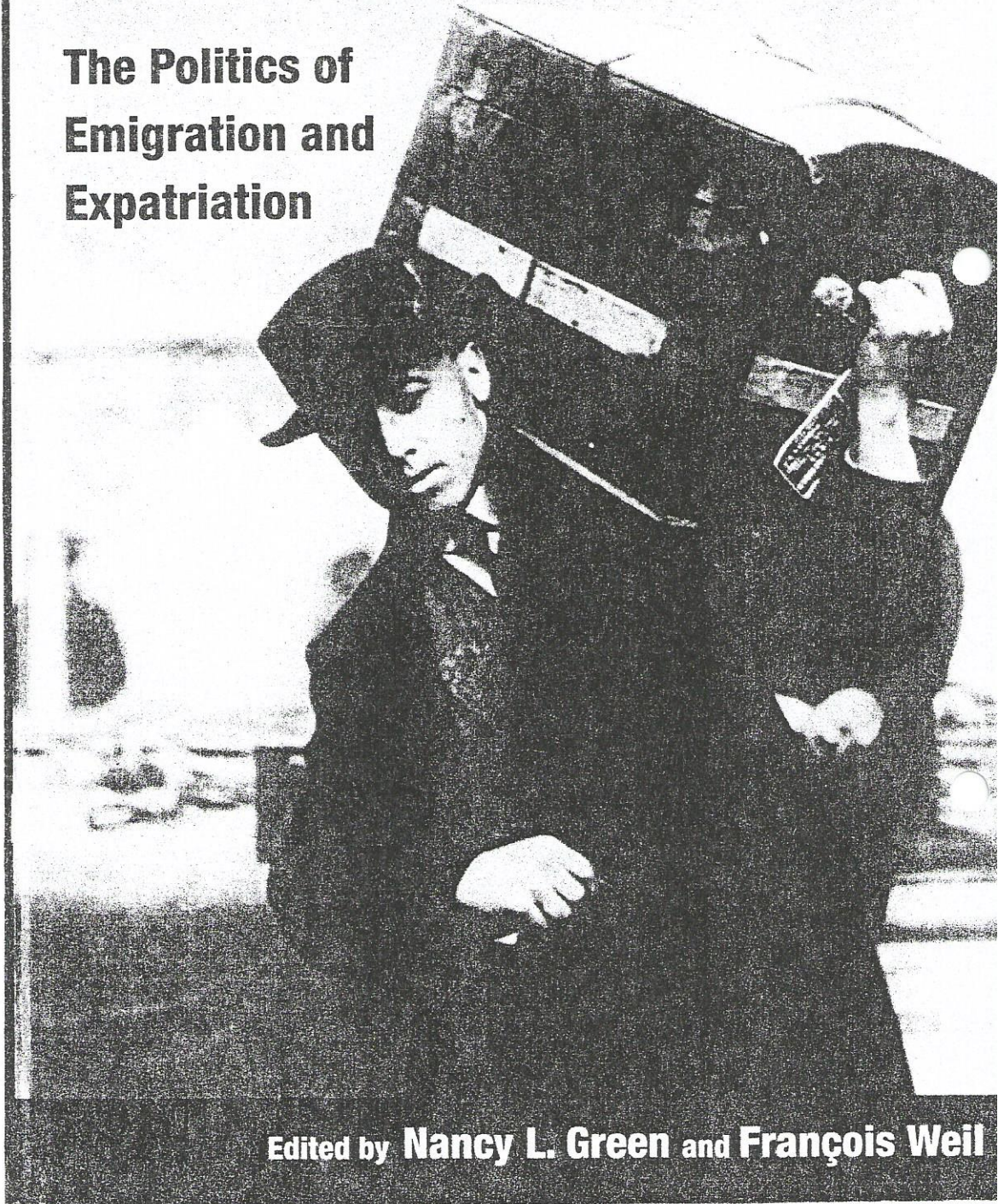


AND THOSE WHO LEAVE

**The Politics of
Emigration and
Expatriation**



Edited by **Nancy L. Green** and **François Weil**

STUDIES OF WORLD MIGRATIONS

Donna R. Gabaccia and Leslie Page Moch, editors

*A list of books in the series
appears at the end of the book.*

**CITIZENSHIP
AND THOSE WHO LEAVE**

THE POLITICS OF EMIGRATION
AND EXPATRIATION

EDITED BY
NANCY L. GREEN
AND FRANÇOIS WEILL

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS PRESS
Urbana and Chicago

CONTENTS

© 2007 by the Board of Trustees
of the University of Illinois
All rights reserved
Manufactured in the United States
of America

1 2 3 4 5 C P 5 4 3 2 1

Ⓢ This book is printed on
acid-free paper.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-
Publication Data

Citizenship and those who leave: the politics
of emigration and expatriation / edited by
Nancy L. Green and François Weil.

