelaria, 1980; Restall, 2003). Cortés was able to 'speak through her,' (Restall, 2003). Cortés spoke in Spanish to his Spanish interpreter, who would then translate Cortés's messages into Nahuatl. La Malinche would translate from Nahuatl into Maya, "in an adult version of the game telephone" (Restall, 2003, p.82). La Malinche might have been 17 years old at the time (Candelaria, 1980); she quickly learned Spanish, and became indispensable to Cortés (Retall, 2003, p. 83), serving not only as his translator but also as his informant (Candelaria, 1980; Alarcón, 1989; Sánchez, 2005).
>
> She would become his mistress and have a son with him, to whom Cortés gave his own father's name, Martín (Restall, 2003). Martín is noted as the first mexicano, the first mestizo born of a white European male and this 'treacherous' brown Indigenous female with many names (Alarcón, 1989).

Accounts vary (Pérez, 1999), but Restall (2003) offers this version of Malinche's many names: 'Her birth name was Malinalli. In Nahual, she was called Malintzin, which carries the honorific Nahuatl suffix of 'tzin.' The Spaniards, however, heard this as 'Malinche.' 'Marina' was the name given to her upon baptism. In historical texts the name was recorded as 'Doña Marina.' The prefix 'Doña' was used for Spanish noblewomen, and its use with Malinche demonstrated the Spaniard's respect for her, wrought out of her loyalty to them' (pp. 88-83).

Malinalli-Malintzin-Malinche-Marina provoked much more Angst in me than la Malinche. I, too, had more than one name. My given name was Marta, but my birth certificate said "Martha." My parents told me that when I was born, the hospital insisted that my name be spelled with an 'h.' This is how it was spelled in America and in English. My father argued and fought back, but in the end, my official birth certificate

said, “Martha.” I was about 12 or 13 when I first heard the story, and I am not sure how I found out, but I learned that all I needed was $5, evidence of my correct name, and an in-person visit to the state capitol to have my name officially changed. I asked my brother if he would drive me to Springfield, Illinois and if he would pay for the name change. On a rainy morning, we made the drive to the capitol in an old aqua Chevy, and by late afternoon, I was Marta. I wondered if la Malinche had had such a choice, what name she would have chosen. Would she have chosen the $5 name? More importantly, without a nationalist discourse with Malinche at its core, would I have chosen my $5 name?

La Malinche carried no real history for me as I was growing up. La Malinche had no backstory in my early life. She was simply a woman who had aligned herself with los invasores [the invaders] and used her knowledge to betray her own people. There is, after all, “evidence” that la Malinche alerted Cortés of two planned attempts against him, thus saving him and his army from capture and possible death (Candelaria, 1980). This action has to be understood within the context of her slave status prior to knowing Cortés and her privileged status (albeit still as a slave) within his army. Malinalli-Malintzin-Malinche-Marina was more complex than la Malinche. Each name/identity was inscribed with a moment of Aztec-Mexica/Mexican history up to the Conquest, or invasion and colonization. This multiply situated, polyglot woman understood that by learning Spanish she would become an essential tool in Cortés’s expansionist project (Restall, 2003, p.83). She saved herself from slavery, although still as Cortés’s property (Candelaria, 1980; Restall, 2003). La Malinche had, in short, goes the narrative, secured her status in the colonial landscape by acquiring more knowledge and using it to sell out to the enemy. She was a ‘vendida.’

This was not the same story about la Malinche that I received when I was taught that as Hernan Córtes's interpreter, la Malinche had betrayed México by helping the Spaniards. I knew little else about her—she was never the real focus of the story. I heard with much greater frequency about "malinchismo" and "malinchista," words derived from her name. Malinchismo is the practice of believing in the superiority of things not indigenous to México; a malinchista is someone who expresses this belief through a preference for the foreign. It was clear to me that being a malinchista was a serious transgression. Being a malinchista was fundamentally an anti-Mexican stance and emerged from a lack of knowledge of Mesoamerican civilization. To be a malinchista was to lay bare your ignorance about the lives and achievements of the Mexica, the original indigenous people of what is now known as México. More disgraceful, I would learn, was that malinchismo was a type of emulation of those who had colonized us and destroyed our economies and our knowledge of agriculture, astronomy, medicine, the arts and writing. Whenever I heard someone say the word malinchismo or malinchista, my ears pricked up to listen carefully to the circumstances that warranted the label.

The malinchismo discourse was consistent with the decolonization projects of post-revolutionary México (Messinger Cypress, 1991), a time my parents, aunts and uncles were born into and came of age in. In the aftermath, an extended, public, national discussion on Mexican identity emerged and found expression in the work of Diego Rivera, Maria Izquierdo, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Jose Clemente Orozco and others, whose canvases celebrated the indigenous and the brown Mestizo. La Malinche became the subject of much theorizing (e.g. Paz, 1962) and was positioned as a traitor. The story was nationalist pedagogy that taught me that my loyalties should be with el mexicano

indígena, a signifier for 'the one unjustly treated' and not with the oppressor. Ironically, it was Spanish, the language of the conquering armies of Europe, that marked me as mexicana. Because of its subaltern status in the United States (Mignolo & Schiwy), it had/has served as my shield against assimilation and wholesale cultural domination (Delgado Bernal, 2006) as a U.S. woman of color.

Chicana feminist, Emma Pérez (1999), acknowledges that feminist scholarship has repositioned Malinalli-Malintzin-Malinche-Marina as a "powerful mother—not the phallic mother feared by modernist, patriarchal nationalists, but an enduring mother, a cultural survivor who bore the mestizo race [when she had a son with Cortes]" (p. 123). Pérez, nonetheless, argues that la Malinche is written into Mexican history as the devouring, "phallic mother, feared and despised over and over again" (p. 107). Her capacity to learn many languages, her political skills that allowed her to find a place in the seat of power (Candelaria, 1980), and the activation of a fluid identity, enabling her to shift subjectivities as a response to oppression, are compromised by her willful alliance with Cortes and his men. Willingly or not, intentionally or not, la Malinche was an agent in the circuitry of power of colonial empire, or the "coloniality of power" (Quijano, 1997, 2000; Mignolo, 2001; Mignolo & Schiwy, 2003). Her 'speaking through' has thus been interpreted as a 'speaking against' the indigenous populations of México. In fact, Restall (2003) tells us that the Nahuas named Cortés "Malinche" and the interpreter, Malinalli Tenépal, "la Malinche" in order to distinguish them from each other while at the same time asserting their utter unity "as though captain and interpreter were one" (p. 83).

The Chicana feminist de- and reconstruction of la Malinche considers her personal history and the complex geopolitical borderlands she had to traverse. Chicana

feminist (e.g. Nieto Gómez, 1973; del Castillo, 1974; Alarcón, 1989; Moraga, 2000) analysis makes it possible for la Malinche to reclaim her Nahua name and identity, Malinalli Tenépal, and to have it along with her Spanish Marina, and the hybrid Malintzin/Malinche. She also claims a place in Chicana feminist thought as a paradigmatic figure (Alarcón, 1989), a feminist protoype (Candelaria, 1980), a symbol of national loss (Nolacea Harris, 2004), and an epistemology of oppression (Alarcón, 2001). La Malinche, argues Alarcón, only in her "wholeness provides a model for whole decolonization" (Nolacea Harris, 2004, 21). This wholeness includes Malinalli Tenépal as la Malinche, the woman who foils assassination attempts against the invading army, Malintzin the educated and privileged Mexica princess turned slave; and Doña Marina, the baptized and respected interpreter for the Spanish. What emerges is a pedagogy of ambiguity in the figure of la Malinche, an indeterminancy (I borrow this term from Noblit, Rogers & Ferrell, 1999 used in another context. I use it here to capture the open, fluid nature of la Malinche in revisionist feminist writing) that is also her agency. At the same time, there is a nagging thought that being agentic does not necessarily mean choosing correctly.

The difficulty of dismantling this invisible/non-existent superficies of neutrality is complicated by the politics of immigration in the United States and the growing culture of 'el soplón,' the whistle blower, citizen-informant or snitch, in México, both sites for my study. Even if I were to translate not only correctly but with 'el tono,' my actions during fieldwork always had the potential of being interpreted through the lens of surveillance. I had these worries, regardless of my fast acceptance in all participant groups. No doubt, I am a privileged interlocutor, in more ways than one. I am, first of all,

mexicana [Mexican woman], an exalted status in heteronormative Mexican gender relations and Mexican society at large. Courtesies and access were extended to me immediately and without question in the field. For instance, as I explained the consent process, participants would often nod and say, "Sí, sí" before I finished sentences, as if to say, 'You're good. Get on with the interview already.' In México, my entrée into the community was the local school, and my affiliation to school personnel made me trustworthy. In the U.S., my status as a fluent and native Spanish-speaker legitimized me as mexicana.

My positionality was further defined by my deep love for my mexicanidad, my family of origin, and my relationship to both the memory of México as lived and transmitted to me by my parents and extended immigrant family and to contemporary México, which I have experienced directly. What this means in a research context is that my interest in this group of fathers was to faithfully represent and disseminate their story, denounce the oppression with which they contend and to proclaim their legacy for all to read as they revealed it to me. The fact that I can proclaim it somewhere to someone where it might be heard implies yet another location, one of emerging privilege within the hierarchies of the Academy. My positionality, then, has been that of an insider/outsider (Villenas, 1996). I am thus oriented toward two communities, that of the fathers and their families and that of official, formal, discrete and distant institutions such as the university, school systems or regional governments.

This insider/outsider positioning was not at all lost on the participants. I was aware of my relationship with the U.S. participants within the context of changing public discourses about immigrants and immigration. I wondered how my questions to them

might be perceived within that context. For instance, in 2004, the Associated Press (AP) adopted the term "illegal immigrant" which gained traction in the media because the AP has a constitutive role in legitimizing media outlets and the terms they say to use will be used. Their sanctioning and dictating the use of "illegal immigrant" quite possibly has been one of the most instrumental tools in flattening the discussion about the complex issue that immigration is. In 2011, the AP had a chance to do away with the term, but even in the face of ongoing criticism from the National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ) and advocates at large who argued that journalists were forced to act as judge and jury when using the term, nonetheless kept it. Observes Michele Salcedo, political desk anchor at the AP and president of the NAHJ,

> In every other legal context, whether criminal or civil, journalists are scrupulously taught, and editors keep a close eye on copy, to make sure someone accused of a crime or violation isn't convicted in the story, that they have a right to the presumption of innocence. The coverage of immigration is the exception to those journalistic standards" (Tenore, 2011, paragraph 13).

In the New Latino South the illegal immigrant discourse was co-opted by law enforcement officials and politicians in the form of 287g, and life for all immigrants became very strange.

Still, I never sensed any loss of trust in me by the fathers that I was interviewing, but I did wonder about random events that could be perceived as produced by my involvement with them. Would the traffic stop resulting in a deportation hearing somehow be seen as connected to the questions I was asking? Maybe I was not a student at all, someone might think. Or, worse, my research actions might invite scrutiny from local officials. After all, it was understood that I was born in the United States. When asked what part of México I was from, I started to read this as a type of immigrant check

of authenticity and trustworthiness. I always answered that I was hija de padres mexicanos [daughter of Mexican parents] and that my father and mother were from the Mexican states of Morelos and Jalisco, respectively. I also offered vivid descriptions of their hometowns or a memory of my experiences there. Only then did I more clearly state that I was born in Chicago, *pero de padres mexicanos* [but of Mexican parents], I would reiterate. Paranoia is perhaps too strong a word for what I was feeling, but as the tensions between the local immigrant community and law enforcement escalated, I worried about being thought of as an outsider and actually becoming someone who might jeopardize the fathers' status in the city simply by conducting my research.

In México, I became equally aware of new accountability mechanisms that were being employed with families receiving government aid and how these might interfere with how forthcoming interviewees would be with me. Some of the families I interviewed were participating in a federal aid program for the economically vulnerable with strict eligibility criteria. In the case of one family, I thought I noticed a distancing during the second interview. The father seemed to have shorter responses than he gave in our first encounter. During the interview, I wondered if I was repeating questions from the previous day, and I started to look more closely at my notes. No, I decided, I wasn't repeating myself. I was just taking too much of his time, but his affect had not changed from that of the previous day. He was still friendly and smiling, just more curt with his answers. Not then, but later, after the incident, I thought back to my second semester at Carolina, when I was assigned to read Jeanne Favre-Saada's (1980) ethnography on witchcraft in French Normandy. In the course of carrying out normal research activities, Favre-Saada was perceived by the villagers as an 'unwitcher,' or someone who is able to

break a streak of misfortunes and remove spells (p. 166). Favre-Saada, discovered that although she did not believe in witchcraft at a metaphysical level, she was nonetheless "caught" (pp. 13-24) in the witchcraft discourse. Her questions during interviews and conducting member checking as she moved about town visiting different participants were all interpreted as the work of an unwitcher.

No doubt, I felt uneasy about being a researcher among an increasingly vulnerable population that was being targeted on many fronts. I did not want to be "caught" in these various discourses of surveillance and detection. During this period, the patterned question and answer exchange of interviews was boldly outed to me as not a neutral process at all and one that could be misconstrued as interrogation for the purposes of detection. I wondered about my gadgets—my tiny digital recorder, multiply colored pens, and leather bound journal and pouch with extra batteries. Would these arouse suspicion? As a mexicana, I saw myself being interpellated by State actions. I felt that study participants and observant officials on both sides of the border might begin to see my self-understood mexicanidad and self-consciously constructed identity as mexicana as something that could serve the State in the capacity of an informant. Of course, co-optation is always a risk (Villenas, 1996), and something that I have worried about throughout my life, but there seemed to be more at stake now, and I worried about how to negotiate the fragile trust common to new relationships. This was all much bigger than me as a translator down the road in the writing phase of my dissertation. This was about me as la Malinche in the field at the side of Cortés. I was aware of the potential incommensurability of words, concepts, epistemologies, power differentials and the invisible, intercultural terrains that can snare meaning. My goal, in part, in offering this

extended discussion of the woes of translation is to make these intercultural spaces visible and legible.

The potential for betrayal is real as is the capacity for advocacy, hence the glee. My Angst is fueled by three dynamics; the first is recognizing and negotiating incommensurability, for which Restall (2003) offers analysis of historical Communication/Miscommunication within the Conquest context; the second dynamic is resisting cooptation, as described by Villenas's (1996) discussion of the colonizer/colonized dilemma within a Chicana-U.S. context; the third is understanding the risk of betrayal when serving as translator, as presented by the traduttore/traditore dilemma (Alarcón, 1989; Paz, 1950; Pacheco, 1974; Pérez, 1999).

Communication/(Mis)communication. Restall (2003) challenges the myth of "conquest by (mis)communication" (p. 85) most recently advanced by Todorov, a semiotics scholar. The myth, explains Restall, positions Cortés as a "master reader of signs and information" (p. 85) and the Mexica as responsible for their own downfall for their "failure to read signs" (p. 85). Todorov and others like him (Restall points to Le Clézio and Diamond) conclude that it was Spanish superiority that made the Conquest possible (p. 90). Restall disabuses us of this long perpetuated myth by offering another theory—that the myth of (mis)communication is one that the Spaniards created and exploited to write a favorable history, when, in fact, they clearly understood through indigenous uprisings and other attempts by the 'locals' to contain, curtail and control the Spaniards, that their presence in the Americas was most unwelcome. Even as Restall reveals the complex nature of language and its radical embeddedness within a sociocultural, geopolitical context and offers instances of real (mis)communication that

results from Moctezuma and Cortés´s *engagement* in dialogue in an intercultural space that was invisible to them, he reaffirms that it was with "the sword and the compass that the Spaniards most successfully communicated" (p. 99). In other words, there was no ambiguity about indigenous resistance nor was there an antidote for Spanish terror. (Mis)communication or not, the Mexica would have defended themselves and the Spaniards still would have taken their gold.

Restall acknowledges that communication was difficult, and blame cannot be placed solely on notions of superiority or miscalculations of meaning, but rather on the complexities of intercultural spaces and relationships of dominance. In this scenario, la Malinche emerges as a slight and diminutive figure who could not have been responsible for the ultimate overthrow of the Mexica by the Spaniards. At the same time, la Malinche was ensnared then (as 'la Lengua' or the Tongue) and later (as the traitor) and again later (ambiguous figure). I feared a similar positioning of being ambiguous at best and a traitor at worse and wondered how my fieldwork would be judged. Each utterance and gesture is interpreted through the experience and culture of the individual interlocutor but also within intervening discourses, such as the anti-immigrant climate in the United States and the growing culture of documenting the lives of the poor in México in order for them to gain access to government programs. I didn't want to be ensnared.

Colonizer/Colonized. Villenas (1996) introduces the colonizer/colonized construct within the context of her experiences as a "detribalized Native American woman…a *Chicana*" (p. 75) who is both a graduate student linked to the Academy and an ethnographer of the Latino community (p. 77). She presents these identities, inscribed with the history of nations and their hegemonic power, as the site where power continues

to play out. Villenas, as the daughter of Ecuadorian descendants of the Quechua, is also a politicized Chicana from the barrios of southern California, a scholar, researcher, and member of the English-speaking academy; and a spokesperson/expert on Latino issues, an identity both sought by Villenas and imposed by the English-speaking, Eurocentric members of an educational institution. With membership in both the Latino community and the privileged English-speaking world of academia, Villenas is exposed to the complexity of negotiating the multiplicity of selves that are evoked by the intersection of the minority researcher's ethnic, political, professional, as well as chosen and imposed identities.

The simultaneity of these identities places her in a unique colonizer/colonized dilemma. She has at once been colonized by the same historical, social and political structures that impact the marginalized group that is the subject of study, because she *is* of that group; and, in the act of objectifying the marginalized group through research, becomes the colonizer who is catapulted into this role through identification with and legitimization by the dominant group whose values and power reside in the academy and at local institutions. Along with exercising these various aspects of self is the risk of being co-opted to fulfill the aims of others. Being both colonizer and colonized, notes Villenas, is what characterizes the experience of the minority scholar and researcher.

It is la Malinche rearing her familiar head once more. Is this ambiguity, indeterminancy, or differential consciousness, as Chela Sandoval would call it, or the "epistemology of oppression" that Alarcón (2001) introduces? Is there a way to do away with the ambiguity? And why do I desire this? Why do I seek determinancy at this juncture? What do I gain if I say la Malinche was a traitor, and claim a place to stand as

an advocate? Would this be more consistent with my stance as a qualitative researcher—that indeed, there are places to stand that are not fluid, not seamless and that perhaps the Borderlands are not the place to be? That differential consciousness has its limits, and that shifting gears, while allowing one to reclaim self, can also be an act of accommodation so that the powerful can continue to press against one's right to self-determination and full expression? Am I being co-opted when I buy into la Malinche and the colonizer/colonized dilemma? Is it an extremism that I long for—an extremism that comes from my desire for the preinvasion/preconquest/precolonial moment, which although also marked by power struggles and hierarchies, had not been brought into submission by or into any larger religious, political, cultural, linguistic and military world order?

Traduttore/tradittori. Alarcón offers a cultural analysis of the traduttore/tradittori (translator/traitor) dilemma found in the figure of la Malinche vis-à-vis la Virgen de Guadalupe, the Catholic virgin who appeared to the Nahua Juan Diego, leaving her image upon his long coat, or tilma. The image is said to have remained intact to this day and currently hangs in the Basilica of la Virgen de Guadalupe in Tepeyac in México City. La Virgen de Guadalupe, who now officially bears the Roman Catholic titles of Patroness of the Americas, Empress of Latin America and Protectress of Unborn Children, is a much revered figure in Mexican history, but also in religious, spiritual, political and cultural life. She, like the Malinche, can also be understood as a type of mestizaje or border figure in that she represents the colonial presence, in this case, the Catholic church, mixed with indigenous cosmology. She, like the Malinche, is a

mediator. However, Alarcón believes that differences between the two are also great and draws sharp distinctions between these two powerful symbols of gendered mexicanidad.

For Alarcón, one understanding of Guadalupe and la Malinche is through a binary lens (p. 62). In this framework Guadalupe is more like the traditional Mary the mother of Jesus found in Catholic iconography—she is the self-sacrificial mother who silently endures her sorrows and has a "transcendentalizing power" (p. 62). Guadalupe is powerful and positive as an asexual, virginal presence (p. 69) in the nation-state, México. La Malinche is Guadalupe's binary opposite. She is not silent, and when she speaks, it is not as a mother but as an independent being advocating for her own needs (of survival, perhaps, for she was a slave that could have been easily disposed of). Alarcón connects la Malinche's dilemma to the Chicana feminist movement and with what is at stake when acquiring a "voice of one's own" (p. 63):

> Because Malintzín the translator is perceived as speaking for herself and not the community, however it defines itself, she is a woman who has betrayed her primary cultural function—maternity. The figure of the mother is bound to a double reproduction, strictu sensu—that of her people and her culture. In a traditional society organized along metaphysical or cosmological figurations of good and evil, cultural deviation from the norm is not easily tolerated nor valued in the name of inventiveness or "originality."
>
> In such a setting, to speak or translate in one's behalf rather than the perceived group interests and values is tantamount to betrayal. Thus, the assumption of an individualized nonmaternal voice, such as that of Chicanas during and after the Chicano movement (1965-75)… has been cause to label them malinches or vendidas (sellouts) by some…Thus, within a culture such as ours, if one should not want to merely break with it, acquiring a "voice of one's own" requires revision and appropriation of cherished metaphysical beliefs. (p. 63)

A clear set of questions emerges from Alarcón's observations: Why do I write this dissertation about Mexican fathers and their parenting experiences? Do I write it on their behalf, hoping to make them more visible as family men, as I have long contended? Do I

speak independently or to (re)present the voices within my community? Am I both la Malinche and Guadalupe, or neither? Does Guadalupe really not speak for her needs? Does she not tell Juan Diego to build her a "house" and instructs him to go to the bishop, one of the most powerful men in México at the time? An apparition with capitalist desires…Is this what I am?

Other ways. So, I ask, would I have less Angst were I to write this dissertation in Spanish? Could I make a stronger statement, stand on firmer ground, be more on one side if the language were destabilizing to the powerful? [Why do I want to stand more on one side?] Could I even write this in Spanish with having had only lifelong exposure to books, music, film and journalistic writing but no formal education in Spanish? On several occasions, I was encouraged by a professor at another university to write my dissertation in Spanish. This idea was tempting. As I have tried to lay out here, I have struggled with the difficulty of representation through translation, not just in ethnographic terms of brokering meaning between oftentimes incommensurable concepts embedded in culture, but also linguistically and how this might situate me as researcher and interpreter in a Mexican context. My goal is to contribute in making Mexican fathers visible as the fathers and family men that they are. As a translator, I engage in "re-writing [the] object for the reading audience" (Sturge, 2011, p. 171) so that the "object" might be seen as 'authentic' by that audience (Mignolo & Schiwy, 2003, p. 15). In seeking this approval, I inadvertently reassert the subordinate position of the "translated" within the "epistemic hierarchy, giving an implicit nod to the structure of authority and power already in place" (Mignolo & Schiwy, 19).

Thus, challenging the current narratives about Mexican fathers, representations that have increasingly become raced, classed and gendered tales of failure or deviance and criminality, results in bestowing a certain legitimacy upon those very narratives. Translation has historically served the powerful. Its use as a tool of cultural and linguistic dominance and assimilation, and "its role in the construction of difference have shown it to be a unidirectional process that helped establish and maintain epistemological hierarchies, conceiving deviant and insufficient other forms of knowledge" (Mignolo & Schiwy, p. 5).

As I listen to the voices of the fathers in this study whose inflection, cadence and words are in another tono [tone], I ask, "How do I "translate" these men?" I translate as a non-parent, U.S. born and raised woman of Mexican parents, speaking Spanish that is sometimes anglicized. How can I represent the life experiences of fathers born and raised in México and who speak a different type of Spanish, one not influenced by English syntax? Are these even good questions to ask, or do they reflect a normative understanding of difference, one focused on gender, race, culture and language? Even if that is the case, I must still 'translate' these men. In linguistically narrow terms, I write English words for their Spanish ones, but this is not that straightforward. English is the privileged language of the Academy, and sadly not just in the United States, but in many other countries as well. To wit, Mazak (2007) reflects on her findings upon conducting research in Puerto Rico, where Spanish and English are the official languages. She makes reference to the linguistic experiences of Chucho and Jacinto, two farmers who are brothers and who hold bachelor's degrees in agricultural science from a Puerto Rican

university. Mazak notices the irony of English being the language of access to knowledge for these two men:

> The saliency of English in … work and politics is not so surprising when viewed through the lens of colonialism. The U.S. dominates Puerto Rico economically and politically, and … English dominates as well. What drives Chucho and Jacinto to read in English is access to information. It is … lack of access to information in the vernacular that a colonial system supports and…relies on… In order to maintain control of Puerto Rico, the U.S. must convince Puerto Ricans that they need the U.S. This …is reinforced in the educational system and …the home of Puerto Ricans where English is seen as the key to opportunity.
>
> The status of English and its importance for economic success are not questioned, and it likewise remains unquestioned in countries … trying to gain access to the world market. Why does Jacinto need … English to get information about world politics, when Spanish is the first language of more countries in the world than any other language …? Why does Elías [a brother residing in the U.S.] have to send his brothers articles about tropical agriculture from a ...U.S. university when his brothers live in, and were educated in, the tropics? Why are the textbooks used in agricultural science in English, when so many Spanish-speaking countries have well-developed agricultural science programs with texts in Spanish? (p. 39).

In similar fashion, I ask why in a country, of which bilingual Puerto Rico is an official part, and where from Florida to the Southwest and California, was an expansive swath of space where Spanish was spoken when it was incorporated into the United States, and where Latinos comprise the largest minority group, does the notion that English is the language of access and opportunity persist? This dynamic is not unique to the United States, nor to English and Spanish.

Not too long ago, I participated in a seminar on African philosophical practice and writing. The scholars whose work we were 'reading' were Francophones, and their scholarship was available in French but not English, so part of the weekly seminar session consisted of our polyglot professor translating the readings into English for us. I

would soon learn that this work was not available in any other language but French. I experienced the impact that two other colonial powers, France and Belgium, had upon me to access this work, but more importantly, I grasped what this meant for Lingala, Swahili and the speakers of these and other indigenous African languages, and their ability to read work produced by their own African scholars. Even casual interest in African philosophy required learning a historically European language. In short, the coloniality of power (Quijano, 2000) is inscribed in the production of knowledge and the process of translation itself. As such, translation is never a neutral process. Mignolo and Schiwy advance the argument further, "translation and transculturation[14] are conceptualized as fundamental processes in building the very idea of modernity and its constitutive companion, coloniality" (p. 3). Again, Mignolo and Schiwy:

> The translation machine [of early Spanish colonialism of México] entailed an enormous effort to write grammars of non-European languages and to adapt them to the Latin grammar, or to translate the concepts and ideas of other cosmologies to the Christian one that emerged in the New World (Mignolo, 1995, ch.1). And here the question was not simply the incommensurability of different worldviews but of different worldviews tied up by the coloniality of power in the making of colonial difference…(pp. 5-6).

The translation task was undertaken because of the mandate to convert the indigenous populations of the Americas to Christianity, and act designed to bring the "New World" into the "Old World" order—in this, translation and transculturation were the conjunctures that articulated the elements of an emerging commercial circuit:

> The initial scene of the modern/colonial world is the Atlantic as an emergent commercial circuit linking communities and civilizations of the "Old World" … to the "New World"… In this scene, the violent contact of Christian ideals with the great civilizations of Mesoamerica (Aztecs and

[14] Transculturation emerges from the work of anthropologist Fernando Ortiz and refers to the merging and converging of cultures, as occurred in the translation of texts during the colonization of the Americas by Spain.

> Mayan) and the Andes (Incas and Aymaras) brought translation/transculturation into contact situations and established them as part of the consolidation of mercantile capitalism, slavery, and conversion to Christianity. The Christian mission… found in translation/transculturation a useful and necessary tool. “Conversion” necessarily relied on and was inseparable from translation and transculturation. Further, translation and transculturation in the service of conversion were marked by a value system and a structure of power - the coloniality of power implemented by the bearers and metaphorical soldiers of modernity- of the right religion and of the true word. Structured by the coloniality of power, translation and transculturation became unidirectional and hierarchical and, therefore, one pillar for the foundation and reproduction of the colonial difference, from the sixteenth century to the Cold War and beyond. (pp. 3-4).

Clearly, I am part of this “and beyond,” because in the new scheme of things of the Global South, Spanish is not an Imperial language but a language of the subaltern, especially vis-à-vis English, yet the process of translation is so deeply inscribed with power that it will not be resolved by my writing this dissertation in Spanish. I have tried to be faithful in my translation. These translated voices, nonetheless, are fragmented by a language that is not the fathers’. But I must ask, Is my concern for language all about that--faithfulness? Wholeness? Pureness? Writes Alarcón (1989): “The translators, who use language as their mediating agent, have the ability, consciously or unconsciously, to distort or to convert the "original" event, utterance, text, or experience, thus rendering them false, "impure"”(p. 68). The translated stories of these fathers, then, not only will, but perhaps also, should remain incomplete.

CHAPTER 4

TESTIMONIO

I write this chapter on pasar la frontera [crossing the border] as testimonio [testimony]. Testimonios historically have been used to report and denounce trauma inflicted upon a group of individuals by a repressive state regime, a corporation, or an economic system (del Sarto & Herbert, 2010). A common illustration is the case of the indigenous populations of the Americas who by all accounts have been subjected to "imperialist forms of economic, political, and cultural oppression" (Ramalho, 2007, 1367). Testimonios are eyewitness accounts that, like the Spanish denotations and connotations of the word indicate, bear witness as one might in a court of law, to brutal acts of injustice (Beverley, 2004). Because the immigration and border crossing of these fathers is considered voluntary, one might ask, why a testimonio?

The fathers in this study, like countless other immigrants, also come seeking to overcome institutional—and centuries-long—forms of oppression. They seek to remedy poverty, joblessness or underemployment, age discrimination in the labor market, or overwhelming debt, or to fulfill a life goal that cannot be fulfilled where they are. Only one father said he migrated to the U.S. to 'try his luck,' but said this within the context of a personal history of several internal migrations seeking better employment and diminishing purchasing power. The fact that 10% of the Mexican population is currently an immigrant in the United States suggests that México offers limited pathways to economic viability. Individuals there face structural obstacles that compromise their

ability develop the skills, talents and interests that would enable them to provide for their family and household needs, both immediate and long-term. They find themselves having to embark on this less than voluntary migration.

Such large-scale oppression in a country like México, that is resource-rich with petroleum, copper, silver, gold, uranium, cadmium, celestite and other technology- and military-age minerals (Torres, 2004), is lamentable. At the same time, U.S. private enterprise is all too happy to have cheap labor. This consensual arrangement between two nation-states colludes against families, and human casualties result.

A confirmed site of occurrence of death resulting from individual migration trajectories is the U.S.-México border. Since 1994, more than 5,600 deaths along the US-México border have been reported (Jiménez, 2009). Sadly, and horrifyingly so, this international humanitarian crisis was manufactured (Jiménez, 2009). These deaths were a "predictable and inhumane outcome of border security policies on the U.S.-Mexico border over the last fifteen years" (Jiménez, p. 7), policies that forced migrants to traverse more dangerous, desolate terrain when crossing into the United States. Explains Jiménez, "Beginning in 1994, the U.S. government implemented a border enforcement policy known as "Operation Gatekeeper" that used a "prevention and deterrence" strategy … intentionally forcing undocumented immigrants to extreme environments and natural barriers that the government anticipated would increase the likelihood of injury and death" (p. 7). Even in the economic downturn, adds Jiménez, the death toll continued to rise at the border.

The fathers' eyewitness accounts of their lived experiences of pasar la frontera told as testimonio is the proper form for presenting the events unfolding in that moment

and place, where so many risk acute physical injury and illness, face life-threatening circumstances with the possibility of death, and encounter a border patrol that processes them as criminals, marring their record on both sides of the border. The immigrants who survive, however, are able to work and stabilize the economy of their homes through the remittances they send to family in México, something they were not able to do when they were physically there.

The retelling is woven together as a single testimonio [testimony] that although not wholly representative of the communal experience of 'pasar la frontera' [crossing the border], speaks to its common elements. This chapter, then, after a discussion on methodology, presents, in the voice, albeit translated, of the fathers, their border crossing experience. Five of the fathers I interviewed shared recollections of this event, which included precipitating incidents that led to the decision to migrate; episodes of physical and emotional hardship along the way; and the relief of finally making it to, if not the final destination, the home of a relative or friend. Some fathers shared detailed accounts of what happened while others talked about this event as a point in the process of coming to the United States. Only one father offered a complete chronology from the moment of deciding to migrate to his arrival to his final destination within the United States.

Testimonio as Method

Testimonios are a blend of history and literature (del Sarto & Herbert, 2010) that are autobiographical in nature (Ramalho, 2007) and give voice to those who might not be able to present their case because of illiteracy, notes Ramalho, without the support of a literate interlocutor who serves as the scribe. The testimonialista recounts a traumatic event from the perspective of the one who has experienced it (del Sarto & Herbert, 2010).

