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Por la Patria Chica: Indigenous Rebellion and Revolution in the Oriente Central de México, Tlaxcala and Puebla, 1853-1927

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

in

History

by

Gerardo Ríos

Committee in Charge:

Professor Eric Van Young, Chair
Professor Christine Hunefeldt
Professor Everard Meade
Professor Michael Monteón
Professor David Pedersen
Professor Pamela Radcliff

2017

The Dissertation of Gerardo Ríos is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

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University of California, San Diego

2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page……………………………………………………………………. iii

Table of Contents……………………………………………………………………. iv

List of Figures…………………………………………………………………….... vi

Acknowledgments…………………………………………………………………... vii

Vita…………………………………………………………………………………… ix

Abstract of the Dissertation………………………………………………………….x

Introduction: Tlaxcala in the National History……………………………………...1
A Genealogy of Mexican Liberalism and its Discontents……………………….…..5
Reevaluating the Mexican Revolution…………………………………………...21
Re-Indiginizing the Mexican Revolution………………………………………...24
Dissertation…………………………………………………………………….....30
Afterthought…………………………………………………………………….....34

Chapter 1:
The State of Tlaxcala in the Natural History: A Forgotten Narrative………………37
The Mexican Revolution of Ayutla and the Rise of Mexican Liberalism……….52
The Rise of Próspero Cahuantzi…………………………………………………65

Chapter 2:
Dreaming in the Volcano's Shadows: Juan Cuamatzi and
The Indigenous Origins of the Mexican Revolution in Tlaxcala, 1905-1913............ 74
The Conflict between Pueblos and the State Government………………………80
The Late Prósperato: A *Pax Porfiriana* in Tlaxcala?..84
The Apogee and Teilight of Juan Cuamatzi……………………………………103
The Impact of Maderismo in Tlaxcala…………………………………………157
Tlaxcala's Maderistas Reform…………………………………………………169

Chapter 3:
The Eagle Falls: General Domingo Arenas, and the Revolution in
the Los Volcanes, 1914-1917…………………………………………………………175
Prologue……………………………………………………………………….....175
Introduction……………………………………………………………………....176
The Politicization of Domingo Arenas…………………………………………183
Domingo Arenas: The Indian Leader of the Central Sierra…………………….186
Arenismo as a form of "History from Below"…………………………………190
Explaining the Ideology of Domingo Arenas…………………………………..193

The Revolutionary Indigenism of Domingo Arenas……………………………202
Arenas and Zapatismo: A Complicated Relationship…………………………..207
The Twilight of Domingo Arenas………………………………………………245
The Eagle's End………………………………………………………………...259
Conclusion……………………………………………………………………...270

Chapter 4:
Redemptive Agrarianism in a Revolutionary Era: The Land Reform of Domingo Arenas, 1915-1928……………………………………………………….274
Effective Land Reform in the Oriente Central…………………………………284
Conclusion: The Benefits of Revolutionary-era Effective Land Reform………315

Chapter 5:
The Rebel with a Cause? Cirilo Arenas and the Revolution in Central High-Sierra México, 1917-1920……………………………………………..321
Prologue………………………………………………………………………...321
Introduction……………………………………………………………………..323
Cirilo Arenas and the Mexican Revolution………...…………………….........336
Arenismo versus Zapatismo in the Los Volcanes Region……………………...341
The Apogee of Constitutionalist Arenismo under Cirilo………………………347
Emiliano Zapata and the Náhuatl Manifestos…………………………………..352
The War against all comers……………………………………………………..368
The Remobilization and Decline of Arenismo…………………………………382
The Crimes of Execution of Cirilo Arenas……………………………………..396

Epilogue………………………………………………………………………………..433

Bibliography…………………………………………………………………………...450

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Map: The Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala (The Oriente Central de México)……………………………………………………………………………….38

Figure 2: Map: Major Zone of Revolutionary Activity in Tlaxcala from May 1910-April 1920……………………………………………………………………………..39

Figure 3: Photograph Source: Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *Domingo Arenas: Caudillo Agrarista* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Difusión Cultural del Estado, 1961)……………188

Figure 4: Source: Porfirio del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala en los Días de la Revolución* …………………………………………………………………………...189

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VITA

2003	Bachelor of Arts, San Diego State University
2007	Master of Arts, San Diego State University
2009	Master of Arts, San Diego State University
2017	Doctor of Philosophy, University of California, San Diego

FIELDS OF STUDY

Major Field: Latin American History

Minor Field: Colonial Latin America (Emphasis on Ethnohistory)
Professors Eric Van Young and Professor Christine Hunefeldt

Minor Field: Sociocultural Anthropology
Professor David Pedersen

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Por la Patria Chica: Indigenous Rebellion and Revolution in the Oriente Central de México, Tlaxcala and Puebla, 1853-1927

by

Gerardo Ríos

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, San Diego, 2017

Professor Eric Van Young, Chair

This dissertation analyzes the historical roles of indigenous people in the state of Tlaxcala and its border region with the state of Puebla from 1853 to 1927. This time period is characterized by political conflicts, state modernizing projects, widespread rural violence, and autocratic rule. By focusing on the collective and individual historical roles of rural indigenous actors from the central Mexican Sierra Madre range, known nationally as the Oriente Central, this study challenges established discourses insisting that indigenous people were passive "sacks of potatoes" manipulated by state actors. Led by indigenous caudillos who proved resourceful and well-informed of the national political developments, the indigenous peasants from the Oriente Central participated in all of the significant nation-forming conflicts. My analytical lens shifts attention from the nationalistic narrative to incorporate discussions of indigenous communal autonomy amidst a rapidly-expanding nation state seeking legitimacy from abroad and complete

hegemony from within its borders. Village political culture in Tlaxcala began to change with the Revolution of Ayutla (1853-1855), which at its end brought the Liberals led by Benito Juárez into power. Liberal reforms promoted private landholding, the rapid modernization of agriculture, and the end of corporate Indian communities and Church lands. The Indian villages in the central plateau then came under greater attack during the era of General Porfirio Díaz, who ruled Mexico from 1876 to 1880, and again from 1884 to 1911. Consequently, during the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), commanded by Domingo Arenas, an indigenous caudillo from Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala's indigenous peasantry fought for the preservation of land and water rights. Arenas was killed by the Zapatistas in late 1917, but remnants of the movement which survived the Revolution were absorbed by the post-revolutionary state led by northern generals. Through the redistribution of *ejidos* (collective lands) as part of a social project premised on land reform, the post-revolutionary regime transformed high-sierra indigenous people into Mexican *campesinos*. This dissertation shows that the villages and pueblos surrounding the volcanic La Malintzi region rebelled to keep predatory outsiders at bay, providing us with a unique panorama into central Mexico's topographies of rural rebellion.

Introduction: Tlaxcala in the National History

This dissertation examines how liberalism, autocratic rule, and social unrest in the nineteenth century brought about the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920) and affected the lives of indigenous people, the Nahuas primarily, in central-eastern México, an area which is known as the Oriente Central. The central Mexican Nahuas responded to abrupt changes in their traditional corporate social structure in various ways, but this study focuses on their violent resistance through the rebellions they waged and their participation in the decade-long Revolution.

The central Nahuas are the descendants of the Mesoamerican Náhuatl-speaking people, which included the Aztecs, Tlaxcallans, Huexotzingans, Chollulans, and others. Even after being forced to adopt the culture of the Spanish dominators, they retained many of the everyday communal practices, customs, and social mores that defined them as an ethnic group. Romanizing their language allowed the Nahuas to record their stories and everyday culture; but their Codices, which were painted books full of concrete and symbolic language, did not disappear with the Spanish conquest. Nahua cultural continuities throughout the centuries after the conquest have allowed them to remain the largest non-Hispanic linguistic and ethnic group in México. Another main form of Nahua expression, the short poem, for example, persisted after the arrival of the Spaniards.[1] In the post-conquest phase, the Nahuas continued to resort to their traditional medicine to treat or cure ailments, and they worked their *milpas* (agricultural plots) communally. The

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[1] James Lockhart, *Nahuas and Spaniards: Postconquest Central Mexican History and Philology* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991), 7-9; Miguel León Portilla, Jack Emory Davis, Trans., *Aztec Thought and Culture: A Study of the Ancient Nahuatl Mind*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 4-7.

entire Nahua family contributed to agricultural work in the *milpa*.[1] The Nahuas were not the only native group living in the Oriente Central of México from 1854 to 1927, but they were the most dominant.

Within the zone of the Oriente Central lies the state of Tlaxcala and its border area with the state of Puebla, described in this study as the Puebla-Tlaxcala border. This larger border area also contains the Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley. Surrounded by three of the nation's most magnificent volcanoes--Orizaba on the east, the Popocatépetl and the Iztaccíhuatl on the west, and with the volcano La Malintzin or the Matlalcueitl (the nomenclature in the Náhuatl language varies) located within the state of Tlaxcala and the Puebla Valley--this area of the Oriente Central is known as the Los Volcanes. During the nineteenth century, two significant events, the victory of the Ayutla revolutionaries from Guerrero led by Juan Álvarez in 1855, and the political ascent of the liberals led by Benito Juárez in 1857, began altering the fate of the region's Indians. Believing that communal landholding was antithetical to their aim to modernize México, the liberals began dismantling indigeneous communities. The liberals had argued that unlike their conservative opponents and the Church, who kept the nation's Indians in a colonized state, they would convert indigenous peasants into private landholders. Indians resisted the state's efforts to privatize their lands, and in the highlands of the La Malintzin indigenous peasants began to oppose the state through organized brigandage and rebellion as early as 1858.

[1] Catherine Good Eshelman and Dominique Raby, Eds., Good Eshelman, "Introducción al volume y a lose studios etnográficos," in *Múltiples formas de ser Nahuas: Miradas antropológicas hacia representaciones, conceptos y prácticas* (Zamora: El Colegio de Michoacán, 2015), 16-19.

The aspirations of the liberals were frustrated by the the Reform War from 1857 to 1860 and the French Intervention from 1861 to 1867, and then halted completely with the political ascent of General Porfirio Díaz in 1876. In Tlaxcala, the indigenous Nahuas lost more of their communally owned lands to a greater extent during the governorship of Colonel Próspero Cahuantzi (1885-1911), a local Indian notable who helped Díaz seize national power with the Revolution of Tuxtepec in 1876. Like Díaz, his patron, Cahuantzi was a military modernizer and a self-proclaimed liberal. The governor, however, did not hesitate to jail, torture, exile, and murder his political opponents, especially those who defied him openly. His *mano dura* (firm hand), or iron hand style of politics engendered great discontent among the indigenous peasantry. The long political tenure of Díaz has been described as a *Pax Porfiriana* (a Porfirian peace), but trouble brewed on the ground in Tlaxcala after 1905, when thousands of Indian peasants began to defend their lands in the courts. Then on 26 May 1910 a native of Tlaxcala, Juan Cuamatzi led a rebellion to depose the governor. This movement, which I have identified as Cuamatzismo, spread to the larger Puebla Valley, to Cholula and Huejotzingo, where the Indian peasants also contended with their own state governor, General Mucio Martínez, also a close ally of Díaz.

With the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution in November 1910, Cuamatzi and his comrades, who included many socialists, became followers of Francisco I. Madero, but Cuamatzi was executed in the winter of 1911 and Madero murdered in February of 1913. As a response to the federal military's near annihilation of the Maderistas in Tlaxcala and in the wider Puebla Valley, a multiclass and multi ethnic coalition arose in the sierras of the volcano La Malintzin to oppose General Victoriano Huerta's regime in

1913 and 1914. People from the indigenous villages who had risen in arms against the state during the nineteenth century and the earlier years of the Mexican Revolution remobilized with greater fervor.

The rebellious coalition was victorious in July 1914, but the urban revolutionaries within the movement became divided politically in November of that year into a Conventionist camp led by Villa and Zapata, and a Constitutionalist faction commanded by President Venustiano Carranza, igniting a terrible civil war that would not end until 1920. In November 1914 General Domingo Arenas, a native Nahua of Tlaxcala, emerged as the major agrarian of Tlaxcala. His Brigada Arenas became the dominant rebel group in the Oriente Central. Arenas and his followers became Zapatistas, officially followers of Emiliano Zapata, in the winter of 1914. But alliances in revolutionary-era México were always shaky at best, and by the winter of 1916 the Arenistas, as the followers of Arenas were called popularly, became members of the Constitutionalist army. Arenas and his revolutionary project, Arenismo, which was passionately agrarianist in character, matter in the history of the Revolution tremendously because the Arenistas amply restored lands to the dispossessed Indians of the Oriente Central. The Arenistas also formed agrarian and military colonies throughout the territory of the Tlaxcala-Puebla Valley and in the La Malintzin highlands. But the history of the revolutionary-era Oriente Central is largely unknown outside of this region of México. The Oriente Central erupted in flames during the period under study largely because Mexican statesmen considered Indians a problem. By the twentieth century the Indian question had been transformed into a national Indian problem. At the root of the problem was liberalism's failed promise, which was to convert indigenous peasants into freeholding citizens. It is

imperative, therefore, to discuss the history of liberalism in the Spanish world and in México in this introduction in order to understand the origins of the participation of indigenous people in this great revolutionary upheaval.

A Genealogy of Mexican Liberalism and its Discontents

The death of the final Spanish Haspsburg King Carlos II, "the bewitched," in 1700 unleashed a war in Spain over succession which, despite the British, Dutch, and Portuguese backing of the Austrians, was won by the French after a series of battles in Madrid. The rule of the Bourbon dynasty was solidified in 1713 with a peace treaty signed by the European Powers at Utrecht.[2] Unlike their Hapsburg predecessors, the Bourbons envisioned converting Spanish America into a dynamic producer of exportable agricultural staples, and silver especially, to heighten revenue for the enrichment of the colonial metropole. Appointed by King Carlos III as the *Visitador General* to New Spain in 1765, José de Gálvez worked on the ground with other Bourbon administrators to curtail the corrupt practices and influence of New Spain's Creoles, the native-born whites. The Bourbons also established monopolies on products such as tobacco, salt, mercury, and alcoholic beverages to increase royal revenues.[3] The Bourbons considered the regular clergy and Indian towns as corporate entities with special privileges, which they attempted to abolish. Bourbon reformers also attacked the regular clergy to limit their social influence. And then with the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, the new colonial administrators sold more than 400 agricultural estates owned by members of the

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[2] David Brading, "Bourbon Spain and its American empire," in Leslie Bethell, Ed., *The Cambridge History of Latin America, Vol. I: Colonial Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 389-390, 400-401.

[3] Christon I. Archer, "Introduction: Setting the Scene for an Age of Warfare," in Archer, Ed., *The Wars of Independence in Spanish America* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., 2000), 6-7.

religious order to independent buyers throughout Spanish America.[4] By prohibiting cash advances to indigenous notables in charge of the production of agricultural products such as cochineal in Oaxaca, the Bourbon reformers engendered even more widespread economic inequality in New Spain and in the entire realm of Spanish America. They also promoted private landholding, began dismantling and dividing communal lands held by indigenous people, and while they attempted to curtail it at first, the traditional Indian tribute continued.[5]

While in New Spain the economic and social measures did not provoke immediate great unrest in zones of dense Indian population, strong anticolonial movements arose in the Andean highlands as a consequence of the reforms. The most significant social upheaval was the Tupác Amaru II Rebellion (1780-1781), which Alberto Flores Galindo described as a revolution through which indigenous rebels in the highlands of Perú attempted to invert all social and economic power relations. Calling for the revival of the great Inca, the movement was millenarian; the weak, it was foretold would become strong and rise to power.[6] The rebellion's chieftain, José Gabriel Condorcanqui (Tupác Amaru II) and other native leaders (many *kurakas* [Indian nobles] supported Túpac Amaru II), recruited heavily from towns where people had ties to the Atlantic economy, underscoring the rebellion's strong material underpinnings.[7] Another Andean rebellion of significant magnitude erupted in 1781 in Bolivia with the Tupaj

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[4] J. H. Elliot, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492-1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 307-310.
[5] Leticia Reina, *Las Rebeliones Campesinas en México (1819-1906), 5ª. Edición* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 1998), III-V.
[6] Alberto Flores Galindo, *In Search of an Inca: Identity and Utopia in the Andes*, Translated by Carlos Aguirre and Charles Walker, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 86-88.
[7] Galindo, *In Search of an Inca*, 93-96.

Katari uprising, and yet another in Nueva Granada (the Comunero Rebellion). Scores of thousands of Aymara-speaking natives joined the great insurrection, which Katari had waged to eradicate Spanish colonial rule.[8] The great social cataclysm did not erupt in New Spain until three decades later and would come as a response to dynamic changes in Europe.

Joining England, Austria, Prussia, Russia, Holand, and the Germanic states, on 25 March 1793 the Spanish Empire declared war on France as a response to the installation of the French Republic on 21 January 1793. The French republicans had executed King Louis XVI at the Place de la Révolution, putting a chilling end briefly to French monarchical rule. Historical developments in late eighteenth-century Europe reverberated significantly in the Americas. In the territory of New Spain, the impetus for the Creole elites' desire to seek first greater colonial autonomy, then a permanent separation from the Spanish Empire emerged largely from France's invasion of, and subsequent control of Spain, in 1808. Napoleon Bonaparte's France had first invaded Portugal in 1807, forcing the Portuguse monarchs to flee to the Americas. And on 5 May 1808, Spain's Fernando VII, who prior to the invasion had asked for French protection during the internecine struggle against his father Carlos IV, was forced by Napoleon to cede royal Spanish power to France. The Spanish monarch protested the forced abdication, but with memory of Louis XVI fresh on their minds, the entire royal family of Spain feared the French

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[8] Sinclair Thomson, *We Alone Will Rule: Native Andean Politics in the Age of Insurgency* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 4-5.

guillotine.[9] The French takeover of Spain, however, would alter permanently the relations between colonizers and colonized in México.

Believing that in the absence of a just and legitimate sovereign power devolved upon the people, Mexican Creoles, who had resented Peninsular Bourbon Reforms that they claimed had relegated them to the status of second-class subjects, began denouncing in 1808 what they believed was the unlawful French usurpation. The Mexican rebels, following the Cádiz Cortes, began to clamor for the return of the prince they believed their rightful king, Fernando VII, "*el deseado"* (the Desired One). With the anticolonial rebellion in full force in 1811 in New Spain, as had occurred in the Andes from 1780 to 1781, the insurgency acquired strong messianic/millenarian undertones as well.[10] Moreover, the Constitution of Cádiz of 1812 reinforced the Spanish American Creoles in the idea that they belonged to a nation, as co-equal citizens. With the Cádiz Constitution, loyalty to the nation took precedence over fealty to the monarch.[11]

Liberalism influenced the political thinking of disenchanted Creoles and their allies, as became evident in the nation's independence movement.[12] This did not begin with the September 1810 Miguel Hidalgo uprising, which sparked a larger revolution that led eventually to independence from Spain in 1821; nor with the creation of a Mexican nation in 1823, but with the Spanish Constitution of Cádiz drafted on 19 March 1812,

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[9] Ernesto de la Torre Villar, *La Indpendencia de México* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 77-78; Henry Smith Williams, *The Historians' History of the World: Volume X, Spain and Portugal* (London: Hooper and Jackson, Ltd., 1908), 326-331.

[10] Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *The Independence of Spanish America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 237-239; Eric Van Young, *The Other Rebellion:Popular Violence, Ideology, and the Mexican Struggle for Independence, 1810-1821* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2001), 154-155, 469.

[11] Marta Lorente, "La nación y las Españas: ¿Cabe hablar de un constitucionalismo hispánico?" in Asdrúbal Aguiar, Coord., *Hacia los orígenes del constitucionalismo iberoamericano y latino: La Constitución de Cadíz de 1812* (Caracas: Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, 2004), 81-84.

[12] David Brading, *The First America: The Spanish monarchy, Creole patriots, and the Liberal State, 1492-1867* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 569-573.

which has been described as the most radical of its time, and whose appeal resonated in the politics of the nineteenth century.[13] Many of the deputies at the Cádiz Cortes were liberal, which included a strong group of American reformists. Twenty-one out of the 67 American Cádiz deputies were from New Spain.[14] The *Sentimientos de la Nación*, a document penned by the hand of Father José María Morelos in September 1813 clamoring for an independent México, was influenced by the Cádiz Constitution. Creoles, merchants, and indigenous notables supported Morelos's proclamation, calling for the establishment of an independent nation ruled by the principles of a constitutional democracry.[15]

Within the Cádiz movement and its Constitution, therefore, we find the seeds of Mexican republicanism, but the Cádiz Cortes left many crucial issues unresolved for New Spain's rebel leaders. One of these critical questions was the status of the New World's *Castas*. The Spaniards had neatly circumscribed all possible racial categorizations created by miscegenation between whites, blacks, and Indians. In Spanish America many of the descendants of black Africans remained enslaved, which Creole abolitionists interpreted as a gross violation of the Enlightenment's tenets. It often goes unacknowledged that Father Miguel Hidalgo rebelled in great part because he was a fervent enemy of slavery. A couple of months after initiating his rebellion on 16 September 1810, Hidalgo wrote in November about slavery's great evils. Hidalgo told to his followers that slavery was an egregious social custom inherited from Europe's dark ages, which violated natural and

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[13] Brading, *The First America*, 650-652.