P. cm. — (Studies of world migrations)

Includes bibliographical references
and index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-252-03161-8 (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 0-252-03161-X (cloth : alk. paper)

ISBN-13: 978-0-252-07429-5 (pbk. : alk. paper)

ISBN-10: 0-252-07429-7 (pbk. : alk. paper)

1. Emigration and immigration—History.

2. Emigration and immigration—
Government policy.

I. Green, Nancy L. II. Weil, François.

III. Series.

JV6021.C57 2007

335'.2—dc22 2006017846

Preface ix

Donna R. Gabaccia and Leslie Page Moch

Acknowledgments xi

Introduction 1

Nancy L. Green and François Weil

PART I. FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

1. Leaving: A Comparative View 13

John Torrey

2. The Exit Revolution 33

Aristide R. Zolberg

PART II. NATION BUILDING AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE FRAMEWORK

3. Emigration and Nation Building during the Mass
Migrations from Europe 63

Donna R. Gabaccia, Dirk Hoerder, and Adam Walaszek

4. The Liberal Italian State and Mass Emigration,
1860–1914 91

Caroline Douki

5. The French State and Transoceanic Emigration 114
François Weil

PART III: THE COSTS OF EMIGRATION

6. Emigration and the British State, ca. 1815–1925 135
David Feldman and M. Pyge Baldwin
7. Holland beyond the Borders: Emigration and the Dutch State, 1850–1940 156
Corrie van Eijl and Leo Lucassen
8. From Economics to Ethnicity and Back: Reflections on Emigration Control in Germany, 1800–2000 176
Andreas Fahrmeir

PART IV: BORDERS AND LINKS

9. The United States Government and the Investigation of European Emigration in the Open Door Era 195
Dorothee Schneider
10. Migration and National Consciousness: The Canadian Case 211
Bruno Ramirez
11. Migration Policy and the Asymmetry of Power: The Mexican Case, 1900–2000 224
Jorge Durand

PART V: NAMING EMIGRANTS

12. The “Overseas Chinese”: The State and Emigration from the 1890s through the 1990s 245
Carine Pina-Guerassimoff and Eric Guerassimoff

13. Tracing the Genesis of Brain Drain in India through State Policy and Civil Society 265
Binod Khadria

14. Israeli Emigration Policy 283
Steven J. Gold

Contributors 305

Index 311

MIGRATION POLICY AND
THE ASYMMETRY OF POWER:
THE MEXICAN CASE, 1900-2000

Jorge Durand

Translated from the French by Amy Jacobs

Mexico is a country of emigrants that does not fully recognize itself as such. The low national awareness of this reality has been due essentially to two factors: the proximity of the receiving country and the fact that emigration is unidirectional. Eighty-eight percent of Mexican emigrants are bound for a single destination—the United States—and nearly 80 percent of them are concentrated in states that were once part of Mexican territory: California, Arizona, Nevada, Texas, and New Mexico.

Most Mexicans who leave do not break definitively with their country, in contrast to emigrants from other countries; the option of return is always there. Mexican emigrants may well go back for the holidays, to bury a relative, to keep an eye on ongoing personal business, or even to attend a soccer match.

Mexicans have been leaving Mexico in great numbers since the late nineteenth century; emigration is thus both a massive and historically deep phenomenon for this country. In 1926, the anthropologist Manuel Gamio noted an emigrant population numbering close to a million (917,000). The 2000 U.S. census reported 9.3 million Mexican-born immigrants.¹

The migration question is a permanent, fundamental issue in national and bilateral policy. But while over the twentieth century there were both changes and continuities in political discourse on emigration, the Mexican position has always been informed by a fundamental, immutable principle: the constitutional right to freedom of movement. Despite rare exceptions that confirm the rule, the Mexican authorities have never tried to prevent their compatriots from leaving.

Nonetheless, official assessments and arguments with regard to emigration changed several times in the course of the twentieth century, and with

them Mexican policy, which I shall review before examining Mexico's current position in greater detail.

THE "DISEASE" OF EMIGRATION (1910-40)

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Mexican emigration to the United States was already a mass phenomenon. The railway line between the two countries, inaugurated in 1884, undoubtedly enabled the supply of Mexican manual labor to meet rising demand from U.S. employers.

The Mexican authorities of the time did not perceive the departure of Mexicans as a desirable development. They viewed Mexico as a depopulated country with enormous natural wealth, a country that was itself in need of immigrants to exploit its resources. "There is work for all in Mexico, Mexicans and foreigners. Work abounds. What is missing is muscle and spirit, hands and brains," affirmed the *Progreso Latino* in 1906.² Emigration was also viewed negatively because emigrants were going to former Mexican territories that had been annexed by the United States. After the 1845-1848 war with the United States, Mexico developed a policy encouraging Mexicans "on the other side" to repatriate—with little success, however.³

For many early twentieth-century editorialists, the emigrants were traitors to the Mexican cause. The Catholic Church itself was of this opinion, as the then-weakly Catholic magazine *La Epoca* made clear: "The [emigrants'] lack of patriotism swells to enormous proportions when we realize [they] are going to work in, and thereby use their labor to develop, a nation we have always considered our enemy, always thought of as responsible for the greatest misfortunes and sorrows of our nation."⁴

In the first decades of the twentieth century, the Mexican authorities opted for dissuasion and propaganda to rein in emigration. Handbills and posters distributed in villages described the dreadful living and working conditions of emigrants. The worst problem bore the name *enganchadores*, recruiters who paid the future emigrant worker an advance in exchange for his or her pledge to reimburse the sum in work hours. Hiring centers functioned as private businesses, and recruitment was an extremely exploitative system that left matters of hiring, moving, and paying workers, as well as the organization of workers' camps and the assignment of workloads, entirely in the hands of private individuals. The system gave rise to child labor, private militias, extremely one-sided contracts, lifelong debt, and miserable living and working conditions.