The result is a more complex retelling of the past. There is urgency to the testimonio (Beverley, 2004, p. 548) that even the very act of telling the testimonio to an interlocutor who can transcribe and disseminate it, potentially places the testimonialista in a more vulnerable situation (Beverley).

This method of recounting was successfully used in México by Elena Ponatiowska (1998[1974]) in *La noche de Tlateloco* [*Massacre in México*, in English] (Ramalho, 2007). Ponatiowska assembled the diverse voices of survivors and witnesses to the government attack on protestors in México City in 1968. Over 300 students and others died at the hand of military sharp shooters. Ponatiowska, intersperses texts taken from the protesters' signs, banners and posters with quotes from interviews with Tlatelolco survivors. Photographs of demonstrators and the military punctuate the mood of the retellings. The reader is left with a sense of having been there. A 'thick description' (Geertz 1973, pp 5-6, 9-10) is achieved through the cumulative effect of the compilation of multiple texts that reveal multiple perspectives. An understanding of history as a linear account of events is no longer possible (del Sarto & Herbert, 2010). The result is a dizzying intertextuality that disrupts received notions about authorship, history, authority of voice and what counts as knowledge, fact and truth.

A case in point, notes Beverly (2004) is *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, the testimonio of indigenous activist and Nobel Prize recipient, Menchú. Menchú was challenged by anthropologist David Stoll for what he said were factual inconsistencies in her testimonio (Beverley, 2004; Ramalho, 2007). Menchú responded that her goal was to make the story a collective one, which is why she included accounts that she herself had not witnessed. Beverley argues that Stoll and Menchú highlight the central challenge for the educated

interlocutor who will write the testimonio, the educated reader who will consume and analyze it and, in the case of Stoll, the ethnographer who will own, manipulate, present and disseminate data; this challenge is to "unlearn privilege" (p. 551), a quoted term from Spivak. Beverley clarifies that unlearning privilege requires accepting the right of the subaltern to speak on his/her own behalf and to promote his/her own agenda rather than to serve as an informant to the inquisitive ethnographer. He asserts,

> …the argument between Menchú and Stoll is not so much about what really happened as it is about who has the authority to narrate. (Stoll's quarrel with Menchú and *testimonio* is a *political* quarrel that masquerades as an epistemological one.) That question, rather than the question of "what really happened," is crucial to an understanding of how *testimonio* works. What seems to bother Stoll above all is that Menchú *has* an agenda. He wants her to be in effect a native informant who will lend herself to *his* purposes (of ethnographic information gathering and evaluation), but she is instead functioning in her narrative as an organic intellectual, concerned with producing a text of local history—that is, with elaborating hegemony" (p. 551).

In fact, as Beverley (2004) observes, the testimonio reclaims an epistemological space in a world that has privileged written language and thus historically excluded the subaltern:

> Because of its reliance on voice, testimonio implies in particular a challenge to the loss of the authority of orality in the context of processes of cultural modernization that privilege literacy and literature as a norm of expression (p. 549).

As such, testimonio points to an epistemology that is just barely within the reach of the Academy, and that may not sit well within the centered and privileged subjectivities of its players.

This approach to retelling is also reminiscent of Walter Benjamin, whose unfinished Arcades Project of collected texts and reflections about Paris that spanned 13 years. The 'finished' work was published in 2002, completed not by Benjamin, but by

editors who made decisions about how the texts should be organized. The reconstruction has been both celebrated (e.g. Kirkus Reviews) and criticized and the final product has been described as a grand critique about the consumerism of the era. What is interesting to me is that Benjamin's Arcades Project and Ponatiowska's *La noche de Tlatelolco* point to the error of believing that the researcher/author is only a scribe in these processes, even when testimonios generally advance the agenda of the testimonialista. As research, however, testimonios do force the researcher to reconsider the centrality of his/her role in the restorying of participants' accounts of their experiences, as noted above. Explain del Sarto & Herbert (2010):

> This means that academics must both modify their own methodologies and perspective to allow for the differences between their hegemonically centered view and that of their subjects and seek to establish new relationships between themselves and the subaltern populations that they are studying (Latin American Subaltern Studies Group 121)" (http://digitalunion.osu.edu/r2/summer06/herbert/testimoniosubaltern/index.html)

The decentering, however, is not complete; I have tried not to editorialize and aestheticize the fathers' testimonios as I assembled them into a story about one aspect of their lives. The testimonio presented here is completely in the voice of some of the fathers, and reveals the multiple ways they experience the 'system' bearing down on them and the multiple ways they move out of its way, and in so doing access and create new spaces for living.

Testimonio: La travesía [Testmonio: The Crossing]

Why Fathers Leave México

Es tu obligación – It is your obligation.

…Tienen que ir entendiendo [los hijos, la familia]…cual es el motivo por el que padre se va, que a la mejor es una postura de amor para poder salir adelante en la familia y no es una cuestión, de irse porque no quiere estar con la familia, sino es una cuestión de economía, de salir adelante, de ser el proveedor, de que se siente con el compromiso completo, y yo creo, que ser hombre…y tener un rol tan firme, tan rígido en un México…que tienes que ser el proveedor, el exitoso, el bueno, el que sabes todo, el que sales adelante, es muy difícil para el hombre, y en ocasiones no se ve desde este ángulo, se ve nada mas desde 'es tu obligación' y sienten que es muy sencillo el rol de ser padre y ser hombre. Es complejo, y es de sufrimiento porque el hombre que no es exitoso, que no tiene buen empleo, que no digamos cubre todas las necesidades básicas del hogar entonces no es exitoso, no es bueno…y que dilema se ponen demasiados padres de familia hasta de robar …por tratar de cubrir estos estereotipos culturales que se dan en México.

[They have to begin to understand (the children, the family)…the reason that the father leaves, which perhaps is a posture of love to be able to get ahead as a family and it is not a question of leaving because he doesn't want to be with the family, but rather it is an issue about the economy, of getting ahead, of being the provider, that he feels the obligation is solely his, and I believe, that being a man, and having for instance, such a firm and rigid role in a México in which you have to be the provider, the successful one, the good one, the one who knows everything, the one who gets ahead, is very difficult for men, and on occasion, this is not viewed from that angle, and is viewed only from 'it is your obligation' and they believe that it is very simple, the role of being a father and being a man.

It is complex, and it is about suffering, because the man who is not successful, who does not have a good job, who let's say does not cover the basic necessities of the home, is then not successful, not good…and that places them in a dilemma of even becoming thieves in order to satisfy these stereotypes of what it means to be a father in México.] (Abelardo, a psychologist and a father, living and working in México)

Yo soy de las personas que piensan que solamente es una vida la que tenemos y hay que saber aprovecharla y hacer lo mejor que se pueda, ¿me entiende? Si yo no tuve una oportunidad allá, pues probablemente la tenga en otra parte….nomás que lo malo es que pues desgraciadamente hay fronteras pero yo pienso que todos tenemos los mismos derechos en el mundo. ¿Verdad?

[I am the type of person who believes that there is only one life that we have and you have to know how to make the most of it and do the best one can, you know? If I didn't have an opportunity there, well, I will probably have it somewhere else. The only bad thing, unfortunately is that

> there are borders, but well I think that we all have the same rights in the world, right?] (A father in the study)

You know, they just told me to take dried meat, a small can of tuna or corn, and water, two small bottles of water, but I hadn't even decided yet if I was going to come over here, so that day, we left very early to buy what I was going to take. In fact, they had told us to take a black bag, one or two black bags to put our clothes in, because we would have to go without clothes when crossing the river, otherwise, if it got wet, at night it's like winter, and the clothes feezes. That would have been a problem. They also told us they wanted dark clothing. Both my uncle and I wore black pants, a black shirt and shoes, like work shoes. Well, at a checkpoint in México before reaching the border, they asked if we were going to play in some musical group or something like that, because we were dressed the same, like in uniform. "Well," we said, "Yes, we are musicians." I told him, "We are musicians who are coming to an event over here and, taking advantage of that, we are going to stay to work in the city." [In fact, the father who tells this part of the testimonio really is a musician as is his uncle.]

Uh, that day that we left, it was three in the afternoon. We traveled 14 hours toward the border in a bus. Because the bus broke down, we were stuck some three hours there. It's a bus that these men contract. There were Hondurans, Salvadoreans, Guatemalans and Mexicans. There were many, many people who came to my state, because what happens is that most of the roads pass through there, so that's where everyone came together and from there we left for the border.

At the border, we had to wait until 8 at night for nightfall so that we could cross the river. It was something quick because the water was not that high. It was half-way up our legs at the most. Just the last part, about three meters from the bank, was deep. We

had to swim a little. I had to keep moving. Well, I don't know how to swim. I tried to anchor myself to the bottom and get out toward the bank. It was hard for me, but in the end I was able to. It was the most critical moment for me.

And, well we had to swim without clothes, only with our undewear, the women and us. First, all of the men stayed on one side before crossing the river, and the women passed. Once they crossed, they dressed and then we crossed. It was all very respectfully [done] by the guides. They were very, very kind at that moment. What I know is that arranging for a guide at the border can be very dangerous, because they are linked to drug traffickers, with the Zetas [drug cartel], lots of organizations that they have there. That's the way it is. Getting a guide at the border is very dangerous, but when you know the person who will be taking you, you are more at peace.

Por el Río Bravo, tres veces, tres veces que me tocó cruzar. …Tiene uno que evitar las luces. Tiene uno que… cruzar nadando, *nadando*. … en verdad no se puede nadar. O sea, simple y sencillamente… hay lugares mucho muy bajos y luego profundos y sí pues es cuando tienes que nadar, y es cuando…se los lleva, cuando la corriente se lo lleva uno, porque no hay forma de nadar, en… ese río no hay forma de nadar. …Vas pisando, vas pisando y sientes como los remolinos, por… debajo, sientes como los remolinos te, te—los remolinos del agua—te pasan por… entre las piernas … por debajo. Y este, y son mucho muy fuertes, y entonces una persona que… va sola se la llevan, automaticamente se la llevan. **[**I had to cross three times, three times the Río Bravo…You have to avoid the lights. You have to…cross swimming, *swimming*…in fact, you cannot swim. That is, simply…there are places that are very shallow and then deep and yes, well that's when you have to swim, and that's when it takes them, when the current takes one,

because there is no way of swimming, in…that river there is no way to swim…You're stepping, you're treading and you feel how the whirlpools, from…below, you feel how the undercurrents, they, they—the undercurrents of the water—they pass…between your legs…from below. And, well, they are very, very strong…a person that…is alone, they'll take her, automatically, they'll take her.]

The rest was pure exhaustion, that all at once, you can't walk because of it. You have to make superhuman efforts to be able to keep going. I mean, because after you've gone through so much and to suddenly go back is very, very frustrating. Aside from that, everything was pretty calm. In fact, we stayed there until about 10 at night after having crossed [the river]. Then, we started, walking, walking, some six, seven hours. Practically all night toward the interior of the country. Then, we were there, and everyone was going across a good stretch of mountain, because it was the hillside, we weren't sent through the desert. And all very weary, we had to stop in the morning. The thing is that by noon we were walking again. They [the guides] already had a route—each guide has his route for crossing. They had already told us it was going to be hills.

We were walking through the hillside. There wasn't much vegetation. And suddenly, we heard a helicopter. Those who already know about these things say, "There comes the la mosca [the fly]," which is a helicopter that's scanning the entire area, to check that there are no caminantes [wayfarers] in the hills. So, we all scattered. We all hid under small bushes, and then we gathered after it passed, and we kept walking through thorns and thickets. We ran out of water on the second night. But we had some, very little, and we were rationing almost everything. The next day, we walked again, and again another small plane came. Everybody ran, but afterwards we met up again.

There were no children with us. What I had known already, well, from that first day, was that the people from Guatemala are very, how do you say? Thrifty. They don't let go of money that easily. What five of them did, the ones that were from Guatemala, is that they disappeared that first night. They took a different path on their own to avoid paying for la travesía [the crossing]. They had 'passed everything,' lo más dificil [the most challenging aspect]. They went their own way. The guide was worried, but said, "We can't do anything. We can't go back to where they were." This would mean losing another day. So, "yes" to those who say—'God help them and if they find the way, well que sigan adelante, [that they may go on]'…they must have had someone who was going to go get them [trailing off, as if to self].

I was with mi tío [my uncle]. He was in one group and I was in another. We didn't know where the other groups had gone. Those in front, who were leading us, the guides, one went with one group and the other with another. They talked by phone or radio. I don't know if they had agreed to meet up somewhere.

We were all in danger—I even passed right by a rattlesnake, but I didn't notice it, I think because I was so tired, I don't know. I passed right by the snake and everyone ran to the side and only afterwards [they asked]

¿Qué no viste la víbora? [Didn't you see the snake?]

Uh, ni cuenta me di, le digo [I didn't even notice it, I said.].

If I had seen it, I think it would have bitten me. We kept walking through the night. Well, not all night. We were almost out of water. We didn't have much. We kept walking, and there was a girl, and she fell in a ditch and passed out. She got hurt pretty badly. We were trying to encourage her and when she felt better, we started walking, and

then we were together again, the two groups. I don't remember if they were digging a hole for water, which to make sure no one would see us, we formed a circle around there.

We kept walking. Then, we really had no water, just the bottles and we saw little ponds that form spontaneously. We filled our bottles with water, and drank it así como venía [as it was]. Around three, four in the moring we reached a point where we had to climb a mesh fence about three meters high. It was like a barbed wire fence, wire netting with square shapes. We had to climb by the—where the tubing was, and jump to the other side and climb down and jump, and from there we moved forward, what was it? Maybe another mile and that's where the trucks were waiting for us. There was another fence. It was already 'broken in' so that people could pass quickly…it was like a door. You could see from below, [it] was bent from the people who passed there.When we passed under the fence, it would be my bad luck that I got stuck there, because I as carrying a small pocket knife and it had moved up along my belt, and it got stuck. I couldn't free myself, so I had to move back, fix the knife and move, but I could see that almost everyone had gone through. I got really nervous, because I couldn't get through, and when I made it through, I had to run, because otherwise the truck would have left me behind.

So, the first truck that came was covered, it was like a Suburban, and one guide went in that, and the other one guide went with us. Tags, everything looked good, the truck was very new. It took maybe 18 people and left. And we waited, and a truck came, a little old, open in the back. It was a pickup. As we got in, my uncle said, 'It doesn't have any tags. This truck doesn't have any tags." But we had to get in and the truck took off. The speed limit was 45 and the driver was going like 80, and a patrol car suddenly

showed up [and started] to follow him, but when he saw it, he accelarated more and yelled to us, “When I stop, everyone jump and scatter to the hillside.”

Well, he stopped, I think that he stopped in “parking”—he didn’t break—just shifted to parking. The truck kept moving, and he said, “No! Lie down! Lie down!” He then took off again for another distance, and he did the same thing again. He shifted to parking, jamming the engine. The truck kept going with the speed it had, and he was saying, “Everybody jump! The truck doesn’t work.” Everyone was jumping off, and they wouldn’t let me get off, because they were along the edge and I couldn’t get passed them. Then they all jumped. One girl who was farther in [the truck] also jumped, but the door pushed her back in. It seemed as if the truck tires almost dragged her along. When it was my turn to jump, I was so exhausted. When I jumped off, it was toward the edge of the highway, and two meters away there was another barbed wire fence. I jumped over it. Against it was a bush, and there I curled up and stayed. Many got stuck on the barbed wire. One guy was injured by it. He was the first one they caught. When they caught us [people from Andrés’s group; he was not detected], the guide left. He disappeared so that the police wouldn’t catch him there. We were now on our own.

I think it was reckless of them. Those who were waiting for us there, because they should have sent two identical trucks, or at least similar ones so that people would be—not comfortable, but at least be able to be okay, without the risk of being caught by some patrol car. For me, that was negligent that they did not check the truck to see about the tags or the that the driver go at the limit. Many times—sometimes—they know that maybe the migra will come, and then they send a good truck to take more [people], so that it’s more likely they’ll pass and the second truck, well, if the police or la migra come,

those who can run, run and those who can't, well they'll get caught there. For them, it's a loss, but they make up for it with whoever is there—that's the whole point.

So, many ran towards the brush. When immigration arrived, they came with dogs and passed near me and walked towards the muntain and didn't see me. Who knows why, but they did not see me. When everything was quiet, silent, after one of the patrol cars left—the ones from immigration—with the people they had caught right away as they all went deeper into the brush with the dogs, someone who had stayed near me at my side, a girl, also curled up and they hadn't seen her either, said,

"Who's there?"

"Well, me."

"Come over here," she said, "Let's go hide on the other side.

There was a small nopalera [cactus bush] in the form of a circle and in the middle it was hollow, without thorns or anything, so we went in there. Shortly afterwords, another immigration patrol car arrived and was shining its lights. But they didn't see us there inside. They didn't see us. We were hidden. Later, around 5:30, they came, with the dogs, and with her uncle and with mine. The two of them—they caught. When they left, the rest of us started coming out. In total, there were about 10 of us, but one person acted very badly, because he said he spoke English and had his license from having been here, and he comes out and says, "I don't want any problems. I speak English. I know everything about here. See you." He said that and left us there alone. The guides abandoned us. They left. They, uh, fled.

The nine of us who were left kept walking behind what were houses, because we were very close to a pueblito, and what we had moneywise, we gave to a girl who was

going to call her husband who lived in San Antonio, and about a half hour after she came back in a truck. She stopped, honked the horn and came out and said, "Come on, we have a ride!" So, she and four others stayed with her in a restaurant we had gone to. They stayed there and we, the other four of us, were taken to another house. After a short while there, they called to tell us that they had caught the people who had stayed in the restaurant. They had been caught there, so from that house they moved us to another one to avoid us being caught, too. From there, I called an uncle in Dallas. He came for me, and from that point, I never knew anything else about the others.

I don't know what happened to the girl who had hidden near me, who was going to another city and who was also being picked up by someone. Who knows. In fact, that girl that day, she said to me,

"Let's get out of here so that they catch us."

I said to her, "No, if we are already here, why should we risk getting caught? Let's see if in a while we can contact your famiy or mine and we'll find a way for them to come get us."

From there, that was it. She was under the care of her uncle [who had gotten caught along with the testimonialista's uncle], which is why I think she was really frightened. What we did learn was that the guy who went his own way, who had a license, he was caught along the highway. They caught him, that's what my uncle told me, that they had caught him.

More than anything, the real hardship is the exhaustion that comes from walking all day and from walkng all night. That's very hard. Also, the thorns; you'll be walking along and the cacti move or a branch with thorns, and they prick your legs. In fact, after a

year, I removed a thorn from my leg. I hadn't been able to find a way to get it out. In part, it started to come out by itself.

I think no one imagines what this is like. I think when you live something like this, that's when you understand, because of what you go through in a travesía like this. That's when you know what you have lived. All I could do was entrust myself to god, and to my saints. In that moment, we have Justo Juez. He is there, in Villagrán, Guanajuato. Es el que cuida todos los caminantes [He is the one who watches over all of los caminantes [wayfarers, soujourners]; to la virgen de Guadalupe, and to Jesús, to Dios, that's how we try to guide ourselves. It is really diffcult. I had also planned to send for one of my sons, but seeing how it was, how I passed, I am not eager for him to come that way. Because of that, I say, if there is ever reform [immigration reform] here, the first thing I would do is get their papers fixed there, so they are well there, and so that it is easier for them. But for now, not this way.

This is very hard. One suffers a lot. But, we were all of good age and in good shape. The only real tough thing, was the girl who fell. She was really very tired, and we had to help her pasar [cross]. Other than that, we were okay.

Section Analysis

Burried Agony

Ramón has physical strength, cosmic protection and luck. When Ramón boards the bus in his hometown to travel to the borderlands of México and the United States, he carries two large black plastic bags and the will to make it to Texas. He is a man of normal built whose body has been conditioned by daily walking, recreational hiking in the mountains, occasional games of soccer, and light to medium labor. His will and

physical strength are enough to make the long journey to his final destination in the United States. His luck remains to be seen, but he is protected by El Rey Justo Juez [The Just Judge-King or Christ the King the Just Judge], the patron saint of immigrants. El Rey Justo Juez is said to have granted many miracles, the first of these manifesting themselves in 1941(Sánchez, 2011, January 5).

The testimonialista remembers asking for the saint's protection at the border, and although he survives the travesía, I cannot help but wonder about the injured girl. Injuries among immigrants along the border are common and an injured immigrant is always featured in films about border crossing (e.g. the 2010 film "Ilegales"). However, it is telling that after describing what happened to her, the testimonialista remembers that they were digging a hole for water and that they formed a circle around the dig site so that no one would 'see' them. At the end of his testimonio he says that the only sad thing was the girl who was injured. In my notes, I make no remarks about the testimonialista's disposition in narrating la travesía, only that he looks away as if visualizing all of the details. But in assembling this testimonio, the lingering on this girl, the detail of the digging and hiding the hole with their gathered bodies, all suggest a more dire and tragic situation. Wouldn't the assembled group draw more attention than a few people digging for water?

The World Has a Place for Me

In the opening quote, el caminante ('the walker,' says this testimonialista, referring to immigrants) is convinced that the world has a place for him. The universe has perhaps acted as a bit of trickster, locating him in a place wihtout opportunity, but el caminante can outwit the trickster by simply going somewhere else. In this understanding

of the immigrant's dilemma, there is the revelation that immigration is a human right and a way to find the place that the world has set aside for one, that space of opportunity.

The Suffering Body, A Consoling Saint

Without hyperbole, without self-pity, the testimonialista tells us of the assault upon the body in this traveía as it withstands heat, thirst, hunger, exhaustion, sorrow, fear and worry. In contrast is El Rey Justo Juez, a figure of Jesus Christ represented as a seated king wearing a golden crown with six high vertical spikes, and who is the testimonialista's protector. He is dressed in loose breeches with a puffed sleeve vestment on top, both made of overflowing embroidered silk brocade and velvet in tones of gold, bright green or red, depending upon the time of year in the Catholic church's liturgical calendar. In his right hand he carries a short bronze scepter embellished with glass stones that simulate rubies, sapphires and emeralds. His face is starkly white against his black beard and dark eyes, which are fixed in a 'straight ahead' gaze. Although there are many representations of him, the 'milagrosa imagen' [miraculous image, actually a statue] that is visited annually on January 5th and 6th by more than 30,000 individuals from all over México, resides in Villagran, Guanajuato, the testimonialista's home state. This statue is enshrined inside a glass cube set in the wall of a small chapel made in his honor. It is this imperial version of Christ, with his wounds concealed or perhaps gone altogether, that there is an assurance of complete restoration and triumph after the body suffers. I have to think that El Rey Justo Juez rather than representing the promise of physical survival is much more about reorienting the present moment in a way that anxiety and worry can be lessened and kept in check. The image of a triumphant, just king is an image of restoration and assurance that all that is done for the good of one self and others is

justifiable and in the end will be adjudicated as such.

En ese río no hay forma de nadar [There is No Way to Swim in that River]

The Río Bravo, its Mexican name, or the Río Grande, its American name, a physical and natural border as well as a symbol of the legal divide between the U.S. and México along Texas and the Mexican states of Coahuila, Chihuahua, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas, has been an actor in U.S.-México relations and immigration policy for well over a century (Henderson, 2011).

El río for the individual immigrant is a test of strength and endurance but also an induction to the group comprised of fellow immigrants, in present, past and future moments. The uncertainty of the depth, the darkness and the cold, and the unexpected torrents of el río become the life challenges that begin to define the immigrant experience at la frontera. This port of entry is a test of the group's solidarity and the members' mutual recognition as men and women in a vulnerable situation, who nonetheless are embarked on making a high-stakes bet on themselves for their families, and now, bet on this group of strangers who are their fellow caminantes. In this testimonio, everyone makes it across alive, and the kindness of the guides is noted, but the metaphor of a river that one cannot swim in because it is either too shallow, too deep or too wild, gains traction as the lives of these men unfold in the stories they tell me. Their narrations emphasize the necessary reliance not just on family but on distal entities such as strangers or acquiantances, or what the literature calls 'weak ties' (e.g. Granovetter, 1973; Pfeffer & Parra, 2009; Rose, Carrasco & Charbonneau,1998; Wilson, 1998), throughout their trajectory from caminantes to imigrantes to trabajadores indocumentados [undocumented workers]. This is also evident in the testimonialista's query of how the female caminante

he hid with ultimately fared. The sense of the importance of and the concern for those outside the family is heightened upon entering the river in which one cannot swim.

La nopalera portentosa y los nómadas involuntarios–The Portentous Cactus and the Involuntary Nomads

A Mexican narrative tells how the Aztecs sought to establish themselves in Anahuac (now central México) and, in this effort, took heed of the sign that their god, Huitzilopochtli, gave them: to settle where they saw an eagle standing on a cactus and devouring a serpent. This image conforms the national seal of México and is featured on the central panel—the white field—of its tricolor flag. While the narratives vary, the spotting of this fruit-bearing cactus was taken as portentous in the process of identifying the place of settlement and the establishment of México. The entire image represents the triumph of the nomadic Aztecs (the Eagle) over the settled agricultural peoples of Anahuac (the serpent). Aside from its medicinal and culinary value throughout México, and now in the United States through immigrant introduction, the cactus is linked to indigenous culture and mexicanidad. For the testimonialista's and the female caminante, the spotting of the protective cactus in which they hide to avoid detection by border patrol is portentous of their survival, their triumph as involuntary nomads over the comfortable settlements that hold the promise of a job and a better life for their families.

CHAPTER 5

THE FATHERS IN NORTH CAROLINA

Emilio, Carlos and Alfredo live together in a house across the street from *La Fogata*, the American style Mexican restaurant where they work. It is an easy commute and a safe one because by walking instead of driving, they avoid being detected and deported by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), as has already happened to two of their co-workers. Andrés lives several miles away, two towns over, and works in landscaping, but because this is not steady employment, he also works the early morning shift as a prep cook in a fast-food chain restaurant.

The fathers were all hired to work in their respective workplaces before they arrived in the U.S., because they made use of weak and strong ties within their social networks. Andrés, for instance, found both jobs through his brother and the husband of a cousin; Carlos and Alfredo relied on uncles and padrinos or compadres (fictitious kinship relationships) in México and the U.S., and Emilio turned to his wife's cousins in Atlanta for his first job in the United States.

The part of the state that the fathers live in has seen a rapid change in its local economies. To some degree, Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés work in industries that are impacted more by how much disposable income families have rather than by macro-economic issues, like massive relocation of industries (not that the two are unrelated). Fathers who are not part of this study but who, through my involvement with the Mexican community in North Carolina, were employed in furniture factories or chicken

processing plants, are now facing unemployment or have already lost their jobs because these industries have shut down or relocated as part of what seems to be a larger economic restructuring of the region. The landscaping and restaurant industry are not as hard hit, per these fathers' own experiences: apartment complexes and local businesses still pay for lawncare and families still go out to eat, even if they do so less frequently.

The men have seen co-workers who left to take more lucrative opportunities like construction work, and then saw them return to waiting tables or trimming bushes when construction jobs dried up in the mid-decade financial markets crisis. The fathers' jobs, however, offer slightly more security even if the pay is less. With these calculations in mind, Emilio, for instance, said, "Yo de aquí no me voy. De La Fogata yo no me voy. Yo ya tengo mi clientela aquí, y no me voy." [I am not leaving here. I will not leave La Fogata. I already have my customers here, and I won't leave.]

The two towns the four fathers live in have less than 10,000 inhabitants each, who represent a broad range of socio-economic levels and a mix of native North Carolinians and Northerners. Because of the towns' convenient access to two major interstate highways and proximity to four major sites of employment, they function as bedroom communities for growing portions of their population. They are quiet towns with attractive amenities like public parks and places to shop, eat, and listen to live music. Each town has very small Mexican and Mexican-American immigrant communities.

In Ridgeville, where Emilio, Carlos and Alfredo live, the local library once consistently hosted a bilingual children's story hour attended by a diverse group of children, including Latinos. There is a Mexican grocery store that carries authentic products not found in other stores catering to Mexicans. The store is not visible from the

road; the owner removed all signage after feeling harrassed by the health department's weekly inspections. He said to me that all inspections stopped ones the signs were gone, "Ya jamás han vuelto" [They [the inspectors] have never ever returned.]. The tidy, well-stocked store is frequented almost exclusively by the Mexican immigrant community, and its existence is made known solely by word of mouth. The fathers in this study do not spend much time in any of these locales. Because Emilio, Carlos and Alfredo can eat at work, they have no need to purchase food to cook, and because their schedules, including Andrés's, keep them away from their home for a good part of their day, their shopping options are reduced to places like Wal-Mart where they can go very late in the evening or very early in the morning.

I know that most people in the world work very long hours, either by choice or because of need (or both), but these men face other constraints that limit their mobility. The very activities that those of uswho live comfortably and might take for granted, like taking an evening class, going for a walk or playing softball with friends, are not as easily accessed by these fathers. After an interview with Alfredo, he asked if I knew about a nearby soccer park, and I showed him where the local public recreation center was with baseball and soccer fields. He explained, "We sometimes go to the next city over to play in the midnight soccer games on Thursday nights, pero pues no me gusta ir tan lejos con todo lo que está pasando. Aquí también nos podríamos echarnos unas cascaditas" [but, well, I don't like going that far with all that is going on. We could also play a few games here.]. I later found out that to play in this local multi-field, multi-acreage park, he and his buddies would have to register as part of a league, pay a fee, confine themselves to one specific field that would be assigned to them and obey a strict schedule as well as

park rules that included wearing a specific type of athletic shoe while playing on the field.

Taking a class is equally challenging. If a father wants to study English, which would help him ascend from being a busboy to becoming a waiter at *La Fogata*, or from gardener to supervisor at the landscaping company, he would have to take time off from work and then have to worry about ICE checkpoints on the way to the local community college, as these are the locations where the sheriffs set up barricades in the county the fathers live in.

These restrictions do not seem to weigh as heavily on the U.S.-based fathers as they do on me. I find myself thinking about Alfredo's desire to 'echarse unas cascaditas' as I sift through mail or pump gas. I remember when I lived in Chicago, banks and libraries started accepting the 'matricula consular,' a picture ID issued by the Mexican consulate to Mexicans living in the exterior of the country. Undocumented men, women and children with that ID could apply for a library card and borrow books or reserve computer time. They could open a bank account as well. I was very bothered by the denial of these small forms of cultural wealth and inclusion to anyone.

No father said to me that they wished they had more freedom to do something recreational, but they all expressed the *need* to have an official identification or driver's license to move about with less worry when going to the grocery store to send remesas, or remittances, to their families. Andrés felt it was shortsighted to deny undocumented immigrants a driver's license and reasoned this in terms of it being a mutually beneficial process to offer the undocumented a license, especially if undertaken as part of a larger legalization project:

> Es otro tanto de millones lo que van a cobrar por licencias…Entonces, el gobierno tendría unas arcas abundante…muy sustanciosa para, para el país…Y yo creo que no le, no le caería nada mal…Entonces, este, ese es el… sería el detalle…tanto se ayudan ellos y nos ayudan a nosotros…
>
> [It is another amount of millions that they will charge for licenses … So, the government would have fat coffers…quite substantial for, for the country…I don't think that they would be upset by this…So, uh, this is…would be the point…they help themselves and they help us.]

Emilio argued from a different perspective; he felt the government revealed its ignorance in denying a state identification card or driver's license to the undocumented and saw this act as one of misrecognition—the driver's license is not a license to drive but rather a document that establishes someone's humanity.

> Es que aquí el vehiculo es indispensable…y…es todo contradictorio que se molestan porque la persona…no tiene licencia de manejo…¿cómo quieren que la tengan…si no se la dan? ¿Sí no se les dan…ninguna facilidad para andar legalmente?…Dejan ver tanto su ignorancia, que… trata uno…de estar en…lo más legalmente que se puede…ahorita ya se ponen, ya tan solo de estar en un plan…no quieren ni siquiera facilitar una identificación…tan solo el ID, la identificación… no la van a facilitar nada…Pues…la verdad, se me hace algo ignorante, la verdad, porque entonces, ahora sí que vamos a estar como animales aquí, ni siquiera van a saber quienes somos, como nos llamamos, … de que país somos…¿sí me entiende?
>
> [It's just that a vehicle is indispensable…and…it is completely contradictory that they be upset because a person does not have a driver's license…How do they want them to have one…if they don't given them one? If they don't give…them any chance to go about legally?...They reveal their ignorance, that…one…tries...to be…the most legal that one can…and now they have a single plan…they don't even want to let you have an identification [card]…just the ID, the identification…they won't provide you with anything...Well…truthfully, it seems ignorant to me, really, because then, we will really be like animals here; no one will even know who we are, what our names are… what country we're from…do you understand me?]

As surveillance and enforcement by the local sheriffs intensified, the men engaged different strategies to balance the risk of being stopped and the need to

send remittances home to their families. The workers at *La Fogata* shared knowledge with each other about where there were checkpoints or police traps. Eventually, they reached out to the brother-in-law of the restaurant owner, and asked him, a legal resident and licensed driver, to drive them all to the grocery store so they could send money home to their families. Andrés faced similar challenges where he lives with other family members, but he does not have know many people who are licensed drivers with whom he could travel.