[14] Jaime E. Rodríguez O., *We are now the true Spaniards: sovereignty, revolution, independence, and the emergence of the Federal Republic of Mexico, 1808-1824* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2012) 152-153.

[15] Rodríguez, *We are now the true Spaniards*, 220-228.

moral laws. His thoughts on slavery and freedom were influenced by the Jesuits, and also from his deep immersion into the literature of the Enlightenment's liberalism, which included readings from authors banned by the Church. Upon rebelling, Hidalgo abolished slavery, and freed people swelled his rebel ranks.[16]

It is easy to assume from all this that strong strands of Spanish Liberalism, which was influenced by the Enlightenment through the French Revolution, touched the ordinary citizens who followed leaders such as Hidalgo and Morelos onto the battlefields of the independence struggle. It has been argued that the "creole leadersip could link elite political conflict to the resentments of the mass of the indigenous population and thus overcome, through politics, the linguistic and cultural diversity that made large-scale mobilization in Central Mexico otherwise impossible."[17] But with respect to the motives for rebelling against the colonial masters, other convincing lines of research by Eric Van Young and Peter Guardino have shown the major discrepancies that existed between the ideology of New Spain's political elite and the popular rebels who filled the ranks of those who perished in the battlefields. [18]

After achieving independence in 1821, in large part because no unifying ideology permeated the national landscape, Mexicans saw multiple rebellions, coups, revolutions, and other forms of civil unrest, which by the 1840s created a significant political divide between country's conservatives and liberals. The parties could not agree on which

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[16] Silvio Zavala, *Por la senda hispana de la libertad* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993), 258-259.
[17] John H. Coatsworth, "Patterns of Rural Rebellion in Latin America: Mexico in Comparative Perspective," in Friedrich Katz, Ed., *Riot, Rebellion, and Revolution: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), 58.
[18] Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 466-467; Peter Guardino, *Peasants, Politics, and the Formation of Mexico's National State; Guerrero, 1800-1857* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 12-13.

political and social direction the nation should take. With respect to the Indians Conservatives continued to view indigenous people as taxable commodities while the liberals insisted upon the nation's rapid de-Indianization. From 1831 to 1854 the strongman Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna dominated Mexican politics, and during that time México lost Texas to Anglo and Mexican rebels in 1836, and California, Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, and parts of Colorado to the United States in 1848. Moreover, vicious racial wars caused largely by the conservative-liberal divide and underlying ethnic tensions, which exacerbated economic inequality, had erupted in central México and in Yucatán in the far Mexican Maya south in 1847 and in 1848.[19] Amidst all the national chaos, which included the U.S. invasion and the endemic ethnic and political strife, the liberal Mariano Otero stated in 1847 that there was no México.[20] Although Raymond B. Craib has shown through his interdisciplinary studies in geography and history that México was more than just a figment of the elite men's imagination, well into the middle of the nineteenth century many Indians lived on society's fringes, reacting violently when outsiders encroached upon the territory that communal villagers interpreted as a threat to their way of life. This was true of the Yaqui in Sonora and other Indians characterized as indomitable and as savages given their resistance. President Porfirio Díaz continued to wage protracted military campaigns against people whom the

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[19] Ralph Roeder, *Juarez y su México* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1980), 95-98; Will Fowler, *Santa Anna of Mexico* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007), 193-196; Terry Rugeley, *Rebellion Now and Forever: Mayas, Hispanics, and Caste War Violence in Yucatán, 1800-1880* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), 12-14; Michael T. Ducey, *A Nation of Villages: Riot and Rebellion in the Mexican Huasteca, 1750-1850* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2004), 6-8.

[20] Mariano Otero, "Considerations Relating to the Political and Social Situation of the Mexican Republic in the Year 1847," in Gilbert Joseph and Timothy J. Henderson, Eds. *The Mexico Reader:History, Culture, Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002), 226-231.

dominant liberal regime under Juárez before him had conceptualized as the eternal enemies of civilization.[21]

For the elites, the “imagined” community of México was a social space of ideological and political cohesion; and México had, at the state level, a “standardized language-of-state,” a gift from the Old World. The Creole elites who inherited the Mexican nation after independence were also bequeathed a liberal tradition from Europe. However, as Creoles they could not be Spaniards, and Indians were not Creoles. The Creoles believed that Indians and plebeians were unfit to rule. Nevertheless, the liberal statesmen pushed for a unified and advanced Mexican nation. Unlike the Conservatives, they attempted to forge a nation unspoiled by the influences of the Catholic fathers.[22] On the ground, México in the nineteenth century was divided by language, custom, history, and geography. In the nineteenth century, being Mexican in Guadalajara and in Mexico City was very different from being Mexican in Chiapas, Oaxaca, or Nayarit.[23] These differences have allowed the people in the distinct regions to develop a unique character, invariably fostering love for the *patria chica* or the *mini patria*, what Eric Van Young has defined as “localocentrism.”[24]

A larger lesson from the history of México from the time of the Bourbon reforms to the middle of the nineteenth century is evident: the process of nation-state formation

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[21] Raymond B. Craib, *Cartographic Mexico: A History of State Fixations and Fugitive Landscapes* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 19-21; Evelyn Hu-DeHart, *Yaqui Resistance and Survival: The Struggle for Land and Autonomy* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2016), 6-8, 180; Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War* (New Haven, Con.: Yale University Press, 2008), 307-308.
[22] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2003), 57-61;
[23] Lesley Byrd Simpson, *Many Mexicos* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), 10-11. The author noted that differences in the people are not acknowledged, especially by foreigners and people unfamiliar with the culture.
[24] Van Young, *The Other Rebellion*, 523.

during the transition from late-colonial rule to the development of republican constitutionalism, the cornerstone of liberalism, was ardous. After the Revolution of Ayutla ended in 1855, the Liberal faction led by the Oaxacan Benito Juárez emerged victorious, but the political factionalism and the ethnic and the strife between the Church and liberal state persisted. Moreover, many liberal elites felt that the Revolution of Ayutla had been won by the southerners of Guerrero, which included indigenous caudillos and their people. Liberals felt apprehension for the illiterate masses and feared mob rule. They blamed the sordid conditions of the common people largely on the Church's pernicious influence. The fact that the Juárez liberals were open about their staunch anticlericalism engendered conflict between the Church and state, with ordinary Mexicans caught in between two opposing colossal forces. Moreover, from 1861 to 1867 Juárez and his liberals had to contend with the nightmarish French occupation. The French claimed that they wanted to improve the miserable condition of Mexicans, who were, as Napoleon III had stated, their Latin cousins, but the Mexican response to the French Intervention resulted in another vicious anti-imperial war which claimed the lives of more than 300,000 Mexican plebeians. The War of the Reform and the French Intervention required the mobilization of vast numbers of indigenous peasants, bringing these people into closer contact with the nascent state. As noted by Craib, land surveyors, both military and civil, revealed the Mexican people to statesmen who did not know them, but the people had participated in every nation-forming civil conflict.[25]

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[25] Jesús Reyes Heroles, *El Liberalismo Mexicano, Vol. III: La Integración de las Ideas* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1974), 547-550; Peter Guardino, *The Time of Liberty: Popular Political Culture in Oaxaca, 1750-1850* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 279-281; Roeder, *Juárez*, 717-722; Fowler, *Santa Anna*, 306-309; Terry Rugeley, *The River People in Flood Times: The Civil Wars in*

Efforts by the political elite to modernize México and convert the country into a bastion of capitalism and part of the concert of advanced nations created mass poverty in the nineteenth century. Since the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, Mexican statesmen attempted to promote free enterprise and private landholding, which led to the dismantling of indigenous communities, but plans to make indigenous peasants more modern in their outlook failed miserably. Rebellions erupted all over rural México, and these varied in their motives and intensity. Because the liberal leaders could not incorporate all peasant and Indian communities into its political orbit, they stated that the nation faced a grave "Indian problem." Rural leaders such as Manuel Lozada in Tepic, Nayarit, arose in the middle of the nineteenth century in defense of the land rights of indigenous peasants in the greater area of the Nayar, and Maya leaders desiring their own political autonomy rose in arms against the state in Chiapas and Yucatán again in the 1860s and 1870s. The Maya rebellions were messianic; the rebels wanted to destroy Hispanic society and revive their indigenous past. In central México, the state described rural rebel leaders as bandits, but banditry also grew uncontrollably in the central countryside due to the political state's inability to organize society. Even during the rule of Porfirio Díaz bandit leaders such as Heraclio Bernal in rural Sinaloa became the people's heroes, underscoring the fractures of state power and the absence of national cohesiveness.[26] Banditry became a way for the poor to resist the growth of the state.

Tabasco, Spoiler of Empires (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), 253-254; Craib, *Cartographic Mexico*, 4-6.

[26] Reina, *Las Rebeliones Campesinas*, XIV-XV; Jean Mayer, *Problemas campesinos y revueltas agrarias (1821-1910)* (Mexico City: Secretaria de Educación Púlica, 1973), 8; Jean Meyer, *Esperando a Lozada* (Zamora, Mich.: El Colegio de Michoacan, 1984), 62-68, 220-223; Nicole Giron, *Heraclio Bernal: ¿Bandolero, Cacique o Precursor de la Revolución?* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1976), 12-13; Chris Frazer, *Bandit Nation: A History of Outlaws and Cultural Struggle in México, 1810-1920* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 158-160.

Eric Hobsbawm described banditry in the nineteenth century as "pre-political" and "archaic." It is not the poor class, however, who define the bandits as criminals, but the state. Career bandits before the twentieth century lived on society's fringes. In this light, banditry is conceptualized as apolitical. Lacking any coherent ideology, bandits, even the social type, are not revolutionaries; they do not desire to transform society by destroying the state.[27] Agricultural societies such as nineteenth-century México created social bandits. These were the Robin Hood type, of a redemptive character, who take from the rich to give back to the poor. The social bandit, though not a revolutionary, counts with wide social support, becoming for the disempowered people "a figure of social protest and rebellion."[28] Paul Vanderwood, for his part, argued that nineteenth-century Mexican bandits emerged with capitalism and therefore possessed a capitalist incentive, meaning that these bandits understood the market economy as well as any merchant. Their foray into banditry allowed otherwise poor peasants to become outlaws and accumulate capital.[29] Nineteenth-century Mexican bandits were the champions of the underdogs, but they also worked with the rural police, became policemen, and notorious bandits such as los Plateados (charro bandits) in the state of Morelos negotiated with the local hacendados.[30] In this light, the Mexican bandit was not "archaic," but part of a developing modern capitalist society. Banditry remained a problem during the Mexican Revolution. Villa and Zapata were described by the elite of México as bandits, and so

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[27] Eric Hobsbawm, *Primitive Rebels: Studies in Archaic Forms of Social Movements in the 19th and 20th Centuries* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1965), 13-16; 23-24.
[28] Eric Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (New York: The New Press, 2000), 21.
[29] Paul Vanderwood, "El bandidaje en el siglo xix: Una forma de subsistir," *Historia Mexicana* 34, 1, (1984): 42-45.
[30] Paul Vanderwood, *Disorder and Progress: Bandits, Police, and Mexican Development (Revised and Enlarged Edition)* (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1992), 88-90.

were the indigenous rebel leaders of Tlaxcala. During the Revolution, Indian rebel and bandit were synonymous terms.

National leaders in the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century failed to recognize the differences among the Mexican people. Liberal statesmen insisted that all indigenous peasants and the poorer mestizos should "become Mexican"—that, anyway, is the objective of any state. James C. Scott has framed the state's efforts to push for greater nationhood, as including the conversion of all people into citizens and therefore "taxable property-holders." In this sense, the Mexican liberals saw "like a state," but their ignorance of the people's local culture often bred conflict. Scott notes that state-enforced modernizing projects have produced disastrous results. The representatives of the modern political state were in the nineteenth century carriers of "high modernism," but an all-encompassing model of modernity failed to benefit all equally.[31] Those acting at the behest of the state to make all of society modern "were guilty of hubris, of forgetting that they were mortals and acting as if they were gods."[32] Another intervention by Scott, his analysis of "state-fleeing people," is incredibly helpful in my study of highland-indigenous peasant rebellion. Throughout human history some people, Scott has suggested, have chosen to be "ungoverned," and the people "not-yet-incorporated" into the state's political umbrella resist the coming of a different political culture. It is easier for highland people to flee the state's grasp by withdrawing to the mountains and high sierras.[33] The people of the Oriente Central took advantage of their region's intricate

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[31] James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 3-5.
[32] Scott, *Seeing Like a State*, 342.
[33] James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), x-xi.

topography and fled the state on numerous occasions. In the highlands, they regrouped as rebels, created alternative governments, formed new state capitals in the volcanic shadows, and even withdrew to a life banditry to survive through the cycles on incessant war. Some indigenous communities in central México during the nineteenth century were pulverized by the regimes of Juárez and Díaz, leaving the people of the Oriente Central no alternative but to flee and seek refuge higher in the volcanic sierras, learning to subsist by whatever means possible.

I want to argue here that the peasant Indian rebellions that erupted in the nineteenth century culminated with the Mexican Revolution, thus demonstrating continuity over a century or so. The abrupt changes wrought by liberalism's agents left too many issues unresolved, the main one being the inequality of land tenure. We may apply to the Mexican state Antonio Gramsci's critique of the making of the modern European nation-state: the Mexican state failed to achieve hegemony during the nineteenth century. Regimes, Gramsci hypothesized, when emerging out of struggle "shift the previously existing disposition of social forces."[34] In the Mexican case, the liberals attacked every pillar of the preexisting state structure; the Church, conservatism, and corporate privilege, which included the semi-autonomy of indigenous communities. The Mexican liberals theorized the Indian community as a site of superstition, filth, and overall human degradation. They also believed that the Church and the Conservatives had maintained the integrity of indigenous village structures to better exploit the Indian.

The Indian, of course, is the product of the European colonization of the New World. Indians and the creation of the New World itself are Columbian inheritance.

[34] David Forgacs, Ed. *The Gramsci Reader: Selected Writings, 1916-1935* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 202.

Christening the hemisphere's aboriginal inhabitants as Indians is one of European colonialism's greatest triumphs. Believing that Indians had to be saved from themselves, the Europeans refurbished the American aborigenes in their own image--as Christians and as imperial subjects. There is much truth in the "black legend" of Spanish cruelty, since the Spaniards enslaved and brutalized natives. Some scholars have likened the mass-murdering of Amerindians to genocide, and the Spaniards were not alone in their brutalization of the Indian "Other." In the physical conquests of the natives, Europeans simply possessed too many advantages over Indians, which included their written language. Tzevetan Todorov has gone as far as to argue that the Europeans' ability to read and interpret the Indians' signs in a manner that the subjugated could not, exemplified by the ability of Hernán Cortés to read into the intentions of Moctezuma II, allowed whites to first conquer and then exterminate and colonize natives.[35]

The creation of the term Indian itself washed away much of the ethnic difference among indigenous people that existed in the pre-Columbian Americas. It flattened the Maya, Inca, Mexica, Yaqui, Hopi, and hundreds of others into colonized beings. As explained by Serge Gruzinsky, the Spaniards fully Christianized the hitherto highly-cultured Indian people of what became central México. This is evident in most post-conquest indigenous forms of cultural representation, which included the pictographic

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[35] David E. Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 279-281; Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement in America* (Boston: Houghton Miflin Harcourt, 2016), 17-20; Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2014), 2-7; Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (New York: HarperPerennial, 1992), 13-18, 101-111.

books, maps, and primordial titles.[36] The Hispanicized Indian became a member of a distinct economic class as well.

Indians became taxable commodities beginning in 1542, when the Spanish monarch Carlos V reformed the encomienda system. Through the labor quota, an egregious form of near-slavery, the implementation of the encomienda had resulted in massive Indian death.[37] Under this system, Europeans could control human labor for agricultural production and other purposes, but not own the land. With the reforms to the encomienda, Indians were offered greater protection by the Crown from the cupidity of the *encomenderos*, but were thenceforth taxed per head; therefore, to be "Indian" suddenly placed these people into an economic category, opposed vehemently by Bartolomé de las Casas, the famed defender of the Indians.[38] Las Casas had written that the Spaniards' mistreatment of the Indians was far worse than "Pharaoh's oppression of the Jews in Egypt."[39] The Dominican Bishop argued that there existed no justification under God's law to enslave Indians in encomiendas. Moreover, he argued that in light of the fact that Spaniards waged protracted wars against natives to procure slaves, it was the Indian who possessed the right to wage just war against the Spanish colonizers, and he advocated for the Christian sovereignty of the Indians.[40] The true barbarians, Las Casas wrote, were those who truly behaved like animals, and Indians did not fit into this category of humans. Las Casas wrote that Aristotle was wrong in his classification of

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[36] Serge Gruzinsky, *The Conquest of México: The Incorporation of Indian Societies into the Western World, 16th -18th Centuries*, Trans. Eileen Corrigan (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1993), 3-8.
[37] Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, Trans. Nigel Griffin (London: Penguin, 1992).
[38] Silvio Zavala, *Por la senda hispana de la libertad,* 109.
[39] Ibid, 107.
[40] Zavala, *Por la senda hispana*, 111; Helen-Rand Parish and Harold E. Weidman, *Las Casas en México: Historia y Obra Desconocidas* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 71-74.

human beings; the illiterate, too, possessed culture.[41] Unfortunately, even Las Casas had infantilized Indians. Baptized Indians were conceptualized by Spaniards as neophytes and always viewed in an inferior light in relation to the white dominators. Theoretically, the creation of the Indian republics, the Spaniards' separate but equal practice, would protect the indigenous people from rapacious whites.

Much of the work involving the destruction of the native cultures, however, had been started by the friars. Friars ordered the destruction of pre-Columbian temples and burned the natives' sacred books. All knowledge not Christian was deemed demonic, and for the regular friars, which involved the orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Jesuits, creating a Christian society in the Americas necessitated uprooting all evil. Destroying all elements of native idolatry justified the violence unleashed upon natives. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra has argued that the conquest of the American Indians was "part of a long-standing Christian tradition of holy violence aimed at demonic enemies from within and without."[42] Measuring the degree to which Indians became Christianized is difficult. The acclaimed historian Robert Riccard had noted that the spiritual conquest of the natives, as opposed to the physical conquest, with some natural resistance on behalf of the natives, which included the occasional murder of a mendicant friar, had been relatively smooth. As observed by Riccard, thanks to the indefatigable efforts of the friars, whose life work in the New World became saving native souls through baptism, Mexican central Indians embraced Christianity almost naturally. Hernán Cortés had given the initial twelve Franciscan friars, "the real Mendicants," authority to baptize and marry

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[41] Bartolomé de las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians*, Trans. Stafford Poole, C.M., (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1992), 50-52.
[42] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 9.

Indians. Most noteworthy in their efforts were the conversions of surviving native nobles. This had been a most sound policy, as Christianity, Riccard wrote, prevailed over paganism. However, other authors have written at length on the indigenous people's different modes of adapting to Catholicism. These responses ranged from religious syncretism through the blending of Christian and native religious practices to cases of full backsliding, which included worshipping pre-Hispanic deities in nooks inside homes or in caves. Confirmed cases of backsliding raised the ire of the Church fathers, who inflicted corporal punishment such as floggings to fix the Indian transgressors. Fray Diego de Landa's way of dealing with native backsliders in Yucatán is emblematic of this. Physical punishment, Landa believed, uprooted evil from the body, helping cleanse the soul.[43]

Throughout the Colonial era many Indians lived in corporate communities. These Indian communities were both sites of ethnic solidarity and places of intra-ethnic social differentiation and conflict. Seldom, however, were these communities closed to the outside world. Indian elites looked to profit from their participation in the market economy, but village notables and commoners had to contend with the hacienda's encroachments, which increasingly led to indigenous land loss. Van Young has illustrated this well in his analysis of Indian corporate communities in the state of Jalisco.[44] Moreover, Nancy Farriss has shown that Maya Indians, who lived in a more marginal and

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[43] Robert Riccard, *The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico: An Essay on the Apostolate and the Evangelizing Methods of the Mendicant Orders in New Spain, 1523-1572*, Lesley Byrd Simpson, Trans. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 265-268. 20-28; Kevin Terraciano, *The Mixtecs of Colonial Oaxaca: Ñudzahi History, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 262-264; Inga Clendinnen, *Ambivalent Conquests: Maya and Spaniard in Yucatán, 1517-1570* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 99-101.