The situation worsened with the outbreak of revolution in 1910. Thou-

sands of people fled the dangers and desolation of war in the direction of the northern border. This was the only occasion on which the United States granted Mexicans official refugee status, housing them in military installations until they could find work through a hiring center.⁵

The landscape changed radically in 1917. The Mexican revolution was over, but the United States was entering World War I. America's declaration of war instantly freed up innumerable American jobs. The United States needed manual laborers immediately, so American recruiters began crossing the border to find them, putting pressure on the consuls to facilitate their progress. The Mexican minister of foreign relations declared, "Given that the government cannot put a stop to emigration, they should make all efforts to ensure that their compatriots suffer as little as possible during their stay abroad." In fact, many emigrants without official papers were inducted into the army and sent to the front. An estimated sixty thousand Mexicans found themselves on United States army bases, and nearly fifteen thousand participated in World War I.⁶ Once again, the Mexican authorities turned to propaganda and official information to warn incautious citizens dreaming of striking it rich in the North. The government began issuing passports so emigrants could prove their nationality and thereby keep from being conscripted into the United States Army.

After World War I a new phase began, with its own pattern: economic recession resulting in massive deportation of Mexican immigrants from the United States. The Mexican government's posture was once again reactive. It was incapable of controlling the phenomenon, helpless either to discourage or contain the flow, and in no position to refuse to take back deported compatriots. There were three mass deportations: nearly one hundred fifty thousand Mexicans were turned out in 1921; nearly half a million from 1929 to 1935; and almost forty-five thousand workers between 1938 and 1940, including six thousand in conjunction with repatriation programs organized by President Cárdenas. On all these occasions, the Mexican government had to intervene, assisting re-entering emigrants wherever possible with transportation, food, and lodging costs until they returned to their village of origin or could be resettled elsewhere.⁷ As part of various settlement projects, the idea was floated of granting returning emigrants land and farming tools, but it never amounted to much.

For analysts of the period, among them Enrique Santibáñez, Mexican emigration had ceased to be a "bloodletting" and become a "hemorrhage" in a "sterile" undertaking: "friendly [relations] with the United States have only helped impoverish our people."⁸ For Alfonso Fabila, emigrants were

"touched by the sin of emigration," and this called for radical solutions: the government must "make the dangers of emigration known," and if necessary "use the force of the law to prevent emigration." Emigration was an error, and though the Mexican Constitution established the right of freedom of movement, "this law, so just and rational, masks a latent truth: Mexico is losing its peasants, workers, even its intellectuals."⁹

Manuel Gamio had a much more measured view. He acknowledged that, with its emigrants, Mexico was losing "the effort and collaboration of approximately 9 percent of its productive classes," but he believed that transitory emigration of Mexicans reduced social problems and unemployment. He also cited the fact that emigrants abroad received training and sent large sums of money back to Mexico.¹⁰

Thus, in the first forty years of the twentieth century, Mexican policy with regard to emigration was dissuasive in that it tried to rein in the phenomenon by informing the population of the attendant dangers and difficulties. It was also passive, in that the government did little more than react to situations such as the massive expulsions of the 1920s and 1930s. Some commentators claim that a first, small, *bracero*-like program (see below) was implemented during World War I.¹¹ In fact, this plan did not go beyond an exchange of consular letters and agreements in which mention was made of certain official arrangements for protecting workers and safeguarding their labor rights. There were no bilateral negotiations or official accords between the two governments at that time.

NEGOTIATED EMIGRATION:

THE BRACERO PROGRAM (1942-64)

Paradoxically, the two states began negotiating conditions for the hire of Mexican workers just two years after the massive 1939 and 1940 expulsions. The specter of deportation was still vivid in the memory of rural Mexicans, but there was now a dearth of manual laborers on U.S. farms and industrial centers. This was therefore a propitious moment to negotiate. For the first time in half a century of emigration, the two states sat across a negotiating table to determine the most effective way of resolving the matter of labor supply and demand. The international context had affected the balance of power; the United States was obliged to adopt a negotiating posture.

The Bracero Program was first negotiated in the context of World War II; it was renegotiated annually over the next twenty-two years. The program led to a significant improvement in the Mexican economy and reinforced

the government's populist and nationalist domestic policy approach at a time when nationalizations of the railroad companies (1937) and the oil industry (1939) were having their effect.¹²

In 1942, the United States did not need immigrants as it had early in the century; it needed labor power—"arms" (*braceros*). For its part, Mexico was happy to sign an accord that would attest to its support of the Allied war effort. In this highly particular historical context, Mexico managed to negotiate an agreement that was fairly favorable for its workers, guaranteeing them a work contract, minimum wage, transportation, housing, and insurance. On the other side, the Americans managed to reverse and transform the earlier migration process. These would be male immigrants (to prevent family emigration), of rural origin, whose stay would be both temporary and legal, and who would be employed primarily in farm work.

The first virtue of the Bracero Program was to put an end to the former *enganche* (indentured) system of hiring. Hiring ceased being a private affair; it now had to comply with official, bilaterally determined programs, and the two parties had to follow a signed agreement. The program's second virtue was explicit recognition of the existence of a binational Mexico-United States labor market. Contrary to most American migration laws, which applied to all countries and immigrants, the Bracero Program was a bilateral agreement first proposed by the United States and founded on the mutual interests of the two parties.

For braceros (Mexicans working in the United States), the fundamental problem lay in the contract specification requiring them to stay on a given farm, which prevented them from moving freely and seeking work on the open labor market. Some critics of the program perceived this as a system of semislavery: the worker was tied to a particular employer, and this situation generated abuses.

For the Americans, the main problem was cost and the heavy administrative management the program required. In essence, the Bracero Program amounted to a worker-boss relationship in which two governments intervened and which gave rise to a binational labor market.

Immigration under the Bracero Program also had the advantage of being temporary. Workers could come and go. On this point Mexico and the United States were in full agreement: temporary immigration was the best option for both countries.

The program functioned for twenty-two years (1942-1964) and proved its effectiveness several times. It mobilized an average of 350,000 workers a year, and led to the hiring of a total of 4.5 million persons.