It was through hearing about these and other experiences that I began to see how the fathers were always in two places at once; that their being physically in the United States while being emotionally here and in México, was a correlative to their ability to work within and beyond the cultural dominant (Sandoval, p. 43) in order to survive and thrive for the good of their families. Helpful to this discussion is to think of three aspects in particular of Sandoval's methodology of the oppressed (MoTo) when listening to the fathers' stories. Sandoval talks about MoTo as strategies to address power. Angela Davis writes, "methodology of the oppressed is a series of methods not only for analyzing texts, but for creating social movements and identities that are capable of speaking to, against and through power."

The fathers' lives are marked by strange and beautiful texts with a noticeable series of ironies and tensions that disrupt normative notions of family, work, legality, love and will and which speak against power precisely because they disrupt the norm: Being here means they can have a presence there as caring and responsible fathers who provide; being here without documents situates them outside of the law but their purpose

for being here establishes them as moral, noble and courageous men whose actions are seen as ethical if not legal; being here allows them to build a house—the physical structure—for their families there but the fathers' physical absence keeps it from feeling like a home; being here allows the family to continue as a meaningful set of relationships and cohesive unit even though physically it is not intact. The men, like other immigrants, live as Ramos Tovar (2009) notes so poignantly, "entre la tristeza y la esperanza" [between sadness and hope] (p.37). The actions the fathers take in order to negotiate the work, living and social conditions they face in North Carolina include what Sandoval calls sign reading, meta-ideologizing and differential consciousness.

Sign Reading

Sign reading is analogous to "la facultad," or the faculty, as discussed by Anzaldúa (1987). It has to do with perception, analysis and understanding how meaning is produced. It is the ability to see the "correlation" (Sandoval, 2000, p. 92) between "surface phenomenon and deeper realities" (Anzaldúa, 1987). In these narratives, "El norte," or the U.S., functions as a sign (as in sign, signifier and signified) of a better future, a better life. As fathers' lives unfold in untold ways, they begin to develop la facultad and engage in sign reading. They see and experience "El norte" as a lie. El norte reveals itself to be a site of deep suffering, uncomfortable prosperities, and closeted hypocrisies, but a place *from* where they can express the love and commitment they have for their family and the self-understanding of what it means to be a good father and man.

Meta-ideologizing

Meta-ideologizing is a type of detournment. It is the appropriation, rearticulation and ultimate transformation of ideological forms (Sandoval, pp. 82-3). In this study, the

notion of father as 'breadwinner' and father as 'protector' is rearticulated to new geographies, and fathers transform the notion that a father must be physically present in order to have an intact family; they transform hegemonic definitions of being solely a breadwinner by offering emotional support and guidance to their children through phone calls, email, text messages, Facebook chats, remittance messages, and messages and gifts through friends and family who travel back to México and love through their work here. As Navarro (2008) points out in his research with Mexican immigrant fathers,

> The evidence shows that although these fathers [in his study] perceived themselves as providers or bread-winners, they did much more than providing financial support and material things. In several ways, they maintained a bond with their children by displaying interest about their lives, engaging in discipline, being supportive, and offering advice (p.103).

Differential Consciousness

Differential consciousness involves activating these other strategies to create space and movement to maneuver. Sandoval has many definitions for differential consciousness as she struggles to find language for this core element of human freedom. She describes differential consciousness at times as a shifting of gears or as a "crossing network of consciousness, a trans-consciousness that occurs in a register permitting the networks themselves to be appropriated as ideological weaponry" (p. 182). "Mobile and transformable" (p. 182) subjectivities emerge. It is la conciencia mestiza (Anzaldúa, 1987), says Sandoval. The "differential joins what is possible with what is" (p. 181). It is both a process and an end point; it is dynamic, creative movement called 'soul' and "amor en Aztlan" (p.4) [love in Aztlan] the site of precolonial desire and beauty, infinite beauty. It is freedom. The clearest example of this comes from the fathers' decision to

cross the border into the United States in order to defend family and father in unauthorized spaces.

These strategies allow fathers to work within and beyond dominant ideologies (Sandoval) and in that space, practice freedom. I turn now to their narratives, examine cross-cutting themes in the experiences of Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés, and identify instances of MoTo in use as I offer my analysis.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

There are several themes that emerge from the narratives of the four U.S.-based fathers, which I have organized into the following domains, Migration as a strategy for overcoming, Working skillfully in the New Latino South, and Undocumented Mexican male immigrant worker as a fathering model. There is an emergent theme, 'Migration as the practice of everyday life' which I am still trying to understand and articulate, and about which I include preliminary thoughts on it.

The themes intersect and are intertwined; to treat them as discrete experiences or dispositions allows me to analyze them separately, and I can introduce some of the fathers as exemplars of a particular theme. I offer an brief analysis in each section.

Migration as a strategy for and the practice of overcoming

> Cómo a la vez, es una de las poco opciones pero a la vez es una decisión muy medida que rechaza de tener menos de lo suficiente.
>
> [It is at the same time one of the few options (one has) and a very deliberate decision (one makes) that rejects having less than what is sufficient.] (Andrés on why he migrated to the United States)

The fathers in this study had several reasons for migrating. All four had aged out of the job market. Education also was a more frequent requirement; with plenty of jobseekers, employers could demand more from potential employees, and it seemed to at least one father, that a degree was required even for jobs similar to those he had held.

Immediate options for the fathers in México were to start a family business, work odd jobs or migrate to the United States. The four fathers presented here were under- or

unemployed and in a precarious situation, and by extension, their families as well. Fathers used migration as a strategy and practice for overcoming. By this I mean, migration was a tool they deployed that involved a geographical relocation. The resulting dislocations that occur from this physical, social, and geographical change occur at the level of the social, the political, the cultural, the psychological, the emotional, the familial and the personal, and require migrations that become the practice of everyday life—a phrase used by de Certeau (1984[1980] in another context—as a way of overcoming.

Facing diverse sets of hardship and circumstances, some with a trodden path to follow and others not, fathers could see possibility and opportunity in coming to the United States that they didn't see as having in México. Migration was a powerful way to achieve immediate, intermittent and long-term goals.

Members of the fathers' families of origin had used this strategy within México to find work or to give their children access to education. In some cases, migration was undertaken to prevent further descent into poverty. In others, it was simply a way to get a better job. Emilio recalls that his father left his home city to follow a public works project as a laborer, "Él trabajó en los proyectos de Manuel Ávila Camacho, en lo que es poner las instalaciones para los drenajes." [He worked on Manuel Ávila Camacho's projects, putting in the drainage systems.](president of México in the late 1940s). His father remained employed for more than half a decade and gained skills to later work on his own in small scale projects. The four U.S.-based fathers migrated both within and outside of México before coming to North Carolina. Emilio traveled first to Georgia and worked there several years before coming to North Carolina.

Alfredo met his wife in a port city of Veracruz known for its Danzón ballrooms. They both had migrated there separately in search of jobs. They soon married and left for México City, then to the Mexican state of Querétaro, later returned to México City, and then back to Alfredo's home town in the state of Veracruz, where his wife remains with their son.

Carlos's first migration was at the age of five with his family, living in various types of settlements, from farms to rancherías to large, cosmopolitan cities and U.S. villages. The most exciting migration for him was going to Dallas; it was a large, modern city like the one he grew up in, and he quickly found a job there.

Andrés experienced his first migration within México as a young adult and has the least number of migrations of the four fathers. He moved briefly to an industrial corridor within his home state to work in a maquiladora (sweat-shop type assembly plants where materials from other countries are sent to, assembled into a final product then sent back to the original country). After a short time there, he returned home and eventually made it to North Carolina.

Many of the reasons that their families of origin migrated for, exist for these fathers as well. Prominent is the desire to improve the living conditions of one's children and offer them a more promising future, as well as to resolve a family or financial crisis or achieve a life goal. Often, these desires intersect and all act as prevailing motivations for coming to the United States. What follows are the four themes that emerged under this general domain of "migration as overcoming."

Facing an Acute Family or Financial Crisis

There were two fathers, Andrés and Emilio, for whom a change in family

relationships or family income created an acute crisis and pushed them into a 'less than voluntary migration' (Buff, 2008, p. 535). However, all four fathers faced financial hardship and found themselves in a difficult economic situation. One can say that economic need is a defining characteristic of the fathers in this study, an existential given. The fathers must generate more income in order to address their families' and their own basic needs, but I focus on Andrés and Emilio in this section.

Andrés. Just days before Andrés boarded a bus to migrate to the United States, Andrés and his wife had separated, and he had lost his job and not been hired for another. It was all a bit surreal—the cookie factory union boss who arranges for him to direct the factory choir to honor a virgin, la Guadalupana; the boss who demands that Andrés go across the street from the office, buy fresh shrimp and deliver them to his house and fires him after Andrés fulfills the order; the 'ready for a reality-show' employment hiring process in which Andrés has the opportunity to compete for a job by going into the field, actually doing the job without a salary but with expenses covered. After six weeks of meeting all goals, he is told he is not among the two hirees. And then something he had never considered, a trip north.

With little prospects of getting a new job in México, coaxing by a family member to join him on the journey north felt like the only option he had and the only decision he could make. Andrés would not have left México had he not felt hopeless about his opportunities there. He was very close to his two sons. Playing music together or having them join him on his freelance jobs is something Andrés especially misses:

> Como te comentaba, yo siempre andaba con ellos, con mis hijos…Con mis hijos para todos lados. Yo salía ahora sí que a los coros o a las serenatas y me llevaba a mis hijos…O los llevaba y los dejaba con mi mamá y me iba a las serenatas, llegaba y los recogía, pero siempre

> andaban conmigo. Más que nada po's yo siempre trataba de apoyar al cien por ciento a mis hijos.
>
> [As I was mentioning to you, I was always with them, with my children…with my children to all places. I would go to the choirs or the serenades and I would take my children…Or I would take them and leave them with my mother, and I would go to the serenades. I'd come and pick them up, but they were always with me. More than anything, well, I always tried to support my children 100%.]

Andrés also enjoyed his circle of friends from work:

> Una vez nos fuimos…a otra ciudad, con unos compañeros, bueno, como unos ocho compañeros y compañeras de ahí del trabajo de Galletas…Entonces este, fuimos a lo que fue un cerro donde está una, una cascadita y…Y nos fuimos a convivir, o sea, llevábamos carne, comida y cerveza…
>
> [Once we went...to another city, with some friends, well, with about eight male and female friends from Galletas…we went to a hill where there's a small cascade…and we went to hang out together, and we took meat, food and beer…]

He had cultivated a certain closeness to a community of musicians made up of brothers, cousins, friends and other family members. "We have always felt "inquietud," [["restlessness"] to sing," he told me. He has recreated this community to some degree in North Carolina with his brothers, cousin, nephews, sister-in-law and cousin-in-law, who migrated before him to North Carolina.

In a lot of ways, as Andrés told me about his decision to leave México, it seemed like he was looking for a place to fall apart, like the betrayed husband in the Merle Haggard song. In my fieldnotes, I wrote: Andrés sits in the scorching sun. Across the way, he sees a small almost barren tree. Andrés walks over to it and sits under its light shade. "Me vine buscando el beneficio," [I came in search of some benefit], he says as he cowers under the brittle, leafless branches a place to sit in the dry parched sand. I have another set of notes that are part of the coding, and I write out what I start to call the

Revolutionary México versus Neoliberalized México archive. The archive tracks accomplishments and failures of each. Andrés's school and work history are important here:

'Andrés finishes secundaria, or middle school, the only one of seven children not to go on to la preparatoria. He is hired to be a school janitor once he is 15. His next job is at Galletas where he is a line worker in the packing and shipping department. He is hired, fired, rehired and fired in Galletas's revolving door job hiring process. He moves to something akin to Aichi Prefecture where instead of car manufacturing cities prevailing, hundreds of maquiladoras await him. The wages he earns don't cover his living expenses even there. He goes on to work as an administrative clerk/tech specialist in an accounting firm where his knowledge of the accounts makes him vulnerable and where the union bosses did not challenge his firing over a shrimp delivery, and finally he is an outreach worker in a land title company wanting to convert communal land owners into private ones. He loves to sing, ["love" circled].'

If I were to check his trajectory against the archive, Revolutionary México would have three tallies: basic and free education, entry level job as school janitor with benefits; and a not so weak, not so strong union labor at Galletas that helps him keep his job a little longer. Neoliberalized México would have seven tallies: lack of job security, low wages, no labor rights, weak labor unions, maquiladoras, privatization; destruction of communal farming. Singing would stand alone and so would Andrés.

Emilio. For Emilio, it wasn't personal. It was financial. Or so he thought. He would come to see that these things are never separate. But, at first, it was with the excitement and sense of possibility that characterize newly married couple, that Emilio

and his wife, Teresa, purchased a large tract of land to build their home on. To buy this property, they borrowed a lot of money. Because they were both working, he as a delivery truck driver for a large Mexican ceramic tile manufacturer and distributor, and she as a sales assistant in a fashionable department store, they were able to keep up with the payments. They were making it. A job-related driving accident that disabled Emilio for several months changed all of that. Although his medical bills were paid for by the company, and the disability insurance covered his full salary, Emilio faced pressure from the company as they tried to release themselves from the responsibility of paying Emilio.

> La empresa trata de… una de otra forma recuperar, hasta, hasta el último centavo, ¿me entiende? de la forma que sea, de la forma que sea.
>
> The empresa [company] will try … in one way or another, to recuperate the very last cent, do you know what I mean? In any way that it can, in any way that it can.

The experience of having been bullied by a large, powerful company made Emilio feel vulnerable as a worker, and in fact, he was reassigned from being a delivery truck driver where tips were lucrative, to a warehouse worker taking inventory, a change that resulted in a salary decrease.

> Tiene [la empresa] abogados, tiene, tiene todo…para cualquier situación…la única ventaja de trabajar en esa empresa …tener un seguro…las propinas…eran bastante buenas…[pero la empresa] todo el tiempo estar pagando el mínimo.
>
> [It (the empresa) has lawyers, it has everything…for every situation…the only advantage of working in that *empresa*…is having insurance…the tips…they were very good…but the *empresa* paid the minimum wage all the time.]

Emilio started to look for other jobs within México. He, like other fathers in this study, was surprised that he was very close to aging out of the Mexican job market:

> Creo que ya, deben de ser, menores de 35 años…Ya una persona que ya rebasa los treinta años, ya es mucho muy difícil para que le den trabajo… estamos hablando de... una persona joven…
>
> [I think that now they are required to be below the age of 35…A person older than 30 finds it very, very difficult to get a job…we are talking about…a young person…]

Emilio kept looking, but at this same time, because of the lower salary he was bringing home, he and his wife began to fall behind on their loan payments and both started to feel the pressure of the lender. Teresa was able to reach out to family members in Atlanta restaurant scene. They offered Emilio a temporary job and told him of an opportunity in North Carolina. Emilio made the journey to Atlanta and eventually found his way to North Carolina.

> Más que nada yo me vine con la idea…de hacer mi, este, mi casa para mi familia, tener…mi casita, y más que nada, pues…vivir diferente a la, tener una vida diferente a la vida que llevé, a la vida que llevé…que…mi familia no fuera vivir lo mismo…Y más que nada, esa fue mi idea, y hasta la fecha…es mi idea. Creo que siempre, para siempre, todo con la idea de estar mejor, de…superar todo lo, todo lo pasado.
>
> [I came primarily for my family, to give my family a home, to give them a life different from the one I had growing up, that they not go through what I went through. That was my idea more than anything else, and until now, you know, that's my plan. This will always be my plan, to overcome everything, everything from the past.]

Section Analysis

Andrés and Emilio are men in their 30s who face erasure from society through denial to access to work because of their age. Examining their work record, one can see that from the time they started working until the present moment, there has been an ongoing process of social marginalization. This plays out like a direct attack on the Mexican family as a construct, as a set of relationships, and as a site of love, hope, courage and cobijo [protection]. The rejection of Andrés and Emilio by the formal

employment sector is a form of degradation of work and what a father can offer his family. By degrading and devaluing labor, corporations are able to justify their unjust wages and the reassertion of relationships based on power. This relationship is bifurcated by the state, which stands in the middle giving unprecedented rights to corporations while with greater swiftness takes them away from workers. In acting this way, the state attempts to disconnect the worker from affective relationships and ignores his embeddedness within social contexts that affirm his humanity beyond the workplace.

The prepotencia (despotism) of corporations and the impotencia (impotence) felt by the worker has no resolution without the state as protagonist. The worker can join social movements to try to change the equation or he can leave the country, which is also part of the state's failure toward its citizens, but which allows the worker to fulfill his obligation, sense of responsibility and love for his family. In leaving México to come to the United States, Andrés and Emilio see work as more than just "labor for wages," and through its articulation to family, reclaim it as love. This appropriation, rearticulation and transformation, or what Sandoval calls meta-ideolizing (Sandoval), permits Andrés and Emilio to free themselves of the predatory view of labor. They, can instead remain steady in trying to break the intergenerational poverty that truncated their education and limited their opportunities, in the hopes that their children's lives will be made better with this rearticulated meaning of work.

Para seguir adelante [To Keep moving Forward, to Progress]

This was a cross-cutting theme; all fathers saw migration as a trajectory of progress, *a vector or a bearing towards* a betterment for their families and themselves. Carlos and Alfredo exemplify the sort of openness that is required to appreciate the small

gains along the way and see these as evidence of a longer process that cumulatively is "seguir adelante." Alfredo's reflection captures the essence of this bearing towards progress that is made available to him by migrating to the United States. He doesn't discount that this "seguir adelante" can also happen in México, but opportunities widen through migration:

> …yo creo que estamos aquí con un fin de seguir adelante y lo será allá también, aunque, este, sea un poco más estrecho el panorama en cuanto a oportunidades de trabajo.
>
> […I believe that we are here to keep moving forward, and it would be over there as well, although the job outlook would be narrower.]

Carlos. For Carlos, this bearing towards, this seguir adelante, began in the early years of his life, although Carlos's family also speaks of "sacar adelante" which refers to someone who propels someone forward metaphorically. A very common expression is also "salir adelante" which means to "come out ahead." Carlos uses all interchangeably, and here he uses sacar and salir adelante.

> Venimos de un rancho, y…fue difícil. Y mi papá…sí batallaba para sacarnos adelante, y ya los más grandes ayudaron a sacarnos adelante. Nos cambiamos a la ciudad y pues a trabajar todos, y eso fue poquito cuando fuimos saliendo más adelante…porque no había oportunidades, no hay oportunidades en los ranchos, y…tuvimos que cambiarnos a la ciudad, para, para seguir adelante, para sobrevivir…y esa fue la única manera de que seguimos… no conocíamos a nadie.
>
> De hecho…nos cambiamos toda la familia, que viene siendo abuelos, eh, tíos y pues, lo que es mi familia…Y llegaron, se puede decir que…a la primera colonia…y ahí se instalaron, y hasta la fecha ahí.
>
> [We came from a ranch, and…yes, it was difficult. And my dad…he struggled to help us get ahead, and the older ones helped us make it. We moved to the city, and everyone went to work, and that's how we started getting ahead…because, there were no, there are no opportunities on farms, and…we had to move to the city, to keep moving forward, to survive…and that was the only way we could go on…We didn't know anyone.

> As a matter of fact…the whole family moved, my grandparents, uh, uncles, and well, my family…And they arrived, one can say…to the first neighborhood…and settled there, and continue there even now.]

He remembers his early childhood as being "dificíl" [difficult], frought with economic hardship and limited by a rural landscape that offered little options for schooling or work. Carlos comes from a long line of farmers who depended upon the land for their food and livelihood. In more recent times, this has proven to be too unreliable as a source of income, and, eventually, his parents decided to migrate to the city of San Luis Potosí, where they saw more possibilities for work and education.

Carlos and his family of origin migrated from a rural area to the city when Carlos was five years old. The drought in the fields was an impetus for the family to finally make the move. The death of livestock and crops coupled with the lack of jobs in rancherías and rural communities, made them look to the big city for better opportunities.

> Había temporadas que…no llovía allá, lo que siembran es solamente es con la agua que, que llueve, entonces había temporadas que ya no llovía igual y la cosecha se pierde, y todo eso le perjudica…los animales que tiene uno…Y pues para todo. Y…hay que buscarle, la familia…pequeñita pues…no pasa nada, pero van creciendo. Además mi madre, mi padre…pensaron…que estudiáramos lo más que se pudiera, todos.
>
> [There were seasons…that it didn't rain there, what is planted there is solely with the water that, that rains, so there seasons that it didn't rain the same and the crops are lost and everything is damaged…the animals one has…And for everything, one has to find a way, the family…young, well…nothing happens, but they [the children] start to grow. Besides, my mother, my father…they thought…that we study the most that we could, all of us.]

As an adult, his first migration was to Texas. He quickly found work in the booming construction business of the last decade. He reached all of his goals with that job, working side by side an architect, interpreting his plans in the field. With that job,

Carlos was able to contribute, with his father, construction expertise and materials to the start up of a bakery for Carlos's brothers:

> Todos nos juntamos…todos pusimos nuestro granito de arena y claro todos también tenemos algo de ganancia…Por ejemplo, uno de mis hermanos tenía el capital, otro sabía elaborar…el pan…yo especialista en la construcción…nosotros, yo y mi padre, hicimos…el local…
>
> [We all got together…we all put our little grain of sand and, of course, we also had something to gain…For example, one of my brothers had the capital, the other knew how to make…the bread…I, a specialist in construction…we, I and my father, made…the place.]

More importantly, he was able to build the house he and his wife live in:

> Es difícil allá [México]. Entonces así escuchaba…gente que 'ah, que en Estados Unidos…se gana muy bien y que está bien, que si ganas tanto acá es tanto, y mi mente luego, luego empezó a trabajar, dije creo que, que voy a ir…voy a trabajar. Y pensé luego, luego en tanto tiempo, cuidando mi dinero, voy a tener mi casa, lo que allá hubiera sido muy difícil… mucha gente no tiene casa…me vine y gracias a Dios he sabido aprovechar.
>
> [It is difficult there [México]. So, one would hear…people [say] that 'ah, in the United States…you earn good money and that it's good [there], that if you earn this much over here, it's that much, and my mind, right away started working. I immediately thought, 'in such and such time, taking care of my money, I will have my house, which was something that would have been very difficult [to achieve] over there…many people do not have a house…I came, and thanks to God, I have known how to seize the opportunity.]

Carlos learned early that migration is a way to escape dire poverty, create opportunities for work, and improve life for himself and his family's. Migration is a steady bearing toward…it is a tendency forward.

Alfredo. Alfredo left México to create a space to maneuver, a libratory space to regain his movement forward. Approaching his late 30s, his employability in México had come to an end. He knew that his job as a supervisor would never be resurrected:

> …Para ellos allá en Querétaro, po's les era más rentable enviar todo el equipo, todas sus herramientas, porque en ese lugar, allá en Querétaro, ellos, los dueños ya nuevos, que venían de Costa Rica, compraron un…terreno grande…Ahí establecieron su industria y entonces ya no les era rentable tenernos en la ciudad de México porque ahí tenían que pagar renta…ya no les era costeable para ellos…Entonces, los dueños…de Costa Rica…no les funcionó y cerraron.
>
> […For them over there in Querétaro, it was more worthwhile to send the equipment, all of their tools, because in that place, over in Querétaro, the new owners who were from Costa Rica, bought…a large piece of land…There, they established their industry…and it wasn't profitable to have us in México City, because they had to pay rent there…It was not cost-effective for them…So, it didn't work out for the owners from Costa Rica, and they closed.]

Alfredo understood that he was looking at a quick and sharp descent into poverty if he left his decision pending. He began to act:

> …Decidí regresar…a la ciudad de México para—aunque ya no fuera el mismo trabajo que desempeñaba antes…Pero, había mas posibilidades—encontrar otro trabajo…Aunque no fuera el mismo, pero había mas opciones de encontrar trabajo…sí encontré un trabajo que fue de guardia de seguridad…
>
> […I decided to return to México City—even if it wasn't the same job that I did before…But, there were more possibilities—to find another job…I did find a job, which was as a security guard…]

Finding a job as a security guard had been a small victory, albeit a short-lived one, because his salary "no…ajustaba a mis necesidades" [Did not…meet my needs]. More decisions had to be made that included relocating his wife and son to his hometown, and his coming to work here:

> Ellos (esposa e hijo) están en Veracruz…en el pueblo de donde soy…Durante el tiempo que yo estuve acá…trabajando fuera de mi lugar… alcancé…o logré construir una pequeña casa allá…Y…más o menos en buenas condiciones…No tenía caso, a mi punto de vista, que mi esposa estuviera en México (la capital) pagando renta…teniendo la casa ya para poder habitarla…Por eso mejor…decidimos que ella se tendría que regresar…Y ahora ellos están en Veracruz…Al principio…le pareció un poco difícil…el ambiente porque no es lo mismo, un ambiente de

> ciudad…a un ambiente donde…haga de cuenta aquí, todo tranquilo…yo creo que siempre las cosas han estado difícil…yo creo que…más que nada las cosas yo creo que…no se logran a un corto plazo…
>
> [They (wife and son) are in Veracruz…in the town that I am from…During the time that I have been here…working outside of my place…I was able to build a small house over there…and…more or less in good condition…It didn't make sense, from my point of view, that my wife be paying rent in México (City)…having a move-in ready house. That's why…we decided instead that she should return (to the town Alfredo is from)…And now, they are in Veracruz…At first…it seemed a little difficult…the setting, because it doesn't have the same vibe like a city…it's a setting…Imagine, like here, everything quiet…I think that things are always difficult…I think that…more than anything, I believe that…things are not achieved in the short-term.]

I add a third contender to my 'archive' after considering Alfredo's story: Revolutionary México, Neoliberalized México, Globalized México/Capitalismo Rapaz [Predatory Capitalism]. Alfredo's archive would have no tallies in the Revolutionary column, one in the Neoliberalized column for his job as a security guard in a car dealership and for aging out of the job market, and one in the Globalized column for the peripatetic PVC factory that finds its death in the hands of Costa Rican businessmen, possibly acting as frontmen for U.S. interests, and looking for a good deal in México.

Section Analysis

Carlos and Alfredo look for ways to open up fields of possibilities. Salir adelante, sacar adelante, seguir adelante and buscarle [come out ahead, help someone come out ahead, keep moving ahead and find a way] are common terms in Spanish, widely used and known by Mexicans. They appear frequently in conversations to encourage someone to remain steadfast in resolving an issue, or to send the message that it is one's responsibility to try and not give up. The words are also a cultural shorthand to mean, 'I will persevere.'

For Carlos and Alfredo, the words become actions. They literally 'buscan' [look for] opportunity; they literally 'keep moving' [seguir adelante]. The words contain important pedagogies about how to solve a problem. They exist primarily on a figurative level, but Carlos and Alfredo "implement" this curriculum by migrating, first within México, and ultimately to North Carolina. In their life, these words "cobran vida" [come alive].

These pedagogies allow them to adapt rapidly; in order to seguir adelante [keep moving forward]; for instance, Alfredo relocates his family to the house he built in order to economize, and through that be able to survive. Carlos decides to come to the United States when migration reveals itself to be good business because of the favorable currency exchange rate.

Alfredo and Carlos respond to predatory capitalism, ageism and poverty by becoming "mobile and transformable" (Sandoval, p. 182). Alfredo engages differential consciousness when he resists the devaluation of his labor. In the same fashion, Carlos seeks out the best-paying labor market even though this takes him outside of his country. For Carlos, the profit margin of selling his labor increases when he comes to the United States to work. By shifting gears, both can accomplish their goals—Carlos that of building his home and starting a business, and Alfredo of finishing his home. Both are able to seguir and salir adelante [move ahead to come out ahead].

Para un mejor vivir [For a Better Life]

The fathers talked about building homes, providing more opportunities for their children, and allocating some of their earnings for the start of small family businesses as examples of building a better life for their family and themselves.

All wanted to work to for 'una vida mejor' [a better life] or 'para un mejor vivir' [literally, 'for a better living,' but does not have the connotation of income]. to

Emilio. Of all of the fathers, Emilio has been in the United States the longest. Over the years here, he has sent his children gifts, letters, and money, and maintainted steady communication over the phone with them. When I first met him, his two daughters were in school and doing fairly well. At the time of the last interviews, however, it was unclear if his oldest daughter had dropped out of school or if she had chosen not to go on to college. He and his wife fulfilled their goal and his original intention for coming here: to provide a home for his family.

> Desde que tuvimos nuestra segunda hija, ya fue cuando ya comencé a pensar seriamente en venirme para acá…todo se dio…por…familiares de mi esposa y escuchaba que tenían restauranes…de este lado y… escuchaba los demás, que les iba bien. Y bueno, dije, aquí no estoy haciendo nada…era la única forma de tener mi casa…pues, es este, ganando mi dinero yo mismo [no pidiéndolo prestado.] Y…fue por lo que…hice el ánimo de venirme para acá.
>
> [From the time we had our second daughter, that's when I started thinking seriously about coming here…everything fell into place…because of my wife's family, and I would hear that they had restaurants…on this side, and…I'd hear the others say that things were going well for them. I said, well, I'm not doing anything much here…it was the only way to have a house…well earning the money myself [not borrowing it]. And …that's what motivated me to come over here.]

Emilio has seen only modest gains for his family in México and lives in a rented house that he shares with Carlos and Alfredo. The house also serves as a landing place for other men who have just arrived from México. He has been in situations where the men weren't able to pay their share. Sensing Emilio's kindness that comes from 'having been there,' some have left him stuck with the bills. In spite of these kinds of setbacks, Emilio continues to desire and work for good things for his daughters:

> Pues me vine para acá, a EU…con la ilusión…de darles a mi familia…lo que yo no tuve, lo que me faltó a mi… siempre lo he hecho de una u otra forma…Siempre se lo demostré a mis hijas, a mi esposa
>
> [Well, I came over here, to the United States…with the hope…of giving my family…all that I didn't have, what had been missing for me…I alway have done that in one way or another…I've always demonstrated this to my daughters, my wife.]

Emilio has boxes full of remittance receipts—these are long ribbons of white paper with faint computer print, some as long as 17 inches because they include every imaginable disclaimer from companies like MoneyGram and Western Union. The cumulative amount of money that he has sent home, every two weeks over the course of several years, is no small amount. Yet, it has not been enough to build the house his wife would have liked but rather just enough to build an unassuming, two-story brick home (brick is common in México) in a working class neighborhood.

The steady flow of money to his family and, on certain occasions, extra remittances for his mother and in-laws, has not resulted in the perfect home or the establishment of a family business that would enable him to return. Still, in recent pictures he has shown, his daughters are smiling, they wear fashionable clothes and both carry backpacks as if they are on their way out the door to school. There is one photograph where the youngest daughter is making a funny face at the camera and balancing on the bannister of the staircase. Her hair hangs to the side and the whole picture explodes with spontaneity, humor and movement. It's a nice teen-ager's life, and as Emilio defined what he has tried to accomplish by fathering the way that he does, from a distance, made me think, 'It's a regular dad's life':

> No llevabamos una vida desahogada, pero siempre traté de darle lo pues, hasta donde pude, lo máximo, lo mejor, la verdad…Si yo no tuve ni un juguete…mis hijas estaban de juguetes que…no sabían ni…con cual

juguete jugar ¿me entiende? Y por lo menos mis hijas no están viviendo lo que viví yo…Y si quieren carrera pues las apoyo hasta donde quieran.

[We never had an easy life, but I always tried to give them everything I could, to the max and the best, really…If I never had toys, my daughters had so many toys…that they didn't know with which one to play. And, at least they are not living what I lived…and if they want a career, I will support them as far as they want to go.]

Carlos. Carlos uses the words "para un mejor vivir" or to have a better life to talk about the primary reason for coming to North Carolina. He feels a fair work situation would offer, on a modest scale, un mejor vivir. Such an opportunity has not come up. After migrating from farm to city and growing up some, Carlos migrated to a larger metropolitan area in another state seeking better employment. He was in a dead-end job that offered no reasonable future:

CS: Y pues yo estuve batallando bastante porque nunca me quisieron dar un seguro, o sea yo estaba trabajando como nomás así, sin antigüedad de nada, ni siquiera me daban un aguinaldo, por allá si es mucho el aguinaldo…cada año le dan…una bonificación…y pues yo no tenía, no estaba haciendo ningún derecho ahí de nada, pues yo no… yo quería asegurar a mis padres porque en ese tiempo estaba soltero y pues no.
MS: No había prestaciones de nada.
CS: Nada…Además, Yo quería asegurar a mis padres porque en ese tiempo yo estaba soltero, y pues no…Estuve como dos años…El dueño solamente me decía…que luego. Me alargaba nada más.

[CS: And, well, I was struggling a lot because they never wanted to give me health insurance; that is, I was working just like that, without accumulating seniority of any sort. They didn't even give me an aguinaldo [bonus]. Over there, an aguinaldo means a lot…every year they give one a bonus, and, well, I didn't get one. I wasn't earning any rights, benefits there of any kind. Well…I wanted to insure my parents, because at the time I was single, and well, no.
MS: There weren't any types of benefits.
CS: None…I was there about two years…The owner would just say, 'later.' He was just stringing me along.]

The migration experiences of his family made him look farther away. Carlos' father migrated to the United States and stayed for a short time. Later, an older brother made the trip north. He continues to work in the United States. The last to migrate was Carlos.