[44] Eric Van Young, "Conflict and Solidarity in Indian Village Life: The Guadalajara Region in the Late Colonial Period," *The American Historical Review* 64, 1 (1984), 55-58, 75-78.

economically dislocated region, had to move around much to survive and adapt to Spanish colonialism, which contradicts Eric Wolf's set framework of the indigenous "closed corporate community," which Wolf has corrected in subsequent work. Indians, Wolf noted, interacted with non-Indians constantly, and the boundaries between the corporate communities and mestizo lands were seldom neatly delineated. By the 1850s most communal entities were threatened by the liberal reformers.[45]

Reevaluating the Mexican Revolution

Indians lost the economic and social war against the liberal reformers, who in theory destroyed the privileges Indian communities had retained in a post-conquest phase. When the Mexican Revolution broke out in 1910 the liberal reforms and the Porfiriato had nearly pulverized the Indian corporate community. Historiographically, the erasure of the deeds of Mexican Indians began in the 1920s when the makers of the post-revolutionary state attempted to create an image of a renewed México. Even the muralist art produced by post-revolutionary artists displayed teleological images of a revolutionary endpoint. Mural art was produced for public consumption and celebrated Mexican revolutionary nationalism, interethnic cohesion. The Revolution was intermeshed by artists with other Third World struggles and anticolonial movements. The active obfuscation of the Revolution's gray areas, the erasure of ethnic and class antagonisms, began immediately following the Revolution with the rise of the victorious Sonoran generals, Álvaro Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles, who created and propagated the term *la familia revolucionaria*-"the revolutionary family." Under their

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[45] Nancy Farriss, *Maya Society under Colonial Rule: The Collective Enterprise of Survival* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 222-224; Eric Wolf, "The Vicissitudes of the Closed Corporate Peasant Community," in *Pathways of Power: Building an Anthropology of the Modern World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 162-166.

conceptualization of revolutionary citizenship all ethnic and racial categories were dropped, and in theory all Mexicans, meaning that people born in the national territory were re-conceptualized as revolutionary citizens.[46] Indigenous people were reimagined by post-revolutionary statesmen and the dominant political parties they created not as part of the Revolution's origninators, but as passive inheritors, re-conceptualized as de-Indianized campesinos. Even serious works such as the *Historia de La Revolución Mexicana, Orígenes y Resultados*, by Jorge Vera Estañol, which examine the great problems the Mexican people faced on the eve of the Revolution, fail to mention the many problems and grievances that came from within the Indian villages.[47]

The historiography on the Mexican Revolution is rich and vast. The established scholarship, however, and this includes (for the sake of concision I will only mention several noteworthy works) meticulously-researched monographs focusing on the states, regions, and individuals argues that hapless Indians, the urban poor, and the mixed-race peasantry were only mobilized by urban politicians and radical organizers belonging to the anti-Díaz political left.[48] Other authors have stated that the politicization of Indians

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[46] Enrique Florescano, *Historia de las Historias de la Nación Mexicana* (Mexico City: Editorial Taurus, 2002), 396-397.

[47] Jorge Vera-Estañol, *Historia de la Revolución Mexicana: Orígenes y Resultados* (Mexico City: Editorial Porrua, 1957), 32-35, 100-104. Vera Estañol saw the Revolution's origins more in line with others who analyze the exploitation of the peasantry within the hacienda grounds and their conditions of semi-slavery; in this classic account peasants owed their lives to the hacienda stores, and their landlessness resulted from land speculations and subsequent purchases of "fallow lands" by both foreign and national investors.

[48] Francisco Pineda Gómez, *La irrupción Zapatista, 1911* (Mexico City: Ediciones Era, 1997), 10-25; Francisco Pineda Gómez, *La Revolución del Sur, 1912-1914* (Mexico City, Ediciones Era, 2005), 338; John Mason Hart, *Revolutionary Mexico: The Coming and Process of the Mexican Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 20-35; Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Volume I: Porfirians, Liberals, and Peasants* (Lincoln, Neb.: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 315-320; Adolfo Gilly, *La Revolución Interrumpida* (Mexico City: ERA, 2001), 115-121; John Mason Hart, *Anarchism and the Mexican Working Class* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1979), ; Colin M. MacLachlan, *Anarchism and the Mexican Revolution: The Political Trials of Ricardo Flores Magón in the United States* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991), 1-11; John Womack, Jr., *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* (New York: Vintage, 1968), 55-60, 74-80; David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla, 1908-1913:*

occurred through the tutelage of anarcho-syndicalists, socialists, opposition parties, and members of organized labor who wanted to transform the Mexican political system. These disaffected leftists, it has been stated, found legions of followers in the villages and towns of rural México where peasants had lost much land and where their local political autonomies were being threatened by the land loss and by the complex webs of Porfirian political patronage.[49]

Major authors have demonstrated that these urban ideologues possessed considerable experience in labor organizing and that a large number of them were members of labor unions centered in areas of dense Indian population. In their monographs on peripheral regions--Yucatán, Chiapas, Guerrero, and Tlaxcala--Gil Joseph, Allen Wells, Antonio García de León, Ian Jacobs, Francisco Herrera Sipriano, and Raymond Buve have analyzed serious uprisings against the Porfirian dictatorships that erupted from within the peasant Indian hamlets; however, they have also portrayed those rebellions as inchoate and spontaneous. Until the arrival of Maderismo, these scholars have argued, indigenous peasant mobilization lacked ideological direction and focus. In other words, they were merely sparks.[50] A major work that looked at the complex internal structures of village politics is *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* by

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the Maderista movement and the failure of Liberal Reform (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources Press, 1989), 10-30.

[49] Gilbert Joseph, Daniel Nugent, eds., *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1994), 6-14, 25-40, 135-140.

[50] Alan Wells and Gilbert Joseph, *Summer of Discontent, Seasons of Upheaval: Elite Politics and Rural Insurgency in Yucatán, 1876-1915* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 2-11 ; Antonio García de León, *Resistencia y Utopía: Memorial de Agravios y Crónica de Revueltas y Profecías Acaecidas en la Provincia de Chiapas Durante los Últimos Quinientos Años de su Historia* (Mexico City: ERA, 2003), 48-85; Ian Jacobs, *Ranchero Revolt*; *The Mexican Revolution in Guerrero* (Austin: University of Texas, Press, 1982), 12-24 ; Francisco Herrera Sipriano, *La Revolución en la Montaña de Guerrero: La Lucha Zapatista, 1910-1918* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2009), 8-22 ;Raymond Buve, *El Movimiento Revolucionario en Tlaxcala* (Tlaxcala: Universidad Autónoma de Tlaxcala, 1994), 37-45.

John Womack, Jr., but according to the author the Zapatista revolution was not an Indian rebellion. Its main protagonists, Womack suggests, were mestizos. Zapata, he argues, was a charro and the state of Morelos as a whole was largely of a Hispanicized mestizo culture.[51] There exists, therefore, a major gap in the literature vis-à-vis the participation of indigenous peasants in the Mexican Revolution. Indians, it is clear, have been written out of the Mexican Revolution.

Re-Indianizing the Mexican Revolution

In the view of educated people, indigenous peasants are not articulate. This thinking is set forth in Mariano Azuela's *Los de Abajo*. Author of arguably the Revolution's most famous novel, Azuela served as a physician in Pancho Villa's División del Norte in the state of Jalisco. In the novel the main protagonist, Demetrio Macias, described as an Indian of "bronze" skin, is uncultured, ruthless, and unprincipled, but becomes a general under Pancho Villa through the exercise of sheer power. Demetrio's fighters spend the money they loot on vices such as gambling, drinking, and buying sex. Demetrio is joined by women and men of his likeness--uncouth and barbaric. Over drinks, Demetrio's fighters reminisce about their experiences and joke about killing their victims, sometimes merely after receiving a "bad look." The pages of *Los de Abajo* reveal vividly Demetrio Macias's crazed veneration of Villa. The followers of Macias, in turn, trembled under Demetrio's gaze. The members of Macias's rebel group, all Indians, are superstitious, idolatrous, lived in squalor, acted like bandits, and know nothing of revolutionary principles. Many picked up arms to gain riches and redress grievances against local elites. The Indians in *Los de Abajo* are too ignorant to make rational

[51] Womack, Jr., *Zapata*, see the introduction to the work.

decisions, and are thrown around like sacks of potatoes by a cunning, criminal leader. They are, however, despite their moral shortcomings, brave. The novel's depictions of Indians replicates older discourses on the character of indigenous people. Exploitation made Indians meek, but warfare activated an innate fearlessness that also made indigenous people brutal, savage, and callous. War also made them heroic.[52]

It is little wonder that the novelist Carlos Fuentes described *Los de Abajo* as "a barefoot *Iliad* sung by men and women rising from under the weight of history, like insects from beneath a heavy stone. Moving in circles, blinded by the sun, without a moral or political compass, they come out of darkness…" Fuentes continued: "The people of Mexico are the armies of the night. They give the reader the impression of a violent, spontaneous eruption."[53] The "people of Mexico" are synonymous with an amorphous Indian mass dying and suffering for the satiation of the personal ambitions of a few. It is little wonder that Fuentes likens Indian rebels to insects pressing up against a huge stone. He expressed to readers that Indians bore the weight of Mexican history, a pitiful narrative of nearly four centuries of brutality, racism, and autocracy. But perhaps *Los de Abajo* can be read differently; it may be interpreted as an epic of triumph and heroism, depicting a unique moment when on 20 November 1910 the Mexican underclass rose to join a national revolution.

Contemporaries of Azuela also remarked on the typical Mexican Indians' sordid existence. In his reflections on Indians published in 1912 as, *¡Piedad para el Indio!*, Pedro Lamicq, a social critic, lamented that Mexico's aboriginal people had been reduced

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[52] Mariano Azuela, *Los de Abajo* (Mexico City: ERA, 1960), 1-5, 16-25, 48-76.
[53] Mariano Azuela, *The Underdogs; a Novel of the Mexican Revolution*. Translated by Sergio Waisman. Foreword by Carlos Fuentes (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2008), 1.

to a state of misery by the caprice of rural oligarchs. The Indian, Lamicq wrote in 1913, remained a slave and lived worse, far worse, than in the colonial era. Stripped of their lands, indigenous people toiled as workers on haciendas, ranchos, and plantations "working ten hours without rest." Lamicq observed that from Sonora to Chiapas, the oligarchs had taken the most fertile lands leaving the Indian a landless slave.[54] Lamicq added that customary practice and tradition, deferential behaviors such as expecting Indians to bow their heads or remove themselves from sidewalks in the presence of whites, kept Indians in a state of mental enslavement. This hatred and indifference by whites in turn, explained the "indigenous rage" witnessed during the Mexican Revolution. By perpetuating the status quo General Porfirio Díaz had done more harm than good.[55]

With the Revolution engulfing Mexico, the writer likened the task of all "just" Mexicans to that of the Gauchos in the Pampas. Just as the Gaucho had "domesticated" a barbarous people in the frontiers to create an Argentine nation, Mexicans had to "de-barbarize" Indians finally to live in harmony. The pacification of Mexico, he noted, would begin with the de-barbarization of indigenous youths, who "once educated, showed an intellectual aptitude comparable to whites." Like Juárez and the liberals, Lamicq thought that the indigenous peasantry kept the country in a backward state. Mexican Indians, Lamicq concluded in 1914, needed their own Abraham Lincoln to liberate them from the shackles of slavery in México.[56]

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[54] Pedro Lamicq, *¡Piedad para el Indio!* (México: 1912), 6-9.
[55] Ibid, 45-47.
[56] Pedro Lamicq, *Criol los, Indios y Mestizos* (Mexico: 1915), 7-8, 10, 15-17.

This dissertation on indigenous rebellion and revolution addresses a vital issue brought up by Pedro Lamicq; central to the development of the Mexican Revolution was the country's Indian problem, which began in the Colonial era and worsened in the nineteenth century with liberalism and its failed promises. Lamicq observed that after November 1914, the Revolution acquired an Indian character; therefore, the Revolution itself, through the proliferation of Zapatismo's agrarianism, had become, as he observed, Indianized.[57] This work analyzes the continuity of popular indigenous protest in the state of Tlaxcala and the Oriente Central from the nineteenth century to the Mexican Revolution and ends with the legacy of indigenous rebellion during the beginnings of the post-revolutionary era.

The protagonists in this dissertation were all Indian or thought of themselves as being Indian. Domingo Arenas, the central figure, argued that he was an Indian who fought in the Mexican Revolution to liberate his indigenous brethren. If Arenas cared about emancipating poor mestizo peasants, he did not mention it in writing. Juan Cuamatzi and his close associates, as shown below, had indigenous Náhuatl-language last names and came from traditional Indian pueblos in Tlaxcala. One is left to wonder if their ancestors were baptized by the members of the regular clergy as such, or if the people rescued these last names in the centuries before the Revolution. But how Indian was the state of Tlaxcala?

The 1910 Census of México shows that in 1895, 128,359 people in Tlaxcala spoke Spanish, while 38,449 people spoke an "indigenous language." These figures show that 29.9 percent of Tlaxcala's people spoke an indigenous language. If this is correct,

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[57] Lamicq, *Criollos, Indios y Mestizos*, 66-68.

roughly speaking, in 1895 around one-third of Tlaxcala's population, based on spoken language alone, was Indian. In 1900, the number of Spanish-speakers in the state rose to 145,505, and in 1910 this number went up to 159,084, representing a 9.3 percent difference. This trend probably reflects overall population growth, children becoming adults, and the effects of the Porfirian schooling, which stressed greater Hispanicization through Castilian-language instruction. Conversely, in 1900 the number of indigenous language speakers dropped to 26,774. From 1895 to 1900, therefore, the number of indigenous-language speakers in the state had diminished by 11,675. In 1910 the Census shows that there were 25,062 native-language speakers in the state. The difference between the Spanish and native-language speakers in 1910 shows that only 15 percent of Tlaxcala's people remained indigenous. If we compare the native-language figures from 1895 to 1910 we observe that the state of Tlaxcala had de-Indianized rapidly.[58]

Figures from the neighboring state of Puebla, where the overall population was much larger, reveal an even higher statistical drop in the number of its native-language speakers. In Puebla from 1900 to 1910 the total number of Castilian speakers rose by 31.2 percent, and in those same years the number of Indian language speakers fell by 42.1 percent. In 1900, the state of Puebla counted with 325,124 native-language speakers and in 1910 the Census revealed a total number of 188,340, which represents a significant drop of nearly 58 percent.[59]

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[58] Tercer Censo de Población de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos 1910. Tabulados Básicos. NUMERO DE HABITANTES DE LA REPUBLICA, CLASIFICADOS POR IDIOMA, SEGÚN DATOS CENSALES DE 1895, 1900 y 1910 EXPRESANDO LAS DIFERENCIAS ABSOLUTA Y PROPORCIONAL POR CIENTO ENTRE LOS CENSOS DE 1900 y 1910. https://www.uv.mx/apps/censos-conteos/1910/menu1910.html

[59] Tercer Censo de Población de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos 1910.

The decline in the overall population of native-language speakers is open to interpretation. With so much trouble brewing in the Indian pueblos already—a string of rebellions had broken out in Tlaxcala's highlands, and in the wider are of the Los Volcanes in 1905 and the middle of 1910--we must question the Census takers' ability to count and interview people belonging to Indian districts in 1910. The town of San Bernardino Contla, and other Indian pueblos neighboring the La Malintzin volcano, had become hot-spots of peasant rebellion. Many people had fled the region in fear of the Cahuantzi regime. In areas of large population density in Puebla's Los Volcanes (Huejotzingo, Cholula, Atlixco) many Indian peasants had also relocated temporarily to the high volcanic sierras. The La Malintzin and Los Volcanes region became epicenters of rebellion early in the Mexican Revolution and we may surmise that indigenous peasants must have been suspicious of anyone serving the state. Additionally, the Census does not show how many people spoke Spanish and an Indian language. It is not impossible to conceive that by 1910 much of the population in these areas had become bilingual. The state was bent on de-Indianizing the country, and a "yes" response to "do you speak Spanish?" was probably satisfactory enough. A "yes" response likely reflected that the state was making progress.

Throughout this dissertation, despite the drop in the Indian numbers (based on language) I refer to the Cuamatzi and Arenas rebellions as Indian and not solely as peasant rebellions as academics focusing on Mexican agrarian regions have. I use the term Indian because the leaders of this movement fought to free the indigenous people of the Oriente Central. Domingo Arenas, in particular, claimed time and again that his was an indigenous rebellion, and he stated that he was a revolutionary belonging to the

nation's Indian race. This is not to say that every rebel serving in the ranks of Arenas was Indian. I am sure that many poor mestizos, especially the Indianized mestizos living in or close to the Indian pueblos, served in the Brigada Arenas; however, Arenas recruited fighters in a zone that remained largely Indian and where indigenous peasants had lost land at an accelerated pace during the Juárez era and the Porfiriato. Moreover, at the height of his power as a regional leader, anywhere from 15,000 to 20,000 people served in the army of Arenas, but he recruited fighters primarily from the central Puebla area, which remained a zone of large Indian population. One the best pieces of evidence highlighting that Arenas' movement was an Indian rebellion, were the two Zapatista manifestos written in Náhuatl in early 1918, through which Emiliano Zapata's camp attempted to reincorporate the high-sierra Nahua fighters they had lost after the Zapatista generals murdered Arenas.

The Dissertation

Chapter one analyzes the history of the state of Tlaxcala from its pre-Hispanic era to the governorship of Próspero Cahuantzi (1885-1911). It is essential to begin with a brief discussion on the pre-colonial phase to highlight the region's deep Indian culture. The chapter also looks at the problems created by land loss after the Liberal victory of Ayutla in 1855, and culminates with the height of the governorship of Próspero Cahuantzi, an indigenous notable from Tlaxcala. He gained prominence first as a colonel in the army of Porfirio Díaz during the 1876 Tuxtepec Revolution. Like his patron, President Díaz, Cahuantzi ruled his home state of Tlaxcala as a military modernizer. His favoring of the region's local elites, however, and the dismantling of indigenous

corporate communities up to 1905, which led to the loss of the villagers' local autonomy, created mass discontent in Tlaxcala's area of the Oriente Central.

Chapter two covers the latter years of the Cahuantzi governorship up to the rebellion of Juan Cuamatzi on 26 May 1910. Cuamatzi was a grassroots indigenous leader from San Bernardino Contla, a town considered since the colonial era a hotbed of Indian peasant discontent. A man of the humblest origins, Cuamatzi commanded a rebel army of diverse malcontents. Within his ranks could be found anyone from an urban Marxist ideologue to a peasant. With the execution of the rebel Indian leader in the winter of 1911 the multi class mobilization remained faithful to Francisco I. Madero, but the group then divided into a multitude of factions with the president's execution. Before his death, Madero had insited upon demobilizing all popular rebels, including Tlaxcala's faithful Cuamatzistas and Zapatistas. This proved a fatal error that left the democratically-elected president utterly defenseless against his enemies, clearing the path for the construction of a reactionary military dictatorship under Victoriano Huera.

The centerpiece of this work is chapter three, which covers the rise of General Domingo Arenas, a grassroots leader from Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, who by November of 1914 served Emiliano Zapata as a general in the Liberating Army of the South. At the height of his power, Arenas commanded a force of more than 15,000 high-sierra rebels known popularly in the Oriente de México as the Brigada Arenas. The indigenous rebel leader was also a Marxist ideologue, a revolutionary of the far political left. Politicized in part by his interactions with labor organizers and union leaders in the factories that dotted the Tlaxcala-Puebla Valley region, Arenas dreamed of the development of a world-wide revolution, which he believed had begun in México. I

acknowledge that there is a contradiction here, but the impetus driving Arenas and others to rebel came from the pueblos primarily and from the Marxist influence secondly. He also restored lands to a multitude of peasant families throughout the Oriente Central, in Puebla's Los Volcanes, and in Tlaxcala. Unhappy with the unruliness displayed by many of the Zapatistas operating in his zone, however, and not fully satisfied with the central Zapatista authority, which attempted to concentrate all power in the headquarters of Tlaltizapán in Morelos, he departed from the ranks of the Zapatistas, defecting to the Constitutionalists of President Venustiano Carranza on 30 December 1916. The demise of General Arenas in August 1917 at the hands of the Zapatistas led to a major reorganization of the Brigada Arenas.