Since both parties were attentive to their prerogatives, this collective binational work agreement, with its associated bureaucracy and costs, had to be renegotiated every year. In 1945, for example, twenty-four hundred people were employed in managing the program.¹³ On the Mexican side there was a great increase in corruption and influence peddling; of course, this directly affected emigrants, now caught up in practices of bribery, "donations," and favor trading.¹⁴

Meanwhile, the various governmental agencies involved had their own conflicts, with clashing perspectives, fears, and sympathies. In Mexico, the minister of foreign relations did the negotiating, the interior minister executed the program, while the minister of labor evaluated, intervened, and interfered. In the United States, a conflict developed among the Department of Labor, allied with the trade unions who, for their part, worked in various ways to sabotage the Bracero Program; the Immigration and Naturalization Service, which, paradoxically, became the program's strongest American defender; and the Department of Agriculture, which supported growers' interests.¹⁵

Another point of disagreement was over where recruiting should take place. The Mexican government wanted it located within Mexico, in zones heavily populated with migrants, rather than on the border, as the U.S. government and American employers proposed, with their eye on transportation costs. Independent of the issue of location, the arrival of thousands of hopeful recruits in one place caused numerous logistical problems that the Mexican government was unable to resolve adequately. For Pedro de Alba, the hiring centers were "one of the most appalling spectacles I have ever seen."¹⁶

The Bracero Program thus had many negative consequences, but these were not all due to the program itself. A major problem was the concurrent increase in clandestine worker movement, a situation that each party blamed on the other. The American view was that Mexico should prevent "illegals" from leaving, while the Mexican government called on the United States to sanction employers who hired them. In Texas, for example, a judiciary measure known as the Texas Proviso authorized North American employers to hire clandestine immigrants without risking any sanctions.

America's massive hiring of seasonal workers, legal and illegal, affected the labor market in both countries. Governors of certain Mexican states, among them Guanajuato, complained of the lack of manual labor and blamed the Bracero Program.¹⁷ In the United States, the opposite view prevailed: the unions continually complained of an overabundant supply

of cheap manual labor that forced local workers to move, brought down wages, and, most important, was used to break strikes.¹⁸

The most recurrent problem, however, and the one that most complicated annual binational negotiations, was violation of work contract clauses by American employers. The initial wartime agreement proved too costly in a time of peace, and the Bracero accords were definitively terminated in December 1964. Mexico's view was that ending the program would only encourage illegal immigration, and that this was an even less desirable situation.

CLANDESTINE IMMIGRATION AND LAISSEZ-FAIRE POLICY

After the American refusal to renew the Bracero Program, the Mexican government placed its hopes in the possibility of a new accord. The government of President Diaz Ordaz (1964–1970) took the problem to heart, and in 1974 his successor, President Echeverria, made an attempt to reach a migration agreement with the Americans. President Gerald Ford declined, however: "It has been proved that this type of accord does not guarantee the rights of Mexican workers."¹⁹ In sum, the United States refused to open the question, arguing that it was for Mexico's own good and the good of the Mexican people.

Above and beyond U.S. government cynicism and rhetoric, Mexican workers themselves were tackling the problem of protecting and winning recognition for their rights. In the 1960s Cesar Chavez, an extraordinary, much-admired union organizer of Mexican origin, set up the United Farm Workers (UFW). On September 16, 1965—Mexican Independence Day—he launched the first of several major strikes in the California vineyards. The struggle was long, but farmworker unionism came out of it greatly reinforced.

Two new types of actors, in addition to the farmworkers, made their appearance at this time: women and urban emigrants. The profile of the Mexican emigrant changed dramatically. As the need for farmworkers fell due to mechanization, the demand for labor rose in industry and the expanding service sector (maintenance, restaurants, hotels, casinos, retail shops). The change was more than a response to new U.S. labor market demands, however; it also reflected radical changes in Mexican social structure. The country was undergoing rapid urbanization, and women, breaking with the traditional propensity to remain in the home, were joining the workforce.

The absence of a specific U.S. migration policy turned any and every

Mexican into a possible illegal worker and placed Mexican workers in the United States in the vulnerable, precarious situation of being fired and deported at any moment. This strengthened the traditional predisposition to return to Mexico, encouraging clandestine workers to invest savings and energy in planning for a better life there. This state of affairs in turn fueled the development of social support and solidarity networks as never before. A bracero had needed neither relatives nor acquaintances in the United States, but both were essential to clandestine immigrants.

The North American labor market now began to be supplied by the workers themselves, and their networks. They were now in charge of recruiting and training new workers, a dynamic that strengthened the system of links with particular communities and regions.²⁰ Meanwhile and similarly, organized crime networks developed at the border, and border-crossing mechanisms were perfected through the help of compatriots and acquaintances, or the intervention of "coyotes," traffickers of illegal workers. Border controls were sparse at the time, and night crossing was relatively easy.

The Mexican government had ceased to concern itself with the migration issue. Emigrants were left to their fate, left to cross the border, and their employers left to treat workers however they would. "Laissez-faire, laissez-passer" seems to have been the attitude in those years. Only rarely, exceptionally, did the Ministry of Foreign Relations intervene to assist and protect Mexican citizens. Certain commentators have dubbed this period "the policy of having no policy."

In reality, the patent lack of political imagination and vision transformed the border into a lawless, ruthless zone. Gangs of thieves loitered around emigrants who were crossing the border, waiting to steal the small amount of money they had on them. Meanwhile, local and federal Mexican police, not to mention customs officials, took charge of collecting *mordidas* (bribes) and extorting money from returning emigrants. Paradoxically, emigrants preferred to be jailed by the American Border Patrol rather than fall into the hands of the Mexican police.