Carlos and his wife Elba together make decisions and take actions that they think will provide un mejor vivir. Before they married, they talked about what they wanted as a couple. Elba suggested that she stay in the home of his parents to save money, while he traveled north to work:

> Yo platiqué…con ella, que yo iba a venir al extranjero para que, pues para tener algo que ofrecerle. Porque allá es difícil, la verdad. Y ella decidió que quería quedarse en mi casa.
>
> [I spoke…with her, that I was going to go abroad so that, well, to have something that to offer her. Then, she decided that she wanted to stay in my house.]

Working first in Dallas and now in North Carolina, meant that Carlos and Elba could offer their children the financial stability and educational opportunities that they themselves had not had. The years in Dallas resulted in two houses, one for his parents and one for Carlos and Elba. Because the border was more permeable then, Carlos was able to travel back and forth to visit his family.

Carlos returned to México after the birth of their first daughter and remained there through the birth of the youngest child, their fourth. This was a period spanning eight years, before migrating to North Carolina. Carlos decided to migrate to the United States with the help of his godfather and friends and pushed by the need for higher wages. Notes Carlos,

> …Allá…si uno va a meterse a una empresa téngalo por echo que solamente va a sobrevivir nada mas para comer y vestir solamente. No lo

> va a lograr. Es difícil…yo solamente quería trabajar [ahí] porque es mi país…yo no tuve mucha suerte en eso y tuve que por medio de amigos, así conocidos, tuvimos que emigrar a donde fuera.
>
> [Over there…if you're going to work for a business, you can be sure that you will only survive, only eat and dress. You won't make it. It is difficult…I just wanted to work [there] because it's my country…but I didn't have much luck, and I had to, through friends, acquaintances, we had to emigrate to wherever].

This migration trajectory reveals patterns consistent with the observations of Buff (2008, p. 535) on less than voluntary migration, and those of Massey, Durand and Maloney (2006, p. 50) who describe the practical mechanics of migration. These are comprised of rich and extensive social networks of friends, family members and fellow townspeople that help Carlos and others find their way to specific regions in the United States.

Having a more secure future for their children through education, but also an economically stable future for themselves as adults are part of having 'a better life.' He wants to "asegurar el futuro de nuestra familia y el de nosotros" [ensure the future of our family and ourselves], referring also to himself and Elba. He has a steady partner in Elba. She is prudent with the resources and watchful of them, los cuida:

> Se puede decir que ella [Elba] cuida lo que hemos logrado con sacrificio. Se dedica a la familia y cuida pues…lo que hemos logrado.
>
> One can say that she [Elba] cuida [takes care of] what we with sacrifice, have achieved. She is devoted to the family and takes care of…what we have achieved.

Their plans for the future are to build a business together in México. Carlos assures me that his stay in the United States is temporary, because this planned business will generate enough income for Carlos to return to México for good. He smiles and opens his arms wide as he describes the reach his business will have, and he leans in to

say that he is closer than ever to having enough money to purchase his freight truck for the business he and Elba plan to establish in México:

> …el proyecto ya está. Ya…se puede decir que ya mero, yo voy a medios del proyecto de transporte, camiones.
>
> […the project is ready. One can say that it is almost done. I am halfway through the project of transportation, trucks.]

Carlos is persuasive; I was completely energized and convinced about this business plan. After the interview, I was certain that he and Elba would have a fleet of trucks and with their skills, knowledge and talent, construct un mejor vivir for their children and for themselves. I wondered if others could see what I saw—a skilled businessman, speaking to a potential investor, and inspiring them to dream and build with him.

It is also true that Carlos wants to be prosperous enough so that he can take his children on a vacation. His co-workers, on one of the few days *La Fogata* closes, invited Carlos to North Carolina's Outer Banks. Carlos had never been to the ocean, not here or in México. He confided that he would like to take his children on such a trip:

> Las voy a llevar al mar, pero creo lo primero, primero. Primero es, sus estudios, que vivan bien, después se hace de lo demás. Para mi lo mas importante es asegurar su futuro para que vivan mejor.
>
> [I am going to take them to the ocean (referring to his children), but I believe, that first thing's first. First their education, that they live well, and then the rest. For me, the most important thing is to guarantee their future para un mejor vivir].

Andrés. Andrés Rueda is a man who loves and misses his sons and is planning to return to México within the next 24 months so that he can be with them for good. He is a father, like the rest in this study and many parents around the world, acutely aware of his

economic responsibility toward his not yet adult children. When he realized that his landscaping job was not a reliable source of income, especially during inclement weather, he took a second job at a local fast food restaurant known for its hand-breaded chicken. As preparation cook there, he prepares the day's first batches of chicken, rice and biscuits. Freelance opportunities in music offer yet another source of sporadic income that involve playing at Quinceañeras [debutante parties for 15-year-old girls], anniversaries, birthday parties and weddings. He has a clear list of what he would like to accomplish as a father, and these include to give his two sons un mejor vivir:

> Estar aquí para mí significa luchar por ellos, tener algo un poquito mejor para…que ellos estén bien allá…forjarles una buena carrera…tenerles un lugar donde vivir, ayudarlos…ahorita mas que nada económicamente a ellos…porque amor lo tienen pero, po's este, falta el cariño de estar juntos…
>
> [Being here for me means luchar [to fight] for them, to have something a little better…that they be well there…forge for them a good career…have for them a place to live, help them …right now, more than anything, economically…because they have love, but what they do need also is the cariño [affection] [that comes from] being together.

Andrés introduced in his comments an affective component of the relationship that is different from love: cariño. A direct translation is "affection," and the way Andrés speaks of it, indicates that cariño is experienced through or results from being together. Being without cariño is difficult for Andrés, so he has made plans to return to México. Because he wants to provide economically at the same level that he has been in the past years, he has devised a preliminary business plan so that he can start a small business in México when he returns:

> …Es algo un poco difícil eso…estoy pensando en regresar a México…el próximo año…y estar con ellos…ya definitivamente allá con ellos. [Para] ayudarlos, apoyarlos en lo que mas pueda…[tengo] muchas ideas…una es abrir una pequeña, pequeño restaurante…conocidos allá

como fonditas…Tengo varios contactos en empresas…o empezar un taller mecánico… se requiere capital…porque hay que conseguir tanto un lugar para trabajar…y el material que se ocupa…

[This is something difficult…I am thinking of returning to México…next year…and be with them…permanently there with them. [To] help, support them as much as I can…I have many ideas…one is to open a small, small restaurant…known over there as fonditas…I have lots of contacts in empresas…or start a mechanic shop…you need capital…because you have to get a place to work…the materials for working…]

Andrés remembered that the Mexican government has a special support program for small business owners,

...Creo que ahorita tienen un programa de apoyo para iniciar pequeñas empresas. Entonces, de ahí pienso agarrarme tanto de aquí como de allá para iniciar un negocio.

[I believe right now they have a program to support the start of small business. So, I plan to grab on to here as well as there to start a business.]

Andrés is poised to take on this next challenge of establishing a business in México. His strategy is to advance his plan with the money he saved from his earnings in the United States and with the support of small business that México offers.

Alfredo. Like Andrés, Alfredo misses being with his 9-year-old son together as a family. Within the first four minutes of the first interview, he mentions the importance of family unity in speaking about his impressions of Ridgeville:

…Me parece un lugar muy tranquilo, muy bonito por cierto, pero pues le puedo decir que aunque tenga todas las comodidades, pues, siempre es indispensable el estar uno unido con la familia. Puede ser el lugar más bonito del mundo pero si está uno solo, no es nada…

[…It seems to me to be a very calm place, very pretty for sure, but, well, I can tell you that although it has all of the conveniences, well, it's always essential to be together with family. It can be the most beautiful place in the world, but if you are alone, it isn't anything.]

For Alfredo, this physical distancing weighs heavily on him, and his attention to the affective aspects of the relationship shift the conversation to the non-material contributions the father makes and to attend also to the emotional needs of the father:

> Se debe de llevar…algo de tiempo para poder cumplir con las metas, los objetivos que uno se propone…Yo tengo muchas metas, muchos propósitos, pero requeriría de más tiempo de estar aquí y honestamente…ya no…Ya no...me siento en las condiciones para seguir…acá en este lugar solo…porque necesito de mi familia, necesito estar con ellos…convivir con ellos…Mas que nada, pues, mi hijo, ¿no? que va creciendo y desperdiciar todo ese tiempo…ya no se recupera…Al venir acá fue para mí…como a ver que se siente…A ver que pasa, que se puede hacer. Yo se que se pueden hacer muchas cosas, pero a un tiempo…más largo…
>
> [It should take…some time to be able to fulfill the goals, the objectives that one proposes...I have many goals, lots of proposals, but they would require being here more time and, honestly…no more, I no longer…feel I am in the condition to remain…here in this place alone…because I need my family, I need to be with them…to spend time with them…More than anything, well, my son, right?, who is growing and to waste all f this time…it is not recuperated anymore…Coming here was like…for me to see what it was like…to see what [could] happen, what one can do. I know that lots of things can be done, but within a longer time span…]

Section Analysis

Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés risked their lives to create a better life for their children. With clear ideas of what they mean by this—a house, experiences and things they themselves did not enjoy, an education, and a future—and they work diligently to make these ideas into a reality. They father towards these goals.

Carlos is, perhaps, the most convinced about the wisdom of fathering from a distance as a way to provide these things. A house and an education are what will give his children a better future, un mejor vivir. Carlos can count on the prudence of his wife who 'cuida' [takes care of] all that they've accomplished so far. With support of the co-parent

and knowledge that his stay is temporary, Carlos is at peace with being here. For him, there is an end in site.

Emilio, Alfredo and Andrés have a slightly different outlook. Still committed to being fathers who father at a distance to provide, they nonetheless begin to see diminishing returns on the investment made to ensure this, or to use Carlos's language, the "sacrificio" made in order to accomplish their goals. Emilio Alfredo's and Andrés's disposition forces us to see the Mexican father as being complexly involved with their children and having a rich and nuanced emotional life that is activated by the desire for being with their children.

Emilio has immediate feedback on how the sacrificio he, his wife and children have made as a split-household. The house this sacrificio could build isn't big enough, luxurious enough or beautiful enough. Perhaps, such a house does not exist. Alfredo weighs the potential consequences of staying longer in the United States to embark on projects that could provide more material wealth, against the risk of losing meaningful time with his son and missing the best moments of his life. It is not a given for him that being here in order to provide is indeed the best decision one can make as a family man. In a more explicit fashion, speaks out about the risk. Andrés has foreclosed possibilities of staying more than he has to. The desire to be near his children has crystallized into a late year return to México.

All fathers engage in 'sign reading' (Sandoval, 2001). Even Carlos, whose seemingly enthusiastic acceptance of immigration as an effective job program is tempered by the unrealistic expectation that the family will fold into one harmonic unit even after years of separation, can read the sign. That is, fathers are able perceive the

superficies of el norte and are able to understand the true meaning behind it. Andrés's planned return to México to be with his sons is informed by the limitations he sees in being far away. All are beginning to read 'migration' as a double-edged sword.

Working Skillfully in the New Latino South

> Sé mucho de construcción. En México nos dedicamos este, exactamente [a eso]…es el fuerte de nosotros ya. Ya de ahora que ya estamos grandes. Mi padre y yo nos dedicamos a la construcción allá, a la carpintería…Es un oficio.
>
> [I know a lot about construction. That's exactly what we did in México…that's our expertise now…Now, as adults. My father and I work in construction over there, in carpentry. It's a trade.] (Sotomayor, a father in the U.S.)

Popular media, formal reports and scholarly articles often describe immigrant laborers as unskilled. Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés defy this characterization; their varied job experiences and multiple skills situate them as skilled workers in the normative sense of the term—they have job-specific dispositions and knowledge that are marketable and would be considered desirable by many employers. The four fathers have long work trajectories during which they developed knowledge in various jobs and economies, from the informal to the formal sector, from entrepreneurial attempts to selling for others, and from craftsmanship enterprises to assembling line or other factory-related work. These skills give them certain advantages within their work place.

Emilio. Emilio talks about the jobs he had as young boy growing up in extreme poverty:

> …Me tenía que levantar a las seis de la mañana para ir hacer cola para alcanzar mi costal del birote, terminaba a las diez de la mañana y rápido me tenía que ir a hacer otra cosa para…tenía yo un carro de paletas…y ya en eso me la pasaba todo el día hasta las cinco o seis de la tarde…y otra vez volvía a regresar…ya en la tarde otra vez a vender birote, teníamos otra vez que volver a la misma panadería a otra vez a lo

> mismo, total que yo me levantaba a las seis de la mañana y mi descanso para mi era nueve, diez de la noche.
>
> [I had to get up at six in the morning to get in line to make sure I got my sack of birote (a small baguette-type elongated bread). I was done by 10 in the morning, and quickly I had to go do something else. I had a cart selling paletas [ice cream bars]…and I would do that until five or six at night…and then it was going back in the evening to sell birote again. We had to go back again to the same bakery to do the same thing. So, I would get up at six in the morning and my time to rest would be around nine, 10 at night.]

Emilio moved from job to job in México searching for better learning and earning opportunities, amassing skills in commercial baking, cold selling, carpentry, laying cement and brick, framing, driving a truck; taking inventory of merchandise both on the shop floor and in his delivery truck; keeping sales, delivery, inventory and customer records, and managing a team of workers. Although his formal educated ended in fourth grade, by the time he arrives to *La Fogata,* he is a highly experienced and multiply skilled job-seeker. In a short period of time, as he progressed in his knowledge of English, he moved up from dishwasher to waiter, increasing his earnings several fold. His customer service skills, sense of responsibility, and experience with selling and tracking inventory—abilities all honed during his youth—made him more competitive at *La Fogata.*

These skills along with his friendly disposition gave him an advantage in competing for the very limited number of positions that generate the most income in a very low-paying industry. His position is more secure in this labor-intensive, highly competitive (in ethnic enclaves, anyway), low-wage job because of his versatility and broad knowledge base.

Carlos. Carlos learned much of what he knows from his father, by accompanying him in the various jobs he had as a self-employed worker:

> Ya cuando empecé a tener uso de razón yo empecé a acompañar a mi padre a su trabajo, él siempre trabajó particularmente, por su cuenta y yo me fui, fui aprendiendo a usar herramientas, a conocer, a tener unas nociones de cómo se hacen las cosas.
>
> [When I was old enough to start understanding things, I started going with my dad to work. He always was self-employed, and I started learning to use tools, to know and have notions about how to do things…].

For Carlos, not working is not living, not fathering, and not loving. To work is also to disrupt the fathering, and because of changes in immigration law, such as the suspension of family reunification policies, fathers must live and father at a distance. Carlos is not in a guest worker program; however, his fate is similar. He, like Bustamante & Alemán note, "continuously reshapes strategies to stay involved in the family" (p.70). The core that makes up Carlos' strategies are those of his home.

> Yo lo único que quiero es trabajar. No pido nada, trabajar, que me den la oportunidad… Yo soy de las personas que piensan que solamente es una vida la que tenemos y hay que saber aprovecharla.
>
> [The only thing I want is to work. I ask for nothing, work, that they give me the opportunity…I am one of those people who believe that there is only one life that we have, and we have to know how to use it.].

Carlos sees himself primarily as a carpenter, although he also drove a delivery truck for his brothers' bakery and is here, in part, to save money to buy a long-haul trailer to get into the delivery business in México. His carpentry skills, however, landed him a job with an architect in Dallas, Texas, the first city he migrated to.

> Yo quería ser arquitecto… lo sentía…como que…era bonito. ¿Pues cómo le diré? Se puede decir que, que lo soy pero no tengo un título que lo apruebe. De hecho en Texas trabajé, estuve ayudándole a un ingeniero. En eso era mi trabajo, ayudante de un, del arquitecto.

> [I wanted to be an architect…I felt…like it was…nice. How can I say this? One can say, that I am one but I don't have the credentials to validate this. In fact, in Texas, I worked assisting an architect. That was my job, an assistant to an architect.]

At *La Fogata*, these skills give Carlos an opportunity to earn more money as he slowly learns English. Without knowing English, Carlos can bus tables, bring the orders to the tables, wash dishes or be a prep cook, which are the lowest paying jobs there. Waiting on customers and taking their orders or becoming the first cook is what is lucrative, but the line is very long to become the first cook and waiting tables requires more than basic English-language skills. When Carlos is hired at *La Fogata*, he tells Samuel, the owner, that he can help with repairs, remodels and other construction-related tasks. Within days, Carlos is earning more money as he, in addition to busing tables, retiles the floors of one of the restaurant's dining rooms. His carpentry and construction knowledge are an advantage there, one that will help him pay off migration-related debts more quickly, enabling him to send more money to his family sooner.

> Pues ahí también le estoy ayudando a Samuel con un piso de un comedor del restaurante, y después vamos a ver lo de pintar una sección. Es un dinerito más que ayuda, pues uno llega con muchas deudas.
>
> [Well, I'm also helping Samuel with the floor of one of the restaurant dining rooms, and later we'll see about painting a section. It's a little extra money that helps—well, one arrives with lots of debts.]

Alfredo. Alfredo is the father with the least amount of diverse job experiences, having maintained three jobs throughout his life in México and one here at *La Fogata*. Alfredo worked first in a taquería as a teenager, and after marrying at the age of 18, he and his wife left their home state of Veracruz in search of a better life. He found a good job in a large PVC manufacturing plant, where he excelled and rose in rank through hard work:

Siempre me dispuse a que el que tenía que trabajar en la familia pues iba a ser el hombre ¿no?...Entonces…no sabía lo que tenia que hacer, pero, mi meta era eso…Que, pues, mi familia no sufriera de…cosas de, que tuvieran todo lo necesario…Creo que eso también me ayudó a que en el trabajo, a pesar de, de iniciar ahí como po's un ayudante general que lo mandan a uno a hacer cualquier tipo de cosas, a barrer, hasta ir a limpiar los baños y todo eso…

Este, yo creo que eso fue, fue un motivo para, po's para no quedarme ahí [a ese nivel]…Y seguir…avanzando y pues me enfoqué mucho a eso, al principio pues no me gustaba porque el trabajo que hacia…no era malo ¿verdad? pero, pues, yo creía que no, no estaba, este que, que podía hacer otras cosas. Pero le eché ganas, pude aprender todo lo que ahí se hacía, y…eso fue lo que me ayudó… con el empeño, la dedicación y todo eso…fueron, los jefes …viendo como trabajaba, la forma en que lo hacía, en que me desempeñaba y todo eso, entonces fui subiendo, fui ascendiendo poco a poco, hasta llegar…a ser supervisor de un área… ahí ya manejaba alrededor de veinticinco personas… estaban a mi cargo y bueno, Finalmente bueno, pues, lo que a lo que mas pude llegar ahí fue po's a tener un grupo de gente, dirigiendo a un grupo de gente, supervisor.

[I always had the idea that the person who had to work in the family was the man, right?..But…I didn't know what I was supposed to do, but that was my goal…that, well, my family not suffer for…[lack of] things, that they have everything that they need…I think this also helped me in my job, that although I started there as a general assistant who is sent to do all sorts of things, to sweep, even clean the toilets and all that…

I think it was a reason for me not to stay there [at that level]…and to continue…advancing and well, I focused a lot on that. At first, well, I didn't like it, because my work that I did wasn't bad, right? But, well, I thought that it wasn't, that uh, I could do other things. But I gave it my all, and I was able to learn everything that was done there, and that helped me…with effort and dedication and all that…it was the bosses who…seeing how I worked, the way in which I did things, in how I made the effort…then, I started rising. I was promoted little by little, until becoming…an area supervisor…There, I managed around 25 people…they were in my charge and, well, that empresa was in México. Finally, well, I was able to have a team of 25 people that I directed, that I supervised.]

Alfredo would probably have stayed there all of his life, had the plant not shut down:

Después…la trasladaron al estado de Querétaro…Y bueno, como allá…todo iba a ser nuevo, la misma maquinaria obviamente, pero el

personal iba a ser nuevo porque…no podían llevárselos a unos…me pidieron que si quería, que si podía apoyarlos en ese sentido de que, además tenia que capacitar al personal donde abrirían esa nueva empresa…Y pues bueno, acepte, estuve un año allá, pero lamentablemente…después ya no dio los resultados que debía de dar y cerró…Cerraron…

[Later…they moved it to the state of Querétaro...And, well, because over there…everything was going to be new, the same machinery obviously, but the staff was going to be new…because they couldn't take everyone…they asked me if I wanted to, if I as able to support them with that, and also train people in that new plant…And, well, I accepted. I was there one year, but unfortunately…they didn't get the results they should have and it closed…They closed.]

Alfredo's only other job in México aside from two he describes above, was a short stint as a security guard at a car dealership shortly before migrating to North Carolina. His search for better employment opportunities failed to be successful:

Busqué otras oportunidades de trabajo allá, pero…toda la experiencia que tenía en cuanto a eso era por medio del…lo que había ido adquiriendo por medio del tiempo, entonces no tenía un documento que me respaldara, por ejemplo, bueno y me preguntaban -*'¿Cómo es que llegaste a ser un supervisor? Pues por medio…de promociones'*

Y este, entonces yo buscaba algo parecido pero me decían -*'Bueno, déjame tu currículum y después te hablamos'*- Y, pero jamás pasó eso. ¿Por qué? Yo pienso que por eso de que OK—Tenía mucha experiencia pero no tenía un documento que dijera -'No, po's estudié, este, estudié, no se algo así como lo que comúnmente se… o gente que contratan, ingenieros industriales, ingeniero en mecánica y no se que, y este, entonces eso es lo que no me ayudó.

[I searched for other job opportunities there, but…all of the experience I had was through…what I had acquired across time, so I did not have a document to back me up. For example, they would ask me, 'How is it that you reached the level of supervisor?' Well, through…promotions.'

And then, I would look for something similar, but they would say to me, 'Well, leave me your cv and we will call you later.' And, well, that never ever happened. Why? I think because of that, OK—I had a lot of experience, but I didn't have a document that said, 'No, well that I studied, uh I studied, I don't know, something that people who commonly hire industrial engineers, mechanical engineers, who knows what, and that's what didn't help me.]

Alfredo is in the process of learning English, and until he is more fluent, he will continue to bus tables and bring the orders to the customers. His leadership skills make him a good team member and was quickly embraced by fellow workers at *La Fogata*. He is seen as reliable, hard-working, friendly and good natured. Emilio, who teases him about his stentorian sportscaster voice, observes, 'Es bien cuate. Aguanta la carrilla que le echamos.' [He's a real buddy. He can stand the teasing we dish out.]

Andrés. Andrés is a father with an equally diverse set of job experiences and job-specific skills. He worked as a school janitor, a line worker in a cookie factory, selling food out of his home, as an outreach worker for a government project that was in charge of providing land titles to communal farmers with communal farm land called "ejidales" that were established as a result of the Mexican Revolution of 1910, and as a file clerk in an accounting firm with government contracts, where he was in charge of archiving accounting documents:

> Llevaba todo lo que era Turbotax software, este de…¿Cómo se llama? Facturas, recibos…Todo, todo lo iba archivando. Igual, este, llevaba, sacaba las copias a, a los gerentes para que sus juntas, estaba pendiente de lo que era papelería…
>
> [I carried out everything that had to do with Turbotax software, uh of…What is it called? Invoices, receipts…Everything, I filed everything. I also made copies for the managers for their meetings, I was in charge of stationery…]

Andrés is also a self-taught musician in a family with many musicians, and he makes a side living with that. He enjoys performing and teaching music as well seeing it both as a means of worship and entertainment. Being a musician and having teaching skills in this area have given him certain advantages here and in México. In the U.S., his involvement with church-based Spanish-language music ministries has led to freelance

opportunities. In México, after becoming distracted on the packing line and ruining half a ton of cookies, he was nonetheless able to save his job because of his musical skills:

> Después de eso [el incidente de las galletas], este, yo llevaba muy buena amistad con el jefe del sindicato de la fábrica… le comenté que… …tenía a mi cargo un coro de niños y un coro de jóvenes…Entonces…me dijo -'¿Por qué no… haces aquí el coro, porque aquí cada año se hace el coro para el doce de diciembre, de la virgen?' Solicitó a recursos humanos para que me dejaran salir a ensayar el coro de ahí de Galletas… de ahí ya fui invitando yo a las muchachas de ahí de la línea donde estaba yo, a otras líneas a que se integraran al coro…
>
> [After that [cookie incident], uh, I had a very good relationship with the head of the syndicate at the factory…I told him that…I lead children's and teens' choirs…and he said to me, 'Why don't you…have a choir here, because each year we have a choir for the 12th of December, for the virgin? [The Virgin of Guadalupe, patron saint of México and the Americas]. He asked human resources to allow me to leave to practice with the Galletas choir, and I started inviting the women from the line I worked on and from other lines so that they would join the choir.]

Section Analysis

The fathers' work histories reveal that they use differential consciousness as a way to stay employed and be active, creative, upstanding men. By building upon knowledge and skills learned and developed in México and constantly reinventing themselves they are able to demonstrate that they are desirable and reliable employees. The very act of reinvention of self as the laboring body is an artifact of living in a México that is not attentive to meeting its responsibility toward the citizenry.

As I learn more about the fathers' work histories, I become increasingly uncomfortable with the number of times they have had to reorganize and realign their lives based on a job demand. Differential consciousness is acting within and beyond the cultural dominant, so it is a disposition, an action that we must practice. However, I begin to consider its limits, especially with regards to political action.

Conclusion

Fathering without Borders: The undocumented Mexican Male Immigrant Worker Status as Fathering

The particularities of the lives of the U.S.-based fathers helped me understand that fathering wasn't something extra or apart from who they are and what they do. Fathering for them consists of: leaving one's home to cross an international border into a country to the north to work. It involved swimming in a river not meant to swim in, and walking through the mountains before finding a highway where trucks waited for transport to another locale. It included depending on the kindness of strangers and the generosity of loved ones in order to make it to the final destination, where, through friends, family or acquaintances, a job had been arranged.

Fathering also consists of working hard, as they had already done back home, usually very long hours, sometimes all of the days of the week and sometimes just six, day in and day out, over the course of several years, for very low wages, and without health or disability insurance or support for acute care. Fathering for these dads meant taking great risks, even for routine tasks, such as going grocery shopping or driving to work.

This brand of fathering requires an almost philosophical disposition toward life, because although most of us work for love—either love for the work that we do or for the freedoms our work buys us—for these fathers, to work for love seemed like a dangerous proposition. It was as if they, like Lady Gaga might croon, were caught in a bad romance. To father as they father was to risk it all in order to bet on one's family and one self.

The fathers in this study, father through their undocumented immigrant status, their cultural dislocations, their remittances, phone calls, text messages and through the

food orders they take, the tables they clean, the gardens they tend, the cement they lay. Fathering is further achieved by the calls they make to their children, the guidance they offer them, and the moral and economic support they extend. This was a deep insight that I would never have gotten on my own but was made accessible to me through conversations with willing interlocutors.

The fathers, Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés, all told of challenges their children face in México. The fathers worry about the children's schooling, express concerns over the quality of education the children are receiving and of the relationship between teachers and parents. The fathers have other worries. Those with adolescents wonder how their young teens will fair in a changing México, with less educational opportunities and more social problems, among which are drugs, both consumption and sale of these, and being targeted by dealers and/or being killed as a bystander in a narco-standoff.

Drugs in México

In the small, tidy rancherías that I visited for the Mexican arm of the study, I was told that the narcoguerra was without incident in that area. By the time I left the region, a mere six weeks later, the drug war had moved to a place that was just 40 kilometers away. One afternoon, as Sandra and I were driving back to AJ, the town where I was staying, we saw several army green vehicles belonging to the federal police, pulled over on the side of the road. The police were heavily armed, with semi-automatic rifle, and wore black, baggy standard-issue pants with several pockets that were usually bulging with what we thought might be grenades. This was not a detail we could appreciate from the road, but we had examined a picture I had taken in a Oaxaca City plaza of military

police, and we could see that these pants were all slightly different. Some had lots of stuffed pockets, and others had snaps and straps for carrying extra arms.

In one of the rancherías, I was told about a male teacher that had been hired by the local middle school and later discovered trafficking drugs among the students. When the parents found out, they united to demand that he be fired. Once he was gone, the parents and school began informal talks to orient the students to the dangers of drugs. These circumstances afflict everyone in México as well as the U.S. fathers who participated in this study. Andrés remarks:

> …Hay muchos jóvenes que se salen de la escuela que ya empiezan con amigos afuera a tomar, a drogarse, entonces siempre trato de informarles a mis hijos a cerca de lo que son las drogas, alcoholismo, todo eso, que no se enreden en ese tipo de ambiente.
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> [There are lots of young people who leave school and start smoking outside with friends, to use drugs, so, I always try to inform my children about what drugs are, alcoholism, all of that, so that they don't get tangled up—no se enreden—in that type of environment.]

He has observed that the pressure to use drugs is also exerted within the walls of the school, "En las mismas escuelas, los niños ya van con cierto interés de envolver a otros niños a la drogadicción." [At school, children go with a certain goal of involving other children in drug addiction.]

Education in México

Drugs and the war on drugs were not the only aggressions families were contending with when I was in México; parents and children in recent years face a high-stakes testing environment which serves to truncate children's future at the middle school by keeping them out of the preparatoria attendance pool. A student who does not pass the middle school exit exam does not qualify for Fall admission to preparatoria. They must

sit out of school for six months, during which time they are advised to study and pay a fee to retake the exam. If during the summer, the student does not pass the exam, they are, nonetheless, admitted after that six month sit out period.

This type of de facto retention and 'push out' was placing tremendous strain on children and their parents, and two boys that I met were teary-eyed because they had failed the exit exam. One boy was studying to retake it, and his father, who I had interviewed for this study, gave his son the modest stipend he had received for his participation in this study, so that his son could pay the exam fee. I, too, was outraged at the thought that a 12-year-old might face the end of his educational career by the end of middle school, not because of the legitimacy of a test, but because the government had chosen this path as a way to address overcrowding in schools rather than invest in infrastructure and a larger teaching force. The once superior education that students could obtain in the Mexican school system has all but been destroyed. The fathers in North Carolina were well-informed about these new obstacles their school-aged chidren faced; these new policies and social realities fueled their worries.

Andrés had firsthand knowledge of the changing patterns of instruction and overall levels of quality. His older son is doing well in school but struggling in mathematics. Andrés tried to get help for him (being in the U.S.) and knows that his (Andres's) expectations about what constitutes good academic performance are different from those of the school,

> …tienen asesores para estudiantes ahí, pero no se que tan seguido los ocupen para los alumnos, porque podrían decir que el niño va un poco mal pero se preocupan por los que van mucho más mal…

> [They have counselors there for students, but I don't know how often they work with students, because they could say that the child is doing slightly poorly but there are others who are doing much worse…]

Alfredo, like Andrés, was also very informed about his son's school and had several concerns as well. When he moved his family from México City to a small town in Veracruz, he wasn't anticipating that there would be such a dramatic change in the quality of schooling for his young son. They found overcrowded schools with up to 50 students in a single classroom, teachers who were ill-prepared to teach and who were not attentive to the children, and materials that were not replenished after being consumed. Alfredo found all of this quite unsettling and the overcrowding, especially, gnawed at Alfredo; he didn't seem at all convinced that the schools were providing Marce with a quality education:

> […Lo que no me parecía es que, por ejemplo, ya, entraban los niños al salón, el maestro ya estaba ahí, y este, y les ponía trabajos, trabajos de lo que fueran a hacer, y ya, les medio explicaba y si le entendieron o no, bueno él, no era su problema, él ya había hecho su trabajo supuestamente y se salía, lo veían platicando por ahí con las compañeras, con los demás maestros…]
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> […What I didn't like was that, for example, the children would come into the classroom, teh teacher was there, and uh, he would give them work, assignments on whatever they were going to do, and then he would sort of explain things to them an if they understood it or not, well, it wasn't his problem. He had already supposedly done his job, and he would leave. He would be seen talking there with co-workers, with the other teachers.]

Alfredo doesn't shun his responsibility as a parent to help his children, but he felt very uncomfortable with the changes in the the family-school relationship that were taking place when he left to come work in the United States:

> …de alguna manera…los padres estamos obligados a estar más al pendiente en cuanto a eso…sobre los hijos, ¿Cómo van? ¿Como están? ¿O como van en su aprendizaje, en su conocimiento? Pero yo pienso que

también el maestro tiene mucha responsabilidad en eso, en que no nada de decir, eh -*'Apliquen mas a sus hijos'*...Eso son los comentarios que yo oía. Eh, 'préstenle mas atención, su calificacion es muy baja y po's no está dando los resultados que debe de dar y este, como diciendo -*'No, po's el problema ahí se los dejo'*- Y yo creo que no tanto, bueno, yo creo que no es nada más para el papá sino como el maestro que está enseñando algo también…Es mi forma de pensar.

[…in some way…parents, we are obligated to be more attentive about this…about the children, 'How are they coming along? How are they? Or, how are they doing in their learning, in their knowledge? But I think that the teacher also has a lot of responsibility in this, and not just say, uh, '*Make your children work harder*.' These are the comments one would hear there. '*Pay more attention, his grades are too low, and you are not getting the results that you should have*' as if to say, '*No, well, I leave you with the problem.*' And I don't think that it shouldn't be that much, well, I believe, it isn't only the parent but also the teacher who is teaching something also…This is my way of thinking.]