Chapter four departs from the greater overall narrative arc of the dissertation to pay special attention to the zealous agrarianism of Domingo Arenas. His movement, which I describe as Arenismo—as opposed to Zapatismo, Carrancismo, and other major revolutionary mobilizations in revolutionary-era México—was premised upon the creation of military and agrarian colonies. By invading haciendas and large ranchos in the region, Arenas and his followers divided the confiscated lands among the indigenous peasants who supported them in the Oriente Central. The members of the Brigada Arenas began redistributing lands to peasants in the winter of 1914. They honored their commitment to the Zapatista banner, the Plan de Ayala, and also fulfilled their own ambition, which was to recreate autonomous peasant communities in the Oriente Central. When Domingo Arenas became a Constitutionalist general his army continued to invade large agricultural estates and return the confiscated lands to the the local peasants. Some of these land restitution cases were deemed illegal by the Carranza regime, but under

Presidents Álvaro Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles some of the military and agrarian colonies were granted official status as pueblos. The establishment of these pueblos represents the greatest proof of the fervent agrarianism of Arenismo. Immediate and effective land reform was Arenas' way of fulfilling his promise to help redeem the indigenous peasantry of México. There was a critical overlap, therefore, between the nation's agrarian and Indian revolution. The Revolution of México was not strictly a class mobilization. Indians belonged to the nation's poor class, and the inequality in land tenure was an important issue, but their protest was also related to their inability to preserve their native cultures.

Returning to the larger analysis and narrative on indigenous rebellion and revolution in the Mexican Oriente Central, chapter five examines the fate of Arenismo under the stewardship of Cirilo Arenas, the youngest of the Arenas brothers. Under Cirilo, the Brigada Arenas members became known as Arenistas, and this popular rebel army grew at an alarming rate, prompting Carranza's military under General Jesús Agustín Castro to order its extermination. Just as Cirilo Arenas and Alberto L. Paniagua were about to initiate their own program of massive land redistribution in the spring of 1918, the federal military under General Castro launched a protracted war against the Arenistas in the form of dozens of annihilationist counterinsurgency campaigns. This included the razing of villages and the indiscriminate murder of indigenous rebels and noncombatants throughout the states of Tlaxcala, Puebla, and Hidalgo. The federal military's counterinsurgent strategy was met with fierce guerrilla resistance, and the Arenistas became masters of unconventional warfare. Finally, the epilogue focuses on the continuity of peasant Indian rebellion and revolution through a short analysis of the

outbreak of the Cristero war in the region from 1926 to 1929, an episode largely unkown outside of Tlaxcala and Puebla.

This work, therefore, hopefully begins to shift our understanding of the Mexican Revolution by arguing that competing mentalities, ethnic differences, popular ideologies, and the divergent revolutionary praxis of two enigmatic rebel leaders, Zapata and Arenas, created schisms that enfeebled the Zapatista project and all the other agrarian-based revolutionary groups in México, while arguing that Mexican Indians possessed distinct motives for rebelling against the state.

Afterthought

Those in power throughout the history of México, who were for the most part non-Indian, were never comfortable with Indigenous people being Indian. With this in mind, defining exactly what constitutes an Indian, historically, is a work of its own. The term, as we may observe above, is fluid, contingent upon who defines the Indian as such. These actors have come in different forms: Mendicant friars wanted Indians to become perfect Christians; conservatives wanted Indians to fight their many civil wars against federalists and liberals and remain slaves of the *latifundio* and cannon-fodder at the same time; and the liberals, who viewed indigenous people as pitiful victims of history, wanted Indians to become modern.

Liberalism emerged triumphant over its titanic struggle against the Church and conservatives in the nineteenth century, but its failures, the inability to create economic, social, and political equality through capitalism, rushed the Mexican people headlong into a tragic ten-year civil war. With liberalism's loss emerged state socialism under

Lázaro Cárdenas. The Mexican nation became revolutionary, and with it, socialists became the new idealists who would save indigenous people from their ignorance and misery. Like Juárez and Díaz, Cárdenas attempted to achieve this through public education. Cárdenas wanted to eradicate the liberal concept of "individualism." "The socialist school," Cárdenas expressed to his constituents, "is an institution integral to all individuals working for the benefit of the collective." Moreover, socialism opposed "the slavery of certain castes," "corporate privilege," "the monopolization of land [by the few]," "and industrial and financial monopolies." Cárdenas contended that socialism would endow the indigenous peasant with a new sense of worth and spirit. Ignorance, the Mexican post-revolutionary state boasted, would no longer victimize the Indian.[60]

[60] Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, *Cárdenas por Cárdenas* (Mexico City, Debate, 2016), 399-402.

Chapter 1:

The State of Tlaxcala in the National History: A Forgotten Narrative

The state of Tlaxcala comprises less than 0.2 percent of Mexico's territory, and except for the Federal District is the country's smallest federal entity. Despite its size, the state has played an instrumental role in the country's formation. Its topography is intricate: sixty percent of the region is covered by the volcano La Malintzin and its outlying sierras. Its lowest point is 6,900 feet above sea level, while the highest, the top of the volcano La Malintzi, which shields Tlaxcala's inhabitants from semi-tropical winds coming from the east in Veracruz, measures 14,534 feet. The state's main valleys are Pie Grande in the northeastern region, which connects with the state of Veracruz to its east and Puebla to its north; the Valle de Huamantla in the southeast; and the central-southern Valle de Nativitas, which lies between the Zahuapan and Atoyac rivers, an area that has the region's most fertile soil and is part of the greater Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley. The soil between the two rivers in the Valle de Nativitas is the region's richest and therefore over the centuries became the site of vicious conflicts over land tenure between indigenous peasant communities and local landholders. Conflicts over land also engendered violence between the rival native peasant communities. From the pre-Columbian epoch to the modern period, the fertile soil of the Nativitas Valley attracted large numbers of people, making it the region's most densely populated zone.[1] Many of

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[1] Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *Breve historia de Tlaxcala*, (Mexico City: Colegio de México, 1996), 15-17. Throughout this work I will use Nativitas Valley and Valle de Nativitas interchangeably. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century the Valle de Nativitas became the home of the Arenista movement, a largely-Indian rebel movement led by the Nahua Indian caudillo, Domingo Arenas. The Arenista movement contested the regimes of Victoriano Huerta, Venustiano Carranza, and also served as part of, and latter battled the Liberating Army of the South commanded by the Morelian chieftain, Emiliano Zapata.

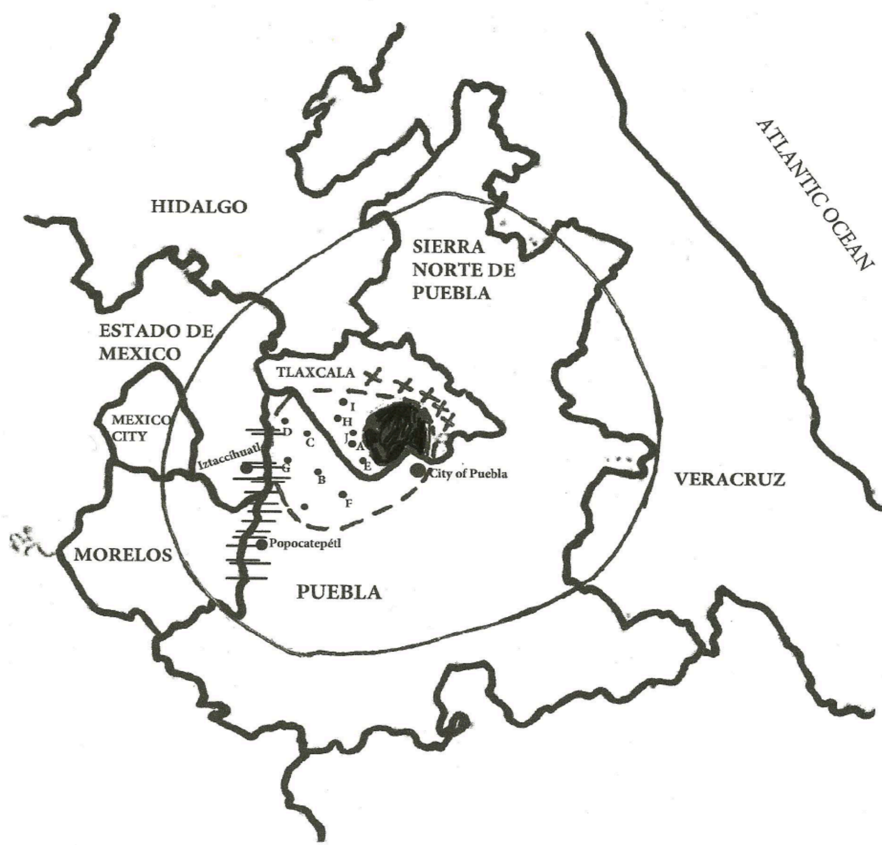

Figure 1: The Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala
(The Oriente Central de México)

Legend:

■ Volcán La Malinche/La Malintzin/ Matlalcueyétl(H)

—— Larger Zone of Arenismo

---- Major Arenista (Brigada Arenas) Zone of Operations, 1915-1920
xxx Juan Cuamatzi Rebellion, May 1910-February 1911

A: Santa Inés Zacatelco
B: Huejotzingo
C: San Martín Texmelucan
D: Santa Ríta Tlahuapan
E: Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco
F: Atlixco
G: San Andrés Calpan Puebla
H: Ixtacuixtla
I: Hueyotlipán
J: City of Tlaxcala

Figure 1: Map: The Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala
(The Oriente Central de México)

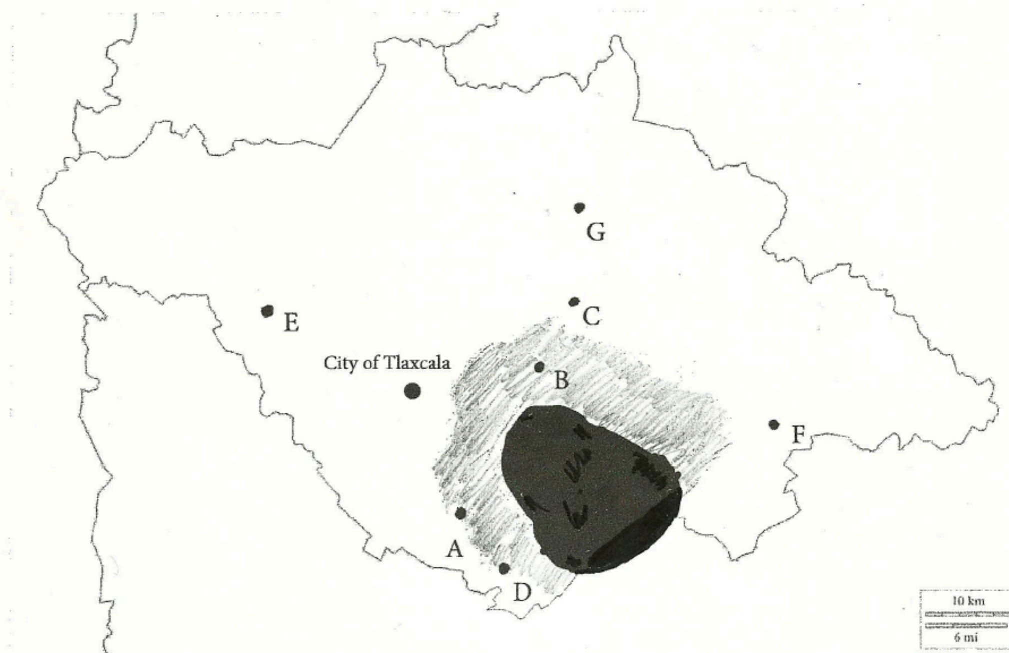

Figure 2: Major Zone of Revolutionary Activity in Tlaxcala from May 1910- April 1920.

Legend:

La Malintzin/ La Malinche/ Matlacueytl (H)

A: Santa Inés Zacatelco	**D: Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco**
B: San Bernardino Contla/ Contla Juan Cuamatzi	**E: Españita**
	F: Huamantla
C: Apizaco	**G: Tlaxco**

Figure 2: Map: Major Zone of Revolutionary Activity in Tlaxcala from May 1910-April 1920

the region's Náhuatl-speakers settled in the La Malintzin's communities. The volcano La Malintzin was and remains very important to these Nahua people.

Francisco Xavier Clavijero wrote in the eighteenth century that the Tlaxcaltecas ascended the volcano to worship their main god Camaxtle (the Aztecs knew this god as Mixcoatl). The Nahua shamans would remain at the volcano's higher points for five days, and as they descended the volcanic highlands they made offerings to other deities, such as the water goddess. Through ritual involving much burning of incense, chants, and dances, the Nahuas felt in union with their gods and they would finalize the ritual by piercing their tongues with needles to nourish the earth with blood. Earlier, Fray Juan de Torquemada observed that during the arrival of Cortés and the Spaniards to the region in 1519, Nahua women and children fled Tlaxcala's pueblos and hid in the volcano's caves. In the case of Cortés's invasion of the territory, the women and children remained hidden until the Tlaxcallans and Spaniards stopped warring and became allies.[2]

Tlaxcala's Náhuatl speakers still refer to the volcano La Malintzin in its native language form of Matlalcuéye, or Matlalcuéyetl, depending on the language's variant being spoken. In the Náhuatl language *matlactli* refers to the color blue, and *cueitl* to skirt; therefore, the volcano acquired its Náhuatl name form from its apparent "blue skirts," which correspond to the dense forestry surrounding the lower levels of the volcano, which is appreciated by watching the volcano after midday from a distance. Major sierras such as the Xaltonalli, Tlachichihuatzi, and the Cuatlapanga, the major *cerros* in Tlaxcala, surround the volcano itself and human populations have thrived in

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[2] Ismael Arturo Montero García, "Matlalcuéye: su culto y adoratorio Prehispánico," in *Coloquio sobre Historia de Tlaxcala* (Tlaxcala: Tlaxcallan, 1998), 76-80.

these high sierras for thousands of years.[3] During the colonial period the volcano Matlacuéye acquired the name La Malintzin, from Malinali, the famous Nahua mistress and interpreter of Cortés, and is therefore also referred to as La Malinche, or as Cerro La Malinche. The volcano has been inactive for centuries, and does not have a crater, but geologists argue that due to its internal lava flow it should still be considered active.[4] Fray Bernardino de Sahagún in the sixteenth century wrote that Indian shamans would ascend the volcano and perform rituals to induce rain in dry seasons or to prevent tempestuous weather from ruining their maize fields. The individuals who controlled the weather through specific rituals were known as *tiemperos*. Up to the present day *tiemperos* blend indigenous practices with the Christian faith by praying to the volcano's natural elements, and also to angels and saints to prevent hailstorms, which ruin their crops.[5]

The region's indigenous people have always relied on the volcano's resources. Local highland Nahuas, for example, possess knowledge of the different types of mushrooms that grow on the La Malintzin. Indigenous people have used mushrooms for anything involving enhancing the taste and quality of a particular soup, to preparing an ointment for alleviating pain from sore muscles.[6] The local Indians also use the region's animals to prepare medicines. People commonly hunt or trap coyotes to use the animal's

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[3] Ismael Arturo Montero García, *Matlalcueye: El volcán del alma tlaxcalteca* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Secretaria de Educación Pública, 2012), 1.
[4] Renato Castro Govea, Claus Siebe, "La historia eruptiva del volcán la Malinche," in *Matlalcuéyetl: visiones plurales sobre cultura, ambiente, y desarrollo, Vol. I*, Pedro Castro and Tim M. Tucker, eds. (Tlaxcala: El Colegio de Tlaxcala, 2009), 75-82.
[5] Maricela Hernández Vázquez, José Jiménez López, "El clima de la Matlalcuéyetl y el conocimiento tradicional," in *Matlalcuéyetl, Vol. I*, 128-130.
[6] Adriana Montoya, et al., "Conocimiento tradicional de los hongos silvestres en Altamira de Guadalupe, Huamantla, Tlaxcala," in *Matlalcuéyetl, Vol. I*, 163-165.

fat to treat pain from arthritis, while armadillos are desiccated and their shells are converted into dust to treat venereal diseases.[7]

Sahagún discovered that the La Malintzin volcano was always a sacred site to the Indians. Like the land, the volcano took a feminine form, and was for the Tlaxcaltecan Nahuas a warrior, goddess, and mother--their warrior mother. In our present day, a shaman from San Juan Ixtenco likens a specific point on the volcano's peak to the earth's vulva, and Nahuas lore relates that the volcano is the mother of all water flowing down to the communities.[8]

The state of Tlaxcala shares borders with the modern states of Puebla, Hidalgo, México State, and Veracruz, making it from pre-Columbian times to the modern era an important strategic zone during times of conflict. The region could have been settled by northern nomads as early as 12,000 BCE. Tribes such as the Chocho, Olmecs, Tepanecas, Zacatecas, and Popoloca migrated in large numbers to the area, and increasingly more so after the pre-classic period (300 CE), large migrations of the Otomies—a people the Nahuas derided as barbarians—further populated the area.[9] The Teochichimecs, otherwise known as the Náhuatl-speaking Tlaxcallans, migrated later, but were highly sophisticated, belligerent, and politically organized. This group quickly became the region's dominant ethnicity and they founded the Kingdom of Tlaxcallan. While other

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[7] Graciela Gómez Álvarez, et al., "Fauna silvestre de la Malinche: importancia cultural y utilitaria," in *Matlalcuéyetl*, 182-184.
[8] "Percepción y representación de la Matlalcueye en el imaginario contemporáneo," in *Matlalcuéyetl: visiones plurales sobre cultura, ambiente y desarrollo, Vol. II* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: El Colegio de Tlaxcala, 2009), 36-38.
[9] Charles Gibson, *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1967), 1-3. Women from the Nahua nobility may have intermarried with Otomi war captains. The Aztecs and Tlaxcalans worshiped many of the same gods. Their main deity, Camaxtle, who is the god of war, represents their version of the Aztec god Huitzilopochtli. See, Diego Muñoz Camargo, publicada y anotada por Alfredo Chavero, *Historia de Tlaxcala*, (México: Fomento, 1892), 5-6.

ethnic groups were driven out of the region, the Otomies learned the Náhuatl language and served the Teochichimec lords as *macehules* (workers) and as *yao* (soldiers). Upon solidifying their rule, the Nahuas of Tlaxcallan divided the region into four main *cabeceras* or *altepetl*—Tepeticpac, Ocotelulco, Tizatlán, and Culhuatecuhtli—which remain the state's main territorial divisions. The Nahua-speaking lords presiding over the main *altepetl*, which divided into smaller pueblos, the *altepeme*, and nearby territories were often blood relatives. Ocotelulco, for example, was founded by the youngest male sibling of the first ruler of Tepeticpac. The territory of Tizatlán, from where the hegemonic Xicohténcatl clan emanated, was founded after the death of Ocotelulco's third king.[10] Diego Muñoz Camargo wrote in the sixteenth century that each *cabecera* owed its existence to the veneration of the elders of Tlaxcallan. Ocotelulco, for example, had been the territory of the great Maxixcatzin Tianquiztlatoanitzin, who we know from the root word *tianguez* (market), controlled the region's largest market, and the people of Tepeticpac owed their lineage to the regional lord Tlehuexolotzin. Powerful chieftains formed strong societies high in the sierras, which gave an advantage to the people of Tlaxcallan when confronting invading Aztec armies.[11]

The Kingdom of Tlaxcallan, as James Lockhart has observed, like Tenochtitlán and Chalco was a complex *altepetl*, and each of the subdivisions had its own lord, the *tlatoani* or *tlatoque*. The subdivisions were large and populous enough to perhaps stand as their own *altepetl* until the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries when a single *tlatoani*

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[10] Gibson, *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth*, 5.
[11] Diego Muñoz Camargo, *Relaciones Geográficas de Tlaxcala 2nda Edición*, prologo y notas de René Acuña (San Luis Potosí: El Colegio de San Luis y la Biblioteca Tlaxcalteca, 1999), 36-45.

exercised full regional hegemony over Tlaxcallan.[12] Two decades before the Spanish conquest of Tenochtitlan in 1521, the unified Tlaxcallan rulers under the stewardship of Xicohténcatl Huehuetl, otherwise known as the elder king, warred incessantly with the Aztec kingdom. In 1515, the Mexica-Aztecs launched a massive invading campaign of 100,000 *yao* against Tlaxcallan, but failed to subdue the kingdom.[13]

Because a kingdom had held off an empire, Tlaxcala's warriors were renowned for their courage. They were also admired for their unfailing devotion to their gods, and were therefore seen by the Aztecs as ideal sacrificial victims for their gods Huitzilopochtli and Tlaloc. Geopolitically, Tlaxcallan's significance in Mesoamerica lies in the fact that the kingdom stood in the way of absolute Aztec political and military dominance over the region of central México. Tlaxcallan's fierce autonomy also emboldened neighboring kingdoms to resist Aztec control, which would leave the Triple Alliance of the Valley of México in a precarious state upon the arrival of the Spaniards. The Kingdom of Tlaxcallan also divided the political realms of Tenochtitlán and the Huastecas of Veracruz. By 1518, the frustrated Mexica *tlatoani*, Moctezuma II, had waged fourteen years of total war against Tlaxcallan. Although the Aztec Empire needed nothing material from Tlaxcallan, conquering the rival kingdom was a matter of pride.[14] Moreover, the Tlaxcallan warlord Tlahuicole, a man who "made the entire earth

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[12] James Lockhart, *The Nahuas after the Conquest: A Social and Cultural History of the Indians of Central Mexico, Sixteenth through Eighteenth Centuries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), 20-24.