Emigration became a lucrative business. In the 1980s "coyotes" were getting \$200 a head for border crossings and offering their services to hundreds of thousands of clandestine workers. North American money-transfer businesses were pocketing about 20 percent of the money sent back to Mexico, which at the time amounted to nearly \$3 billion annually. Mexican postal workers systematically stole money orders and the cash in sealed envelopes. Foreign exchange offices and banks lifted another 10 percent when

converting dollars into the national currency. And the "policy of having no policy" continued.

The story was different on the American side. In the face of increasing deregulation of the labor market, politicians and the media began displaying concern for the legal status of migrant workers. The Americans were moving toward a profound change in their migration policy: sweeping amnesty combined with strict border controls.

DOMESTIC DAMAGE-REPAIR POLICY

In 1986, the U.S. Congress passed a four-point reform of the immigration law, called the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA).²¹ The four points were sweeping amnesty for clandestine immigrants, a special program for farmworkers, much tighter border controls, and sanctions against employers who hired illegal workers.

The first two provisions functioned well enough: 2.3 million clandestine immigrants became legal, and the United States thereby ensured itself a vast pool of cheap labor. The border-control rules worked only moderately well: border crossing became more difficult and risky, but the flow of clandestine immigrants continued as before. The plan to sanction employers, however, was a resounding failure. The Border Patrol's budget tripled, but only 2 percent was earmarked to combat the hiring of illegal workers. In addition, the IRCA had many unexpected effects: a sharp increase in the flow of clandestine workers, changes in the migration pattern, and a significant rise in the number of deaths at the moment emigrants crossed the border.²²

The American government's unilateral decision and change of pace took the Mexican government, with its wait-and-see attitude, by surprise. This attitude became a problem for Mexico in the 1988 elections, when accusations of fraud were heard from the other side of the border. President Salinas and the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in power realized that several million Mexicans in the United States were demanding justice, assistance, and guarantees for their civil rights. Celebrations of Mexican Independence Day (promoted by Mexico) in various U.S. cities apparently no longer sufficed to maintain the peace, and during the 1988 celebrations, Mexicans in a number of American cities joined together to accuse politicians in their native country of electoral fraud.

It became urgent for the government to readjust its domestic and foreign policies so as to repair the damage done by its effective abandoning of the

emigrants: the latter were considered favorable to the opposition because, after "voting with their feet" by leaving the country, they had been ignored by the Mexican authorities while living in the United States and mistreated upon their return. The PRI had lost its political capital among emigrants. Worse yet, emigrants were no longer showing the traditional patriotism and cultural resistance that had led them systematically to refuse to change nationalities, an attitude that had benefited the PRI.

The Mexican authorities launched several programs to try to repair the damage. In 1990, the Grupo Beta (Beta Group) was founded, a tripartite public safety and law enforcement organization that included some of the country's best police officers. Its mission was to defend migrant rights on the northern border. The Grupo protected emigrants from attack and police extortion and came to their assistance in the event of problems or danger. Member selection was extremely important, as was evaluation of Grupo Beta's performance. The results were swift and spectacular. Violence in the lawless border zone decreased 90 percent. From 1990 to 2000 there were more than twenty thousand arrests, and the Grupo Beta, which began with twelve people, today employs more than one hundred and operates in seven border cities.²³ The Grupo Beta later extended its activities to the southern border to protect immigrants from Central America. Members have not carried out police functions since 1995 and cannot bear arms. According to press reports, however, certain abuses persist, particularly against Central American immigrants.²⁴

Another initiative, the Paisano Program, was aimed at resolving the problems of returning emigrants, particularly the problems arising during the winter holiday season. At first an attempt was made to limit the number of customs inspections and policemen in order to reduce the possibility of extortion. Then the customs "red light" was introduced. A Mexican citizen arriving from abroad has the right to carry \$300 worth of merchandise; above that amount, he or she has to make a customs declaration. With the Paisano Program, the traveler had to turn a switch at the customs entrance, which set off either a red or green light, at random. If the light was green, the person passed; if it was red, he or she was searched. The system proved highly effective.

This was not at all true of the Highway Patrol and Criminal Investigation Bureau police in the various states through which emigrants passed. Officers readily identified migrant vehicles and would stop the driver on any pretext, such as having foreign license plates, or to demand "compen-

sation."²⁵ The Paisano Program is now limited to running complaint windows, but it still makes information and guidance on rights and obligations available to returning Mexicans.

Consular registration cards did not have the hoped-for results either. Migrants were given an official card to show on demand to the North American authorities. The Salinas and Zedillo governments (1988–2000) issued more than a million such cards, but with no simultaneous support program. The cards were meant merely for identification purposes and looked improvised and amateurish. In some cases they failed to mention crucial information such as education level and sex (the latter was supposed to be self-evident from the first name). Moreover, every consulate kept its own separate database, so the information could not be used for more extensive analyses. And there were serious lapses in security. A number of Central American emigrants managed to obtain consular registration cards so that if they were deported from the United States they would be left at the Mexican border rather than sent back to their country of origin.

The Program for Mexican Communities Abroad was instituted with the purpose of establishing ties with Mexicans living in the United States, supporting educational, cultural, and athletic activities, and acting in the areas of health and business. Another program that proved quite helpful to emigrants and their families validated educational level so that pupils could continue their school year upon return from the United States. Some analysts claim this program was developed for purely political reasons, to improve the government's image, but it has come to fulfill a number of functions. For example, authorities in several Mexican states used the validations to establish contacts with emigrants, and particularly with emigrant associations, which led to the founding of a number of *casas*, such as Casa Puebla and Casa Guanajuato.