Fathering Dispositions, Practices, and Strategies

What follows is a description and discussion on how these fathers father. I point out that I see *dispositions* as general attitudes and approaches to fathering; *practices* are what fathers do to father, and *strategies* are targeted practices to address events in a relationship or in the personal life of one's children.

Emilio, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés are engaged fathers. They find many ways to father in the transnational social space that is their home, through their overall disposition, the practices they incorporate into their routines, and the strategies they deploy according to their discretion. In describing some of these, I rely again, for the most part, on fathers whose experiences serve as exemplars of the identified themes.

Dispositions

By dispositions, I refer to the fathers' general attitudes and approaches that guide their fathering. These are orientations that inform their interactions with their children and the decisions they make. The fathers' disposition is one of love, care and a sense of

urgency to provide for their families. This is expressed through their presence in North Carolina and the work they carry out on a daily basis.

This global disposition is crystallized in the general act of 1) el sacrificio, 2) in the concept of el respeto, 3) in the fathers' empathic stance that enables them to identify with their children and see the world from their perspective; and 4) in their willingness to accommodate their children and be attentive to their experiences, or what I call having a comedido-atento orientation [accommodating-attentive].

The literature reports cases of Mexican immigrant fathers who lose contact with their families and all but abandon them (Dreby, 2008), but this is not the case with any of the fathers I interviewed in North Carolina. The fathers I interviewed in North Carolina insisted on regular contact with their children. Contentious encounters, in fact, were marked by the fathers' complaint to the family that they were not reliably available by phone.

El sacrificio. The U.S.-based fathers do what they do—migrate to work and leave the family there—as an act of sacrifice. They understand that not being physically together as a family is a sacrifice that their families also make in order to seguir and salir adelante [continue and come out ahead].

Carlos links sacrificio to his children's education. In so doing, he privileges el sacrificio as a worthwhile disposition to have and an act to carry out. El sacrificio will liberate his children from intergenerational poverty and offer them a future in which their talents and skills can find greater expression. El sacrificio has been theorized in the literature (e.g. Elenes et al. 2001; Navarro, 2008), and Navarro (2008), for example, found in his study with Mexican immigrant fathers, that fathers engage in the "maximum

sacrifice," when they and their families separate through migration as a way of keeping the family viable and intact.

El sacrificio's connection to both family separation and family unity is also evident for Carlos. His orientation to family is shaped by costumbres—he is "accustomed" to his family there, in México, of being close, of being together. His very definition of family emerges from these costumbres or practices in which many gather, not just the nuclear family. He draws a map to show me how geographically close they live to each other:

> CS: Mire por ejemplo, supongamos que aquí está la casa de Papá, esta es la casa de mi papá, es una misma avenida, digamos a cien metros está, bueno no va a caber pero aquí lo vamos a dibujar más o menos…más o menos así, supongamos que aquí es la casa de mis papás y en la misma avenida está mi hermana y está digamos a cincuenta metros, mi hermana y poquito para atrás pero enfrente está uno de mis hermanos y enseguida está la panadería de mis hermanos y ya al último, en la mera esquina de la calle esa, de esa avenida, está otro de mis hermanos y yo vivo acá.
> MS: ¿A dos calles sería?
> CS: A dos cuadras yo estoy, pero sobre la esquina de papá está mi casa, en esa avenida yo vivo.
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> [CS: Look, for example, suppose that here's Papá house, this is the house of my father. It's one same avenue, let's say at a distance of 100 meters there's, well, it's not going to fit here, but we'll draw it more or less…more or less this way, suppose that this is the house of my parents and on the same avenue is my sister and she is say 50 meters away, my sister, and a little farther back but in front is one of my brothers and right after that is my brothers' bakery and then at the end, on the very corner of that street, of that avenue, is another one of my brothers, and I live over here.
> MS: Would that be like two streets away?
> CS: I'm two blocks from there, but on the corner by Papá is my house, I live on that avenue.]

His current immigration status forces him to consider the all aspects of having his wife and children join him here. Carlos feels this path would result in the decimation of family writ large:

> Es que es la única opción que tenemos nosotros, digo que más quisiera tener a la familia aquí, porque el país me gusta, es lindo, pero no podemos estar aquí. Entonces en si yo tengo que pensar en algo allá y pues eso es lo que quiero hacer, si yo pudiera estar aquí, aquí me estaría…Por la seguridad más que nada también…Me siento más seguro y a pesar de lo que sea pues tengo mi trabajo decente, honrado…Estoy trabajando y sí me gustaría estar acá pero no es mi país. Yo creo que desbarataría a mi familia…Yo creo, no se si me equivoque…en que nos alejaríamos bastante…Y se perdería la comunicación de los demás y pienso que ya nada sería igual…Porque estoy muy acostumbrado a la familia allá. Somos muy unidos y como no podría entrar y salir [del pueblo], y yo creo que ese sería el detalle, el problema…Y ellos no podrían venir a visitarme…Entonces yo creo que lo mejor es estar con los míos.
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> [It's just that the only option we have, I mean, I would love having my family here, because I like the country, it's beautiful, but we cannot be here. So, I have to think about something over there and well, that's what I want to do. If I could be here, here I would stay…For safety, more than anything…I feel safer here, and in spite of everything, I have my job, decent, honest…I am working, and I would like to be over here, but this is not my country. I believe that I would ruin [desbaratar-destroy] my family. I believe, I don't know if I'm wrong…in that we would grow apart a lot…And the communication would be lost with the others and I think nothing would be the same…Because I am very accustomed to the family there. We are very close and, because I would not be able to come in and out [of the country] , I think that would be the key point, the problem…And they would not be able to visit me…So, I believe, it is better is to be con los míos [my people]]

Carlos would rather be temporarily separated from everyone in his family in order to be able to preserve a greater unity in the future. This marks his fathering style with the notion of 'sacrificio' or sacrifice, in which his suffering reaps the reward of family unity and family progress, or el salir adelante.

> Para que ellas [las hijas] estudien, el sacrificio que yo hago es para ellas, para que estudien, es lo que a mi más me importa en la vida, que estudien y no quiero que les falte nada.
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> [So that they [the children] study, the sacrificio I make is for them, so that they study, which is what is most important to me in life, that they study and not be in need of anything.]

El respeto. Instilling el respeto, or respect, is established in the literature as a

hallmark of Mexican socialization practices (Delgado-Gaitán, 1992; De la Cruz, 1999; Valdés, 1996). In this study, el respeto emerges as an underlying expectation that the U.S. fathers have of their children and which th fathers demonstrate to their family by being upstanding, hardworking men.

El respeto is a stance that one assumes, and children are taught to assume it through the recognition that one's elders and one's parents should automatically receive respeto. Valdés, in her ethnographic work, describes how children as young as two would wait attentively to ask their mother for something if she was engaged in another activity (p. 120).

Culturally, 'el respeto' circulates in the Mexican imaginary as a core concept of Mexican identity, and school children can recite my heart a short phrase by México's most popular president, Benito Juarez, who said, "Entre los individuos como entre las naciones, el respeto al derecho ajeno es la paz" [Among individuals as among nations, the respect for the rights of others is peace.] This conceptualization of el respeto illuminates what parents hope to teach their children—ultimately the pedagogy of el respeto has to do with a respect for difference. Reminding children of this valued disposition is the responsibility of everyone, but especially the parents. Emilio, of the four fathers, seemed most aware of transgressions against respeto. When I interviewed Emilio, his children were entering adolescence, or as it is colloquially referred to, 'la edad de la punzada' [literally 'the age of the pang or stab'].

La edad de la punzada relates to the emotional and attitude changes observed in children making the transition into adulthood and which are in part brought on by hormonal changes. At the time, his oldest daughter, was changing from a quiet and

adoring daughter to one who 'talked back' or, on other occasions, did not want to speak with Emilio when he telephoned. During the interviews, many of the discussions about fathering started to gravitate to conflicts around parental authority, and Emilio's emotions—such as disappointment and hurt—were palpable.

> Ahora el 3 de septiembre…que fueron los quince años de mi hija, hablé otra vez una semana después…únicamente…quise hacerle el comentario a mi hija…sobre un chamaquito, que…supuestamente es su novio…Únicamente quise preguntarselo, no…le estaba reprochando absolutamente nada, únicamente quería hacer el comentario. Y…me contestó en una forma…mucho muy grosera, la verdad, o sea…ahora sí…la desconocí totalmente, la desconocí totalmente.
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> [Recently, the 3rd of September…that was her 'quince años' [15th birthday, like 16th birthday in the U.S.] of my daughter, I called again a week later…only..because I wanted to comment to my daughter…about a boy who, supposedly is her boyfriend…I only wanted to ask her about it…I wasn't, I had nothing to reproach her about, I just wanted to comment. And…she responded in such a way…so very rudely, that really, I mean…I did not recognize her at all, not at all.]

Emilio said his daughter was upset. She questioned his motives and denied having a boyfriend. Practically shouting, Emilio remembers, she accused him of wanting to believe this 'lie'. Emilio responded:

> No mija. Primeramente, fíjate…con quien estás hablando…y que no se te olvide. No se trata de lo que yo quiera escuchar, sino de lo que me tienes que decir…Pero, no te olvides que soy tu padre. De una forma o de otra, soy tu padre--no te olvides que me debes…el respeto'.
>
> —E inmediatamente cambió…yo también noto todo eso…Están, las niñas…como confundidas. Rápidamente, o sea inmediatemente, la niña cambió…su tono…me pidió disculpas…'Papá, lo que pasa es que me alteré.' Le digo, 'no te preocupes, hija'. Pero, la verdad, que no…veo el motivo por el que, por el que me hablen así.
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> [No, mija (from 'mi hija' or, my daughter). First, consider who your are talking with…and don't forget. It isn't about what I want to hear, but rather about what you need to tell me. But don't forget that I'm your father. One way or another, I am your father—don't forget that you owe me…el respeto (respect).
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> —She immediately changed…I notice all of this, too…They, the girls are…sort of confused. Quickly, I mean immediately, the girl

> changed…her tone…she said she was sorry…'Papá, what happened was that I got upset.' I told her, 'Don't worry, mija.' But, truthfully, I don't see the reason for them to talk to me that way.]

Empathic stance. The fathers showed empathy in being able to imagine what their children think and feel about the configuration of their family and other events in their lives. The fathers, through this empathic stance, attempt to help children to work through a difficult or confusing situation primarily through employing a strategy I call a *cognitive appeal*, which I discuss under "Strategies."

Andrés is a father who can see the world from the perspective of his children when he confesses that they must be confused about who is in charge in their families, who has the authority. He knows that not having told them that he would be leaving for the United States and instead saying he was delivering goods within México has made him lose authority with them. He is concerned about his sons, because he and his wife are separated, and Andrés feels that his sons' loyalties are split and their safety compromised. He knows his children were at the very least surprised to learn that he was in the United States, because he had not told him them that he would be migrating.

> No pude avisarles porque fue muy repentino…han de estar confundidos sobre autoridades…yo creo que para ellos ahorita la autoridad del más pequeño son mis papás…y para el mayor es su mamá.
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> [I wasn't able to let them (his sons) know, because it was all very sudden…they must be confused about authorities…I believe that for them, the authority for the youngest one is my parents…for the oldest one, his mother.]

In similar fashion, Alfredo perceives the importance of telling his son about why Alfredo doesn't live with them. He understands that Marce will feel rejected without knowing why his father is far away from home or distanciado:

> …Este, es de hacerle ver muchas cosas que, bueno, si yo estoy separado, 'si ahorita estamos distanciados…es por cuestiones …económicas…Y…para que él las vaya entendiendo, las comprenda, y no es porque yo quiera estar lejos de [ellos]… no es porque yo quiera estar lejos de ustedes…'. Entonces…y hasta él mismo me lo ha dicho que, pues, me extraña, que siente ya…las ganas…de estar otra vez uno con él…
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> [Well, it's about having him understand many things that, well, if I am apart [from them], 'if right now we are far away from each other…it is because of economic reasons'…and…that he start understanding, comprehending, that it isn't because I want to be far away from them…'It isn't because I want to be away from you…' Then…he himself has said it to me, well, that he misses—that he feels already…the desire…that I again be with him…]

Estar pendiente/ Comedido [Attentive/Accommodating]. The fathers are "comedidos," [accommodating] and pendiente [attentive] to needs and momentos cotidianos y momentos especiales [daily moments/special moments]. Estar pendiente literally means to be inclined, pitched towards something. The way the fathers use the term is to be attuned to the child, to be attentive to their needs and what they are doing, or to anticipate what they might need. Being pendiente is a way to observe and assess. It is the first step that then allows you to activate all sorts of parenting relationship strategies. Emilio believes good fathering means starting with being pendiente:

> Creo que…estar pendiente de los hijos, es apoyarlos como hijos…es siempre ganarse la confianza de los hijos ¿me entiende? Que para nada, ni en lo mínimo le tengan desconfianza a uno, porque por eso, desde ahí, siento es la educación de los hijos, ¿me entiende?
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> [I believe that…being pendiente of the children, is supporting them as children…it is always winning the trust [la confianza] of the children, you know? That for nothing, not even the smallest, they have mistrust toward one, because, from there, I feel, is the education of children, you know?]

Comedido is being oriented toward helping, toward serving. Someone who immediately sets aside what they are doing to help someone else is considered being

comedido. This can be in even small tasks, like helping someone with groceries but also refer to much more time-involved tasks, like going across town to find an important school supply to complete an assignment. It is anticipating the needs of others and attending to the activities of others that are critical in this disposition.

Emilio is comedido/pendiente as he looks on with great curiosity to his daughter's mysterious behavior in the patio of their home in México, a decade-old memory that he shares with me:

> Estábamos platicando nosotros…terminamos de comer, y ¿oye y Suli?, ¿no se durmió con Elena? No pues voy a ver. ¿No oye dónde está?...Comenzó la preocupación, a buscarla por donde quiera…Salgo al patio y la veo, ha de haber tenido dos años creo, estaba sentadita en cuclillas, yo veía que jugaba con algo en la tierra pero se lo aventaba a la boca y dije "¿Qué está haciendo?" Vamos a verla su mamá y yo, cuidando de no asustarla porque ella estaba en su mundo, después vimos que estaba jugando con unos animalitos, cochinitos, que se hacen bolita, ella les picaba y se hacían bolita y…se los echaba a la boca y se los comía.
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> [We were talking…we had finished eating, and, 'Hey, and Suli?' Didn't she go to bed with Elena? Well, I go and look. 'No, hey, where is she?...The worrying started and [we were] looking for her everywhere…I go out to the patio and I see her, she must have been 2 years old, I think. She was sitting on her haunches, and I could see how she played with something in the dirt, but she was throwing it into her mouth. I said, 'What is she doing?' Her mom and I go see her, being careful not to startle her, because "estaba en su mundo "[she was in her world]. Then we saw she was playing with little animals, cochinitos [roly poly], that she made into a little ball. She would poke them…and they would recoil into a ball and…she would toss them in her mouth…]

This comedido/pendiente disposition has an indulgent side to it; it is marked by the parents' delight in the children's inventive, curious, mischievous and even daring investigations into the world around them. In the example above, Emilio was still at home in México with his family; his transnational life had not yet started. A more recent example of this disposition is Carlos.

Carlos wants to be informed about his children's treatment at school. This level of attentiveness to his children's daily life is not uncommon for the fathers in this study:

> Platico mucho con mis hijas, diariamente yo platico con ellas y yo les digo a ellas que cualquier problema que tengan, sobre todo en la escuela, que si se sienten que las hacen menos o que si sienten como que las humillan o algo…que me digan a mi para pues yo, no para yo ir a pelear con el maestro ni mucho menos, ni con los padres de los niños, pero para yo darle un consejo a las niñas, a mis hijas…pues todos tenemos los mismos derechos y…yo así les digo a ellas, que todos somos iguales, todos somos exactamente iguales.
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> [I talk a lot with my daughters, every day, I talk with them, and I tell them that whatever problem they have, especially at school, if they feel that someone belittles them or if they feel like someone is humiliating them, or something…they should tell me, so that I can—not so that I go fight with the teacher or much less with the parents of the children—but to give the girls, my daughters, a consejo to my daughters…well, we all have the same rights and…I tell them that, that we are all the same, we are all exactly the same.]

Alfredo, for example, expresses worry about his son's overcrowded classroom, even with the recent news that a new teacher has been hired so that two 3rd grade classroom can be established to address the overcrowding. The fact that Alfredo keeps up-to-date on school-related matters and could speak to current concerns he had regarding Marce's schooling, shows that he is pendiente:

> Estoy preocupado, el año pasado hubo muchísimos niños en su salón y este año hay 50 alumnos con él. Así es como ahora están sucediendo las cosas. Estas dos semanas que llevan apenas, empezaron igual, con los mismos, la misma cantidad de alumnos. Pero ya a partir de esta semana, o sea, hoy va a llegar un maestro nuevo…Entonces estos alumnos se van a dividir en dos grupos. Y le digo, pues no te desanimes porque, bueno, ahora ya van a tener, cada grupo ya va a ser menos.
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> [I am worried, last year there were many, many children in his class and this year there are 50 students with him. This is how things are happening now. These two weeks that they just started, they started the same, with the same, the same amount of students. But beginning this week, that is, today, a new teacher will arrive…Then these students will

> be divided into two groups. And, I tell him [Marce] not to be discouraged because, well, now they will have—each group, they will be less now.]

Practices

By practices are the things the fathers do for, with and on behalf of their children. The fathers had three key practices for fathering. Fathers used direct communication (e.g. phone calling, texting, video-chatting), giving consejos [advice], and probing.

Direct Communication

Fathering by phone is used by the four fathers as a way to keep in touch, spend time together with their family, confer about family issues or concerns, offer help and guidance, issue discipline, and discuss or create plans.

Carlos is one of the fathers who has daily and multiple conversations with his wife and children; "Diariamente hablo con ellas, diariamente" [I speak with them daily, daily]" he affirms. From the interviews, I learned how connected he is to both his family of origin and his wife and children. His mother, Olivia, is a woman of many words, her own and those that her husband utters mostly only to her. With these words she opens up new discursive spaces for Carlos and his siblings to inhabit, inviting her children to do and be what she and her husband could not. Carlos remembers,

> …mi papá platicaba con mamá, y mi mamá se encargaba de decírnoslo...que ellos querían que estudiáramos lo más que se pudiera… porque ellos no estudiaron nada.
>
> […my dad would talk with my mom, and my mom took care of telling us…that they wanted us to study as much as possible…because they hadn't studied anything].

Carlos, unlike his father in this regard and taking after his mother, is softspoken but talkative. His fathering takes place mainly through talk, and he takes great pains to stay connected. Using Nextel's "direct talk" service, which does not charge extra for

international calls, Carlos is able to call home on a daily basis several times a day; he calls his brothers, his wife, his children and, although his wife is very involved in their children's school, Carlos has even called his children's teachers:

> CS: … De hecho, yo hablo con sus maestros.
> MS: ¿Desde acá?
> CS: Desde acá.
> MS: ¡Qué bien!
> CS: Hablo con ellos y les digo, o les pregunto como van ellas, y pues me da, a mi me da mucho orgullo, porque…este, la más grande va muy bien. La otra, la segunda…regular. …
> MS:…Y, ¿Qué, qué, lo inspiró a hacer eso? o ¿Cómo surge que usted decide un día, yo le voy a hablara este maestro?
> CS: Porque, porque en lo personal, cuando mi madre iba a la escuela, yo sentía…muy bien. Sentía muy bonito que mi mamá preguntara por mí…Y yo creo que eso les gusta a mis hijas. Por eso lo hago, y yo quiero saber, más que nada.
>
> [CS: As a matter of fact, I speak with their teachers.
> MS: From here?
> CS: From here.
> MS: That's great.
> CS: I speak with them and I ask how they're doing [his daughters], and well, it gives me a lot of pride, because uh, the oldest one is doing really well. The other, the second one…regular.
> MS:…And what, what inspired you to do this? How did you decide one day, 'I'm going to call this teacher?'
> CS: Because, because personally, when my mom went to school, I felt really good. I felt great because my mom asked about me…I think my daughters like this. That's why I do it, and I want to know, more than anything else.]

Alfredo uses phone calls to maintain a close relationship and to stay up-to-date on his activities. The phone calls are, more importantly perhaps, a way to be together, to feel each other's presence:

> …se ha dado mucho la comunicación con él, siempre estamos platicando por teléfono, que pregunta sobre como está, como le va en la escuela, que tanto aprende de los maestros, de cosas rutinarias de la casa, algo por lo muy, este, así sea no importante, pero la cuestión es mantenernos…o mantenerlo yo a él que sienta que estoy, aunque no esté

físicamente allá pero que por cualquier cosa que a él le pase, le suceda, pues, sabe que él tiene…todo…mi apoyo...

[…there has been a lot of communication with him, we are always talking by phone. I ask about how he is, how things are going in school, how much he is learning from his teachers, about routine things at home, something, uh, like that always, well not so important, but the idea is that we stay…or that I keep his feeling that I am there, although I am not there physically, but that for whatever might happen to him, well, he knows that he has…all…of my support.]

Alfredo described how the phone conversations help Alfredo build a relationship with his son, Marce, as if the two were together in the same place. Alfredo felt that his not being there with him right now '[lo] está afectando,' is affecting him [Marce] and noted that communication helps them sustain contact:

Eh…yo se que le está afectando mucho el que no esté allá con él ahora…Bueno, desde el inicio, desde siempre, entonces procuro que…esa relación de padre a hijo, o trato de hacerlo como si yo estuviera presente ahí…¿Si? Y…hacerle o sacar en la plática hasta la mas mínima cosa, pero el caso es que estemos…en contacto mediante la comunicación.

[Uh…I know that it is affecting him a lot that I am not there with him right now…Well, from the beginning, since always, so I try to make that relationship between parent and child, or I try to make it as I were there present…Right? And…make him or bring up in the conversation even the most basic thing, but the idea is that we be…very much in contact through communication.]

Finally, Alfredo advances the vision he has for his son by conveying his expectations in the phone calls through pláticas or talks.

Si es una persona que, es un niño que siempre se ha aplicado a sus estudios, es porque yo también siempre he tratado, en mis pláticas con él por medio del teléfono, de que eso es lo más importante, ¿Si? Es una de las cosas más importantes porque ahora sí que el que no estudia pues no llega a nada…

[If he is a person who, a child who always has applied himself to his studies, it is also because I have always tried, in my talks with him by telephone, that, that be the most important. Right? It is one of the most

important things, because, for sure now, if you don't study, you get nowhere.]

The fathers establish a closeness to their children by talking together on the phone. Carlos, through the use of the Nextel "direct talk" phone, was *fathering in real time*. He, like Emilio, Carlos and Andrés, rely heavily on the phone as a form of direct communication with their children and families. Emilio also uses Facebook and phone texting; Andrés sometimes calls with Skype, which allows him to see his children and extended family through the videochat option, while Alfredo uses mostly the phone.

Giving Consejos

Consejos are elaborately coded, dynamic and meaningful narratives. They are advice issued by elders to each other and to younger members of the community to help guide someone through a problem. When used with children, they include the goals of socializing, disciplining and opening up problem-solving possibilities for them. Because consejos convey expectations about what is deemed appropriate and acceptable by the culture, they are also used in apprenticing children into the mature ways of the community.

Consejos are variably defined and discussions about them have recently been aimed at parents and practitioners. In these venues, consejos are broadly described as a "prized Latino mode of teaching" (Inoa Vasquez, 2004, p. 6) and as a "frequently used strategy" (Cabrera, Villarruel, & Fitzgerald, 2011, p. 47) for the socialization of the child. By some, they are a type of discipline that is not readily perceived as disciplinary among Mexican, Mexican American and Latino parents (Cabrera, Villarruel, & Fitzgerald). These references suggest that consejos are not just advice; they are a type of pedagogy which, in it narrowest sense, is used to guide or shape children's behavior.

Delgado-Gaitan (1994) was among the first to theorize their meaning and deftly identified consejos as "cultural narratives"(p. 298). She writes,

> The Spanish connotation of consejos extends the notion of the English language translation for the pragmatic purpose of solving a problem. In Spanish, consejos implies a cultural dimension of communication sparked with emotional empathy and compassion, as well as familial expectation and inspiration (p. 300).

The consejos that fathers gave their children were school and behavior-related and oriented toward the children's future. Deeply embedded in these were the fathers' expectations and desires for their children. Giving consejos is another reliable strategy; these are deployed as a targeted practice to address a specific event and to intervene in a particular way, but their ubiquity in fathers' daily and weekly conversations with their children marks them also as a parenting practice.

Andrés bring into play the strategy of offering consejos to guide his younger son, who in contrast to his older son, is "distraído" or distracted in school. Andrés offers him support in the form of consejos so that the boy might 'persevere and not give up,'

> …lo he estado apoyando para que siga adelante, que no se quede atrás con sus estudios

> […I have been encouraging him to keep forging ahead, so that he doesn't fall behind in his studies]

Andrés uses the word 'apoyar' which means to support, help or encourage. Andrés tells his younger son, "…que le eche un poquito de ganas al trabajo" […to put a little effort into his work (school work)]. Evoking notions of progress in expressions like 'salir adelante' (get ahead) and 'no se quede atrás' (to not stay behind).

Andrés, after hearing that his oldest son had gone out drinking, he first admonished him not to. Reaching the age of maturity, his son didn't respond well to that,

and Andrés gave him the following consejo, one passed on by Andrés's grandfather. This example demonstrates that consejos are also encoded with the parenting beliefs and practices of previous generations:

> '¿Sabes que hijo? Lo que siempre me dijo tu abuelito -Tómate tu el vino pero que el vino no te tome a ti- ¿Que quiero decirte con eso, que, que tú tomes dos, tres copas, a que estés a gusto y no que te acabes diez y que te andes arrastrando en el piso, que estés dando lástima. Digo, con dos copas, con tres copas que ya digas -'Ya estoy a gusto'- Ya, hasta ahí. No es una competencia ni nadie te va a alabar porque te acabes todo el vino, así es que tranquilo, trata de si puedes evita todo eso, si no puedes, este, como te digo, dos copas, tres, este, hasta ahí que no, que no te afecte'-
>
> [Do you know what, son? What your grandfather always told me, 'Take the wine, but don't let the wine take you.' What did he mean by that? That you drink two, three cups, and that you feel comfortable but not have 10 and that you end up dragging yourself along the floor, that people feel pity for you. I mean, with two cups, three cups, you say, 'I feel a gusto, comfortable,' and that's it. It's not a competition and no one is going to praise you for for finishing all of the wine, so go easy, try to avoid it, if you cannot, then, it's like I'm telling you, two, three cups, that's it, so that it not, it not affect you.]

By providing encouraging an academically struggling son and by providing concrete information about issues impacting young people, like drug use, as well as consejos that convey these same messages, Andrés confidently fathers his sons over the phone, tacitly implying that his authority as a father and his ability to nurture, guide, motivate and influence his sons are not compromised by the fact that he is thousands of miles away. Through consejos Andrés articulates the expectation that his sons engage in behaviors that will help them to do well in school and get ahead as students and individuals, avoid drugs, and be alert to peer pressure and other negative influences. Delgado-Gaitan writes that the Mexican immigrant families she worked with over several decades use consejos in a similar fashion, to manage their children's schooling, to give

guidance on appropriate school behavior, and "to support their children's independence and self-control" (p. 309).

Alfredo deploys consejos to help and guide Marce through doubts or challenges he might face:

> De alguna forma dándole algún tipo de orientación, un consejo -*'Mira…hiciste esto pero no lo vuelvas a hacer o te pasó esto'-,* mirarlo de alguna forma, darle un tip de que…si le pasó, algo malo, decirle -*'Mira, para la próxima vez pues procura esto y el otro y así cosas'-*…y mantenernos en comunicación.
>
> [In some way, giving his some sort of orientation, a consejo, 'Look…you did this, but don't do that again, or this happened to you.' To see things a certain way, give him a tip on…if this happened, something bad, tell him, 'Look, for next time, well, try this and that' and things like that…and stay in communication.]

The fathers' use of consejos shows that they recognize them as valuable and enduring narratives that survive distances of time and space.

Probing

Fathers used probing to reconnect and start a conversation or to get additional information on something they needed more clarity on. Probing involved common questions such as, 'How are you?,' 'How did things go at school today?,' to very specific questions about a matter of concern like, 'But what did the teacher say to you about the homework?' This was a very common practice used by all fathers to either start a conversation or to keep it going. This is how Carlos described the content of some of his conversations with his children:

> Pues…les pregunto como van en la escuela. Como están de salud, pues más qué nada es eso. Qué cómo, cómo es su mamá con ellas. Qué si van a ver a, a mi madre.

> [Well…I ask them how they are doing in school. How they are healthwise, well, nothing more than that. How, how their mother is with them. If they are going to visit my mother.]

Strategies

A strategy is a disposition or practice that fathers deploy to address an event in their children's lives and that rivets the father's attention. For example, a consejo, can be deployed to intervene in an uncomfortable situation. When Emilio's daughter started dating, he said to his wife, 'Tenemos que hablar con ella, el tiempo ya apremia, a darle consejos, ya entra en otra etapa.' [We have to talk with her, the time is upon us, to give her consejos, she is entering another stage]. Here, Emilio has a targeted purpose for this common practice of giving consejos; he and his wife will employ consejos to craft a 'family policy' message on dating to intervene in what he feels is a moment of transition for his daughter, one that has caught him and his wife off guard.

I identified three key strategies and, again, will use exemplary narrations from the fathers to illustrate these: cognitive appeal, reassertion of cultural values and representative fathering. A *cognitive appeal* is an attempt by the fathers to persuade their children using information and logic and by engaging the children's ability to examine, understand, imagine, decide, prioritize, plan and create, or what educators might call 'higher order thinking skills.' In Spanish, parents have a phrase for this type of appeal, 'hacerle ver las cosas' which means, 'make him/her see things.' This implies persuasion and a reasoned approach to asking the child to take another perspective on something.

Reassertion of cultural values is to intervene by issuing a command or claiming authority based on cultural norms as they related to gender, age, or family status, among other characteristics. Such commands might be, 'Be respectful of your aunt,' or 'Watch

over your little brother.' A claim to authority might be, 'I am your father, and you need to listen to me.'

Representative fathering is a distributive model of parenting. The father identifies and recruits someone in México to represent him and to be involved as a co-parent, along with his wife, and serve as an additional support to the children. Representative fathering is also a way to distribute the father's authority in order to establish a stronger presence there. In some cases, this is an amicable arrangement and in others, the father takes this action as a last recourse to assert presence and power or to reclaim respect and authority, or all of these. In order to determine whether there is a need for representative fathering, a father might seek *corroboration* from someone outside of the household to assess how accurate or trustworthy the information that he is receiving about a family matter is.

Cognitive Appeal

Carlos has high expectations for his children, insisting that they develop intrinsic motivation as a life-long disposition. He uses a cognitive appeal when 1) he offers an explanation to his daughters as to why they should do something for their own good and not for a gift or reward that he will give them; 2) he extends a tacit invitation to imagine themselves not going through what he and their mother go through; 3) he asks them, again tacitly, to engage in comparisons by considering the superiority of a non-material thing, like an education, over a material reward, like a car; and 4) he helps them relate their actions of today with the conditions they might find themselves in in the future:

> De la manera que yo trato de motivar a mis hijas y la manera de que yo las motivo es, es, yo no les prometo nada, yo siempre les digo que es un bien para ellas mismas, es un futuro que ellas van a lograr, ¿para que?, para que no pasen por lo mismo que nosotros pasamos y pues creo que está dando resultado porque yo no les prometo nada, ni que un carro un día que estén grandes, no, no, no, nada de eso, yo solo les digo que es

la única herencia que yo les puedo dar, el estudio y pues, pues hasta ahorita creo que vamos bien.

[…The way I try to motivate my daughters and the manner in which the motivation is that I don't promise them anything, I always tell them that it is something good for them, a future that they will achieve. For what? So that they don't go through the same thing we go through; and I believe that this is being effective because I don't promise anything, not a car when they are older, no, no, no, none of that. I just tell them, that the only inheritance that I can give them is education, and until now, I believe we are doing okay.]

Reassertion of Cultural Values – Me debes respeto

In a previous example, Emilio described an exchange he had with his daughter, Elena, in which she responded with anger at remarks he made as he tried to learn more about her boyfriend. His basic message to her in his longer response was to tell her to temper her anger because, 'Soy tu padre, me debes respeto' [I am our your father, you owe me respect.] In México, there is an ever-growing youth culture which resists adult intervention. Elena is growing up in this changing México in which someone's role or position in the family does not guarantee certain treatment as it did in the past, when Emilio was Elena's age.

In linking the show of respect with the role one has in the family, Emilio quickly establishes a hierarchy in which the father role is privileged. This move evokes the patriarchy and reasserts the power of the patriarch to whom respect is owed. Although, in fact, Emilio is quite comedido/pendiente (accommodating/attentive) with his children, a disposition that is egalitarian, this reassertion of patriarchy, we learn from Emilio, is effective. Emilio discovers that amid the confusion of his children, confusion brought on by a general distancing of the family members, this declarative statement 'reubica'

[resituates, reorients] Elena, who reconsiders her position and apologizes to her father for getting upset (alterarse).