[13] Ross Hassig, *Aztec Warfare: Imperial Expansion and Political Control* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 233-234.

[14] Alan Knight, *Mexico: From the Beginning to the Spanish Conquest* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 190-191. Starting in 1504, the Aztec army strengthened its resolve to subdue Tlaxcala. Prior to that year, the Aztecs intimidated Tlaxcala, and other regional rivals through the practice of Xochiyaoyotl-"the flowery wars", which were battles arranged by warring chieftains. Contrary to what others have written, Ross Hassig states that Xochiyaoyotl was not waged primarily to acquire sacrificial victims, but as an ostentatious display of the Aztecs' military might. Hassig, *Aztec Warfare*, 9-8, 219, 255.

tremble," had in multiple campaigns shattered the myth of Mexica-Aztec invincibility to the point that Moctezuma II paid reverence to the enemy warrior, sending him upon his capture to an impossible conquest to the Kingdom of Michoacán.[15]

Despite enduring the brunt of the Aztecs' military might, the Kingdom of Tlaxcallan remained autonomous until the forces of Hernando Cortés arrived in 1519, when Muñoz Camargo wrote that the massive Christianization of the natives in the New World began.[16] Upon initial contact in September 1519, the people of Tlaxcallan and the Spaniards warred, but unable to defeat the invaders, Xicohténcatl Huehuetl formed a pact with the Spaniards. Their common objective was defeating the Aztec Empire and collecting the defeated empire's riches. The Kingdom of Tlaxcallan too had been weakened by warfare and intertribal factionalism, and although the elders of Tlaxcallan debated the matter, they decided to aid Cortés in July 1520; however, the Tlaxcallan lords demanded many of the war spoils—the main one being a permanent military fort in the Aztec capital.[17]

The Spaniards under Cortés used a strong and unified native kingdom to topple an enfeebled and divided empire. After the joint Tlaxcallan-Spanish victory over Tenochtitlán, the elite *yao* of Tlaxcala forged permanent alliances with the Spanish conquistadores, serving as foot soldiers in the Spanish conquests of the Kingdom of Guatemala. With time, they adopted the identity of indigenous conquistadors and colonizers themselves. Through intermarriage, warlords from Tlaxcallan had established

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[15] Fray Diego Durán, *The History of the Indies of New Spain*, Edited and Translated by Doris Hayden (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992), 448-449.
[16] Muñoz Camargo, *Relaciones Geográficas*, 39. This claim, of course, should be highly contested, especially in light of the Spaniards' efforts to Christianize natives in the larger Caribbean realm.
[17] Ross Hassig, *Mexico and the Spanish Conquest, 2nd Ed.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006), 122-123.

close relations with the conquistador Pedro de Alvarado (Alvarado, for example, had married Tlaxcala's princes Luisa Xicohténcatl). But as letters written in 1545 by the Nahua-Tlaxcallan soldiers to King Phillip II reveal, the Nahua allies butchered and enslaved Mayan warriors to pacify and colonize Guatemala, only to be subjected to enslavement, torture, and death by Alvarado's henchmen. The native allies lamented that they had left behind in their homeland wailing wives, mothers, and sick children only to be subjected to Spanish cruelty once the work of conquering and colonizing the Maya had ended.[18] The *Título de Caciques*, written by a group of Totonicapan K'iche' nobles in 1544, underscores the deeds of the warriors from Tlaxcallan, who invaded, conquered, and colonized their lands.[19] Informed by their ethnocentrism, however, which stressed that they possessed pure blood, the Spaniards relegated their *macehual* allies to a subordinated status.[20] Although native allies from Tlaxcallan helped Pedro de Alvarado to establish San Salvador, and the conquistador in turn rewarded the native cacique Juan Tlaxcalteca with an enormous encomienda, the Spaniards exploited most of the native commoners in those colonies.[21]

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[18] Matthew Restall and Florine Asselbergs, *Invading Guatemala: Spanish, Nahua, and Maya Accounts of the Conquest Wars* (University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007), 79-92.

[19] Florine Asselbergs, "The Conquest in Images: Stories of Tlaxcalteca and Quauhquecholteca Conquistadors," in *Indian Conquistadors: Indigenous Allies in the Conquest of Mesoamerica*, Edited by Laura E. Matthew and Michel R. Oudijk (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 65-67.

[20] Following the famous *Noche Triste*, in which the Spaniards were defeated at Tenochtitlan, Cortés and his men sought refuge in the Kingdom of Tlaxcallan. Consequently, unknown in most historical accounts, Aztec emissaries attempted to forge an Aztec-Tlaxcala unification to wipe out the Spaniards. Axayacatzin Xicohténcatl, Tlaxcala's prince, favored the union; however, Xicoténcatl-Huehuetl, the elder, Maxixcatzin, the high governor, and Cortés, decided that Axayacatzin was a traitor. The prince was captured in Texcoco and was summarily executed. As a whole, Tlaxcala's noble Nahuas were rewarded by Cortés himself. Some were given land and laborers; others became part of Spanish expeditionary forces and colonized and "pacified" conquered territories throughout Mexico and what is now Central America. The most significant of these re-colonization projects occurred in the Gran Chichimeca. See Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *Breve Historia de Tlaxcala*, (Mexico City: Colegio de Mexico: 1996), 47-52.

[21] Andrea Martínez Baracs, *Un gobierno de indios: Tlaxcala, 1519-1750* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2008), 270.

Without the aid of Tlaxcallan's warriors arguably, the Spaniards would not have succeeded in their mid-sixteenth century in the northern territory of Nueva Galicia.[22] When the Spaniards under Pedro de Alvarado were nearly obliterated in the initial Chichimec rebellion in the Cerro del Míxton, Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza appealed to the Nahua lords to help them settle permanently in the barrios of Analco and Mexicalcingo in Guadalajara.[23] The Tlaxcallan warriors had already helped the Spaniards subdue Chichimec groups such as the Zacatecans and Caxcanes, and the Tlaxcallans also helped Spanish authorities establish permanent settlements in what became Aguascalientes, Queretaro, Guanajuato, and Durango. Based on their interactions with the indigenous northern people, the Spaniards thought that the Chichimec were the most loathsome, belligerent, depraved, vile, and savage heathen.[24] The conquest of the Chichimecs took more than fifty years, and after 1560 Viceroy Luis de Velasco convinced more than 400 Tlaxcallan families to settle in the northern realm of New Spain. The Spaniards conceptualized Tlaxcallan's people as industrious, loyal, and civilized, and colonial authorities encouraged the conquered Chichimec people to imitate the customs of the central Nahuas.[25] De Velasco followed a tradition of granting encomiendas, titles of nobility, and farming lands, to conquerors and colonizers and therefore Tlaxcallan nobles in the north gained lands in exchange for helping the Spaniards Christianize the northern Chichimec realm.[26]

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[22] Gibson, *Tlaxcala in the Sixteenth*, 158-159.
[23] Yolanda Ramos García et al. *Los Colonizadores Tlaxcaltecas: Siglos XVI al XIX* (Tlaxcala: Fideicomiso Colegio de Historia de Tlaxcala, 2015), 53-55.
[24] Philip Wayne Powell, *Soldiers, Indians, and Silver: The Northward Advance of New Spain, 1550-1600* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1952), 40-49.
[25] Ramos, *Los Colonizadores Tlaxcaltecas*, 58-60.
[26] Ramos, *Los Colonizadores Tlaxcaltecas*, 67-70.

In the middle of the seventeenth century, the Spanish authorities made sure that the 1,000 Tlaxcaltec men migrating north to colonize were all married as Christians. The Tlaxcallans, they believed, would help them establish a Catholic regime in the north.[27] Both ecclesiastical and civil authorities believed that Tlaxcala's natives were "well instructed in our doctrine" and would serve the empire well as local officials. Moreover, the clergymen believed that as "Christian Indians" the native allies would help them domesticate "the barbarians," leading the former heathens into "the peace and friendliness of our Catholic faith."[28] The Spaniards began referring to Tlaxcallan's natives in the north as "good Christians" and *hidalgos* (persons of the lower nobility). Elite Tlaxcallans were given thirty-year tax exemptions, rode horses, and were allowed to carry weapons. Therefore, whereas the Tlaxcallans travelling south became subjugated and forgotten conquerors, after 1590 the people from Tlaxcallan migrating north enjoyed the special status of conquerors and noble colonizers.[29]

James Lockhart has found that in a post-conquest phase, Tlaxcallan's system of governance remained purely indigenous until the mid-seventeenth century. Amerindian population loss accounts for the change in governance.[30] Diego Muñoz Camargo noted that major epidemics broke out in Tlaxcallan in 1520, 1545, and 1576. Indigenous systems of governance in Tlaxcallan only began to lose strength after 1650 due to the prolonged impact of Old World diseases such as smallpox, influenza, measles, and

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[27] Martínez Baracs, *Un gobierno de indios*, 277.
[28] Ibid, 279.
[29] Ibid, 283-289.
[30] Lockhart, *Nahuas and Spaniards*, 159-158.

typhus.[31] Even with the catastrophic population losses, which surpassed the ninety percent mark, the indigenous *cabildo* in Tlaxcala (the Spaniards renamed Tlaxcallan, Tlaxcala) did not merely acquiesce to the whim of Spanish governors, but brokered an arrangement with the dominant culture mostly to the benefit of the indigenous communities.[32] Although by 1620 indigenous caciques had sold much land to Spaniards in the fertile Huamantla region, the *naturales* (natives) of Tlaxcala defended their privileged status in colonial courts. Moreover, local Spanish magistrates worried about the Indians' vigorous defense of their lands, and about the protestors' manner of galvanizing other native pueblos to resist paying their tribute.[33]

On 15 June 1692, a maize scarcity in Tlaxcala and Puebla caused Indians to revolt. The mutineers burned down portions of Tlaxcala's municipal palace, looted and razed the homes of Spanish nobles, and took off with supplies of maize and wheat. In response, Governor Fernando Manuel de Bustamante Bustillo and an armed militia suppressed the insurrection. More than 100 Indians, the local magistrate reported, died during the tumult and the governor then had 60 rioters decapitated. Nor was he without collaborators from within Indian communities. The "loyal" local indigenous caciques of Tlaxcala raised the militia against the rebellious Indians of Santa Cruz in the "service of the Spanish governor."[34] The Indian nobility was as concerned as the Spanish authorities with precluding the insurrection's growth, and also wanted to prove that the tumult was the "barbarous deed" of "*macehuales*"—Indian commoners, and not of the "noble

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[31] Noble David Cook, *Born To Die: Disease and New World Conquest, 1492-1650* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 133.
[32] Lockhart, *Nahuas and Spaniard,* 162-164.
[33] Martínez Baracs, *Un gobierno de indios*, 330-334.
[34] Baracs, *Un gobierno de indios*, 398-402.

Indians." Further investigations in 1693 revealed that the governor's militia had killed as many as 200 Indians who had rioted, or had planned to rebel, and also observed that the insurrectionists came from virtually every Indian pueblo in Tlaxcala, but primarily from San Bernardino Contla and Santa Cruz. The governor had even requested permission from the viceroy to pulverize the two pueblos into dust and relocate the natives.[35] Colonial records from 1803 show that the pueblo of San Bernardino Contla remained a hotbed of conflicts over disputed land. Villagers often threatened to kill each other over land demarcations.[36] Colonial authorities reported that the *naturales* (Indians) of Contla and nearby pueblos were natuural *tumultarios* (violent). The Contla natives had often refused to pay their religious tithes, which called into question their loyalty to the Church and authorities also doubed their loyalty to the empire.[37]

The Indians of Contla and other La Malintzin pueblos may have become recalcitrant due to heightened Church taxation, which contradicted the aims of Bourbon Reformers seeking to curtail the power of the Catholic regular clergy. Raymond Buve notes that, despite the efforts by Bourbon reformers to prohibit excessive taxation by the clergy, during the latter phase of the colonial period (post-1750), Tlaxcala's Indians were becoming increasingly exploited by both Indian caciques (through communal, mandatory public works) and Spanish labor drafts. The Spaniards, however, were much more exploitative than the Indian elites. The participation of Tlaxcala's fighters in the nation's

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[35] Baracs, *Un gobierno de indios*, 403-411.
[36] San Bernardino Contla, AGN, Tierras de Indios (TI), 27 October 1803, Cuaderno 6, Tomo, 1, 347.
[37] San Bernardino Contla, AGN, TI, October 1801, Cuaderno 3, Tomo 3.

wars (1810, 1846, 1855, 1857, 1862, 1872, and 1876) was noteworthy.[38] We do not know much about the participation of Tlaxcala's Indians in the Independence Wars, but indigenous guerrilla groups did fight against the royalists. They fought primarily to preserve their local autonomy and privilege.[39]

Well into the middle of the nineteenth century, the Reform Laws of 1856-57, which disentailed church and communal properties, and the nation's entry into the global economy in the late nineteenth century under President Porfirio Díaz, made it increasingly difficult for Indian peasant communities to retain their village autonomies.[40] This introductory chapter will offer readers a concise analysis of Tlaxcala's role in the formation of the modern Mexican nation state, particularly from 1853 to 1905, and will therefore fill a significant void in our understanding of a neglected region in the Mexican Oriente Central.

The Mexican Revolution of Ayutla and the Rise of Mexican Liberalism

The conservatives and moderates who opposed President José Joaquín de Herrera got a chance to unseat their hated rival on 6 February 1853. The conservative faction had fulfilled its desire to topple the Mexico City government as they had stated in their Plan of Jalisco, which called upon the establishment of a brief dictatorship to fix the nation's political woes. Supporters of the Plan de Jalisco understood that Antonio López de Santa Anna would become the nation's provisional dictator, arguing that this was absolutely necessary. Some conservatives wanted Santa Anna to become the Mexican Emperor, but

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[38] Raymond Buve, "Política y sociedad en Tlaxcala: unos interrogantes y unos hilos conductores a través de su historia, entre 1810 y 1910," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario en Tlaxcala* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1994), 101-114.
[39] Rendón Garcini, *Breve historia*, 67.
[40] Adolfo Gilly, *La Revolución Interrumpida* (Mexico City: ERA, 2009), 16-19.

the old dictator and veteran of dozens of coups, rebellions, revolutions, and foreign wars, settled for the title of "His Most Serene Highness."[41] Moderate conservatives would have been content with the opportunity to re-write the 1824 Constitution and restore the privileges of their class, but Santa Anna intended to stay in power. Arguing that preventing future uprisings and revolutions necessitated fixing the country's economic, social, and political ills, Santa Anna very rapidly forced all the state governors and federal government deputies to his surrender to his supreme authority.[42] He also restored clerical and military *fueros* (exemption from civil jurisdictions), and his army jailed, tortured, and executed political dissidents.[43] The old dictator was determined, however, to solve the nation's agrarian problem. Too many peasant communities, he observed, lacked lands. Article 1 of his 25 November 1853 Decree ordered the confiscation of all public lands, converting these parcels to the "exclusive property of the Nation." Article 2 declared that only the nation could sell these lands.[44]

Santa Anna was never able to implement any proposed reforms after 1854. Even had he wanted to, he had blundered too many times. Although he emerged from the Independence and post-independence 1820s civil conflicts as a popular hero, his gravest mistakes had been losing Texas in 1836, abandoning the Mexican forces during the Anglo invasion of México in 1847, and failing to end the Caste War of Yucatán, which erupted also in 1847. His prestige had plummeted in June 1853 when he sold La Mesilla,

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[41] Anselmo de la Portilla, *Historia de la Revolución de México contra la Dictadura del General Santa-Anna, 1853-1855* (Mexico City: Imprenta de Vicente García Torres, 1856), 9-14.
[42] Ibid, 30-37.
[43] John W. Foster, "The Contest for the Laws of Reform in Mexico," *The American Historical Review* 15, 3 (1910): 550-553.
[44] Rosario Varo Berra, *La reforma agraria en México desde 1853* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara; UCLA Program on México, 2002), 85-86.

a strip of territory located mostly between Sonora and Arizona, which was desired by the United States to establish the western line of the California Railroad. The La Mesilla sale is known in U.S. history as the Gadsden Purchase. U.S. Expansionists interpred the purchase of La Mesilla as a triumph of their Manifest Destiny. In México, however, the loss of additional land to Anglo expansionism, despite the ten million dollars which the Mexican government received, deepened the political rivalries between Liberals and Conservatives. Many considered Santa Anna a villain and a U.S. puppet.[45] Santa Anna also earned himself much hatred from the Mexican rural sector when he promised concessions in the form of land and money to Europeans, especially Germans willing to help him modernize the country by settling permanently in México.[46] Richard Johnson also observed that the death of chief government minister Lucas Alamán from pleurisy on 2 June 1853, just weeks into the renewed Santa Anna regime, caused a good number of notable conservatives to disavow Santa Anna.[47]

The death knell to the last Santanista dictatorship came when as a response to the dictator's heightened centralism, Juan Álvarez, the veteran of the Independence War and 1830s Guerra de la Tierra Caliente, from the state of Guerrero, and other prominent liberals such as Ignacio Comonfort from Puebla, rebelled against Santa Anna in 1854.[48] The Plan de Ayutla, drafted by the rebels on 1 March 1854, called for the end of Santa Anna's centralism. Moreover, implementing a comprehensive agrarian reform program

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[45] Louis Bernard Schmidt, "Manifest Opportunity and the Gadsden Purchase," *Arizona and the West* 3, 3 (1961): 256-257.
[46] Luis González y González, *El Indio en la era Liberal* (Mexico City: Clío, 1996). 143.
[47] Richard A. Johnson, "Santa Anna's Last Dictatorship, 1853-1855," *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 41, 4 (1938): 285.
[48] Foster, "The Conquest for the Laws," 532.

was one of the chief aims of the Ayutla rebels.[49] The Ayutla rebellion, which began in the state of Guerrero in early 1854, reached the northern states of Sonora and Tamaulipas by the spring of 1855. Thousands of Indians joined the Ayutla revolutionists in Guerrero and Michoacán, and the inexorable "war of the guerrillas" had also spread out throughout the Oriente Central, where many Indians and plebeians joined the rebellion in Puebla and Tlaxcala. Santa Anna's enfeebled military was not ready to mount an effective counteroffensive against what rapidly became a national revolution.[50]

When in February of 1855 four thousand indigenous Nahua commoners led by local elites from Zacapoaxtla in the Sierra Norte de Puebla rose in arms against the government, the Santa Anna military began losing ground precipitously. Subsequently, the Santa Anna government lost the Sierra Norte de Puebla, Tlaxcala, and central Puebla early in the winter of 1855.[51] In March 1855, the Ayutla revolutionaries, with the backing of thousands of Indians, launched a massive offensive against the federal army from Santo Toribio Xicohtzingo, Tlaxcala, and from Cholula and Ocotlán, Puebla. By August, the Santa Anna military had lost the major cities of Puebla, Morelia, Acapulco, and Oaxaca City, forcing Santa Anna to abdicate the presidency.[52] Although Johnson did not acknowledge it, (he gave greater importance to cholera epidemics which probably devastated not only the Santa Anna army but the Ayutla rebels equally as well) the Indians of the Oriente Central won the war for the liberals.[53] But it was estimated that in

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[49] Marcos Daniel Silva Maldonado and Carlos Humberto Durand Alcántara *La cuestión agraria mexicana desde el derecho agrario y los pueblos indios (La Tierra y lo sagrado)* (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, 2015), 139-140;
[50] De la Portilla, *Historia de la Revolución*, 105-125. 132-135, 167-170.
[51] De la Portilla, *Historia de la Revolución*, 266-286.
[52] Ibid, 298-328.
[53] Johnson, "Santa Anna's Last," 305-306.