The URRESA RURESIA UIFSA, an interstate program (based on the Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act, the Revised Uniform Reciprocal Enforcement of Support Act, and the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act) developed by the Ministry of Foreign Relations, assisted families of emigrants with problems of child and family support after divorce or abandonment. The ministry could transmit a legal complaint against migrant heads of household who failed to return to their families or send financial support, and force them to pay the corresponding alimony or child support. This program has limited application, because it presupposes a legal suit, but it has resolved many migration-linked cases of abandonment.

Last, there is the *Iniciativa Ciudadana* program, better known as "tres

por uno" (three for one), which channels emigrant savings into productive investments for their communities of origin, adding contributions from Mexican city, state, and federal authorities. The government has pledged to provide triple matching funds for emigrants' savings; the money is to be used for constructive projects that respond to urgent infrastructure and basic-service needs in the communities of origin. The program, first implemented in the state of Zacatecas, has now been extended to other Mexican states. From 1999 to 2000, Zacatecas emigrants' clubs amassed \$2.8 million for their home communities.²⁶

Like most development projects, the *Iniciativa Ciudadana* has experienced success and failure, as well as problems of management, transparency in fund handling, and liaison among the various bodies involved.²⁷ It has received substantial government support and attracted the interest of international organizations such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank.

The Mexican government was active in other areas affecting emigrants, reaching an understanding with the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service on "orderly repatriation" of arrested minors and sick persons: they must be turned over immediately to Mexican consular authorities and transferred to reception centers in Mexico, where a relative can come to identify and collect them.

In quite a different matter, the government reacted to the IRCA provision permitting legal residents who so desire to acquire United States citizenship. Growing numbers of Mexicans were being naturalized, and the trend accelerated after passage of the 1996 American immigration law stipulating that only legal residents could receive Social Security payments and other benefits. In December 1996, the Mexican Congress approved a constitutional reform permitting Mexicans to maintain dual citizenship. New American citizens who had already given up their Mexican citizenship were granted the right to request restitution within time limits fixed by the law. This reform was well received by the emigrant population. Emigrants no longer lost their rights as Mexican citizens, and *ejidatarios* or *comuneros* peasants retained their usufructuary right to the land. Those who returned to Mexico enjoyed full citizenship rights: the right to vote and be elected; the right to work, buy, or sell goods, etc.

The constitutional reform of December 1996 also allowed for voting "outside voter's electoral district if voter is located elsewhere than in his or her usual place of residence, or abroad."²⁸ Much remains to be done, however, before the right to vote abroad is fully realized. Although the Federal

Election Institute (IFE) appointed a board of experts to analyze different possible modes for voting abroad, its final report, submitted to Congress in 1998, has not yet been debated.

All in all, the last two PRI governments, headed respectively by Salinas and Zedillo, made some progress in the area of domestic policy (and a little in foreign policy) in protecting and informing emigrants, granting them rights, supervising initiatives involving emigrants, and resolving some of the many practical problems they face daily. After two decades of total abandonment, this represented a major and remarkable move forward. Wrongs against the Mexican community living outside the country were in part redressed by granting rights that had been demanded for decades (such as dual citizenship and the right to vote abroad) and by partially resolving domestic problems of corruption and extortion.

At the bilateral level, however, no new proposals on the migration situation were made during this period.

THE NEW MIGRATION AGENDA

In the last decade of the twentieth century, relations between Mexico and the United States were marked by the "war on drugs." America's enemy was no longer the Soviet Union; it was narcotics.

In the 1970s and mid-1980s, drugs arrived in the United States mainly through the Caribbean; their point of entry was usually Florida. The Colombian cartels in control of production and traffic were hard hit by the war on drugs, and many traffickers turned to Mexico, where cartels made their appearance in Tijuana, Juarez, and the Gulf region. The Mexican border, more than three thousand kilometers long, was ideal for developing new drug routes.²⁹ Migration routes, especially through border cities, were soon implicated in drug traffic, with narcotics dealers using emigrants and *burros* ("mules," or drug carriers) to get small quantities of drugs into the United States. Illegal immigration became linked with drug trafficking in the public mind. Fighting drug traffic became as much a part of the U.S. Border Patrol's mission as stopping human contraband.

With drugs and economic accords now at the top of the bilateral agenda, emigrants and their myriad problems placed a distant second, if not third. Even in the case of serious human rights violations, such as the brutal 1996 beating by American police of two immigrants captured in Riverside, California, the Mexican government's attitude was timorous. The Foreign Relations Ministry and the Mexican consulate in Los Angeles protested and sent

the appropriate diplomatic memos, but President Zedillo seemed to excuse the conduct of the American police by mentioning that Central American immigrants at times fell victim to the same excesses in Mexico. The affair went all the way to the Mexican Congress, which reacted energetically, demanding that President Zedillo make public the report conducted by forty Mexican consulates in the United States listing human rights violations committed over the preceding five years. The report had remained confidential "so as not to undermine bilateral relations."³⁰ Clearly, emigrants were seen as an inconvenient matter that provoked discord and got in the way of commercial negotiations.