Representative Parenting

It is difficult for fathers to know 'what is really going on' at home while they are away at work in the United States. At the same time, fathers also expressed concern leaving their wife and children alone, 'sin protección' or 'sin la cabeza' '[the head (of the family)] without protection. Some fathers recruit family members to assist with the parenting of the children and to be clued in on all that is happening at home and especially with the children, and oversee how the remesas are dispersed and spent. Representative parenting is a way to distribute the father's authority in México and can be a way to keep him relevant in cases where the relationship has deteriorated.

Alfredo moved his family from México City to a small town in the coastal state of Veracruz so that his wife and son could live with his elderly and infirm father. The elderly father provides symbolic protection through a male presence while Alfredo's wife can make sure that is receiving appropriate medical care. His son also has the opportunity to get to know his grandfather better. Although the elderly father is a type of 'stand in' for Alfredo, in reality, the arrangement is much more about providing each other with mutual support.

For Emilio, the situation is different. Emilio learned that his wife was sending their daughters to a private school only after the school raised the tuition and his youngest daughter called him to ask for more money. He was outraged that his wife had not asked him for an opinion on the necessity and affordability of private schooling. He was incensed when his daughter scoffed at the idea of attending a public school, and he was

visibly angry as he retold the story.

Emilio, in a long and difficult phone conversation with his daughter, started, "Primero sácate la fresa de la boca antes de hablar conmigo…" [First, take the strawberry out of your mouth when speaking with me…(In México, wealthy children are called 'niños fresas' or simply 'fresas'. Fresa means strawberry; in telling his daughter to remove the 'fresa' from his mouth, he was, at the very least, telling her to stop acting like a snob. More importantly, he was reminding her that they were not members of the upper class, and that a well-brought up daughter does not look down upon those of the lower classes.)]

After this incident, he stopped sending the remesas to his wife, and now sends them to his mother with specific instructions on how much money to give his wife out of each remesa. Had his mother lived in another city, it is uncertain who would be carrying out this task for Emilio. For Emilio, it is much more than just a task; it is a way to reclaim respect and authority. "No lo toman en cuenta a uno, solamente para el dinero" [They don't take one into account, except for when it's about money], he said indignantly, referring to how he had been excluded from this important decision.

Andrés made a verbal list; for him, the only positive aspect of fathering at a distance was the ability to send money on a regular basis, knowing that it was sufficient for the family to meet its needs. The cons outweighed the pros for him, because his physical absence in México precludes him from knowing how truthful everyone is being with him:

> Es bueno, en parte sí porque un los está apoyando económicamente desde acá. Pero no está uno al pendiente de lo que está pasando allá con ellos. No sabe si en realidad están estudiando, no sabe si en realidad están fuera, en una pandilla o una ganga. No sabe como se comportan en

casa…o si están diciendo la verdad en ese momento. Si tienen algún problema con alguien, vamos, uno está allá al 100 por ciento, pero estando acá, podríamos decir que estamos allá un 30 por ciento, porque mandamos para que ellos estén bien pero el otro 70 por ciento no sabemos que está pasando con ellos.

[It's good, in part because one is supporting them economically from over here. But, one cannot devote time to what might be happening to them. One does not know really if they are studying; one doesn't know if in reality, they are outside, in a gang. You don't know how they behave at home…or if they are telling the truth in that moment. If they have some problem with someone, well, one is 100 per cent there, but being here, we can be there, let's say, 30 per cent, because we send so that they can be well, but the other 70 per cent we don't know what is happening with them.]

At the time of Andrés's migration to the U.S., he and his wife had been separated for just four months. It was a sudden decision to leave México for the US, one precipitated by job loss and an uncle's invitation. "Vámonos al norte, voy a salir el miércoles," [Let's go to el norte; I leave on Wednesday], he prodded Andrés. When Andrés boarded the bus that would take him and his uncle along with several other men from their hometown to the border, his sons were mid-way through their school day. When he called home, he said he was working on a trailer with other workers delivering goods throughout México. He wasn't ready to tell them his real whereabouts out of fear that his wife might retaliate by reporting him to the authorities in the U.S., thus jeopardizing his ability to stay to work.

Andrés sent money to his wife for his sons' living expenses as soon as he started working, which was within two to three weeks of his departure from México. He claims, however, that through various communications with different individuals in México, he learned that his wife was squandering the money at bars and dance clubs. He reports that he corroborated this with acquaintances:

> Me enteré no solo por mis papás sino por varias personas que conozco en México, que hablaba con ellas, que la veían en los antros, que andaba con los amigos y todos gastandose el dinero…
>
> [I found out about this not only through my parents, but through various people that I know in México, that I had spoken with, who would see her at the clubs, that she was with friends and everyone was spending all of the money…]

He has since stopped sending her the money, and currently sends funds directly to the his own mother for disbursement to his sons.

> Entonces, dije -'No, pues mis niños andan mal vestidos…Mal comidos…Lo que hice fue hablar con mi mamá, le dije -'¿Sabes que? Te voy a mandar a ti el dinero, tu comprales la ropa, uniformes, libros…colegiaturas, lo que vayan requiriendo y yo, pues, te voy a estar mandando pa' que lo hagas…Pues no le pareció a ella [la esposa]…Ya no estaba recibiendo nada ella…Ahorita ellos [los hijos] son los que reciben… el dinero por parte de mi mamá. Yo estoy acá por ellos, porque, ahora sí que son mis hijos y… ahora sí que los llevo hasta…en el corazón.
>
> [So, I said, 'No, well my children go about poorly dressed…poorly eateen…What I did was I spoke with my mother, I said, 'Do you know what? I will send you the money, you buy them the clothes, uniforms, books…tuition, whatever they need, and I, well, I will be sending you [money] for you to do it…Well, she [his wife]…did not like that at all. She was no longer receiving anything...Now, they [the children] are the ones who receive…the money from my mother. I am here for them, because, of course, they are my children…and for sure I carry them…in my heart.]

Dreby (2008; 2010) describes the tensions created among couples and families by transnational gossip. I wondered what role gossip had played in Andrés's decision to ask his own mother to act as a type of fiscal administrator for his youngest son, a move that shames the mother of his sons as Andrés exerts the only power he has from such a distance of time and space.

Dreby (2010), for instance, found that neighbors often become a source of information for children. One father who had migrated to the United States with his wife

while their children remained in México with family, wanted to break the news to his son about the pending divorce between him and his wife and was taken aback when his son calmly responded, "Dad, I know already. The kids at school told me" (p. 176). In this case, the 'gossip' was a reliable truth; however, even with the marital troubles Andrés and wife had before Andrés's migration to the US, it remains unclear how true the stories about her alleged "debauchery" were.

Andrés has had to learn to rely on other family members besides his spouse in the raising of the children and the distribution and management of the money he sends. To this day, his children and spouse believe that he works in the Oregon-Washington region rather than in North Carolina. He believes this protects him from the vindictive character of his wife. Andrés is comfortable with his decision:

> Entonces, este, ahorita mi hijo el menor está muy tranquilo ya, está dice, incluso mi mamá me dice -'¿Sabes que? Ha cambiado mucho a como me cuentan que era, es muy tranquilo, hace sus tareas, hace, va bien en la escuela, este, ya entró al coro acá con nosotros…'
>
> [Right now, my son, the youngest, is very calm now. My mom even says to me, ¿You know what? He has changed a lot from how they told me he was. He is very peaceful, he does his assignments, he, he is doing well in school, and he has already started choir over here with us.]

Section Analysis

By encouraging an academically struggling son and by providing concrete information about issues impacting young people, like drug use, as well as consejos that convey these same messages, Andrés confidently fathers his sons over the phone, tacitly implying that his authority as a father and his ability to nurture, guide, motivate and influence his sons are not compromised by the fact that he is thousands of miles away.

Emilio, on the other had, has been jostled out of what he thought was a reciprocal relationship with open communication. When he left México, it was with the idea to get a job to support his family. At no time did he think that this would mean everything else would change as well. Had he been in Jalisco, venturing out to work would not result in his wife and daughters making such a big decision without his input. They completely circumvented him, perhaps anticipating his resistance to the idea of private schooling, and in the process, have left him bewildered and saddened by what he saw as their audacious disregard for his opinion. Although an outsider perspective might be that Emilio is acting too punitively in redirecting the remittances, this is the only way that he can reclaim authority and some modicum of respect as a father. In redistributing his authority and presence there through representative fathering, Emilio also reminds his family that he is much more than a bimonthly remesa; he is someone with an opinion and a stake in the family. Alfredo, perhaps, has the best situation of the three. In his case, representative fathering appears to be a mutually beneficial and satisfying arrangement for all involved.

Migration as the Practice of Everyday Life

This is an emerging theme in the fathers' narratives that has to do with the daily migrations fathers make as they go about their day. These migrations are responses to the new geographies they find themselves in and the varying ways various relationships are defined, developed and carried out. At the same, it includes migrations from being a father *en persona* [in person] to a father *a distancia* [at a distance], and understanding that being an immigrant father in a split-household is fathering. This was a surprising

finding; at a future moment, I will return to the interview data to examine it from this perspective of migration as the practice of everyday life.

The phrase 'practice of everyday life' (de Certeau, 1984) refers to people's daily experiences with the world around them, how they engage in it, and their approaches to creating spaces that are not completely 'colonized' by the cultural dominant, but rather are spaces inscribed with "each individual's way of being" (p. 110). I use the 'practice of everyday life' loosely, with only a superficial understanding of de Certeau's complex meaning of the term; still, I find it useful to think of ways that fathers make migration the way they go about in the world, free from the cultural dominant and inscribed with their way of being; I want to speak of 'migration as the practice of everyday life' in ways that are specific to the lived experiences of the fathers in this study.

I am trying to get at something I cannot yet name. Migration as the practice of everyday life is the conscienticized use of their (the fathers') difference. In the case of the Mexican immigrant father, it is reaching an understanding that the things they do, *do* constitute fathering (e.g. migrating, working in an ethnic enclave as an undocumented worker, living far away, sending money home, worrying about their children, etc.). Migration as the everyday practice of life would boldly own this reality and claim it as a way of being in the world and as a model of fathering that resists comparisons to normative models of fathering.

Apropos to this discussion is the notion of 'the border never being left behind' (Navarro, 2008; see also Murillo), as immigrants' lives are marked by differences related to culture and language which are felt everyday. There were two comments that fathers made that led my thoughts in this direction.

All the Time I'm Money

> Y todo el tiempo soy dinero. Todo el tiempo soy dinero.
> [And all the time, I'm money." All the time, I'm money.] (Emilio, immigrant worker awakening)

In this first declaration, "And all the time, I'm money. All the time, I'm money," Emilio said he was referring to his family's view of him as an endless flow of money:

> Yo ganaba mi dinero diariamente …Como se hacía el dinero, es como se le mandaba el dinero…Que únicamente cuando necesitan, me hablan (esposa e hijas)…Y no saben como lo hago. No saben si tengo algún motivo para hacerlo, o que me motiva hacerlo, sea únicamente, es dinero.
>
> [I earned my money everyday…The way money was earned, was the way I sent it to her…Which only when they (wife and daughters) need me did they contact me. They don't knew if I have a motive for doing this [making money] or what motivates me to do it, I mean, it's only, it's money.]

This relationship that he, his wife and daughters have established has a dehumanizing effect on all of them. Instead of engaging as human beings, there is a move toward instrumentality. No longer is Emilio a father, a partner, and a provider, but he is there solely to fulfill economic needs and wants. Emilio has an immigrant awakening that creates a distance to his wife and children, an appropriate response to what Emilio sees as their lack of sensitivity. If he were at home with his family, he would still have very serious economic pressures, but he would feel these within the context of daily family life, with moments of tension and moments of solidarity. As an immigrant in the United States, Emilio finds himself mostly in the company of other fathers like him, who also feel like they are 'all the time money.'

There is something recursive about the two satements, 'All the time, I'm money' and 'It's only money.' In the first instance, there is complete congruence between Emilio

and money; they are one and the same. In the second instance, Emilio reports, "It's only money," after he laments that his family is not interested in knowing how he makes this money or what his motivations are in earning it. 'It's only money' means that they don't understand that, for Emilio, it is an expression of his commitment to them, that it represents a desire to return to México with modest savings stashed away in a cardboard box, that it represents hard work and the love he feels for his family. For him, money is the artifact of all of those things. For his family, 'it's only money.' 'It's only money' is a backdrop for 'you are money all the time.'

The message is, 'you are only money,' devoid of any human context, the social or of any imprint of care and love. This is articulated to his status as an immigrant. He learns through these brief encounters over the phone with his daughters and wife, that this is what happens to immigrants, both with their families and on the job, they risk becoming the site of confluence for labor and money and little else. Emilio was not bitter when he talked about this. He was simply relating insights in a descriptive manner. I had the sense that Emilio had discovered something important about himself, his family and the way their lives function across expanses of time and space. Their lives were changing, and shared experiences were no longer the protagonists of that history. This explained the very different ways they both looked upon immigrant labor and money and was an example of migration as the practice of everyday life.

Estar aquí es luchar allá

> Estar aquí significa luchar allá, por ellos para que ellos estén bien allá. [Being here means to fight there, for them so that they can be well there.] (Andrés, talking about his children and reasons for coming to North Carolina.)

Andrés's conceptualization of the here and thereness of the immigrant parent is powerful and summed up what I was learning from the fathers in this study. His understanding of why he is here, and the simultaneity of presence in two places, is what I am trying to express with 'migration as the practice of everyday life.' Andrés is sign reading; he understands what migration is all about. The migratory experience is a fight, a struggle and, in the case of the fathers, it is a struggle to reclaim their right to father and a space of hope and possibility for their families. Being here while fighting there transforms aspects of their lives in ways that enable them to confront the harsh living conditions they face in the United States and the loneliness experienced from being away from their families. I once asked Andrés if he had ever thought that to be a father meant having to become an immigrant in the United States. He said, 'I don't think anyone thinks that,' and yet the children I interviewed in México said that one has to leave México in order to work. The children were also learning about migration as the practice of everyday life

CHAPTER 7

AN INSIDER/OUTSIDER IN MEXICO

I introduce this chapter in acknowledgement of the movement required to "crossing into" the Central Valley of Jalisco where I interviewed fathers, mothers and children and spent time as a participant observer in the schools, central plazas and, in one case, the 'Casa de la Cultura' [House of Culture], of the rancherías and city that I went to. I present in this chapter a description of the settings and the impressions I gathered there from being together with the families, exploring natural and built spaces, and hearing sounds familiar from previous visits to México and new ones. I do not in any moment liken this to the 'travesía' of the U.S.-based fathers. I simply say that this is another seam I could feel and that required of me a recalibration, one that asked me to attend to my insider/outsider status as I immersed myself in a place that is both the ancestral home of my mother and a site of loving relationships with my extended family.

Valley Girl

My mother is from the Central Valley of Jalisco. She was born in Rancho el Zapote, a ranchería where horses and SUVs compete for the same un-asphalted roads and where a priest warns his diminishing flock of the evils of the 'other' churches. His words spilled out of the long, narrow church, and so did he as soon as the service was over, rushing toward a waiting car and without paying much attention to the children who ran to him.

I had never been to the ranchería, so I wanted to locate the house where my mother was born. Sandra, the assistant principal who helped me gain entry to the schools and communities that I will be interviewing families in, and her family as well as distant cousins from a nearby ranch, joined me there. I could see that one cousin, Ricardo, had been assigned to watch over me. As I walked toward a clearing, I slipped on a large mossy stone, and out of nowhere, Ricardo appeared, extending his arm as an assist to prevent my fall. At that moment, I realized that I was 'la hija de Chavela' [the daughter of Chavela, a form of "Isabel"] and not Marta. 'Through there,' por ahí, I was told, was where 'those buildings might have existed.' I stood on more stones, the round stones of the region—las piedras bola—as they are immortalized in the work of Juan Rulfo, to catch a glimps of the healthy green fields in the distance. This was as close as I was going to get to a site of origin.

It is where my mother lived the first decade of her life. This is where she climbed trees and splashed around in streams, and where she loved eating the freshly gathered squash her father brought from the fields or she herself had picked. An uncle points to a very old tree, 'Sácale una foto, a ver si se acuerda.' [Take a picture of it, let's see if she remembers.].

My mother was nine years old when her mother died. As I looked around at the old willow trees, the round-stone fences, the areas of abandonment, the openness of the fields, it all seemed like a large, engulfing place for a little girl. I forgot, in that moment, how able older siblings are in providing love and cobijo [protection]. I forgot, in that moment, how Mexican children are socialized to be indulgent towards the youngest among them, and my mother would have benefitted from that. I forgot that she had my

grandfather, an affectionate and doting father by all accounts. Still, a mother is also everything.

I took pictures and wrote notes on what people told me about these fields. My mother assured me after seeing the glossy print of the tree that she didn't remember: 'Ya no me acuerdo.' [I no longer remember.]

Getting There

The 13 miles or so between AJ, the base from which I travel to and from the interview sites, San Marcos and San Alfonso, takes less than 20 minutes to traverse by car. On one side of the four-lane highway are the cerros, or hills, and on the other are more open expanses of land used for agriculture. Along the way, there are people walking, driving, on horseback, or waiting for rides on the shoulder or at designated bus stops. At the end of the short ride, a large double arch supported by eight columns displays the rancheria's name in tidy black font. A common 1940's slogan, 'Tierra de trabajo y progreso,' [Land of work and progress] appears beneath the name, referencing an era of great national investment in infrastructure and social programs of post-revolutionary México. The discourse of progreso has been circulated by every Mexican head of state since the 19th century dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz to the present moment and articulated to the economy and notions of national identity. Progreso, as used by politicians, expresses an understanding of progress that is informed by Enlightenment philosophy and modernity, promoting the "sense [that] life [is] in transit from a primitive origin to its utopian end" (Gillen & Ghosh, 2007, p. 33) and the idea that "the future is discontinuous from the past" (p. 53). The fathers in this study have this concept as a backdrop when they use terms like seguir adelante and salir adelante to describe the goals

they have for their children or the role they think education can play in their children's lives.

However, in San Marcos and San Alfonso proper, the school and sugar cane and cornfields were the only sites that could potentially offer a job. The three grocery stores, one fruit and produce market, a vendor of animal feed and agricultural products, one beauty salon, an internet café, several vendor stalls in the plaza, and a mechanic shop are owned and operated by independent families. These businesses might hire individuals to work as clerks or cleaning staff or for small projects, like painting a storefront, but it would be unlikely that they could offer a steady and living wage. Jobseekers might have found work at construction sites for the many buildings under construction, but there were very few such sites at the time I was there. Fathers often expressed in their interviews that jobs were scarce and poorly paid.

Trabajo y progreso en San Marcos and San Alfonso and the surrounding rancherías had been exported. The nearest jobs besides the school and agricultural fields were the maquiladoras, 12 to 20 miles away, depending on which one was hiring. The town of AJ could be considered a potential site of employment, where one could possibly find work in a pharmacy, department store, restaurant, bank, clinic, the police department, or in a social service agency, for instance. In the past, when I visited this region as a child and teen, it was not uncommon for households with the most modest of incomes to hire a domestic worker on a daily basis to help with laundry, cooking, ironing and other tasks of the home. This no longer seemed to be the case; the very poor have migrated to the United States, and those with a slightly stronger economic standing will

not readily hire themselves out to clean or cook for others but instead would rather establish a sidewalk business outside of their home.

Right before the entrance to San Marcos is a bus stop where I would, over the weeks I spent there, come to see several people waiting for regional transit and company-sponsored buses to take workers, mostly women, to do day work at the maquiladoras. To the right of the entrance was a general store and to the left a dirt road that led over the canal to the other side of the ranchería. The unpaved road ahead, a mix of sand, dirt and the large round stones common to the region, went right to the center square, or plaza. I noticed that I was never uncomfortable in the mid to high 90s. I wondered if it had to do with the lack of heat-absorbing and heat-releasing asphalt that covers most U.S. roads.

Along this main entrada [entrance], there is a mix of homes. Some are single-story structures with adobe façades and expansive gardens, while others are two-story stone buildings with colonial-type wrought iron fences. Some structures are falling apart and some are in mid-construction. All of the houses have a patio; flowers grow in some, with tall trees for shade; others have patio furniture set up and more than once I heard soft music and laughter as we drove by. There was a field with sheep, the herder not far away. I observed once how he whistled to them and they followed! The SUVs slowed down as the sheep filled the street. We passed a large tour bus; Sandra explained that the region is home to many bandas [music brass bands very popular in the U.S. and México], which travel around in such buses to perform and compete. 'Es un problema con algunos niños que se van a tocar con la banda, ganan su dinerito y ya no quieren ir a la escuela, o se presentan pero todos develados' [It' a problem with some children who play with the

band, earn a little bit of money and then don't want to go to school anymore, or they come but are sleep deprived'], worried Sandra.

Sandra pointed out the principal's house. Painted sky blue, it sits on a corner, fully fenced with a large carport to the side. Sandra didn't slow down, but I remember seeing dark green foliage in his garden. The water in this ranchería is always warm, 'right from the tap' warm. When Sandra started working in these areas, she wanted to build a house with a pool in San Marcos.

There is one house that by any standard would be considered luxurious. I am told that it was built by an 'hijo ausente' [absent son/daughter], as the government and the church call the men and women who have emigrated. The owner of the house is the proprietor of a chain of Mexican restaurants in Georgia. I immediately wondered if he was somehow related to Emilio's wife's family member, the one's who gave him a job in a restaurant in Atlanta and later helped him find a job in North Carolina. This man, the one with the beautiful home in San Marcos, returns to the ranchería during the summer months for a short stay and again during the Christmas season, when he dresses as Santa Claus and distributes a busload (confirmed by several sources) of gifts to school-aged children.

The house is visibly newer than the others, has an intercom system installed on the rails of its five-foot tall iron fence and an American-type front yard lawn that gives it a suburban look. The house itself is a Spanish colonial painted in a sun-toasted orange hue. There was a motorcycle parked outside the front door, and as we drove by it, Sandra remarked that one of the owner's sons was murdered in the United States. The circumstances surrounding his death remain unclear. Soon, we arrived at a street, on the

corner of which was a small store with a public telephone right outside. It was a short distance from that corner to Secundaria Héroes de la Independencia [Heroes of the Independence Middle School].

That first day I was at the school, there were several women gathered outside holding packages, Tupperware, and small pots. It was about 10:30 in the morning and Sandra explained that the mothers had come to give their children 'el almuerzo.' In smaller communities in México, the traditional meal times are still observed: At the break of morning, a warm beverage and pan dulce [sweet bread] or a tamal are offered. At 10:30 a.m., the almuerzo is served. The almuerzo is a meal similar in size to a serving of ham, eggs, toast, coffee and orange juice.

The mothers were standing outside of the gates of the school, passing home-made almuerzos to their children through the pickets. The children could have also purchased snacks and quick meals at the school. However, casual conversations with the mothers revealed that they felt their home-cooked food was healthier and better tasting than what the school offered and was "comida más fuerte," or more solid food. At both schools that I visited, this became a familiar sight during the remaining weeks of classes before the summer vacation. The image of a mother handing food across a fence to her children lingered with me throughout my stay—a glimpse into the future when many of these children would metaphorically hand food across a fence to their families, as immigrants in the United States do when sending remesas [remittances] back home.

Héroes de la Independencia Middle School

Héroes de la Independencia is a school identified as 'high priority' by the Secretaría de Desarrollo Social (SEDESOL). This status allows for more funds to flow

into the school, but parents are still required to pay a flat fee at the beginning of the year of $300 pesos per child, or $30 dollars, which I was told was a hardship for many families. As I was led to the main office, I had to be careful not to step into blocks and blocks of freshly laid concrete along the school's walkways, part of the improvements being made as part of this federal program.

I was introduced to the office staff and then led to another building, the science lab, where principal, Jaime Amado, was meeting with the science teacher, Ms. Rangel. Mr. Amado was interested in talking about my dissertation, and Mexican politics and history. I learned from Sandra that he was very involved in social movements, and our brief encounter was long enough for me to get a sense of his commitment to social justice. There, I interviewed three fathers, Martín Rulfo, Martín Colunga, and Carlos Heredia and two mothers, Martha Salgado and Alicia Marín and Martha's children, who were attending this school. I interviewed four additional mothers, three more children and three more fathers, in their homes within this same community.

The school is made up of a series of individual one-story buildings, which house single classrooms arranged around a central courtyard. The students, when exiting each classroom, are outside, exposed to the elements. The classroom windows were kept open, and the sound of birds, dogs, the whir of motor-bikes, and the Muzak from the truck delivering bottled water and which was winding its way through the narrow, bumpy streets were all captured on the digital recordings of the interviews. On my first day there, the students had prepared a culminating activity to a year-long study of México's centennial and bicentennial of the Mexican Revolution and Mexican Independence, respectively. The students recreated events from the period that spanned from 1810, the

year México gained its independence from Spain, to 1910, the year of the start of the Mexican Revolution. They reenacted key moments complete with period clothing. The classrooms were set up as museum halls, with a sign at the beginning of the exhibit that read, 'El Museo' [Museum].

Declamación [declamation], a common rhetorical speech form taught in Mexican schools, was used to deliver poetry, speeches and impassioned calls to battle. The students moved from classroom to classroom to view each other's presentations and performances; each room was completely transformed into a battle site, a courtroom, a kitchen, or other relevant scenario. Performances took the form of song, declamación, acting, reading aloud, and chanting, but also an emerging craftsmanship was seen in the elaborate scenarios students had created. As I went to each of the classrooms, I asked some of the students why they had focused on these two points in Mexican history. They shared that they had culminated a study of these events in preparation for the centennial (Revolution) and bicentennial (Independence) celebration of each.

The entire school had also read Pedro Páramo by Jalisco native Juan Rulfo, including non-teaching staff, I later found out. The 1955 novel tells the story of Juan Preciado, who promises his dying mother that he will track down his father, Pedro Páramo, and, as is her wish, 'make him pay' for all that he denied him by being absent all of his life. The novel is set in the period when the agrarian latifundista system of worker and land exploitation was being dismantled by the approaching Mexican Revolution of 1910. Pedro Páramo, an hacendado [Hacienda owner] and the main character, is a power broker in and beneficiary of latifundismo, as the owner of an entire town and also the absent father to the many sons and daughters he has engendered. He readily exploits them

as workers and is completely detached from their suffering. I had also reread the book as preparation for my trip to this region.

There are many ways to interpret Pedro Páramo, and in my frame of mind at the time, when the stories of the fathers I had interviewed in North Carolina were most salient, I saw Pedro Páramo as a symbol of hacienda economics and the absent state. I moved from room to room completely energized by the work of these students.

Secundaria Niños Héroes/Niños Heroes Middle School

To get to Secundaria Niños Héroes, one takes a tree-lined two-lane road about two miles long. Sandra points to the upcoming hill and describes how it can create a blind spot in the road. A young male teacher, much loved by the students, drove into a fallen tree and died just at that rise. The school staff struggled to find a way to tell the students. By mid-morning all of the students had been called to the courtyard and the principal told them what had happened. Complete silence fell upon the gathered students. Sandra remembers that the only perceptible sounds were of chairs being pulled away from desks, a teacher's quiet presentation of a lesson, or the dissolving scratch of lead against paper as students completed their assignments in silence.

The two-lane road leads directly into the ranchería where the school is located. To the left the first building in a row of buildings is a modern structure, a house built by an hijo ausente living in the United States. It is a house made of stone and glass arranged in sharp angles. It nonetheless seems to honor the landscape with its prominent triangularity mimicking the steep hills in the background. Farther off behind a row of houses are the remnants of the hacienda, which I explored with Sandra between interviews. Without guardians or inhabitants, the disrepair of the hacienda was visible throughout. The deep

outdoor tub with its lapis-blue and white mosaic walls that Sandra was so enthusiastic to show me, still impressed through the dirty rain water, soda bottles and other debris it was filled with. The main building where the hacendado and his family would have lived sat to the side of the ranchería next to the church in keeping with colonial architectural planning.

I was unaware that Sandra would later invite me to visit a restored hacienda not too far away from this one. The restored hacienda was nestled in a lush, well-cared for setting with a full view of the hills, and which was rebuilt with a bar, restaurant and spa amentities to draw the wealthy of Guadalajara—and visitors from around the world—to its swanky saunas and imperial guest rooms. There, I would think back to this battered and abandoned building and see in it the potential that the restored hacienda had exploited. I felt and feel instead an intense sadness about that—one hundred years ago, at the height of the Porfiriato, 300 men, all of them hacendados, controlled the Mexican government and the destiny of all Mexicans. The practice of "derecho de pernada" or the 'right to the first night' automatically placed young women at risk of being sexually violated by the hacendado before reaching the age of marriage. The exploitative labor practices of the hacienda system caused men to drop dead in the fields and trapiches [sugar mills] as a result of excessive work, exertion and exhaustion. I see the haciendas as sites of great suffering. To convert these geographies of oppression into zones of leisure and entertainment is the height of arrogance and an expression of disdain for those who lived as slaves so that a handful of others might get rich (see Bartolomé de las Casas, 1552; Rionda Ramírez, 2010).

The ranchería's fairgrounds are nearby, and during the patron saint celebrations, which can last days and even weeks in some localities, families fill the streets and encroach upon what would have been the private gardens of the hacienda. Of course, the ranchería itself is on former hacienda lands, but there are separate tracts of land that more immediately are seen as belonging to the buildings once inhabited by the hacendados.

From this main entrance, the school is one right hand turn and two streets away. I notice that some streets are paved with asphalt, some have pavers, others are made of sand and stone, and still others are plain dirt roads. The uneven development, explained Sandra, is because emigres to the U.S. send remesas [remittances] not just to their families but to the town for specific projects, like paving a street or installing street lighting. She also tells me that priests in these small settlements travel to cities in the U.S. where 'los hijos ausentes' are concentrated. There, appearing in venues such as soccer games or flea markets, the priest appeals to los hijos ausentes to donate money for the patron saint festivities, some of which will be used to beautify the ranchería. As we make the short drive to the school, I catch glimpses of an internet café, a grocery store that advertises that they stock pet food, a clothing store with an attractive display of fashionable handbags, a stationary store (very common in México) and a pastry shop with a café.

This school, like the other schools we had been to, was, along with its ample grounds, completely fenced in, and the fence was locked. Because we were expected, Mario Romero, the school's janitor and father of two school-age children, and the man that I would be interviewing, was at the gate waiting to let us in. Our first stop was to the main office, a large sunny room with several white desks arranged in an L shape. There

were three women and one man working away through piles of folders and papers. There were quiet exchanges between the workers. The principal, a well-coiffed woman in her early to mid-forties, was friendly and welcoming, but showed no interest in understanding my project, unlike the principal at Secundaria Heroes de la Independencia.

This school like the two others I visited is constructed around a central courtyard, and at the end of each class period, students move from classroom, to classroom. When it rains, they get wet as they make their way to their next class. Although I've been to México several times, I was struck for the first time by how indoor and outdoor spaces are fluid and less defined in homes, schools, cafés and many other locations. One is never really inside and never quite outside, rather the spaces are simultaneously both and neither. One is both inside and outside and not, all at once. This architecture left its imprint on me and emerged as a good metaphor for the lives of the fathers in North Carolina who are simultaneously inside and outside of their families' lives.

I interviewed Mario Romero at the school where he works, and in his home. The first meeting was in the science lab that currently functioned as a storage room and teacher meeting space. The black slate counter-top tables were dusty, their rectangular bulk taking up expanses of the room. Beakers, flasks, clamps, pliers, tongs and other equipment sat on top of each other in a sink. The chairs were piled high, and it seemed unlikely that students would be abl to work here. Unlike the other buildings, this one was dark inside, lit only with artificial lighting. Among the furniture, we found a table and two barstool-type chairs and the interview began. There were three female adults who seem to be connected to the school and who sat in a corner to talk. I could hear their voices but not the content of their conversation.

Mario is a small, thin man with dark curly hair cropped close to his head. His dark eyes contrast against his light skin. He wears a crisp, short-sleeved red shirt and neatly ironed black slacks, his work uniform. I would interview Mario two more times in his home, after this initial encounter; the first interview was cut short because Mario had to get back to work. Mario talked about family as an important site of moral training and pedagogy for the children and described his wife as a 'gran mujer,' a great woman.

In addition to Mario, in this same ranchería, I interviewed two mothers, Patricia López and Yoli, and in the same general direction of this ranchería, ranchería San Marcos, and ranchería EC where Mario lives, I was able to interview Juan Pérez, an engineering assistant, who lives in a commune. Later, with Sandra's help, we located two more fathers, Roberto Salazar and Jesús Pérez; they lived in ranchería Rosa Luz and AJ, respectively. The voices of others I interviewed or had conversations with during participant observation also appear here as refracted thoughts, stories, feelings, insights and knowledge.

CHAPTER 8

THE FATHERS IN MEXICO

The narratives of the México-based fathers describe, without the expressed intention to do so, México's political economy, from the latifundismo of the colonial period, or hacienda economics, to clientelism, institutionalism (of Mexican modernity) and sindicalismo (Unions), and the rearticulation of colonial economics to neoliberalism[15] and capitalismo rapáz [predatory capitalism] of globalization. In listening to the fathers, a clear picture emerges of how distinct modes of production insinuate themselves into everyday lived experience and inscribe themselves in ways writ large on the lives of these men for several generations.