1856 two-thirds of Mexicans were Indians, and this worried the victorious liberal elites. Manuel Doblado, Benito Juárez, Ignacio Comonfort (who had led many Indians in battle in Puebla and Tlaxcala), and even Juan Álvarez, who knew the Indians of Guerrero intimately as both a rebel leader and hacienda owner who employed hundreds, argued that the Ayutla Revolution would not be a punitive one. They would not destroy the propertied class entirely, nor eliminate the Conservatives wholly. There were moderate Conservatives from the old regime, Doblado reasoned, who could serve the new government well. Moreover, the moderate conservatives were interested in amending the Constitution and, like the moderate liberals, they wanted to nationalize all excess lands. Moisés González Navarro has argued that what fully divided the conservatives and liberals, and this included the *puros* (fundamentalists) and the liberal moderates, was dealing with the Church. A staunchly anticlerical group, the *puros* sought to curtail the influence of the Church entirely.[54] Moreover, with an upset higher clergy supportive of Conservatives, even with the Liberal Ayutla victory Juárez and his camp remained on alert. He and other *puros* anticipated an armed conservative reaction. On 26 January 1856, therefore, Juárez called upon the National Guard stationed in Oaxaca to “stand ready and respond to the cause of their *real ruler*, the Government.” Juárez argued that true patriots would not succumb to the pressure coming from the conservative “enemies of Liberty.” All Mexican patriots, he wrote, supported the liberal Revolution of Ayutla.[55]

The state of Tlaxcala did not escape the national political division during the War of the Reform (1857-1861). On 26 April 1856, Tlaxcala Governor Guillermo Valle also

[54] Moisés González Navarro, “La Ley Juárez,” *Historia Mexicana* 55, 3 (2006): 950-954.
[55] Benito Juárez, “Oaxaqueños,” Oaxaca, Oaxaca, 26 January 1856, in *Benito Juárez de su puño y letra* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de las Revoluciones de México), 83-84.

warned his constituency that the nation's reactionaries were ready to overthrow the liberal government installed by the Ayutla revolutionaries.[56] In late 1857, Ignacio Comonfort rebelled against the Juárez camp, calling a need to reform the Mexican Constitution of 1857. Comonfort's Plan de Tacubaya sought to limit the political influence of the radical *puros*, but galvanized by the political instability within the liberal party, the conservatives launched a coup on 21 January 1858 against Comonfort himself.[57] In a surprising move, Governor Valle joined the Conservatives in 1858, establishing a provisional state capital in Huamantla, while the liberal leader of Tlaxcala, Miguel Lira y Ortega, supported President Benito Juárez. Lira y Ortega had declared himself a liberal since Juan Álvarez first rebelled against Santa Anna.[58] Tlaxcala became the site of intense battles between the conservatives and liberals during the Guerra de la Reforma, but ultimately many rural people joined forces with the liberals.[59]

Luis León, who became Tlaxcala's substitute governor when Lira y Ortega fled the area to join the liberals fighting in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, wrote that the conservative army, "the barbarians," as he described them based on how they behaved in Tlaxcala, had killed many men who resisted the conservative occupation of the pueblos of Tepeyanco, Tetatlahuca, and Nativitas, leaving behind hundreds of widows and thousands of orphans. The interim governor exclaimed that the human toll in Tlaxcala reflected the "sordid horrors of a civil war!" But he called upon the descendants of

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[56] Guillermo Valle, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, "Discurso" in *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 26 April 1856, p. 3.
[57] Brian Hamnet, "The Comonfort Presidency, 1855-1857," *Buletin of Latin American Research* 15, 1 (1996), 83.
[58] Corresponsal, "Tlaxcala," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 24 September 1855, p. 4; Miguel Lira y Ortega, *Causas y efectos en los principales actos de mi administración del Estado de Tlaxcala*, Text rescued by Mercedes Meade de Angulo as: *Homenaje al Licenciado y Coronel Manuel Lira y Ortega en el centenario de su muerte* (Tlaxcala: Gobierno del Estado de Tlaxcala, 1982), 40.
[59] Rendón Garcini, *Breve historia,* 74.

"Xicotencatl" to fight the conservative occupation of Tlaxcala until the bitter end.[60] Lira y Ortega also wrote about the horrors of the Mexican civil war through his reflections on his exile while in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, where he became a colonel under General Miguel Castúlo Alatriste, the liberal chieftain of Puebla. Lira y Ortega wrote that he served the Mexican nation proudly, but noted that he participated in the civil conflict in large part because the war had reached his nation, Tlaxcala, his *patria chica*. Lira y Ortega expressed a profoundly localist sentiment. Defending his *patria chica*, he said, even alleviated the pain he felt after separating from his children. Like the Indians, the descendants of creole elites and prominent mestizos also loved their communities. By defending their towns and villages they played an instrumental role in the establishment of modern México.[61] In the aftermath of the Ayutla revolution, two transcendent problems remained unresolved: autocratic governance did not end, and problems persisted between the agrarian sector and the nascent liberal government.[62]

Reports from the liberal writer Francisco Zarco stated that peasant "bandit gangs" coming from the sierras of Puebla had attempted to take the city of Huamantla.[63] Other reports related that "these were religious rebels" from within Tlaxcala who freed prisoners from Huamantla at the chants of "Long live religion!" The rebels were responding against the liberal anticlericalism, and had attempted to occupy estates in Huamantla permanently before the liberal forces drove them away from the territory. President Juárez responded to the growing threat in the sierras of Tlaxcala by dispatching

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[60] Luis León, "A los pueblos y a las tropas de los mismos." Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 December 1859, AHET, Fondo Siglo Diecinueve (FSD), Caja, 10, Exp., 4.
[61] Lira y Ortega, *Causas y efectos*, 40-42.
[62] Richard A. Johnson, *The Revolution of Ayutla, 1854-1855: An Analysis of the Evolution and Destruction of Santa Anna's Last Dictatorship* (Rock Island: Augustana College Library, 1939), 40-44.
[63] Francisco Zarco, "Noticias Nacionales," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 2 September 1857, p. 4.

General Nicolas de la Portilla to pacify the region.[64] Zarco wrote later that the bandits were pseudo-insurrectionists who feigned loyalties to the Church to attempt to undermine the liberal government. Led by a Polish immigrant, Kersy Kausky, and a local caudillo, José María Garcilaso, the group had attempted to galvanize people from the La Malintzin pueblos of Atlangatepec and Piedras Negras to join in them.[65]

By December 1857, the conservatives had taken advantage of the social conflicts in the La Malintzin, forming a strong contingent of anti-Liberal forces around Huamantla.[66] The Tacubaya rebels had enlisted fighters from the La Malintzin region to try to overcome the political influence of General Cástulo Alatriste in the region, but the liberals serving under Alatriste had also recruited people from the La Malintzin and the Puebla Sierra.[67] Since it was a region of great geostrategic importance, the liberals decided to occupy Huamantla permanently in the middle of 1858. Controlling Huamantla enhanced their ability to hold off the conservatives in the high sierras of Tlaxco and San Pablo Apetitlán, and the control of the La Malintzin region also provided a gateway to liberal hotbed of Zacapoaxtla in the Sierra Norte de Puebla.[68]

In 1859, Antonio Carbajal, a famed liberal rebel leader, formed "*las blusas rojas*" ("the red shirts") and this rebel faction, which controlled Tlaxcala's north, eventually defeated the conservatives throughout the state.[69] The conservatives lost the definitive national battle of the Reform War on 21 December 1860 at Caluplalpan in the state of

[64] Guillermo Valle y Miguel Lira y Ortega, "Informe," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 3 September 1857, p. 3
[65] Francisco Zarco, "Noticias Nacionales," *El Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 11 September 1857, p. 4.
[66] Informe, *El Siglo Diez y Nueve,* 17 December 1857, p. 2.
[67] M.M. Echeagaray, "Puebla," *El Siglo XIX*, 29 January 1858, p. 2.
[68] Rafael Espinoza, "Huamantla," *El Siglo XIX*, 11 March 1858, p. 3; "Puebla," *El Siglo XIX*, 17 July 1858, p. 4.
[69] Rendón Garcini, *Breve historia*, 75-77.

México. Although the major conservative general, Miguel Miramón, had fled to Cuba, however, the army of the Indian chieftain Tomás Mejía continued the fight against the liberals at various points throughout the Oriente Central in 1861. The war between the conservatives of Mejía (whose forces the liberal government described as terrible hordes of bandits needing to be exterminated) and the liberals of Carbajal, who served under the major Liberal General Ignacio Zaragoza, would persist in San Martín Texmelucan until the late summer of 1861. The Tlaxcallan army, which was raggedy and composed primarity of the poor, had joined the liberal effort against Mejía, fighting in Puebla and in the Sierra Gorda of Querétaro.[70]

Tlaxcala emerged from the great factional conflict in 1861 with a new liberal governor, José Manuel Saldaña, who wrote that Tlaxcala, a relatively new federal entity since it achieved statehood only in December 1856, had been left devastated by the incessant warfare, which had invaded every district. The people, therefore, would have to form a local liberal government from the ashes of war, he declared.[71] With the French Invasion in late 1861, Governor Saldaña reorganized the state's forces for the defense of the *patria chica*, but even with the support of "the red shirts" Saldaña was defeated by occupying French Imperial forces in 1862. Under imperial military jurisdiction, the occupation forces divided Tlaxcala into four districts--Tlaxco, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, and Zacatlán--in 1864. Emperor Maximilian handed the military jurisdiction of Tlaxcala to Ignacio Ormaechea y Ernáiz, who had fought tenaciously to restore conservative

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[70] Ignacio Zaragoza to Ministro de Guerra, San Martín Texmelucan, 4 September 1861, reprinted in *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 6 September 1861, p. 2; Parte Oficial: Ministerio de Guerra y Marina, *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 7 September 1861, p. 2; Antonio Carbajal, Informe de Guerra, San Martín Texmelucan, 6 September 1861, reprinted in *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, 13 September 1861, p. 3.

[71] José Manuel Saldaña, "Informe." Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 6 March 1861, reprinted in *Siglo Diez y Nueve*, p. 2.

privileges during the War of the Reform. The local conservative leaders supporting Emperor Maximilian warned the indigenous and mestizo leaders of the Oriente Central "of the growing influence of Porfirio Díaz," whom they observed would likely emerge as a military autocrat if the Juaristas defeated the occupying forces. Conservative opponents of Juárez accused the liberal camp of disloyalty to the patria. According to them, Juárez was plotting to sell Baja California to the United States, while Emperor Maximilian purportedly worked indefatigably for the Mexican people's benefit.[72]

In the midst of the French occupation, the liberals of Tlaxcala joined the *Ejército Republicano del Oriente* in 1865 under Lira y Ortega, but after a series of heated battles they were unable to expel the French forces and their conservative allies from the region. To better control the Oriente Central and subdue the Nahua resistance in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, the French added the Sierra Norte towns of Zacatlán, Chignahuapan, and Tetela to Tlaxcala's territory. The conservatives had believed that Tlaxcala's loyalists had helped them to pacify the area permanently, but in 1866, the liberals in Tlaxcala received a huge boost in morale when Antonio Rodríguez Bocardo and his group recruited many of the disaffected villagers who had been defeated by empire. By early 1867, the tide had turned in favor of the liberals, and Porfirio Díaz and the northern serranos of Puebla controlled the greater area of Tlaxcala. The long years of fighting, however, had left Tlaxcala economically devastated. General Rodríguez Bocardo, who emerged from the liberal triumph after the French Intervention as the Military Commander of Tlaxcala, wrote to the citizens informing them of the urgent need of implementing a three percent tax increase on woodcutting. Agave growers would also have to pay the state three pesos

[72] Martín de las Torres, *El Archiduque Maximiliano de Austria en México* (Madrid: Librería de D.A. de San Martín, 1867), 436-438.

yearly for every *tlachiquero* (agave worker) laboring on their estates.[73] These increases would affect the rich, while Lira y Ortega ordered halving the yearly contribution for the maintenance of the National Guard, a tax that had mostly hurt ordinary citizens.[74] With the liberal victory, the districts were redrawn and Puebla recovered its territories, while Miguel Lira y Ortega gave greater local political power to Tlaxcala's five main municipalities: Tlaxcala, Zacatelco, Tlaxco, Huamantla, and, the recently incorporated territory of Calpulalpan, which had belonged to México State. This benefitted the local politicians clamoring for greater municipal autonomy.[75]

Divisions between the conservative camp, the Church, and the Empire, moreover, had facilitated the liberal victory of 1867. Just as the Mexican conservatives believed that Emperor Maximilian shared their political views, but discovered otherwise, Maximilian informed the Bishops of México that he felt they needed to do a better job of making the Mexican people a pious pueblo in the traditional Roman Catholic sense. Moreover, the emperor accused the Church members of promoting dissent, of participating in the nation's many revolutions and civil conflicts, and scolded them for having meddled for too long in the political affairs of the country.[76] Emperor Maximilian interpreted the guerrillas resisting his rule as a popular army's degeneration into brigandage. The entire countryside, he observed, had been plunged into banditry, and anarchy, and he wrote that the different factions emerging after the exile of Juárez had "burned down pueblos, and

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[73] Antonio Rodríguez Bocardo, "A los Habitantes." Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 18 January 1867, AHET, Siglo XIX, Caja, 113, Exp., 1, f. 65.
[74] Miguel Lira y Ortega, "A los Habitantes." Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 26 April 1867, AHET, Siglo XIX, Caja, 113, Exp., 1, f. 68.
[75] Rendón Garcini, *Breve historia*, 78-81.
[76] Emperor Maximilian to the Archbishop and bishops of México, 29 December 1864, in Pedro Pruneda, *Historia de la Guerra de México, 1861-1867* (Madrid: 1867), 320-321.

robbed and killed innocent civilians, including the elderly and defenseless children." Under the emperor's dictate, any bandit caught *in flagrante delicto* would be summarily executed. His regime, he stated, would be "inflexible to punish."[77] When the liberal army won the war on 18 June 1867, thanks largely to the Sierra Norte de Puebla indigenous caudillos whom Porfirio Díaz had incorporated into the Mexican forces, President Juárez suspended a constitutional decree banning capital punishment and ordered the executions of Miguel Miramón, Tomás Mejía, and Emperor Maximilian in Querétaro.[78]

Political intrigue, factionalism, and conflict, however, plagued the Restored Republic under Juárez. In 1867, Francisco Zarco and President Juárez expressed well the liberal view on the nation's backwardness. Zarco and Juárez felt that only European immigration could modernize the country. Whereas indigenous peasants were slothful and superstitious, the liberals thought that Europeans were industrious and innovative. The nation's transformation, the liberals reckoned, would begin with the disamortization of ecclesiastical lands and the expropriation and nationalization of indigenous communal lands. Their defense for expropriating Indian communities was that Indians could then purchase the lands they had farmed individually. As Zarco suggested, full modernity would come with the establishment of railroads, the veins of global commerce, throughout the entire Mexican landscape. What the liberals wanted, therefore, was to obliterate all the corporate communities, especially the Indian ones, promote private landholding, and make México a capitalist nation. Luis González y González, a

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[77] Pruneda, *Historia de la Guerra de México*, 335-336.
[78] Guy Thompson, "Cabecillas indígenas de la Guardia Nacional en la Sierra de Puebla, 1854-1889," in Leticia Reina, coord. *La Reindianización de América, Siglo XIX* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores, 1997), Conde E. de Kératry, trad. Hilario Frías Soto, *Elevación y Caída del Emperador Maximiliano: Intervención Francesa en México* (México: Imprenta del Comercio, 1870), 584-592.

prominent scholar on Mexican liberalism, observed that the greatest obsession of Benito Juárez, a Oaxacan Zapotec Indian himself of very humble origins, was saving the Indians from their superstition and ignorance. Juárez wanted to model México after the United States, which had emerged triumphantly from its own horrid civil conflict in 1865.[79]

Not content with the president's perpetuation of power, in 1872 Porfirio Díaz rose against his old mentor Juárez in the Rebellion of La Noria. In Tlaxcala, Lira y Ortega remained faithful to Juárez until the president died in 1872. La Noria turned out to be an unsuccessful coup, but Díaz roared back against the liberals in 1876 with the Revolution of Tuxtepec, calling for an end to autocratic governance with the pledge of "no-reelection." Upon the death of Juárez, Tlaxcala's Lira y Ortega liberal faction headed by Governor Doroteo León remained loyal to the Sebastían Lerdo de Tejada Liberals.[80] But the Díaz National Guard under Díaz proved too strong and organized for the Lerdo de Tejada government.[81] With the Díaz victory in November of 1876, Tlaxcala's Congress submitted to the rule of the "new Constitutionalist military" and its new president. Districts such as Zacatelco, Tlaxcala City, and Calpulalpan surrendered to Díaz, calling an emergency session for the appointment of Manuel Inclán as the new provisional state governor.[82] Subsequently, the state of Tlaxcala fell rapidly into the web of Porfirian patronage and autocratic rule, primarily through the political ascent of the local indigenous caudillo Próspero Cahuantzi.

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[79] Luis González y González, "El Liberalismo Triunfante." In *Historia General de México* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2000), 639-644.
[80] Doroteo León, "A sus habitantes sabed," Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 6 March 1876, AHET, Siglo XIX, Caja, 125, Exp., 10.
[81] González y González, "El Liberalismo," 657-659; Lira y Ortega, *Causas y Efectos*, 43-44.
[82] Miguel Avalos to Porfirio Díaz, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 4 December 1876, AHET, Siglo XIX, Caja, 126, Exp., 2, f. 63.

The Rise of Próspero Cahuantzi

Some people knew Governor Próspero Cahuantzi, an indigenous notable from the town of Santa María Ixtulco, "a picturesque town surrounded by green hillsides" adjacent to the city of Tlaxcala, as an honest, just, and diligent man. Born in 1834, Cahuantzi came from humble but "proud" Indian stock.[83] From his parents, José Severiano Cahuantzi and Joaquina Flores, Próspero Cahuantzi learned how to work the land. To his good fortune, Cahuantzi's native Indian town was a short walking distance from an elementary school in Santa Ana Chiautempan. Cahuantzi finished elementary school under the tutelage of schoolmaster Domingo García, and received further instruction from the Dominican Friar Petronilo de Nava y Mota, who recognized his pupil's superb intellectual aptitude. As a teenager and as a young adult, Cahuantzi worked as an accountant and public notary in Ixtulco, but in 1858 at the onset of the Reform War, he enlisted as a volunteer in the National Guard, División de Tlaxcala, commanded by General José de la Luz Moreno.[84]

In late 1858 Cahuantzi enlisted in the company commanded by General Miguel Cástulo de Alatriste, and joined his liberal mentor (who believed that high-sierra Indians were manipulated easily by Conservative forces) in the great battles of the *Reforma* in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, such as Huauchinango, Tetela, Xochiapulco, and Zacapoaxtla, which under the command of Alatriste and Juan Nepomuceno Méndez, became seedbeds of indigenous Nahua liberalism.[85] Alatriste has been celebrated as one of Mexican liberalism's greatest heroes, but while he respected native elites such as the Sierra Norte

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[83] A. Zoyatzin, "Biografía de Próspero Cahuantzi." *La Antigua República*, 15 January 1905, p. 1-2.
[84] Zoyatzin, "Biografía de Próspero Cahuantzi, 2.
[85] Florencia Mallon, *Peasant and Nation: The Making of Post-colonial Mexico and Peru* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 30-38.

chieftain, Juan Francisco Lucas, he treated native fighters like canon-fodder. The general-cum-Governor of Puebla never liberated himself from his disdain for ordinary indigenous people, whom he wanted to deracinate to endow them with a more progressive outlook. Alatriste viewed Indian commoners as pitiful, and loathed them for their backwardness.[86] Nevertheless, the Tlaxcallan volunteers had distinguished themselves in numerous battles, Cahuantzi was a sergeant by 16 September 1858 and he became prominent among them.[87]

Florencia Mallon has asserted that although the hegemony of the liberals was contested and negotiated in central México during the early years of *La Reforma*, the energetic participation of the Nahuas during the French Intervention shows that they became indigenous liberal diehards.[88] The idea is that peasants benefit from modernity and acquire a more modern political sensibility. For example, Kelly Stauter-Halsted has noted that although Galician peasants in mid-nineteenth century Austrian Poland "were experiencing the benefits of modern civic life," they harkened to their older traditions and possessed a different version of nationalism, differentiating them from the elite.[89] While it is highly plausible that native elites such as Próspero Cahuantzi and Juan Francisco Lucas became modern, implying that they became modern liberal patriots through their constant interactions with the state, these chieftains were also interested in defending their *patrias chicas*. On 20 August 1861, for example, the Nahuas from Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte "rose in defense of the Mexican nation" not because the communities had

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[86] Mallon, 39-42; Sandalio Mejía Castelán, *Huauchinango Histórico* (Puebla: Editorial Cajicá, 1951), 136-139.
[87] Zoyatzin,"Biografía de Próspero," 2.
[88] Mallon, 285-292.
[89] Kelly Stauter-Halsted, *The Nation in the Village: The Genesis of Peasant National Identity in Austrian Poland, 1848-1914* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), 2-5.

been mobilized by Alatriste, Lucas, Méndez, and Rafael Cravioto, but because their communities were under siege. The fact that a district rose in rebellion more than likely reflected the fact that the villagers were forced to pick up arms to defend their communities and families.[90]

Because they were indigenous strongmen, however, leaders such as Cahuantzi were able to command the respect and loyalty of their kinsmen and countrymen. Cahuantzi's great moment came with the Díaz victory at the Battle of Tecoac in Huamantla, Tlaxcala, against the Lerdo de Tejada loyalists. Tecoac became the definitive battle of the Tuxtepec Rebellion. General Manuel González commanded a huge rebel force from the Huastecas of Veracruz and Tamaulipas, which ultimately claimed the victory on 21 November 1876, but the forces gathered in Tlaxcala coming from Apizaco, Zacatelco, Huamantla, and Puebla led by Colonel Cahuantzi had held off the Lerdo de Tejada liberals since November 16. The people from the La Malintzin pueblos had also risen in arms in support of Díaz. It was observed that they rushed to the defense of the Díaz insurgents, descending the La Malintzin in droves, because they sympathized with the Oaxacan general. In the aftermath of Tecoac, the otherwise lushly vegetated hillsides of Huamantla adjacent to the agave-growing fields were littered with corpses. The battle had been so horrid that the Lerdo de Tejada camp capitulated. In the aftermath, Díaz asserted that this revolution had settled all conflicts, and he then claimed the liberal mantle for his own.[91]

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[90] Mejía Castelán, *Huauchinango Histórico*, 143-147.
[91] Lucina Toulet Abasolo, *Tecoac: Nacimiento del México Moderno* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Colegio de Historia de Tlaxcala, 2005), 17-25, 92-96, 98-100.