In the United States, this was the period of the anti-immigrant offensive, particularly in California, where Governor Pete Wilson and his Proposition 187 called for punishing immigrants and their families by denying them access to education, welfare, and health assistance. The Mexican government failed to respond to these moves, which constituted attacks on the emigrant community. In 2000, the arrival of democracy in Mexico gave emigrants some hope. The year began with good news for the Mexican community residing in the United States: the new president Vicente Fox had promised to give new weight and a new direction to the migration agenda. This was not just a campaign slogan. For Fox, originally from the state of Guanajuato, which has a century-long history of emigration, the issue was of great significance and now became a fundamental focus of foreign policy. The new president created a special commission to study the situation of emigrants, and Juan Hernández, a Texas-born Mexican American, was put in charge of the project. For his part, Chancellor Jorge Castañeda was fully familiar with the phenomenon and had good rapport with the Americans. More important still, the language used to discuss the issue began to change. For decades the Ministry of Foreign Relations had used the conventional term "protection" for Mexicans outside the country. Now the official terms became "defense and promotion of the rights of Mexicans abroad."

The Fox government proposed a "complete negotiation of the migration issue with the United States, a negotiation which will examine the roots of the problem, its manifestations and consequences; in which the interest of emigration for our two countries is considered a shared responsibility; and which will establish an ordered framework for guaranteeing adequate legal protection and decent working conditions."³¹ The government's democratic legitimacy would allow it to negotiate from a different position. A new phase was under way.

The Mexican president's political will and Chancellor Castañeda's nego-

tiating skill did produce a verbal agreement—on September 10, 2001. According to Frank Sharry, a Washington lawyer for the emigrant cause, such an agreement was virtually un hoped-for.³² Presidents Fox and Bush publicly declared the political will of the two parties to reach an accord on the migration issue. Mexico's proposal addressed a number of major issues: border security, sweeping amnesty for emigrants living in the United States, a program for temporary migrant workers, extension of the permanent visa program, a project for aiding emigrants' home communities, and a calendar for further discussion to resolve any problems of implementation. The Mexican side went so far as to affirm that the ultimate solution should resemble the European Community, with free circulation among member states.

This promising verbal agreement between the Texas and Guanajuato cowboys also contained crucial points not made public, although their importance was obvious. For the United States, a migration agreement with Mexico presupposed Mexico's control of its southern border to limit the number of illegal Central and South American immigrants crossing Mexico on their way to the United States. The narrowing of Mexican territory at the Tehuantepec Isthmus in the south, an intersection point of highways, roads, and other passageways, was an ideal spot for controlling illegal immigration to the United States. In this connection, Castañeda made a revealing declaration: "In the interests of consistency, but also as a matter of principle, Mexico will ensure that the rights not only of our emigrants but those of Central America and other countries who cross our territory, and who occasionally fall victim to ill-treatment or harassment by Mexican authorities, are fully respected. We will work to guarantee the same treatment for immigrants in Mexico as that which we demand for Mexicans across the northern border."³³ The reality was very different, but here at last was a clear, precise idea of what might be demanded.

Times had changed and the migration issue, taboo during the 1992–1993 negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), reappeared on the horizon. Practice had proven that trade agreements were not enough to reduce migration flows, and border controls had not worked either.

Everything changed on September 11, 2001. Bilateral policy was put on the back burner as the United States prepared to counterattack. The migration agreement was postponed indefinitely. The issue became much more sensitive when the terrorist attacks were linked to illegal immigration. The suicide commando squad was made up of immigrants, some of whom were using false identity papers. They had been granted entry into the United

States on tourist or student visas and stayed beyond the date fixed by the immigration authorities. A lax, inefficient migration policy had let them in. The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), which had extended the visas of two terrorists a month after the attacks, was in the hot seat.

Reform was swift. The INS began a process of radical internal reform, and new requirements were added for obtaining tourist and student visas, types used by many emigrant workers in the United States. Use of false information such as a fake Social Security number (no one can work in the United States without one) began to be penalized. Though there was absolutely no connection between Mexican emigrants and the 9/11 terrorists, Mexicans suffered as a result of the general paranoia. Whereas before they had been termed "illegal" and associated with delinquency and drug trafficking, now they were linked in the public mind with international terrorism. Paradoxically, the only logical way out of this in security terms would have been to legalize those residents without proper papers. But this would have meant granting them certain rights and undermining the country's political and economic interest in maintaining a huge supply of cheap manual labor.

The attempts to reach a migration accord thus came to naught. All that President Fox and the Chancellery were able to obtain from the United States were declarations that the international political context had changed and that immigration negotiations were postponed until further notice.

Nonetheless, there was some progress, including a reform of the consular registration card. As mentioned, this had raised serious problems concerning reliability and security. A plan was conceived for modifying and modernizing the card format. The Chancellery negotiated with various banking institutions to get the card recognized as a valid document for opening a bank account. In early 2003, seventy-four banking institutions accepted the registration card; more than a million cards had been issued in 2002. Emigrants now had access to withdrawal accounts, which meant money transfer costs could be dramatically reduced. The Mexican authorities also undertook negotiations with police departments in various American states for validation of the consular registration card. In January 2003, eight hundred police departments accepted the consular card as legal ID; immigrants were less tempted to use false documents.³⁴ The clearest proof of the impact of the registration card is the fact that the idea has been taken up in other countries, among them Peru, El Salvador, Honduras, and even Poland.

Mexican foreign policy in migration matters has become decidedly more active. The results have not been as good as expected due to the general world disorder. And Castañeda's resignation after two years as chancellor

has led to the suspension of the migration agreement and a great number of practical questions. However, progress in terms of proposals has been significant.

CONCLUSION

The historical record shows that Mexican migration policy has been uncertain and oscillating. The asymmetry in the balance of power between Mexico and the United States is extremely pronounced; this continues to affect the pace of negotiations and explains the United States' unilateralist approach. It also seems to explain the PRI's wait-and-see attitude and its readiness to procrastinate instead of doing what should have been done long ago.