In Roberto's story, its articulations are to plantation economics, or the latifundismo of the haciendas and the clientelism of México's current moment. In Mario and Martin´s experiences, influential are the institutions that were forged after the Mexican Revolution such as the ejido system of communal farming and the rise and instituionalization of labor unions. Jesús's life is embattled by the ferocity of neoliberal practice expressed in the global movement of transnational corporations. Finally, there is Juan, who stands alone and directs us to México Profundo and communal and sustainable economies. I have given their own words more prominence.

Roberto Salazar

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[15] Harvey (2005) defines neoliberalism as a "theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free market, and free trade" (2). Harvey goes on to describe the role of the state, which is reduced to protecting private property rights.

> …Mi abuelo fue el capataz de la hacienda de aquí de la hacienda de Rosa Luz
>
> […My grandfather was the capataz, the foremean, of the hacienda here in Rosa Luz.]

Tengo cuarenta y dos años, I am 42 years old and in the days of my childhood, we still had parts here where there was no electricity. It's very different today, what conveniences light gives!

En relación a la familia…In terms of my family, my parents were farmers. We lived from what is produced here, maize, whatever was worked here. It was "a lo pobre, a lo ranchero" [poor and rancher style]. We lived well, to a certain degree, because, you see, the opportunities here are few. You don't have an education, you don't have anything, especially now-a-days, when science is advancing, every day science is advancing. But you got accustomed to how you lived. You adapted to what there was…My parents were always with us. Siblings--we are, let's see, let me remember, some of them live here, right around the corner, two, three, four, five, about eight. Yes, some eight siblings.

…My grandfather was the capataz, the foremean, of the hacienda here in Rosa Luz. I used to talk with him a lot, and I asked him questions. I said to him, "Listen, Abuelo, in your times, What difference is there between the life you had and today's life?" He would say, "Before, we had greater difficulty with transportation for ourselves, getting somewhere to get something, and well, now, well, today it is much better, there are more opportunities, many things." In his moment he owned a home in Ameca...and he established a bank account…And some land titles and other material goods…I didn't see

that…he gave anyone [of his children] an education…they worked farm machinery, like tractors, and managing agricultural lands.

He would say that, and it would confuse me because in his times, well he was the patrón, the boss, and jobs were a lot different. Rough jobs of carrying sugar cane, of planting sugar cane, and many different things. He would tell me that how we live now was much better than before. Who knows what perspective he had, because, like I was saying, he was the capataz of the hacienda and the administrator and for sure he had the hacienda in a very good position…he died already and the two people that followed him, well, the hacienda took a step that almost left it in ruins, just imagine!

You can more or less analyze this and know that the problem of the haciendas, for example, the one here, was ruined by the powder milk industry. The milk industry impacted the work of the hacienda. The hacienda produced milk—it was also a cattle ranch. The milk industry comes in, and they [the hacienda] stop producing the milk here. And here, with the sale of milk, all of the weekly personnel costs were covered. So, one can say that the hacienda goes bankrupt when powder milk comes in.

Since then, the hacienda started to manage other crops, it started to produce cane to pay salaries, but because they didn't have the same earnings as they had had from the milk—because it was a lot of milk—they supplied all of AJ, and from there, they went all over. It started to change, and they started to focus more on the cattle and many people lost their jobs, where there were, let's say 100 workers, now there arere four, five, six people. It changed to something very different than before.

Y pues uno le va buscando. Conozco bastantes maneras de trabajar y ahí va uno escogiendo donde no se vaya uno golpeando tanto en la vida [And, well, you try to figure

it out. I know many ways of working, and you start to choose where life doesn't beat you up so much.].

School, well look,

> … en el tiempo que yo estuve estudiando…éramos muchos (en la familia)…Entonces tenemos muchas privacidades de manejar dinero y pues yo realmente como mire la situación yo me iba de aquí a las…seis de la mañana en una bicicleta…Y se me hacia muy complicado y este, no pude seguir estudiando mas, hasta la pura secundaria.
>
> […When I was in school, we were many (in the family)…So, we had many deprivations of money and well, because I could really see the situation, I would leave here at…six in the morning by bike…And it would seem too complicated, and well, I couldn't continue studying more, just up to middle school.]

Our family is smaller. Every couple's dream is to have children, and when they come, well ¡encantados! [thrilled]. Any problem one has, one has to resolve it and in the way that one can, and I give thanks to God, because my children are healthy and we have lived well. For instance, my wife…

> …ella no trabaja afuera…Ella atiende bien a mis hijos…aquí se la lleva con ellos, yo salgo a trabajar ahorita, hoy en día. Tengo un trabajo, se le nombra de planta porque es constante. Lo tengo aquí en el Ayuntamiento de AJ. Y yo trabajo…en la área de parques y jardines. Tuve la oportunidad que un compadre por medio de las elecciones le dieron trabajo y ahí fue en donde me…invitó a trabajar. Es un sueldo mínimo que gano pero ya se consuela uno. Ando ganando 2500 pesos quincenales (en el tiempo de la entrevista, esto equivalaba $250 dolares EU), entonces ya de ahí por las tardes si hay chancita de ir a ganar un peso o algo ya pa' completar, porque es muy poco dinero…
>
> […she doesn't work outside…She takes care of my children well…she is here with them, I go out to work right now, today. I have a job, it's called 'de planta' [permanent employee], because it is constant. It's here in the municipality of AJ. And, I work…in the area of parks and gardens. I had the opportunity that a compadre (the father of one's god child or the godfather of one's child) through the elections was given a job, and that's where he…invited me to work. It's a minimum salary that I earn, but you feel consoled. I earn 2500 pesos every two weeks (at time of

> interview, this was $250 US dollars), so I go out in the afternoons to see if there's a little chance to go earn a peso or something to complete, because this is too little money.]

If in this region, AJ would have…more jobs…well, people would have less worries about giving their child an education…and various things, as you know, good jobs resolve lots of needs. In middle school I learned a little bit about electronics. They gave six hours a week of what is a radio workshop and, in that way, I learned to use sound equipment for bands, the kinds of sounds that, uh, are used here regularly, let's say…with six speakers…That's the most that I've done, but it's sufficient sound here and I've been leaning on that to sustain myself and my family.

Martín Rulfo

> …Yo deseo para el país, mmm…que sea un país en que haya oportunidades para todos, o sea, tanto como para el que está en el campo como para el que está en la ciudad, que se le ayude al padre de familia, porque sí es duro. Educar un hijo se ocupa muchas cosas…
>
> […I desire that this country, mmm…be a country in which there are opportunities for all, that is, both for those in the countryside and for those in the city, that the father be helped, because it is difficult. To educate a cild requires many things…]

We are seven siblings in our family…I am the fourth [child]. My father worked in the fields. My mother in the home. I grew up in a family, one can say…not poor and with all of our needs met. My father was hardly ever at home, what we shared was always with my mother. My father…we would see him only at night and sometimes not. He worked just about all day; he was always out working.

The house was more important than education…before, one only finished elemenatry school…But my father didn't want the same thing, he wanted us to study [more]…And, yes, we finished middle school…But you lack many things…And that's

when you say—Why didn't I study? Why didn't I do this? … you tell your children, so that they keep…studying, that they have to prepare themselves for the future because life has everything.

[My wife] was in her third year, finishing up middle school, and I had started school in Guadalajara. I would come evenings on the weekends to see her, to talk with her, and then I would go back again to Guadalajara….The moment came when we married, had children—four, two girls and two boys. Now, I see how different my life is, because we are fewer, and I try that they have lo neceario [the necessary things]…Here we say, 'sacar fiado' [to buy on credit]. I don't know if you know what that is?...We handle everything that way, because it is difficult. We cannot, with our salaries, maintain everything.

I was studying a technical career…as electro-mechanical maintenance…But, I didn't finish it, because the material was too difficult for me…My father asked if I wanted to work in a school, and I said no. I told him that I didn't like the job of being a janitor, because it involved cleaning and I didn't like that…I married at the age of 20…that's why he found that job for me…I first went to the United States, and I entered 'de ilegal' [as an illegal].

We always had the hope of…going to the United States…I didn't like it there…I worked in a PVC factory…And, we worked Monday through Saturday, and Sunday was extra time. We almost always took two extra shifts. And then they started to let us go. After that, I started working here. You have a retirement plan here…When I returned from the United States, my father said, 'Son, the money you earned, don't let it all go on other things, start building.' He helped me a little, so I want to to do that for my children.

My mom and my dad went through a difficult time…They suffered because of not having a house. They had to move from place to place.

My wife, she works at home…She works where they package hoja de maiz [corn leaves used for tamales and arts and crafts]…Here, they use maiz and sugar cane a lot. I take my children to the fields and my father ralso. He's happy that I take them to see that…They observe and learn what you need to do with the cane. You use a lot el azadón [hoe], la casanga (cane machete) the pump with the pesticide and the bag with the fertilizer.

The best is having our children, right? Support them in everything, in that they see each other as brothers…I mean, more than anything, something like love, something like that. Because, there were occasions in which I would come home mad, disgusted and I saw how they distanced themselves from me…I think that being a good father is to give them something like affection, understanding, talking with them..

We have a friend, a priest, who has instilled in us that we should read, because he says, as soon as we are done studying, we stop reading. I tell you that to study is a beautiful thing…I like to learn—as a young man, I was looking for people who knew how to play, and I didn't have a guitar. I would borrow one, but the moment came when I had my own. My father bought it for me…he supported me…I wanted to keep learning how to play and I joined a choir, where I learned more. I sometimes play at weddings to bring in a little extra money, and I have even been a waiter at banquets. I can do many things.

Mario Romero

Se traba en algún lado pero va a buscarse por algún otro.

[It gets jammed in one place, but you go look for a way somewhere else.]

Yo viví en un ambiente tranquilo…I lived in a tranquil environment, although with a lot of family, because we were eight siblings. It was difficult for my father to completely support us, but he was always able to feed us. We had to work to study. We all managed to finish elementary school, but middle school and la preparatoria we had to complete while working and studying. I completed middle school in 1986, but I couldn't go on to la preparatoria; the economic conditions wouldn't allow it. We had to go to AJ, which was something that made my situation worse. We were such a large family, it was impossible for my father to support us all... Now, the government helps some way or another, but before it was "ráscate con tus uñas, si puedes" [scratch yourself with your own nails, if you can], and with eight children and ten with my parents, it was extremely difficult.

Once I started working, I completed my preparatoria here in the community. I would barely finish [work] in the evening, and 'vámonos para la escuela [Let's go to school]. It was like a challenge, but I got it done. Later, I wanted to go to the university…I haven't been able to, but I haven't lost hope. One way or another, I want to do it. It gets jammed in one place, but you have to find a way somewhere else.

My grandmother, who I used to visit a lot before she died, I remember that I would ask her, 'What are you doing? And she would say, 'Resting.' 'But you're shucking corn with your hands,' I would say. She would answer, '*Pues es que mientras descanso hago adobes.'* [Well, it's just that I while I rest, I make bricks.'] So, I have this from my grandmother, and no one really knows why I say it, but 'I'm making bricks while I rest.'

I work as a janitor in a middle school. I have a son and a daughter. Right now, we have in our community from elementary school to preparatoria. We have the university…about five kilometers away. This is an option if they want it. We have the idea to give our children options…We give options, and in that way open up a gamut of opportunities. We will be there to support them. I also have other jobs.

My wife does not work…We have had to balance and have seen the need to put the family first. We have valued the family more, because you can live in a mansion, but the family? What type of formación [includes socialization, formal education and what Elenes et al. would call 'pedagogies of the home']. That is our focus. My wife is a preschool teacher's assistant, but she has never worked. She had the bad luck of when she studied, la preparatoria was not required. She had the bad luck of the 'cambio' [the change, referring to changes in the law that require higher levels of education and credentially within the teaching profession]. Among other things, my wife and I also work in the parish [Catholic church]. We give premarital talks, and we tell the couples to talk with their children from conception. This will establish mutual trust and will help…create a solid family.

My father did not have any time. I try to combine time with la formación…My father would be told to do something, and he would do it. I'm a little more rebellious. I would say, 'You are working for free for those people,' because he would work from five in the morning until four in the afternoon, just in the tortillería alone. Afterwards, he had to help the owner with his farm. He did everything. Now, the work he used to do is done by five in the same tortillería. I say this was killing my father. He went too far being good…and in relation to that, I am rebellious…Rebellion helps…no me dejo [I don't

allow myself to be pushed around]…there should be justice. People who pay you, me, others, should be fair. It's that easy.

One time, my daughter told my wife, "Mamá, why doesn't papá go to bring us a lot of money?" My wife said, '…Do you want your father to leave? Sometimes the fathers don't come back…sometimes they can't because they don't have the money…sometimes they get sick, and sometimes they are killed.' My daughter responded, 'Mamá, stop. I want him to stay.' I will look for a way, a more correct way to go, so that there isn't so much risk…because even going with documents there is much risk. To go to stay, no….I say it to many others, 'Si queremos, en México tenemos el oro que allá buscamos en Estados Unidos [If we want, in México we have the gold that we search for over there in the United States.].

Here we have situations in which we see sons and daughters who leave, the mother dies, the father dies…And they don't come…Why? Because of la zozobra [the anxiety] of not being able to go back…And they are used to a life that is holgada [comfortable]. To be here now seems imposssible to them. Tenemos que, pues buscar la papa como dicen [One has to look for the potato, as they say: One has to find a way to eat.].

Here…we now hear the young say, 'Why should I study? I am going to leave. I'm leaving.' It's as if they see themselves already there…They see that in some ways, things go well for those who leave, but they don't see the other part. Are the families going? What sort of life will they have, and where? How are they going to live? On both sides? That's the reality.

Someone came from the United States, a friend. he was telling me, he said, "*No, si vieras que feo allá'*- dice. Dice –*'No oiga, yo tuve que andar sacando comida de la basura para comer.'* ['If you could see how awful [ugly] it is there.' He said, 'No, listen, I had to go around taking food out of the garbage to eat.']. 'Good heavans! You taking food out of the trash to eat, and your wife in her SUV [in this two-street town] driving around all day. Acá hace falta valorar…[Over here, we ned to value…]

Jesús Pérez

> Pero si aquí en México…las cosas se implementaran de bien a bien y hubiera más, más apoyos al campo, más apoyo a los agricultores, a los ganaderos, todo eso, pues yo creo que México se superaría…
>
> […But if here in Mexico…if things could be implemented de bien a bien (done the right way, not incomplete)—more aid for the countryside, more support for farmers, for ranchers, all that—I believe that Mexico would excel…]

Somos nueve hijos en la famila…soy del estado de Jalisco…terminé la preparatoria…We are nine children in the family...I am from the state of Jalisco...I finished high school...I couldn't more...for economic reasons. I would have liked to study at the School of Design Industrial Design. A brother attended the CETIS [a technical institute], the other didn't finish high school. I wanted to go to college but we had financial problems. There was an economic crisis, and we couldn't continue studying... like around 1983, José López Portillo [former president of Mexico] nationalized the banks or something happened but there was a change that affected many families.

I was kind of lazy, too, because at the end of my school day, my parents had a business and I had to help...Studying and working in the family business...well, you never fully get to study because you don't have all the time in the world to say 'I will be studying,' 'I will focus on that,' right? The store was open every day from dawn until dark

But now I am a sales representative of a transnational company...My goal is for my children to achieve a career. Hopefully, we can do it, because this crisis goes from bad to worse... I see the crisis in the company, because there have been cuts and not cuts in personnel but in salaries. For example, you get a raise but at the same time, a month, two months later, you lose the same percentage of customers and sales and you stay at the same salary level.

I have three children, ages eighteen, twelve and six. The oldest, she just finished [high school]. Those are the plans [university], [but]…my job...She is very interested in photography. She is hopeful and more excited than anything else.

I've never been to the U.S., and the family had trouble seeing migration as an option. For example, the family would be here alone, and there will always be someone who bothers them. They are seen as being alone, and you're not aware of what happens. In our family, actually…there is not much communication, because I leave really early and sometimes I'm coming at this hour, almost at nine o'clock at night.

At first, they'd send me out one day and the next day I'd return. Well, I've been there 18 years. They [the family] never saw me. You can say there is no [communication with the school] because of no time. My wife goes...She is dedicated entirely to them. When I come home, she already has everything under control. Being a father, I try to give them all the tools to study. If they need a pencil, a computer, I see the way, how to get it. I give them the tools so that they can study ... And they have the harmonious and moral support of my wife.

Right now I have a salary that is not enough for all expenses. Here, there are no well-paid jobs right now, that I can say, I'll change companies or do this work. The government's desire is that everyone will have almost the same pay.

In the countryside, on the farms, they have a lot of support ... support for the students, because they have no salary and the are only temporary jobs in the field. I think it's because presidents take a lot of money—presidents, governors, from the lowest to the highest—and invest a part, and the other part is for them. There's the infrastructure, poorly made. This is also the fault of the government, all those salaries...in fact, when I started working in this company, it was a good salary. When Fox [ex-president of México] came...they cut our wages…Because they required companies to give a fixed salary to all of those who were on commission only. The company then said, 'Oh well do you want us to give them a salary? We will take 30% of their variable salary and put it as a fixed salary.' So, that was the first hit that they gave us, it was ugly.

Before, the retirement age was at 60 and right now it is at 65. It gets worse day by day we, as workers, we worsen more [our condition]…We, at this company, every two years are going to make new contracts, a review of contracts, a review of salaries and all f that. The company says they can not give us much of a raise, because the government does not allow it, because then everybody would ask for a similar increase. For me, it is uncertain what will happen, what I will get [from the new contracts, salary-wise.].

I work from Monday to Saturday...I have not figured it out, but we can say that 70% of la canasta básica is met [La canasta básica, or "the basic basket" is a set of items, like food, services such as potable water, and other basic necessities, that a family must

have in order to function. Currently, there are 80 identifiable items in la canasta básica mexicana (Jiménez, 2012)]. And debts remain week after week.

I have worked as a bricklayer...Well, I worked as a bricklayer's assistant...that salary was better than any wage I had found there in Guadalajara...You can say it was "mejor pagado, pero bien trabajado" [better paid ... but well worked].There are some jobs que son una farsa [are a joke]. They say they're going to pay so much and do not pay…or when you do the math, the transportation, food—how will I get that much? I'm going work just for transportation and food? I left because I had to come back to my house because my dad had a crisis—he became ill—and I had to take care of the business. I had to come. In Guadalajara, I was getting used to getting paid, you can say en pura plata, pure silver [well paid].

Right now, they have been cutting routes, ya no te sale lo de tu semana [You no longer make your week's salary]. You can say that the future is uncertain for me ... Because with so much happening right now, phone calls that ask you for money [refers to virtual kidnappings and phone extortion], more killing of people.

My son will be entering second grade...If he is interested in studying [University], ¡pues adelante! [move onward]. I will support him as much as I can. I know people who have gone to other parts, Spain, who have gone to work there. What I see is that retirement is not enough here. My parents are retired and what they are given is enough for just a week. And the other three weeks? I give them lo poco que se puede ['what I can afford,' recognizes its insufficiency, 'the little that I can'].

Regarding education, my daughter told me, before she entered high school, 'Hey Daddy, I'm going to need a computer.' And taking advantage that the route [at work] had

lots of ‘ciber’ [computer geeks] I began to ask them, ‘Hey, how do I use a computer? What is it for? Teach me the basics.' The first time I used a computer, I felt stupid. I said, I'm on the computer. But what do I do? What can I do? What, is it for?…I started to ask the guy on other side [of cubicle], ‘Uh, to enter the network, what do I do? 'No, do it this way, hit that.’ And, there I learned. I can say that in a month or so I learned to use it; then, I taught my daughter. She would ask me and I would say, 'Well, let’s investigate.' This is the way that I could help her and…computer classes at school.

Look, to build your own house, we can say is the assurance that if tomorrow, we are no longer with them [the children], que no estén rodando de un lado para otro [that they not have to go around from one place to another]. Here, we built the house together, the whole family. My wife doing the [cement] mix, I as a bricklayer. And this is where you could see the family’s unity.

…I mentioned to you that my daughter was making arrangements for college. Unfortunately, she didn’t get in. She missed it by six points…I had already started researching everything, and I heard on the news that U de G [the university she applied for], accepted only 30% of all applicants. They did the same thing last semester…There really isn’t sufficient capacity at universities for the youth to study… I said, ‘I will support you,' just that inside, I said, 'Let’s see.' You think, ‘I don’t know if I can afford to pay.’ I will, hasta donde pueda [as much as I can].

Here, there’s family unity, but its relative to honesty and trust in each other. What is the United States to México? For some people it is a place of opportunity, as it has been seen for hundreds of years...But everything can end…just like the Roman Empire ended. I think that if the U.S. continues with the policy of discrimination that it started, it

will queder en la ruina [end up broke] sooner or later, because they are discriminating against the very workers! But if here in Mexico…if things could be implemented de bien a bien [done the right way, not incomplete]—more aid for the countryside, more support for farmers, ranchers, all that—I believe that Mexico would overcome…More spaces of opportunity for young people...so that they can study, so they don't go without education. Because in a country with education you can do more than one who does not have these…opportunities, like education...If you do not have an adequate education you are never going to progresar [get ahead, progress].

Juan Pérez

> Estados Unidos nos exprimen, como dicen. A mi lo que siento que nos ha estado dañando son esos patrones superficiales de existencia que tienen allá (en EU) que todo es el dinero, las cosas materiales, y que esos patrones están bien infiltrados aquí en México. Necesitamos un cambio de conciencia para no estar ilusionado por el mundo externo. Nosotros tenemos que influir con nuestras culturas indígenas, para…minimizar toda esa cultura negativa de ellos.
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> [The United States exploits us (literally, "squeeze" us), like they say. What I feel that has been hurting us are those superficial patterns of existence that you have over there (in the U.S.), where everything is money, material things, and that these patterns have been infiltrating México…We need a change of consciousness so that we are not building our hopes based on the external world…We need to influence with our indigenous cultures, to…minimize all of that negative culture of yours.]

We were six siblings, three men, three women. My father worked making floor that is made here, brick mosaic flooring. It used to be made by hand with figures and special marks. He worked in the seminary. I used to help him there in the seminary. It was hectares and hectares, and I liked it because it was very beautiful, and the priests weren't there, and I used to run through there. They had pianos, I would play them. They had books. I would read them. They had magazines. I would page through them. There

was an entire pool for me. I swam in it every day. My siblings would come too. It went on for blocks and blocks, and inside was the brick mosaic factory. The flooring was for the seminaries that were in Jalisco. I learned how to make them when I was 14 or 15, and I used to help him especially during my school vacation.

My father never went to the United States, the idea never even came up. My siblings developed and finished their careers, just one sister did not. No one in the family ever thought of going to the United States, no one. It was never about going to the United States, no one thought about that.

Many did go, and they had tragedies there, a lot of people suffered there, they got into drugs. They had a bad end. I thought of going in 1986, 1985, I wanted to take a long trip to South America, and I thought of going to work in the United States to save money for it. But I didn't go, and I didn't take the trip either. It wasn't my time yet.

I studied the first year of engineering in Ciudad Guzmán and then I had an existential crisis, and I started to feel that I didn't even know where I'd come from or where I was going. I had a deep sadness inside, and at school they don't guide you well. That's why I left my studies, I left because of these anxieties. I started searching. One day, I found a flyer at the social security offices. The flyer talked about a meeting, and I decided to go. That day, the electric power went out in Ciudad Guzman, and I said, maybe the conference has been canceled, but I said, no, I have to go. I went, I found a teacher, a spiritual teacher. Education is for finding a job, developing a career but not to fill the empty interiors, los vacíos interiores. I had learned that the meaning of life was making money and that that would be enough. At home, my mother said, 'Estudia, te

tienes que superar para tener un buen trabajo' [Study, you have to excel in order to have a good job]; I understood that it was to have money

I went to work at an empresa, in Lázaro Cárdenas, Circarsa, one of the biggest empresas of America that makes iron beams, iron rods [like rebar], from extraction of the mineral to the finished product. It was a huge, huge complex, you had to go by bus inside the empresa to get around from one building to the next…I was there for a while. I eventually went to another empresa in Manzanillo. Later, I started teaching. I liked it, but it was somewhat exhausting. Middle school students are restless. I liked explaining things to them, and sometimes I would teach them things about life too. We have a school here, in addition to teaching them the normal education, we also give them alternative things that we teach them…we also teach them disciplines, the spiritual and other things.

My parents were bothered that I left school, and then I took time to find a job, and I became a vegetarian. That was the worse…they burned some of my books, I was bothered so much by that…One day I told them, 'You are my parents, but I am not going to change my ways for you.' I left and made it to Guadalajara by myself. I spent a year away, they didn't know anything about me. When I came back, my father was more respectful…my mother would say, 'Go to your yoga classes, you'll be late' because they were against all of this. They didn't say anything…they respected me more…The conceptions that she [his mother] had for me were different…Later, I learned that they both do yoga now; it was nothing like what the church said, like it's something from the devil. The pope said that they tell people not to do yoga, that astrology is from the devil.

My siblings come, 'Why do you live so far away?' they ask me, 'There's nothing to buy.' Here they sell yogurt, a family does, and cookies. They…want me to buy a house in Guadalajara where there are lots of shopping centers.

I have four children, I had a first marriage and I separated. My children from that marriage are in Spain. Their mother is Spanish. And I have two children here, from the second experience. I didn't think too much about it. I just knew that I had to have this experience of being a father. The way is to have experiences, this takes you to the light.

…a teacher from India said, 'have experiences…it's like someone who talks about an apple…it's not an apple until they bite it…it's the same thing with being a father, to be a father, you have to be a father…the first child is the one that makes the two people parents…the child with screams educates the mother and father to be parents…the child is the first teacher…the sleepless nights, the screaming, is it hunger?…It's not the same to be listening to a teacher as when you dive into it…Life starts you. I have always felt like life guides me, like a protective feeling, life always gives without much effort. When I have looked for a job, someone has…said, I know of a job for you, it's been very fluid. I know others suffer, but I don't. I've always wanted to travel, and I just got back from Ecuador and Peru...I am grateful to God, I feel I receive too much. I work in Teléfonos de México, I have a good salary.

I like going places with the goal of a spiritual encounter, trying to find that light that we all seek. I've gone to Spain…to see my children, I go twice a year to see them. Money has its magic and purpose in the spiritual field…but let's take the money from the black magic to the white magic…we hope that the money will be in the hands of the white magicians and not in the hands of the narco-traffickers and corrupt politicians…the

black magicians make war…the US has a lot to pay for its abuses in Peru, Ecuador, Mexico, everyone will have to respond in heaven. It's just a cause and effect thing…there are lots of good people in the United States…there's individual karma, family karma and country karma.

> Todo los indígenas no vamos unir, había una comunicación, era una sola sabiduría… que unión hay entre las familias indígenas, ellos dan el ejemplo más profundo de la familia…ellos van a ser el ejemplo para todos los pueblos que han perdido de eso.
>
> [All of us, the indigenous, are going to unite, there was one communication, one single wisdom…What unity there is among indigenous families! They give the most profound example of the family…They will be the example for all of the nations who have lost this.]

I like being with the family, I don't like going to parties, ni nada [and other stuff], I like being with the family. Saturdays and Sundays that I don't work, I'm just here with them. The fathers who migrate to the U.S. suffer a lot over there, discrimination. They experience a lot of hardships, insecurity—that if they leave the house they fear that they will be caught by la migra [ICE] and all of those things. They're discriminated by the very Mexicans that went over there, who have a little bit of money, an apartment. I had a cousin who went over there, and he hardly spoke to me anymore, and we used to play as children, we lived next to each other. They think,'Tengo una camioneta grande' [I have a big truck.], I don't know.

[Their families] feel better, and they send them money when before they hardly had anything, not even to eat, and now they can buy a casita [a small house], a small piece of land. That need to have one's own house, a small car…that they never had before. Many, upon achieving that, they feel good, because of the carencia [the lack], and at the same time, because the father has gone over there, the children take on vices when

the father is gone. …The mother, they don't pay much attention to her, the mother is sometimes weaker in temperament.

They feel happy with a television, they never had one before, and they start down the path of consumerism, well, without even being aware of it. Without being aware of the true needs of the soul, although the need to eat and have a roof over one's head, well all of us have that need, and I believe that one doesn't need a lot to have that. It depends, if you want a palace, but a house without a lot of luxuries, you can have, and without sacrificing so much, because there are lots of people who their entire lives as slaves to their work. You see how in the U.S. from morning until night they work, and they never have time to ask themselves other types of questions…who am I?...or to meditate.

I think we come to this earth to know, and the external circumstances and the internal circumstances of each soul sometimes make them take the wrong path of consumerism or to allow itself to be led solely by the external. I do believe that it is necessary to eat and have a place to sleep, but you don't need luxurious beds for that. You can be on a very expensive couch. It will be más cómodo [more comfortable], but comfort is not the same as la felicidad [happiness]. We need a change of consciousness so that we are not building our hopes on the external world.

Here, we focus on living in harmony with the earth, the sky, with man. Being in a religion can take away your ability to heal yourself…I understand that the soul seeks community, el alma es comunitaria. Here, we live as a community:

> Es dificilísimo, es súper difícil. Es un aprendizaje, porque te tienes que ir quitándote todos esos "yo-s" que eres aparte de los demás…es un poco doloroso al principio…Hemos logrado pasos, pero todavía nos queda un largo camino…

> [It is extremely difficult, it is super difficult. It is a learning process, because you have to take away all of your "I's," that you are part of the others…it is a bit painful at first…We have accomplished some steps, but we still have a long road…]

Each soul has its destiny engraved…energy is never created nor destroyed. It is only transformed. You have always been here, if you are here, you have always been. My children will go their own way. I am the only one in my family completely immersed in this and my siblings not. My siblings are good people, but they are not in this. I have a path, and they have taken another.

> Eso me hace sentirme en paz, de que digo que mis niños van a seguir su destino aunque yo no quiera, porque mis niños van a seguir su camino… si son fuertes nadie los van a influir, si son débiles, se van a caer.
>
> Mi compañera tiene más miedo…Yo le digo, 'Tu dales lo mejor que tu tengas. Tu mamá te dio una educación pero ¿a poco eso es todo lo que eres?'
>
> [That makes me feel at peace, that I say my children will follow their destiny even if I don't want them to, because my children will follow their path…if they are strong, no one will be able to influence them; if they are weak, they will fall.
>
> My partner has more fear…I tell her, 'You give them the best of what you have. Your mother gave you an education, but is that all that you are?]'

She worries more than I do. I am at peace. For me, the greatest part of being a father right now is that we are recuperating our original cultures:

> América [el continente] va a resurgir con su sabiduría antigua, la que estamos viviendo en un momento de resurgimiento de valores espirituales en nuestro continente apoyado por la sabiduría de aquí de la tierra de nosotros.
>
> [America [the continent] will resurge with its ancient wisdom, the one that we are living in a moment of resurgence of spiritual values on our continent, supported by the wisdom of our land here.]

Findings and Analysis

Commonalities

Commonalities among this group of fathers include the precariousness of their early lives. With the exception of Juan Pérez, poverty starts within their families of origin and the geographical area they live in. The fathers all had large sibships (this includes Juan); the fathers had truncated educational trajectories (Juan by choice); the fathers' spouses were mostly stay-at-home moms, with the exception of Martín's wife, who was working in a maquiladora; the fathers, with the exception of Juan, had multiple jobs and continued to struggle economically. The fathers, with the exception of Juan, value formal and normative forms of education; Juan values learning and knowledge, but maintains a critical stance toward the co-optation of education by the market.

México's Political Economy

Political economy refers to the how government, the capitalist class, labor and the production and distribution of goods and wages are related and relate to each other; the patterns that are established are among these entities and processes 'political economy.' In México, it seems as if its political economy has been a continuous rearticulation of colonial practice, which, as I discussed earlier, establishes economies of extraction of the wealth of the land, including its minerals, precious metals, etc.; appropriation of knowledge and technologies, and the expulsion of indigenous populations, and destruction of local economies.

From hacienda to mass production

Roberto's story is interesting. Roberto was surprised that his grandfather, the capataz of a large hacienda and a man of power and wealth in command of labor and goods, nonetheless felt that Roberto's life was unfolding with more conveniences than his

own had had. When Roberto expresses wonderment at his grandfather's perspective, one has to attend to his comments on joblessness in AJ. Roberto desires better and more job opportunities and even offers a possible way to achieve this through the leadership of AJ's municipal government. He reports how the minimum salary income he earns has to be supplemented with side jobs such as a serving as a sound engineer for bandas. His ability to get this municipal job, poorly paid thought it might be, is based on clientilism, or el cohecho, as it is referred to in Spanish. In exchange for political support, citizens are offered jobs, goods and privileges.