At the conclusion of the Revolution of Tuxtepec, General Porfirio Díaz became the president of México. He would rule México with an iron hand, displaying a ruthlessness that commanded people's respect and struck them with fear. On 27 August 1876, Díaz had ordered the prompt execution of two soldiers before a firing squad, men allegedly part of a group that conspired to kill him in the palace of his native state of Oaxaca. In the aftermath, Díaz told a shocked Mexican public that the executions were necessary. He declared that he had rebelled not against México, for he was an indefatigable patriot, but because Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada had violated the constitutional no-reelection clause and had usurped "man's rights," primarily his individual freedoms.[92] Díaz, however, became an autocrat.

Save for a four-year interlude during which he handed the Mexican presidency to his military ally and *compadre* Manuel González (1880-84), Díaz's presidential tenure would not end until May of 1910. To best the forces of Lerdo de Tejada, Díaz formed alliances with powerful regional Indian leaders from the states of Guerrero, Puebla, Oaxaca, and Tlaxcala. During the final Tuxtepec campaigns, the Ministry of War established the National Guard of the East, an amalgamation of armed indigenous groups, commanded by General Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla from Tetela in the Sierra Norte de Puebla. The brigade from Tlaxcala was the Guard's largest and was commanded by Próspero Cahuantzi. Díaz would never forget that Tlaxcala's fighters had played an instrumental role in the Battle of Teocac, where more than 3,000 of Lerdo de Tejada's

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[92] General Porfirio Díaz, "A la Nación Mexicana," *El Monitor Republicano*, 28 August 1876.

soldiers were wiped out.[93] Díaz rewarded Bonilla with the governorship of Puebla, and did the same for Cahuantzi in Tlaxcala in 1885 after a brief election, during which only a few polls had been opened. Governing Tlaxcala from 1885 to 1911, Cahuantzi would grow old in power along with his mentor.

Conscious of his Nahua indigenous background, and the pejorative notions some people held about him because of it, Cahuantzi wanted to prove himself a leader capable of modernizing Tlaxcala. At the beginning of his final term in 1906 the population of the state of Tlaxcala stood at 172,305, out of which only 24,372 people could read and write. However, Cahuantzi boasted that from 1885 to 1900 he had vanquished ignorance and illiteracy by opening ninety-six schools, mostly in the state's marginalized rural areas. Cahuantzi was a fluent speaker of both Náhuatl and Otomí, and promoted the production of knowledge on Tlaxcala's Indian heritage. He drafted a meticulous reinterpretation of the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala*, for example, and collaborated with linguists, anthropologists, and historians who worked in the region to uncover the histories of its indigenous past.[94]

Cahuantzi's supporters viewed him as an illustrious leader, a Mexican modernizer, and war hero. The state of Tlaxcala's main newspaper credited the Indian governor with building schools, promoting adult literacy, lighting streets, constructing bridges, and lowering urban crime through heightened police surveillance. He had promoted order, as Díaz commanded, by ridding the streets of ruffians through the construction of Ixtacuixtla prison, which observers as noted, was one of the nation's most

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[93] Guy P.C. Thomson and David G. LaFrance, *Patriotism, Politics, and Popular Liberalism in Nineteenth-Century Mexico; Juan Francisco Lucas and the Puebla Sierra* (Wilmington, Del.: SR Books, 1999), 217-19.
[94] Cuellar Abaroa, "La Administración Publica en Tlaxcala Durante Las Postrimeras del Porfiriato," in *La Revolución en el Estado de Tlaxcala Tomo I*, 25-28; Rendón Garcini, *Breve Historia*, 89-92.

modern penitentiaries.[95] Cahuantzi invited foreign investment into the state and gave British and North American capitalists the power to exploit the region's rich coal deposits. Governor Cahuantzi wanted to link Tlaxcala's economy with that of the wider world, himself developing vested interests in railroad construction. His clients shared his concerns. The state's hacienda owners and rural bosses invested heavily in the extension of the *Ferrocarril Industrial* to southern Tlaxcala, for example. After 1900, the line ran from Taxco, Guerrero, to Apizaco, Tlaxcala, a growing industrialized hub where another railroad line linked with the Central Mexican Railroad. A sizeable amount for the financing of the track extension came from Cahuantzi's own treasury, but the government did count with the backing of both national and foreign investments.[96] Consequently, to meet new market demands, hacienda owners mechanized agricultural production to export agricultural products in greater quantities. This, however, reduced the small growers' ability to compete, making it more difficult for peasant communities to produce enough surpluses for the family's subsistence.[97] On the surface, however, the state of Tlaxcala appeared as the paragon of Porfirian order and progress. At the turn of the twentieth century, its revenues, the economics ministry reported, surpassed its public expenditures. What is more, public works projects tripled under Cahuantzi and employment rates soared; however, no specific numbers were provided to the public

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[95] Especial, "Al Señor Coronel Don Próspero Cahuantzi," *La Antigua República*, 11 de diciembre de 1910, p.1; "Fiat Lux", "Tlaxcala aprovecha los frutos de la Paz," *La Antigua República*, 12 de junio de 1910, p.1.
[96] Del Editor, "113,000 para el Ferrocarril Industrial de Taxco," *El Chisme*, 20 de marzo de 1900, p.1.
[97] Raymond Buve, "Del Rifle al burócrata; un estudio comparativo de las pautas de movilización campesina en dos estados críticos: Morelos y Tlaxcala," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario de Tlaxcala* (Tlaxcala: Universidad Autónoma de Tlaxcala, 1994), 443-4.

accounting for this purported growth in employment. According to government's discourse most Tlaxcaltecas were wage earners who lived well.[98]

Critics of the governor, argued otherwise. In 1900, an anonymous writer noted that the state's Indians and the poor languished in utter misery. Families who migrated from the countryside to the state's capital slept in streets laden with disease-infested vermin. Moreover, these hapless folks shared sleeping space with "drunkards," "brigands," and other "immoral" people. Cahuantzi and his circle were accused of stealing freely from the treasury, and *jefes politicos* (district chiefs) allied to the governor brutalized rural people with impunity. Even in times of dearth, Cahuantzi forced Indians to comply with their "tributary obligations."[99] Moreover, Cahuantzi's taxation policies engendered widespread criticism and angered the peasantry. In the countryside, the governor repressed dissenters with great ferocity. His 7th rural corps headed by the infamous Agustín García "el Colgador—the hangman," did much of the governor's dirty work. People who protested the governor's policies were jailed, exiled, transported to work on haciendas and agricultural estates without pay, and members of agrarian leagues not aligned to the government were occasionally executed.

In 1899, however, Cahuantzi's excesses were met by widespread protests coming from the agrarian sector.[100] Cahuantzi ordered García to crackdown on the regime's opponents. Consequently, large numbers of peasants were persecuted and killed by Cahuantzi's rural police and armed thugs.[101] Beginning in 1898, Cahuantzi had faced an

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[98] Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato: El juego de equilibrios de un gobierno estatal (Tlaxcala de 1885 a 1911)* (México, D.F.: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1993), 263-4.
[99] Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, 230-2.
[100] Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, 22-23.
[101] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución en el Estado de Tlaxcala: Tomo I*, 29-30.

unprecedented challenge from the state's peasants and small property landholders who began voicing their dissatisfactions collectively. Peasants and Indians argued that the governor's policies had reduced them to greatest poverty. Cahuantzi's Fiscal Reform Law of 1897 stipulated that the land taxes rendered by small property owners would be increased by thirty-three percent, and the regime seized properties when the peasants could not pay. By 1889, indigenous peasants worried that their meager yields would not provide for their subsistence and allow them to pay the governor's new taxes. To compound the peasantry's troubles, in 1899 the state's Ley de Hacienda imposed a ten percent contribution on all rural properties worth more than 100 pesos. In reality, even holders of properties worth below 50 pesos were forced to pay more taxes.[102]

Angered by the new policies, agrarian organizers Andrés García and Isidro Ortiz collected numerous petitions from *vecinos* and mobilized victims of the 1897 and 1899 property tax laws.[103] Accompanied by more than 1,000 villagers from forty-two villages, García collected a large number of written complaints and took them to the governor's office. On his way to Cahuantzi, however, García was intercepted and arrested by "El Colgador." As he was being transported by the rural gendarmerie to Zacatelco's jail, a mass of malcontents attempted to free him. A melée ensued, but the people's sticks and stones were no match against the government's guns. Consequently, the men of "El Colgador" combed the area of Santa Ines Zacatelco to conduct mass arrests. On 1 January 1900, the political boss of Zacatelco stated that the "rabble" was organizing with the intent of liberating García. While in jail, the agrarian leader was charged with the crime

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[102] Ezequiel M. Gracia, *Los Tlaxcaltecas en la Etapa Revolucionaria, 1910-1917*, (Tlaxcala: Imprenta Zavala, 1961), 6. This book is comprised of a series of memoirs from Gracia who participated in the Revolution and became a historian of the conflict.
[103] Rendón Garcini, *Breve Historia de Tlaxcala*, 96-97.

of sedition. Many people testified on the leader's behalf, but some of the testimonies were discarded by the judge because these persons spoke "El Mexicano" (i.e., Náhuatl). However, José Guadalupe García, the detainee's brother, cited articles 9 and 16 of the federal constitution, which allowed groups to organize peacefully. Asserting that the prosecution had failed to provide further incriminating evidence, the Zacatelco judge freed Andrés García after a six-month incarceration. Close to a dozen other people were released from custody when no further charges were presented against them either. Numerous Indians, however, had sought refuge in the volcano La Malintzi, and they would not forget that the local government had drawn first blood.[104]

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[104] Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, 25-26.

Chapter 2:
Dreaming in the Volcano's Shadows: Juan Cuamatzi and the Indigenous Origins of the Mexican Revolution in Tlaxcala, 1905-1913

As recalled by Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, a distinguished historian from the city of Tlaxcala, two months after the Liberating Army deposed the Díaz regime on 25 May 1911, Francisco Madero toured throughout Tlaxcala and Puebla, states from where many of his supporters came. The Mexican Revolution's progenitor expressed much gratitude to the region's people, who in turn showered him with paeans, roses, and adulations. As part of that tour, Madero visited the small, remote, but picturesque Indian town of San Bernardino Contla in July 1911. Madero's visit to Contla took place six months after Juan Cuamatzi, a native, was executed along with five of his comrades by federal soldiers from the army's 29th Battalion, which was commanded by General Aureliano Blanquet. Also involved in the decision to execute Cuamatzi was Tlaxcala's Governor, Próspero Cahuantzi. The villagers held an assembly in Madero's honor, and he repaid them by acknowledging their contributions, and he then venerated the fallen Juan Cuamatzi as "an Indian precursor to the Mexican Revolution."[1] Why did Madero, a landed scion from the northern state of Coahuila, whose national liberating army had toppled the Díaz regime two months earlier, go through the pain of traveling on dusty roads to reach San Bernardino Contla and publicly praise a fallen native leader? Who, therefore, was Juan Cuamatzi, and why did Cuamatzi and his comrades elect to rebel against the government? Juan Cuamatzi was a village native leader who on 26 May 1910 attempted to start the Mexican Revolution in Tlaxcala. He and his band of poorly-armed Indian followers

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[1] Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, "Muerte de Juan Cuamatzi," in *La Revolución en el Estado de Tlaxcala, Vol. I* (México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de las Revoluciones en México, 1979), 59.

were the first to raise arms locally against the regime of Porfirio Díaz. They believed that their small-scale local rebellion would, in a short time, ignite a massive insurrection against President Díaz that would drive away the despot from the Mexican presidency. Although his rebellion failed, in the Tlaxcallan popular lore, local people regard Juan Cuamatzi as a precursor to the 20 November 1910 Mexican Revolution. Unlike Francisco I. Madero, who is recognized in national narratives as the Mexican Revolution's originator, Juan Cuamatzi has been relegated to history's dustbin. Also lying in oblivion are the indigenous people who followed Cuamatzi into battle.

In time, Tlaxcala's pro-Madero wing would order the exhumation of Cuamatzi's corpse, and the body was transferred from Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco to Contla where the local townsfolk buried their leader's remains in the front patio of their pueblo's church. Today, a gold-plated monument of Cuamatzi's head and torso sits atop the burial site, adorning the church's patio. The locals still decorate the tomb with flowers, and the state government has renamed the town, Contla de Cuamatzi. Though largely forgotten, the rebellion of Juan Cuamatzi matters. This chapter will contend that the Indian uprising in Tlaxcala paved the way for the formation of a multiclass and multiethnic resistance in the wider Oriente Central. Why then, is the Juan Cuamatzi rebellion absent in the Revolution's mainstream narratives?

To write this chapter, which is the only study of the Juan Cuamatzi rebellion in the English language, research was conducted in archives located in Tlaxcala and Mexico City. Much of the material found came in the form of letters, military dispatches, and newspapers, but not satisfied fully by the state's archives findings, I decided to ask the local people of Contla what the Juan Cuamatzi rebellion meant to them. Upon walking to

the town's central plaza I began asking questions to younger people, but most responded by saying things such as: "Hmm, there's not much I can tell you, unfortunately," "I do not know much," "Cuamatzi was our town's founder, but that's all," etc. Fortunately, as I sat and ate a delicious bean and cheese tostada in a stand in the pueblo's small *zocalo* and started a conversation with a married couple, upon bringing up the topic of Juan Cuamatzi the husband suggested I talk to don "Horacio," a bread vendor and a well-respected elderly man in the community who, "knew everything about Juan Cuamatzi." The brief narrative of Cuamatzi's childhood below reflects some of the things I learned from speaking with don "Horacio."

Even as a boy Juan Cuamatzi exhibited the qualities of an organic leader: headstrong, determined, and brave; he loved his pueblo and its people, it was said, but just as he displayed the gleeful boyishness of his age at times, he was stoic beyond his years at others: he had already been hardened by personal experiences: his family's arduous daily work in the fields, the racism of the city elites, and by the collective suffering of the members of his "Indian race." These qualities exemplified exceptionality and individuality in a time when Indian youths were conceptualized by the dominant Hispanic culture as obedient, inarticulate, pliable, and in need of correction at public schools where teachers were bent on civilizing and Mexicanizing Indian pupils. Since he was a boy, he swore to end the social and political system that kept oppressed the people from his pueblo, San Bernardino Contla. On a typically busy Sunday market day, as the

child Juan traded goods in the local *tianguis* (market) he saw the haughty Próspero Cahuantzi face to face and, "upon first sight of the governor, immediately hated him."[2]

Governor Cahuantzi, don Horacio now recalls from what he heard his older kinsfolk say about the governor, "spoke in the manner of the Indians," (alluding, perhaps, to the fact that Cahuantzi spoke Náhuatl) and "was for the most part humble and respectful." Governor Cahuantzi was fluent in both Náhuatl and Otomí, and knew well the ways of the indigenous high-sierra people. He held meetings with Indians in the front patios of their village church, or in the plaza adjacent to the municipal palace, and showed respect for their local customs as the village leaders had gathered customarily when making crucial decisions concerning local politics. The governor was different from the "criollos" (alluding to fair-skinned people) and mestizos: "he did not talk down to the people," but to them, "employing basic words" (perhaps in Náhuatl), on their own level.[3] In Contla, after 1900, however, many of the villagers began to speak of Governor Cahuantzi's villainy. Don Horacio stated that in their town meetings and in their everyday conversations "the villagers complained about the loss of their lands, their lack of access to fresh water, about their increasing poverty, and of the elite's enrichment." To most of the people from the pueblo of Contla, the governor, once a benevolent patron, had become the face of bad governance and had begun to lose his prestige.[4]

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[2] Interview with town elder don "Horacio" in the market of San Bernardino Contla, or Contla de Cuamatzi as most people refer to it now to the small, picturesque town; 13 September 2014. To "Horacio" his hometown, what he lovingly described as "his minute corner in Mexico," was the birthplace of the Mexican Revolution,"the most significant civil conflict in all of the Americas." Although his physical constitution remains strong and he still works, based on how time has withered away his physiognomy "Horacio" may be anywhere from 85-95 years old.

[3] Interview with town elder Don "Horacio."

[4] Interview with town elder Don "Horacio"; Candelario Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Difusión Cultural del Gobierno del Estado, 1961), 5.

As Juan Cuamatzi grew older, his personal animosity towards the governor burgeoned; first, Cahuantzi expanded his own estate, the Rancho La Concepción at the expense of the villagers' loss of lands, and then, amidst a wave of massive protests in 1905, the governor ordered the execution of the agrarian leader Andrés García. A zealous agrarian organizer, García had advocated for the communal landholding rights of Contla's townsfolk, and had become a greater enemy to the governor and landholders when he galvanized the Indian peasantry to protest. Cahuantzi then instructed the rural police, headed by Agustín García, "el colgador"—"the hangman," to kill and persecute the villagers who had followed García. In the aftermath of García's execution the Cahuantzi regime tortured, imprisoned, and exiled many people belonging to the local agrarian league of San Bernardino Contla and from the nearby pueblo of San Bernabé Amaxac. In time, Juan Cuamatzi became one of García's main followers. García had first considered settling the conflict between the pueblo of Contla and the governor through the state's courts, but any hope for arbitration was thwarted when Governor Cahuantzi refused to respond to any petition coming from the pueblos of San Bernabé Amaxac, Vira Alta, and San Bernardino Contla—all communities that Governor Cahuantzi considered seedbeds of troublemakers. The hatred of the villagers towards the governor reached its crescendo when in 1906 Cahuantzi meddled directly in the town's politics, attempting to impose an outsider to rule in the town, and jailed the people's local Municipal President, Esteban Romero. Subsequently, elected village president to supersede Romero in late 1906, Juan Cuamatzi was entrusted by the people of Contla with the duty of protecting their landholdings from the covetous governor and from other landed elites.