In the last century, there have been successive phases of short-lived progress and longer retreats. From 1900 to 1940, Mexico practiced a dissuasion policy in order to keep workers from departing for its northern neighbor, and a reactive policy in response to American unilateralism in matters of inspection, control, and deportation. The period 1942–1964 was characterized by intense negotiation around the Braceros agreement and systematic defense of emigrant workers' rights, though this was rarely effective. From 1965 to 1990, unilateral American action predominated; Mexico kept a low profile. In 1990, the Mexican government became fully aware of the situation of Mexicans outside the country and enacted major domestic policy reforms while making some progress in foreign policy. In 2000, the approach changed radically, and a new phase began.

The periods of Mexican initiative and action coincide with important moments in national life: the rise of nationalism, linked directly to President Cardenas's nationalizing of the railway and oil companies; World War II, which facilitated negotiation of the Bracero Program; and democratization.

The periods of Mexican retreat coincide with particularly difficult or complicated moments in the country's history. Early in the century, these were the end of the Porfirio dictatorship; the 1910–1917 revolution; and the Cristera War (1926–1929), which broke out in regions with a history of emigration. The second major phase coincided with the 1968 student movement, the crisis of the corporatist system, the end of the economic model of import substitution, and the end of the road for the single party.

It took Mexico a century to realize that it is a country of emigrants; at present more than 21 million people of Mexican origin live in the United

States, 10 million of them born in Mexico. And it took the Mexican government decades to learn how to negotiate and demand respect for the rights of their fellow citizens abroad. The asymmetry in power between the two countries must not prevent Mexico from implementing policy that actively supports and defends the human and labor rights of its emigrants.

NOTES

1. Manuel Gamio, *Mexican Immigration to the United States: A Study of Human Migration and Adjustment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930).
2. Alvaro Ochoa and Alfredo Uribe, *Emigrantes del Oeste* (Mexico City: Conaculta, 1990).
3. Jorge Durand, *Más allá de la línea* (Mexico City: Conaculta, 1994).
4. Ochoa and Uribe, *Emigrantes del Oeste*, 134.
5. Jorge Durand and Patricia Arias, *La experiencia migrante* (Mexico City: Universidad de Guadalajara, 2000).
6. Fernando Alanís, *El primer Programa Bracero y el gobierno de México 1917–1918* (Mexico City: El Colegio de San Luis, 1999).
7. Fernando Alanís, "No cuenten conmigo: El gobierno de México y la repatriación de mexicanos de Estados Unidos 1910–1928," *Mexican Studies/Estudios Mexicanos* 19, no. 2 (2003): 30–35; Durand, *Más allá de la línea*.
8. Enrique Santhbáñez, *Ensayo acerca de la Inmigración Mexicana en los Estados Unidos* (San Antonio, Texas: Clegg, 1930).
9. Alfonso Fabila, *El Problema de la Emigración de Obreros y Campesinos Mexicanos* (Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos de la Nación, 1932).
10. Gamio, *Mexican Immigration*.
11. Alanís, *El primer Programa Bracero*.
12. Luis Gonzalez, *Los días del Presidente Cárdenas* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1981).
13. Robert C. Jones, *Los braceros mexicanos en los Estados Unidos durante el período bélico* (Washington: Unión Panamericana, 1946).
14. José Lázaro Salinas, *La emigración de braceros. Visión objetiva de un problema mexicano* (Mexico City: EDIAPSA, 1955); Durand, *Más allá de la línea*.
15. Kitty Calavita, *Inside the State. The Bracero Program, Immigration, and the I.N.S.* (New York, Routledge, 1992).
16. Pedro de Alba, *Siete artículos sobre el problema de los braceros* (México D.F.: Autor edition, 1954).
17. Durand, *Más allá de la línea*.
18. Calavita, *Inside the State*.
19. Manuel García y Griego, "The Bracero Program," in *Migration between México and the United States: A Binational Study*, Mexican–United States Binational Commission, 3:1215–22 (Austin, Tex.: Morgan Printing, 1998).

20. Douglas Massey, Jorge Durand, and Nolan Malone, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigration in an Era of Economic Integration* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2002).

21. Immigration Reform and Control Act, also known as Simpson-Rodino.

PART V

22. Massey, Durand, and Malone, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors*.

23. Javier Valenzuela, "El programa Beta: La protección de los derechos humanos de los migrantes indocumentados desde la perspectiva policiaca, no convencional," in *Migración y fronteras*, ed. Manuel Angel Castillo, Alfredo Lattes, and Jorge San-tibáñez, 479–509 (Mexico City: Plaza y Valdés, 2000).

NAMING EMIGRANTS

24. *La Jornada*, September 18, 2002, 5.

25. *La Opinión*, January 15, 2003, 7.

26. Rodolfo García Zamora, "Los Proyectos Productivos con migrantes en México hoy," presented at the second conference on international Mexican–California migrations, University of California, Berkeley, March 28–30, 2002.

27. *Ibid.*

28. Leticia Calderón Chelius and Jesús Martínez Saldaña, *La dimensión política de la migración mexicana* (Mexico D.F.: Instituto Mora, 2002).

29. Peter Andreas, *Border Games: Policing the US–Mexico Divide* (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 2000).

30. Rafael Fernández de Castro, "The Riverside Incident," in *Migration between México and the United States*, 3:1235–40.

31. Internal documents of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, 2000, available at <http://www.sre.gob.mx/eventos/fenomenomigratorio/docmigratorio.htm> (accessed May 6, 2006).

32. See <http://www.immigrationforum.org> (accessed May 20, 2000).

33. Internal documents of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, 2000.

34. *Reforma*, January 15, 2003, 5.