Roberto discusses the death of la hacienda as the site of lucrative business practices and employment for ranchería Rosa Luz, and names its assassin: The powder milk industry. Roberto cannot understand how his grandfather, possessing all of the might of an era as capataz of the hacienda, believes that things are better for Roberto's generation, one whose future has been compromised through rapid industrialization and a lack of jobs and other opportunities. It is only through the cohecho that he can achieve some viability for his family, quite a different positioning from that of his grandfather's. What is startling about Roberto's account is the fact that hacienda economics still existed during Roberto's youth, an economic system that had been dismantled more aggressively in the 1930s during state expropriation of the land held by hacendados, and that the wealth and power of his grandfather had not lasting benefit for the generations that followed. Roberto remains close to the edges of poverty, with less than a middle school education. His fathering is not in question. During the interviews, he held his infant son and quietly sang to soothe him. He is committed to supporting both of his children throughout their lives in anyway that he can, but the job opportunities for him will only

become more limited as he ages, and plans for the children's education beyond high school remain a question mark.

You have a Retirement Plan Here

Martín and Mario are two fathers who work in a public sector that is known for its union activism. In 2006, a prominent teachers' union fought to have the governor expulsed from the Mexican state of Oaxaca. Through summer-long uprisings, the taking of a radio and television station and civil disobedience, the teachers union along with other groups kept Oaxaca and government oppression in the news. Such are the activities of unions in México, whose membership can reach in the thousands.

Martín, after returning from working as an undocumented immigrant or 'ilegal' [illegal], as he calls himself, immediately availed himself of the institutions of México—namely, unionism—through his father's offer to find him a job as a school janitor. Working in a school made him eligible for joining a labor union. Members of a labor union have certain rights and can apply for credits for the purchase of a house, car, property or other investment. Moreover, workers have a retirement plan. Although his father desired higher levels of education for Martín, his desire to marry young and the subsequent need to provide for his new family took precedence. Martín, limited to jobs that do not require high levels of education which are also low paying, has to supplement his income with other jobs such as waiting tables in banquets, but he was happy to have a retirement plan through his job as a janitor.

Mario also works as a school janitor. He and his wife are very involved in the church, and offer workshops for parishioners. Leaning on these two institutions, and on the many other entrepreneurial projects he and his wife embark on to make ends meet,

Mario along with Martín, emerge as transitional figures from a political economy based on nation building to the rapid neoliberalization of the economy.

El momento neoliberal

Jesús recalls how a national economic crisis had a direct impact on his future; the nationalizaiton of banks affected many families, including his own, thus ending his desire or ability to continue studying. Nonetheless, he managed to get a job in a transnational corporation, where for several years, all was well. Now, as a top earner, he has seen his salary shrink twice as the company cuts salaries. Jesús calls out the government's complicity in the suppression of wages as a way to squelch the possibility of actually getting ahead. His employment prospects are not good, as he admits—there aren't that many jobs available. The greatest impact this slight of hand salary scheme that Jesús is subjected to is on how Jesús begins to reconceptualize the possibilities for his own children. With a show of bravado he is able to enthusiastically support his daughter through the college application process and conceals the doubts he has to actually carry this out. Although Jesús 'sale adelante' through his ascension within the hierarchy of his work setting, he is still not able to help his children scale higher mountains than he did, so to speak. He is snared by the discourse of commodities, profits and projections.

México Profundo

Juan Pérez, with a strong relationship to the supernatuaral and a pressing desire for truth and harmonious living, is open to long conversations about the 'spiritual.' On the day that I interview him, he tells me about fairies that appear after you've purifed your heart, mermaids that accompany you on deep swims, and several of his past lives. He rejects the artificiality of U.S. culture and its invasion of Mexican cultural spaces and

of the Mexican public imaginary. Juan pushes against received notions of progress and salir adelante and calls for a reconsideration of life lived on a human scale. His economic pressures are few because he has a good job and because he does not desire things like late-model vehicles or expensive furnishings. He calls for a conscientization of individuals and invites them to participate in the practices of ancient sabiduria [knowledge]. In so doing, he evokes México Profundo, although Juan does not use this term. México Profundo is a stance, a move that permits one to resist full cultural domination.

Section Analysis

The fathers in México are much more than the reduction I've engaged in here, but I wanted to give emphasis to how economic policies have a widespread impact on entire families and communities across generations. The fathers' narratives point to the intersectionality of history and discourse and the ensnarements that seek to subdue, even squash, human creativity.

Holland et al. (2001) speak of 'history in person' as the "identities-in-practice and the subjectivities they produce" (66). Engagement in everyday life is a mutually constitutive process that begins to inform the making of self. This process involves articulations to other moments. Roberto, for instance, is the poor heir. Normally, a capataz would have power, but not wealth. Roberto, however, reports that his grandfather had both. This wealth was never invested in the next generation in ways that would make the wealth lasting, because in "those days," primaria [elementary school] was enough. What money and properties the grandfather had, were quickly distributed among his children upon his death, but because there were so many children, as was the practice in

rural agrarian communities, the money made several rounds and was soon depleted. Roberto's generation is left with just the story of the wealthy and powerful capataz grandfather. The end of hacienda economics, the structure of rural agrarian families, and the relationship to education at the time his grandfather was fathering, are Roberto's socio-historical DNA, a configuration that places him in a precarious situation in the present moment.

CHAPTER 9

THE MOTHERS AND THE CHILDREN

LAS PLEGARIAS

In this chapter, I opt for what Ellingson (2011) calls "openly subjective knowledge" (p. 599) and ethnopoetics Rothenberg, 1990) as a way to represent the narratives of the women and children in this study. Ethnopoetics receives short shrift in qualitative research, and in handbooks it is talked about in historical terms, as a methodology that leaves as its legacy "investigative poetry" (Hartnett & Engels, 2005 [1999, 2003]). Ethopoetics speaks to the political through poetry and, say Hartnett & Engels, merges "a critique of colonialism, soft anthropology and the poetry of witnessing" (p. 1050). The words belong to the women and children; I added six.

The women and children were intervivewed in México and were all members of split-households. Their husbands or fathers work and live in the United States and, through remesas, provide economic support to their family in México. I interviewed eight mothers and seven children. All but one mother-child dyad allowed me to audio-tape them. I started with the transcripts, coded these and extracted swatches of text based on thematic analysis. I distilled these into the first iteration. I then used the first iteration as the raw material for the second iteration, which I present here.

The inspiration for this chapter came from my visit to Oaxaca City, where I wandered into one of the food markets looking for lunch. What I heard when I walked in

was the polyphonic murmur of the women who "manned" the food stalls as they called out the offerings of the day:

> Mole, mole rojo
> Mole, mole negro
> Mole, mole coloradito
> Un tasajo, Unas Tlayudas,
> Mole, mole almendrado
> Mole, mole chichilo
> Mole, mole amarillo
> Pozole mixteco, Salsa de hormiga, Arroz chepil
> Mole, mole rojo
> Mole, mole negro,
> Mole, mole coloradito
> Chileajo, Escabeche de pulpos, Caldo de nopales
> Mole, mole alemendrado
> Mole, mole chichilo
> Mole, mole amarillo

In reality, the women were each calling out different dishes and promoting their own inventions in addition to the traditional fare; one would have to imagine the above list annuciated by each woman-vendor hundreds of times and simulatenousely with different items called out. As I heard the murmur, I immediately thought of the common prayers said in Roman Catholic worship services, like the Sunday mass. The Our Father, for instance, is a prayer in which all pray outloud. In Spanish-language masses that I have attended, I was always struck by the automaticity of this devotional style. With the same diction and speed and in complete harmony, the parishoners would emit an almost Budhist-like meditation chant—a Catholic Om.

At the market in Oaxaca, competing for tourists who came armed with reviews from Trip Advisor and Lonely Planet, the women tried to draw their attention through this mid-day recitation of the menu. In my fieldnotes, I wrote, "Plegarias de mujeres trabajadoras-buscando la vida vendiendo mole, mole rojo en los mercados de Oaxaca,"

and I had scribbled the list of as many dishes as I could make out in their recital [Prayers of working women—looking to make a living selling mole, mole rojo in the markets of Oaxaca].

I offer the plegarias of the women and then of the children who feel the distance of their men.

La familia en el tiempo de Skype: Tienes que salir de aquí para tener trabajo

Somos una familia muy unida
Con el Skype hablamos
Y con texts

Ya vente ¿o no?
Ya vente ¿o no?
Ya vente. O no.

La misma rutina
Trabajar y trabajar
Y por las noches yo lloraba
Veía el cielo, y decía ¡aquí no se ve igual!
Pensaba en mis papás
Me dabas dinero para mi boleto
pero pudimos regresarnos juntos
y luego otra vez para allá
y luego mis hijos en otra escuela
y luego otra vez para acá
y luego mis hijos en otra escuela
y ya tu allá, y yo acá

Ya vente ¿o no?
Ya vente, ¿o no?
Ya vente. O no.

Mi papá era todo,
Mi esposo se quedó allá
Con los vestidos que hago salgo adelante
Pura Botella, pura botella
Vente de allá
Allá es todo el día trabajar
Allá es puro problema,
Allá es pura botella, pura botella, pura botella

Ya vente ¿o no?
Ya vente, ¿o no?
Ya vente. O no.

Fue muy rápido,
Esposo, padre, dinero
La $an†ísma Trinidad

Los hijos aquí
Los hijos aquí
¡Los hijo mejor aquí!

Tengo miedo tener mis hijos allá
El medio cambia las personas
Las sobrinas regañan a la mamá
Y luego ni llegan a su casa

Los hijos aquí
Los hijos aquí
¡Los hijo mejor aquí!

Ya vente ¿o no?
Ya vente ¿o no?
Ya vente. O no.

The family in times of Skype: You have to leave here to have a job

We are a very close family
With Skype, we talk
And with texts

Come back, no?
Come back, no?
Come back, or don't.

The same routine
Work and work
And at night I cried
I would see the sky and say, 'It doesn't look the same!

I thought of my parents
You offered me money for my ticket
But we were able to return together
and then again head back there
and then my children in another school
and then again head back here

and then my children in another school
and then you there, and I here

Come back, no?
Come back, no?
Come back, or don't.

My father was everything,
My husband stayed there.
With the dresses I make, I make it.
All bottle, all bottle, all bottle
Come back from there
There, all day it's work
There, all day it's problems
There, all day, it's all bottle, all bottle, all bottle

Come back, no?
Come back, no?
Come back, or don't.
It was too fast:
Husband, Father, Money
The holy trinity

The children here!
The children here!
The children are better here!

I am afraid to have my children there
The setting changes people
The nieces scold the mother
And then they don't even come home

The children here!
The children here!
The children are better here!

Come back, no?
Come back, no?
Come back, or don't.

La plegaria de los niños: Hamburguesas y sopa blanca

Mamá eres muy buena
Papá también
¡Texas! Eres Grande

¿Es bonito donde estás, Papá?
¡Es bonito donde estas Papá!
Hay hoteles grandes
¿Dónde vives, Papá?
¿En Texas estás?
¡Traeme una camarita, Papá!

¡Por trabajo!
¡Por trabajo!
¡Por trabajo!

Allá es puro trabajar
Aquí es ir a todas partes
Eres más libre aquí

Mis amigos me lo platican
Mis amigos me lo platican
Mis amigos me lo platican

Mi papá era muy duro conmigo con las tareas
Con los demás ya no, ya estaba allá
Voy a ser enfermera
¿Cuándo vienes, Papá?

¡Quiero verte, Papá!
¡Quiero verte, Papá!
¡Quiero verte, Papá!

Yo sí, yo sí, quiero estar a un lado de con él
Escojamas una fruta y pongamos el pie
en la figura de esa fruta,
y si no puedes, te ponen una piedra, ¡un hijo!
El que tiene más hijos ¡pierde!
¡Vamos a jugar ¡Stop!, Papá!

¡Vamos a jugar ¡Stop! Papá!!
¡Vamos a jugar ¡Stop! Papá!
¡Vamos a jugar ¡Stop! Papá!

¡Juguemos a las luchitas!
¡Vayamos con mis abuelitos!
¡Vayamos a Ameca!
¡Vayamos a comer: Hamburguesas y sopa blanca!

¡Vente ya, Papá!
¡Vente ya, Papá!

¡Vente ya, Papá!

The children's prayer: Hamburgers and white rice:

Mamá you are very good
Papá you too
Texas! You are Big

Is it beautiful where you are, Papá?
It is beautiful where you are, Papá!
There are big hotels.
Where do you live, Papá?
You're in Texas?
Bring me a little camera, Papá!

For work!
For work!
For work!

There it's only work
Here you can go everywhere
You are more free here

My friends say it' so
My friends say it' so
My friends say it' so

My father was very strict with the homework
With the others not anymore
He was already over there
I am going to be a nurse.
When are you coming, Papá?

I want to see you, Papá!
I want to see you, Papá!
I want to see you, Papá!

I do! I do! I want to be at his side.
Choose a fruit and let's put our foot on
the picture of that fruit, and if you can't,
they'll give you a stone, ¡un hijo! [a child]
Whoever has the most hijos loses!
Let's play Stop! Papá

Let's play Stop! Papá
Let's play Stop! Papá

Let's play Stop! Papá

Let's play luchitas [wrestle]!
Let's go see my abuelitos [grandparents]!
Let's go to Ameca!
Let's go eat! Hamburgers and white rice!

¡Vente ya, Papá! [Come now, Papá!]
¡Vente ya, Papá!
¡Vente ya, Papá!

CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

México, Carlos Fuentes (2002) once wrote, es un país de contrastes [is a land of contrasts]. The facts say much about this: It is the country with the highest number of free trade agreements but no market for its own products; the richest man in the world lives there, and 50 per cent of the population live in poverty; it has thousands and thousands of hectares of farmland where nothing is planted; and it has hundreds of thousands of students who want to attend the university but get left out every year (this year 56,000 students did not get into the National Autonomous University of México, la UNAM); and, it is a country in which the population wants to work and are more or less shown the door. Its pueblo emprendedor [enterprising people] are forced to find another way.

México is a hyperspace where these ironies and desbarajustes [confusions, disorders] are par for the course and where the coloniality of power (Quijano) is rearticulated in the labor practices of the contemporary work site. This was evident in the narratives of the fathers. The narratives of the fathers in México show that the country's political economy, which, no matter the name,—latifundismo, sindicalismo, neoliberalism—has been an ongoing attempt to subjugate knowledge, truncate human development, cancel futures and divide families. The neoliberal mantra that the state should not be paternalistic and therefore not engage in establishing a social contract with the citizenry, has all but abolished the gains from the great social movements of post revolutionary México. In quite a dramatic fashion,

the impact of failed economic policies is being seen unto the third generation.

The case of Jesús with his aspirining photographer-daughter is poignant. In the course of two interviews, his daughter's future was changed. In my vivid imagination, I had already imagined her as a Lola Alvarez, a Tina Modotti, or Mariana Yampolsky, photographing México and Mexicans in ways that fulfill our desire for something transcendent. I thought of my own undergraduate studies, in which I had a photography concentration as part of my Communications major. I remembered building my own pinhole camera and never having to worry in a life-changing way if I could buy my next box of pearl-finish British import photographic paper, or if I would finish my studies; Jesús's daughter couldn't even start them.

Apostándole a la familia mexicana, as Abelardo calls it, betting on the Mexican family, is not public policy, there or here. The fathers in this study struggle economically, face diminishing prospects for continued employment, and suffer from a lack of social policies that could help them and their families overcome, and which could include investing in local job creation and local access to education from prekindergarten to college. And yet, like Bob Marley's Redemption Song, the men and their families say, "We forward in this generation, Triumphantly" and make something out of so little. Their lives are a complete meta-ideologizing—they work within and beyond at all moments of the dominant discourses that seek to snuff them out. They reclaim spaces for living, loving, hoping, working and imagining.

Cross-cutting Themes

Solidaridad con el papá que migra - Solidarity with the Migrating Father

The fathers in México expressed solidarity with the fathers in the United States. The fathers there worried about the lack of recognition and honor U.S.-based fathers received for the sacrifices they were making, especially, one México-based father observed, by their wives and children. They also felt that the loss of freedom of the fathers in the U.S., because of laws like Arizona's SB 1070, was a high cost to pay. The México-based fathers were aware of the sufferings of Mexican immigrants in the United States, identifiying these as discrimination, poverty and a loss of freedoms.

They expressed disappointment and anger in the treatment they receive in the United States. Roberto was one of the first to mention Arizona SB 1070 and spoke of how angry he was to learn that the U.S. was treating Mexican immigrants as criminals. Jesús suggested that the U.S. would eventually face its downfall because of discrimination toward the Mexican worker. Mario was equally incensed by family members who remain in México and squander the money fathers send to them, calling out in particular the carefree attitude of a wife who drove around the ranchería in an SUV while her husband went through a period of poverty in the United States.

The women and children had similar thoughts and emotions. The women and children lamented the predicament of the father. A young boy, Marcos, said he did not want to live where his father lives, because it's a place where all you do is 'work and work and have no friends.' His father worked in a body lotion factory in Texas. Alicia, a mother, talked about the her husband's excessive drinking, something he had never done before. He eventually stopped, but she knew that drinking was a result of the imbalanced lives many fathers lead in the United States. She said, 'Over there it's work and work,

and always the same routine. It becomes pura botella (pure bottle, referring to a beer bottle) when there's some time off.'

The women's disposition was one of solidarity with their husbands. They had empathy and concern; it almost seemed that this disposition surpassed romatic love and revealed a deep level of concern for the well-being of their husbands. I have not seen a discussion in the literature of this empathic stance toward the migrating father among family and countrymen.

Valorando la educación – Valueing Education

With the exception of one father, all expressed a desire to give their children an education that would lead to a career. They hoped for changes in Mexican policy that would open more spaces and opportunities so that no one would be left without schooling. Jesús was sensitive to the lack of educational opportunities after his daughter was rejected in the new college admission's process. He quickly understood that universities have not grown to meet the demand. Engaging in 'sign-reading,' Jesús knows that if a country does not have spaces of opportunity, like education, it will never progress. In this moment, Jesús, sees beyond the present crisis his daughter is going through, beyond his current situation, and reads it as a social problem on a national scale, a failure of the state, an indolent state that refuses to live up to its mandates.

Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés saw themselves having to address issues of education on their own; their children still young, did not yet face the cost of university tuition, like Jesús would have faced had his daughter been accepted into college. However, Carlos, Alfredo and Andrés expressed worry and dissatisfaction with overcrowded classrooms, slack teachers and new school policies that seemed to shift school responsiblities onto the

geographies of the home. This theme resonates with the literature; Pribilsky in his work with Ecuadorian fathers and Dreby's studies with Mexican-origin mothers and fathers demonstrate that providing an education for their children one of the primary reasons fathers migrate.

Deseando casa y cobijo para los hijos – Desiring Home and Protection for the Children

All fathers had as a goal to build a home for their children. Martín spoke of it as:

> 'el lugar…de uno, el hogar ahí..Es el espacio donde uno va a crear a su familia, y donde uno va a vivir.'
>
> […the place…one's place, the home there…It is the space where one will raise the family and where one will live.]

For other fathers it was an assurance that their children would not become homeless should something happen to the parents. Having a house had a special meaning. In México, work has never been secure; the house gains salience as a place of shelter and refuge and a hedge against total destitution. The house is a safety net that protects the family from job insecurity and poverty. In some families, building a house is more important than getting an education; this is why it was remarkable to hear Martín say that his father preferred to send his children to school, a decision that allowed Martín and his siblings to have a few more years of study than the previous generation.

The migration literature (e.g. Massey) discusses how the lack of alternate ways of buying a home in México requires that fathers migrate in order to be able to carry out these plans for a home. Emilio, however, rejected the idea of getting a home loan from Infonavid, a government program designed to create homeowernship in México. He criticized the mortgage lending system that made one 'un esclavo' [a slave] of the banks.

When I was in México, there was widespread criticism about the quality of the houses, especially the physical dimensions of some of the more affordable models (90 square meters for a family of four). It seems, then, that even with credit programs and other routes to homeownership, fathers might still be inclined to migrate to achieve the goal more rapidly and in financially less encumbered ways.

El trabajo seguro y renumerado – Secure and Well-Paid Work

During member-checking with Abelardo, the school psychologist and father of two, who also served as an informant in México and who himself holds two jobs, put into context for me why the fathers' narratives had such an intense focus on work:

> Yo creo que platicando, pues, con algunos grupos de orientación de hombres, narran…que la preocupación mayor de un hombre cuando se sube de edad es de perder el empleo, y ser padre tiene muy mezclado la idea…de que tiene que ser proveedor. El hecho de poder apoyar y solventar los gastos es algo de lo más complejo que lo ven cuando pierden. Se desesperan.
>
> [I think that on the basis of talking with men in counseling groups, they narrate...that a major worry as men get older is a fear of losing their jobs, and to be a father includes the very entrenched idea…that he has to be a provider. The ability to support and pay for expenses is something that is of utmost complexity that they see when they've lost [a job]. They become desperate.]

The fathers in this study know that the U.S. has a bigger pool of jobs that are paid with a currency that increases in value when crossing the border. All but one México-based fathers had jobs in dependencies of the government. Juan worked for the national telephone company, Martin and Mario for the public school system, and Roberto for the local municipality. Jesús was the only father working in the private sector, but all had slightly better than the average job they would qualify for given their levels of education and age. They remained in México for varying reasons. Martín had previously migrated

to the United States and did not like it. Juan had never contemplated it, and the other fathers did not see it as an option to leave their families in México while they worked in the U.S. With the exception of Juan, they all worried about their diminishing wages and the difficulties associated with meeting all of their obligations.

The fathers who migrated to the United States in search of a job represent a peculiar type of migrant. They are not the victims of war or famine, or natural disaster but a subjct position created by the persistent neglect by the state. Their employment trajectories started when some of these men were barely school age. As grown men, they face lay-offs, firings, demotions and other unfair labor practices such as age discrimination. Such actions truncate plans and disable them from being able to participate fully in society. When the U.S.-based fathers faced mounting and cumulative pressures at home and had limited ways of addressing these, they opted for migration, knowing that it is a powerful strategy to create a positive impact if not in their own lives, then certainly for their children.

The U.S.-based fathers in this study were all hardworking and had worked consistently for the same employer for at least two or more years. There are reports of fathers who come to the United States to work but who squander the tremendous effort they make to get here and abandon their families. This was not the case for any of the fathers I interviewed. The fathers, for instance, shared copies of their remesas receipts—concrete proof of their commitment to their families.

At the same time, children grow up having to live in a differently defined family without having the full picture as to why this is so. Worrisome is how children will interpret this experience. One child in this study said quite bluntly, that to be able to

work, one had to leave the country. As fathers make headways with regards to feeding, clothing and educating their children, what is less clear, is how children assess the possibilities in their own lives to to develop their talents and interests within México and remain thre. Still, we know that children receive el cobijo [the protection] through their father's work in the United States.

No father ever complained about his workload, here or in México. In the U.S., the men did not make mention of a lack of social and family life, the low wages or the sometimes substandard housing accommodations. Concerns were expresssed about the co-parenting process and some involved real challenges around communication and trust.

The fathers understood the value of their jobs here; they recognized them as the opportunity they couldn't find in México. When I asked if they felt excluded from the childrearing process, Carlos gave the most lucid response: "If I were back home, I wouldn't see my children that often during the day. I would work from 7 in the morning until about 9 at night with a break for the mid-day meal. Work is how I am involved in my children's life."

Navarro, Pribilisky, Mummert and Dreby all speak about this relationship between labor and fatherhood as being the primary impulse for migrating. A father understands that jobs are more scarce in México than they are in the United States, and not wanting to fall short of his responsibilities, will migrate to where the jobs are. This pattern is evident even once within the United States. Carlos, for example, had worked in Dallas, but when that work ended, he had to find another job, and in his case, it was in North Carolina. Emilio migratd from Atlanta to North Carolina, because of a job.

La importancia de la pareja – The Importance of One's Partner

The fathers in México whose wives were stay-at-home mothers felt that this was an important decision that together they had undertaken. For instance, Mario saw his wife as an extraordinary educator who was doing remarkable things to support their two young children's academic learning and moral development. Martín's wife was mostly a stay-at-home mom, but would, as the need arose, take part-time work at the local maquiladora. Roberto felt it was important for his wife to attend to the needs of their children, and all fathers relied on the mother to oversee the children's formación [formal education and family socialization]. There was tacit and complete trust in the ability of the mother to do this and in being the best person to do this, '¿Pues quién mejor lo va hacer? was a question I often heard them say, 'Who else to better do it?'

The U.S.-based fathers with the exception of one father, acknoweldged the invaluable presence of their spouse, whose co-parenting was critical to the succes of this ambitious arrangement of family and household that is the transnational family. All fathers described how they also reached out to other family members for affective support in raising their children. The literature, both the body of work specific to fathering at a distance and other U.S.-focused work on non-residential fathers, highlight the mediating presence of the co-parent who remains with the children. It is her mediation that allows for the child to assimilate this new family formation and understand why it is important to have this particular arrangement and not another.

Final Thoughts

The Women and Children

In this study, I have tried to include the voice of the mothers and children, or los que se quedan, those who stay behind, thus labeled in a recent film about split-

households. The women I interviewed had suffered greatly under the prolonged separation from their husbands. Three of the women had originally migrated with their husbands to the U.S., but worried that their growing children would get involved, either through their own poor choices or coercion, in serious social problems, like drug use. In a move not unlike the U.S.-based fathers, the women found themselves making a decision for the good of the children that resulted in a return migration to México and the physical separation of the family.

The children understood why their fathers were in the U.S., and younger children delighted in the possibility of getting a gift, 'una camarita,' [a small camera], as one child said her father had promised her. There were older children who expressed missing their father. Abelardo said that the children who suffer emotional dislocations the most are those who were accustomed to high levels of paternal involvement. In fact, Abelardo suggested that children who have grown up with a migrating father, periodic and prolonged separation becomes a norm. These children, he noted, might not experience the separation as a "dramatic" moment. However, he did speak of studies within México that report that children prefer to live in poverty than to live without their fathers.

The Myth of Progress

In México I interviewed Guillermo Marín Ruíz, a cultural worker, writer, researcher and collaborator of anthropoplogist of Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, who challenged me to turn to a more philosophical perspective in order to understand Mexican male migration to the United States. He urged me to go beyond a sociological examination in order to find meaning in this phenomenon. Ultimately, I understood that Marín Ruíz was cautioning me about uncritically accepting the discourse of progress as

captured by the fathers' commitment to 'salir adelante' [come out ahead]; their search for 'a better life,' 'un futuro,' and a desire to have a 'casa; and their families' fascination with material goods. This was a critique of modernity, articulated to notions of prosperity and social mobility. The risk for families was to misread the conjuncture, an error which leads to the pursuit of the material through a process of emulation of the wealthy rather than as one focused on the fulfillment of real needs.

Juan Pérez, a father, warned against being lured, distracted and derailed by consumerism. Marsiglio et al. (2000) report that fathering is beginning to inform masculinity. Being a good father means being a good man. It is true that the fathers who come to the United States are interpellated by the dominant discourses around fatherhood, family, masculinity, and what it means to provide. At the same time, Navarro points out that fathers give their children much more than just monetary support.

Yes, the fathers are recruited into the discourse of "progress" and "getting ahead," which in the U.S., and now increasingly around the world, is articulated to a consumer model. The fathers' focus is on education and casa [house], but when I was in these tiny rancherías in the central valley region of Jalisco, I was surprised by the number of SUVs there were in town. In some cases, such a large and rugged vehicle makes sense for the type of roads that one has to traverse and for working in the fields, to transport farm equipment or the harvest. In other cases, the large trucks seemed excessive. However, most of the families I interviewed had modest homes with few amenities. One family had a large screen TV. I did not see any excesses, but I did see mothers whose husbands were working in the United States, themselves working outside of the home to make ends meet. I find the critique weak: fathers migrate to the United States under less than

voluntary circumstances. They don't have much of a choice, and if with their earnings in addition to saving for a house and paying school fees, they also buy a televison or a truck, does not mean that they have bought wholesale into the idea of consumerism.

I turn to the border for this discussion. The fathers in this study do not have the option to choose fronteras [borders] and for them, the border does not really exist. It is simply a decision they make to head hacia el norte, to the north. They are not interested in any immediate manner about the complexity of laws or international borders. They themselves at times move this border, and, at times, the State, a war, or business intrests move them. The fathers—in an act of sign reading—come to recognize borders and their existence as arbitrary and contingent upon a set of circumstantces beyond the fathers' immediate control, but from whose ambiguity they can benefit.

The fathers further know that they do not count on any support from the Mexican government—not economic, not moral and not legal. Any support it might offer is offered through a highly selective process. The fathers' economic contributions are so great that they support the external dependencies of the Mexican government, such as regional consulates. These consulates pursue fathers and other immigrants in order to extract more money from them through a series of 'services' for Mexicans in the exterior; yet the fathers remain invisible and undocumented as nation-builders on both sides of the border. The Mexican government, for instance, knows how much remesa money enters the country but it quibbles back and forth about the number of *Mexicans* who send this money.

The United States is no better; for the last six years it has done much to criminalize immigrants, complicating their lives and deepening hardships by persecuting

them for not having documents that the country could easily extend to them. As the primary purveyors of neoliberal political economy and militarism, the U.S. also wreaks havoc on fathers who stay in México. There are layers of complicity, from direct interventions to indirect ones through U.S. economic tyranny in the region, and now, through the funding of the drug war, that is being seen for what it is, una invasión poco a poco [an invasion little by little]. U.S. economic policies that insist on privatization of México's resources and which displace workers and their families is an assault on the Mexican people. Without wanting to scale rhetoricla heights here, the U.S.-México relationship is disfigured and corrupt and breeding discontent among the citizenry.

These are the things I know.

- The fathers in this study in the U.S. and in México keep their commitments.
- The fathers in this study have faced underemployment and/or unemployment, not because of natural disaster or war, but because of state neglect in generating spaces for living and working and because the state, in capital class unity with corporations and the nation's elite, embrace economic models that weaken worker rights, sell off a nation's wealth and divest from public spaces, such as education and health care.
- Few would criticize Mexican fathers if they were not to migrate. It seems that among fellow Mexicans, there is a real understanding of the suffering many Mexican fathers and other immigrants face in the United States.
- With greater frequency there are less spaces in which to practice being a father. The home is one of these vanishing spaces for fathers who parent at a distance.
- Fathers have knowledge and utilize strategies to overcome the persistent economic hardship they face; one can say that poverty is an existential given for them and their families.
- The fathers have knowledge and they use strategies which assist them in overcoming the possibility of a crisis with respect to one's immigration status.
- Fathers use multiple strategies to ensure the well-being of their children and spouses.
- The fathers reaffirm their right to define work as something that is more than a labor-value exchange.

- The fathers experience changing subjectivities – They are not just breadwinners, they are fathers engaged in affective relationships with others.
- Fathers assume various positions on a continuum of agentic positions under hegemonic oppression and 'light' expressions of state terror, such as social erasure through ageism and manufactured joblessness.
- The fathers are agential actors in shaping their future and that of their children's; theirs is an "enfranchised identity" (Gálvez) as fathers y 'hombres de familia [family men].

The fathers in this study embark full throttle in defense of children and family but more importantly in defense of their freedom and right to imagnine and love. They go about their lives working multiple jobs to provide for their families. They suffer in pursuing such a plan, and even as they successfully carry it out, anxieties about job loss are real, either through unfair labor practices for México-based fathers, and the additional burden of deportation for U.S.-based fathers. The fathers are happy that they can provide; they are not happy about the circumstances under which they accomplish this. They see it as a disgrace that the governments of both countries have such disdain for families, and that this dispositon has a dehumanizing affect on the fathers, their families and broader society. Their being here *is* meta-ideologizing; that is, fathers crossing borders is a working within and beyond the cultural dominant in order to access libratory spaces and be able to defend the family as the site of imagination, courage, hope and love.

Jesús Pérez is a paradigmatic figure in all of this. Jesús is a father who has achieved a position that is promising, but in the moment of reckoning, his job proves to be unreliable—he will not be able to assume the costs of a university education for his daughter. The question is, did Jesús's job when it was a 'good job' help him believe that he could send his daughter to college, and so it became an expectation for her to attend college? Did his job fill him with confidence that he would be able to provide? Do fathers

like Emilio, Alfredo, Carlos and Andrés know that giving their children an education would be out of reach had they had stayed in México, that they would never have a job that could pay such costs?

A concern throughout was my ability to represent the fathers in the study as they represented themselves. I was especially worried about translation both linguistic and ethnographic, and tried to mitigate this by preserving as much Spanish as possible within the text. Ethnographic translation is more challenging. This is where I am not so sure that I 'get it' and therefore, am left wondering about my ethnographic translation of the fathers' lives.

APPENDIX I

Authorization from *La Jornada*

La Jornada

México, D.F., a 26 de julio de 2012

CAJ/33/12

Srita. Marta Sanchez
UNC-Chapel Hill
School of Education
Presente.

En relación a su petición, mediante correo electrónico de fecha 25 de julio del presente año, dirigido a Demos, Desarrollo de Medios, S.A. de C.V., editora del Periódico "La Jornada", me permito informar a usted que esta casa editorial ha considerado procedente su petición, por lo que se autoriza el uso de la reproducción de una caricatura de Rafael Barajas, publicada en La Jornada el 26 de enero de 2011, para ser utilizada en la tesis "Por imaginación y amor – el permanecer del padre mexicano a distancia", publicada en la base de datos ProQuest Dissertastions and Theses (PQDT), que para obtener el doctorado presenta Marta Sanchez.

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