We still do not know enough about the factors that precipitated the outbreak of the peasant Indian rebellion in the high-sierra region of Tlaxcala: many criminal records, which contained vital information from detainees, which may have explained why they rose in arms, were burned along with the government buildings that housed them during the Mexican Revolution. Based on the archival and biographical data that is available, however, we understand that the government's persecutions of people, the loss of their most fertile land, and the local government's waning prestige all contributed to the intensification of class and ethnic animosity in the state of Tlaxcala. Like many Porfirian strongmen turned politicians, Cahuantzi had stayed in power for too long, ruling Tlaxcala relatively unencumbered from 1885 to 1911. The rebellion of Juan Cuamatzi, which broke out on 26 May 1910, was a cross-class and interethnic conflict fought by a variety of protagonists and emerged from the pueblos surrounding the state's volcanic La Malintzin highlands. Desperate and willing to take any recourse to defend their remaining plots of land and the little local autonomy that they still enjoyed, the villagers from Contla began to organize a rebellion against the regime of Governor Próspero Cahuantzi. In Tlaxcala's La Malinche region, as the locals still call the highlands, numerous poorly-armed Nahuas, forgotten in the pages of Mexican history, followed Cuamatzi into a seemingly impossible victory. This chapter will begin to answer a question posed by Miguel León-Portilla regarding indigenous participation in both the Mexican Independence Wars and Mexican Revolution: "What motivated them to participate?"[5] Developing an understanding of indigenous participation in the Revolution necessitates a

[5] Miguel León-Portilla and Alicia Mayer, Coord., *Los Indígenas en la Independencia y en la Revolución Mexicana* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2010), 11.

reinsertion of Juan Cuamatzi's role in the conflict into a wider discussion of the nation's most pivotal moment. Although the initial Cuamatzi rebellion was suppressed rapidly, it did set in motion the wider mobilizations in the central Mexican sierras that eventually paved the way for Madero's victory over Díaz. More than re-inscribing a forgotten Indian liberator and his comrades into Mexican history, this chapter will examine the unacknowledged indigenous origins of the Mexican Revolution.

The armed conflict in the high sierras of the volcano La Malintzi began with an intense personal feud between a community leader seeking land rights and self-governance for his people, and a state governor who in the latter part of his political tenure favored the interests of the landed gentry and the foreign elite, while showing a reluctance to acknowledge the indigenous people's longing for local autonomy. What is more, the conflict involved members of two indigenous groups holding long-standing grievances due to land and water disputes. The people from Contla, while ethnically Nahuas, belonged to the Ulmeca-Xicalanca clan. The Ulmeca-Xicalanca, who were the region's numerical majority, were described by contemporaries as the "irreconcilable" enemies of the dominant Teochichimecs from Ocotelulco, a smaller group of Nahua Indian elites to which Governor Cahuantzi belonged.[6]

The Conflict between the Pueblos and the State Government

The people living in the numerous communities surrounding the volcano La Malintzin responded to a larger tradition of rural violent protest: those patterns of popular rebellion had been established in the preceding century, dating back to 1858 when

[6] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, 5-6.

villages rose in arms against the liberal state. The *Pax Porfiriana* and its method of pacifying the countryside by drowning potential uprisings in pools of blood, had precluded mass mobilizations after the Reform-era La Malintzin revolts; however, under the stewardship of Juan Cuamatzi the state's Indian pueblos renewed their effort to attain autonomy. After 1909, a year of unprecedented persecutions in the high sierras, the delicate thread binding the pueblos of the La Malintzin region and the governor had frayed irreparably. By the middle of 1910 there was no room for negotiation and peasants led by Cuamatzi adopted an identity of resistance, an anti-Cahuantzi stance and the right for self-governance defined their revolutionary identity and politics. By early 1913 the rebels, many veteran women and men who had fought alongside Cuamatzi, would form an alternative revolutionary government with the La Malintzin volcano as its capital. This early period of the Mexican Revolution in Tlaxcala followed patterns of earlier nineteenth-century uprisings and rebellions: virtually all the same pueblos located within the volcanic La Malintzin region, and in the nearby Puebla-Tlaxcala border, rose up in arms against the Porfirian regime. At the state level, politics and society were dominated by the regime of Governor Próspero Cahuantzi. The Mexican Revolution in Tlaxcala, which began with scattered local mobilizations from within several of the pueblos, but cohered into a unified front under Cuamatzi and his closest associates, picked up great momentum with the political rise of Francisco I. Madero. Seen by many as the rightful democratic successor to President Porfirio Díaz, Madero, who espoused a discourse of effective suffrage and no-reelection gaining legions of disaffected adherents, was a cultured landed scion from the state of Coahuila in Mexico's north, and a member of one of northern Mexico's richest families.

Madero came from a cultural and political milieu much like the United States; seeped deeply in individualism, free enterprise, and secularism. In arid Coahuila, and other northern states, parish priests were a rarity, and so was their social and spiritual influence, but this is not to say that the region was bereft of Catholicism or diverse manifestations of popular religion. Being from the wealthiest class, Madero harbored no personal hatred against President Díaz, nor did he oppose the Coahuila elite nor the local authorities. Quite the contrary, Madero admitted that he could have easily entered the upper echelon of the political ranks of the Porfirians; however, he believed autocratic governance to be an archaic form of governance and therefore wanted Mexico to undergo profound political, economic, and social transformations.[7] In his work, *La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910* (1908), Madero outlined the source of his frustrations; all efforts to rid the nation of the system of Porfirismo were trumped by Díaz's appointment of a Vice-President in the form of Ramón Corral. Madero felt that with appointment of Corral, even with Díaz absent, his appointee would be the old leader's puppet. Madero stated in *La Sucesión* that Díaz had created an intricate chain of command from the state governors to the mayors, political bosses, and beyond—most, if not all, were still loyal to the old autocrat, and this explained the Porfirian practice of "*poca politíca, mucha administración*"—"little politics, much administration," which was responsible, Madero reckoned, for the systematic corruption and inefficiency plaguing Mexico. But despite this Mexicans had to show a stern willingness to "reconquer their rights" and Constitutional guarantees.[8]

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[7] Francisco I. Madero, *La Sucesión Presidencial en 1910.* San Pedro, Coahuila: El Partido Nacional Democrático, 1908), 35-37.
[8] Madero, *La Sucesión Presidencial*, 6-10.

Madero had been educated in the science of agronomy in Berkeley, California, and had traveled extensively throughout Europe, where he also studied. Although the Madero family owned a large cotton hacienda in Coahuila, Madero was a benign estate manager, and claimed to "know…the innate need of those who suffer…remote from education and justice."[9] In time, many of the nation's peasants would join Madero's cause during the Revolution because his Plan de San Luis stated that the Indian peasantry, which languished in miserable poverty, would recover all the lands they had lost during the Porfirian era.[10] Moreover, the very language of the Plan de San Luis galvanized common people to fight. Peasants long inured to suffering were called upon by Madero "to make the greatest sacrifices" against a "tyranny…that has become intolerable." And the Plan de San Luis also chastised the façade of the *Pax Porfiriana*, described by Madero as a "shameful peace" that kept the peasantry oppressed, enriching only the most privileged. To Madero the system was created to be self-perpetuating; Díaz stated that he wanted to improve the nation for his children, the citizens, but "his greatest guiding principle was to keep himself in power." [11]

More will be written on the effects of Maderismo later, but in Tlaxcala, as in other zones of the Oriente Central de México, the prospect of recovering lands lost illegally during the long Porfiriato was tantalizing, and Madero's Plan de San Luis was indeed read through a liberating lens. Madero's message gained wide appeal at the village level,

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[9] Stanley R. Ross, *Francisco I. Madero: Apostle of Mexican Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1955), 5-15. The quote is found on page 5 of Ross's work.
[10] Francisco I. Madero, *El Plan de San Luis Potosí,* 5 October 1910, p. 177 in Bibliotecas Jurídicas, UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México), http://biblio.juridicas.unam.mx/libros/2/594/14.pdf; Alan Knight, *The Mexican Revolution Volume I: Porfirians, Liberals, and Peasants* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1990), 110.
[11] Madero, *El Plan de San Luis*, 177.

and this was evident in late 1910, when after Pablo Torres Burgos read the Plan de San Luis to the people of Villa de Ayala, Morelos, the Ayalan villagers exclaimed; "Down with the haciendas, long live the Pueblos!"[12] The people following Juan Cuamatzi, however, rose against the state before the advent of Maderismo; like Madero's, theirs was a political struggle yet at an intensely local level.

The Late Prósperato: A *Pax Porfiriana* in Tlaxcala?

Back to our protagonist, as Juan Cuamatzi grew older, his personal animosity towards Governor Cahuantzi burgeoned, and by the time he reached adulthood, the governor had done much to fuel the hated: first, Cahuantzi expanded his own estate, the Rancho La Concepción at the expense of the villagers' lands, and then, amidst a wave of massive protests in the La Malintzin region, first in 1900 and then in 1905, the governor ordered the execution of grassroots leader Andrés García. García was an agrarian organizer from Tzompantepec who since 1900 had worked for the land rights of people from Contla and neighboring pueblos: in his career as an organizer, García had mentored members of the Cuamatzi family, Juan Hernández Xolocotzi, Secundino Ayometzi, and Juan Xelhuantzin, all village-level elites. Andrés García had spent much of his time holding secret meetings in the homes of his followers since January 1899, always protesting the governor's tax hikes. On 1 January 1900 García held a meeting with villagers to organize with respect to the protection of their land rights. On 3 January, spies alerted Governor Cahuantzi of the villager's activities and he ordered García's arrest; the governor's secret guard captured García coming out of a meeting that was held in Xaltocan on that day, and as the guard transported the prisoner a crowd of followers

[12] Francisco Pineda Gómez, *La Irrupción Zapatista, 1911* (Mexico City: ERA, 1997), 78.

gathered to protest the arbitrary arrest and attempted to liberate García. Some villagers hurled stones at the police, who fired back with gunshots; the villagers fled, but the police searched in all streets and even stormed homes to find the protestors, bringing some into custody. García was released in early July; however, because he had been accused of inciting the passions of the masses, although a state judged had dropped the case against García for lack of evidence, authorities kept him under close watch.[13]

In the years following the January 1900 arrest, the secret police kept Andrés García under surveillance. When President Díaz met with Cahuantzi on 30 December 1900 in Mexico City and learned of the disturbances in Tlaxcala, he warned the governor that he did not want to be surprised by any unsavory news coming from Tlaxcala. In 1901, Cahuantzi's police went after some of García's known associates, notable among these Juan de la Rosa Cuamatzi, and Isidro Ortiz, but scores of nameless peasants were abused, intimidated, beaten, exiled, and even disappeared.[14] The government's tactics, however, did not bring the peasant activities to a complete halt. In 1904, Andrés García and the local villagers reorganized and resumed their fight for their right to own their lands in Contla, which were becoming harder to keep with the existing land taxes. On 20 November 1904, García and the villagers wrote to Tlaxcala's supreme judge asking for a moratorium on the debt, but an infuriated Cahuantzi called García to his office on 7 January 1905, and forced the agrarian leader recant on the villagers' claims. The García affair worried Governor Cahuantzi, more so because the agrarian leader had mobilized people from the volcano La Malintzin, where the mostly-Nahua Ulmeca-Xicalanca

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[13]Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prósperato: El juego de equilibrios de un gobierno estatal (Tlaxcala de 1885 a 1911)* (México, D.F.: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1993), 22-25. Cuellar Abaroa, "La muerte del líder campesino Andrés García," in *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 21-22.
[14] Rendón Garcini, *El Prósperato*, 29-31.

peasantry opposed the government. García was described as being light-skinned, with blond hair and eyebrows, and hazel green-eyed, but spoke "El Mexicano"—Nahuátl fluently, as this was his native language. García, therefore, was one of the region's indigenized mestizos, or was a Mexican national of direct Spanish descent who was born in an indigenous community. García had worked the fields since his childhood and had developed intimate lifelong ties with his indigenous neighbors; however, it is likely that his phenotype and ability to read and write elevated his status amongst the peasantry.[15]

On 4 February 1905, Governor Cahuantzi issued an arrest warrant for Andrés García for conspiring against the government. Spies informed the governor that Andrés García was holding a meeting inside a home in Xaltocan. Andrés García was intercepted by Agustin García "*el colgador*"—the hangman—the leader of the state's rural corps, and Cahuantzi's main henchman. The hangman took García into the fields, made Cahuantzi kneel, and according to some witnesses he and his men fired numerous rounds into García's body. The government stated that Andrés García had attempted to escape, forcing the police to shoot him dead. Some suspected that the police killed García through the *ley fuga*—the law of flight, through which a prisoner is made to run and is then shot in the back. Upon learning of the execution, Cahuantzi instructed the rural police to persecute villagers who had followed Andrés García, considered an "agitator of the rabble." In the aftermath of Andrés García's murder, Agustín García and his rural police force tortured, imprisoned, and exiled many people belonging to the local agrarian league of the La Malintzin pueblos. In 1905, the "witch hunts"—the systematic

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[15] Cuellar Abaroa, "La muerte del líder campesino Andrés García," in *La Revolución en el Estado de Tlaxcala: Tomo I*, 22; Consignación del Comandante de la Policía del Estado, "La Muerte de Andrés García," *La Antigua República*, 19 de febrero de 1905, p.1-2.

persecution of peasants, as they are described popularly, became commonplace in the communities that encircle the volcano La Malintzin, which were always conceptualized by the government as hot-spots of peasant insurrection. Juan Cuamatzi had followed García, and, in firm command of the indigenous villagers who wanted their lands back, he first considered mediating the conflict between the pueblo and governor, but any hope for arbitration became thwarted completely when the governor refused to answer any petition for land rights coming from the pueblos of San Bernabé Amaxac, Xaltocan, Santa Inés Zacatelco, and San Bernardino Contla. Although the murder of Andrés García occurred swiftly and without trial, and, although the murder of the agrarian leader generated mass popular outrage, neither local nor state, and much less federal authorities, ever prosecuted anyone. The extralegal execution earned the governor much ill-repute; his most able cutthroat, it was known, had perpetrated the heinous deed, and the men of Agustin García had also tortured and killed Indian women and men indiscriminately. The need to maintain order and progress, to stamp out "caste warfare," and save Mexican civilization gave the government its carte blanche to murder selectively.[16]

[16] Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, 25-26; Consignación del Comandante de la Policía del Estado, "La Muerte de Andrés García," *La Antigua República*, 19 February 1905, p.1 & 2; Cuellar Abaroa, "La muerte del líder campesino Andrés García," Vol.1, 22; Gracia, *Los Tlaxcaltecas*, 6. According to Gracia, García had been long employed as the rural the hangman for the state's rural corps. He was notorious for brutalizing rural inhabitants especially. According to Cuellar Abaroa the last time he saw "El Colgador" was in 1910 when his men attacked an Indian town. "El Colgador" held a peasant who had been "beaten inhumanely" under his custody; No Autor, "Crimen atroz en el Estado de Tlaxcala," *El Pais*, 20 February 1905, p.1; Cuellar Abaroa, "La muerte del líder campesino," 23; Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato*, 34-35; Consignación del Comandante de la Policía del Estado, "La Muerte de Andrés García," *La Antigua República*, 19 February 1905, p.1 & 2; "Anexo Numero 1. "Gobierno del Estado Libre y Soberano de Tlaxcala." Número 932, Reimpreso en *La Antigua República* y *Periódico Oficial del Estado de Tlaxcala*, 18 & 19 February 1905; Anexo Número 2. Agustín García a P. Cahuantzi, 6 February 1905, Reimpreso en *La Antigua República* y *Periódico Oficial del Estado de Tlaxcala*, 18 & 19 February 1905; According to this informant upon making the arrest, with the greatest hubris, the rural corps leader told García, "Follow me because I am going to execute you," from "Un Tlaxcalteca," "Correspondencias: Tlaxcala," *Diario del Hogar*, 22 February 1905, p.2.

After the murder of García, the anger of the Contla villagers reached its crescendo in 1906 when Governor Cahuantzi meddled in the town's politics, attempting to impose an outsider to rule, and jailed the elected local municipal president Esteban Romero. Subsequently, chosen as village president in late 1906, Juan Cuamatzi was entrusted by the people of Contla with the duty of protecting their landholdings from the covetous governor and from other landed elites.[17] Juan Cuamatzi, who was as poor and worked as hard as any other villager, came from a respected family. Cuamatzi was born in 1879. At the time of his appointment as Contla's chieftain, he was twenty-seven. Clearly, in times of great stress, the village elders, who in the traditional gerontocracy made all critical local political decisions, ceded the power to the younger men that had the energy to defend the pueblos.

Aside from having to deal with the governor, Contla's people worried about the depredations of the landed magnates from the agave-growing region of Huamantla. The Tamariz, Bretón, and Avila families, and their network of associates, who controlled local trade and politics in Huamantla and its neighboring pueblos, had taken possession of much of the areas' best lands and fresh water in the northern La Malintzin region.[18] These landed elites had benefited from the implementation of Governor Cahuantzi's Fiscal Reform Law of 1897, which stipulated that the land taxes rendered by small property owners would undergo a sudden thirty-three percent increase, a tax hike that proved too onerous because many local villagers could not pay the new taxation, and the

[17] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan*, 9-10.
[18] Interview with Don "Horacio," 13 September 2014.

government seized many properties when peasants could not pay.[19] Governor Cahuantzi also hurt the indigenous communities when his government promoted foreign investment into the state by first suspending and then lifting tariffs and gave British and North American capitalists the power to exploit the region's coal deposits. As discussed previously, Governor Cahuantzi worked assiduously to link the Tlaxcallan economy with that of the wider world and therefore invested much of Tlaxcala's available hard currency into railroad development. His clients shared his interests. The state's hacienda owners and rural bosses invested heavily in the extension of the Ferrocarril Industrial into southern Tlaxcala. After 1900, the line of the Industrial ran from the silver mines of Taxco, Guerrero, to Apizaco, Tlaxcala, where the local line linked with the Central Mexicano. During the Porfirian period Tlaxcala became a site of intense railroad development, one that linked goods coming from Veracruz on the eastern coast, Puebla, Morelos, and the state of Guerrero, with the dominant economic market of Mexico City. A sizeable amount of the financing allotted to the extension of railroad track came from Governor Cahuantzi's own state treasury.[20] Consequently, to meet the burgeoning post-1900 market demands, hacienda owners mechanized agricultural production to export goods, both raw and finished, in greater numbers. This form of development, however, reduced small growers' ability to compete, and made it harder for peasant communities to

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[19] Cuellar Abaroa, "La Administración Publica en Tlaxcala Durante Las Postrimeras del Porfiriato," in *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 25-28.
[20] Del Editor, "113,000 para el Ferrocarril Industrial de Taxco," *El Chisme*, 20 March 1900, p.1.

produce enough surpluses for the family's subsistence, resulting in heightened indigenous penury.[21]

Governor Próspero Cahuantzi has been described as a modernizer. He invested many of the state's existing resources into public works projects that stimulated greater infrastructural development. During his final tenure (1904-1911), Cahuantz put to work an unprecedented amount of people. The population of the city of Tlaxcala expanded dramatically when people from the pueblos migrated there looking for employment. *La Antigua Republica* boasted on January 1905 that through the state's material progress the governor had converted the common people, hitherto indolent, into "industrious Tlaxcallans." Early in 1905, physicians working for the Cahuantzi administration stopped a virulent outbreak of smallpox in the poorer districts of the state, and slowed down an epidemic of typhoid fever that had raged for several months in Villa de Tlaxco and Zilaltepec. Cahuantzi was lauded for bettering the living standard of ordinary people and for combating squalor, superstition, lassitude, ignorance, customary practices, and illiteracy through the expansion of public education. The state's main paper read that Cahuantzi was a good father, a patron, and was a man replete of virtue, who ruled selflessly for his people's benefit. In the elite discourse, the governor loved the people and his constituents reciprocated with equal regard.[22]

Much like Díaz, however, Cahuantzi was unwilling to relinquish his power. Like many Porfirians, the Cahuantzi regime believed the pacification of the countryside and

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[21] Raymond. Buve, "Del Rifle al burócrata; un estudio comparativo de las pautas de movilización campesina en dos estados críticos: Morelos y Tlaxcala," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario de Tlaxcala* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Universidad Autónoma de Tlaxcala, 1994), 443-4,

[22] Discurso Pronunciado por el C. Coronel Próspero Cahuantzi, Gobernador del Estado; Primer Periodo de Sesiones Ordinarias del XXI Congreso Constitucional, *La Antigua República*, 23 April 1905, p. 1; Editor, "Onomástico del Señor Gobernador." *La Antigua República*, 12 August 1906, p. 1 & 2.

the overall tranquility characterizing the *Pax Porfiriana* required the use of an iron hand.[23] Backed by President Díaz, Cahuantzi believed that he should rule Tlaxcala until his last breath: an ardent defender of order, Cahuantzi thought that for the continued health of the state he owed the people the right to rule, and that he should do so uncontested. But during his last tenure he also took lands belonging to peasants arbitrarily, augmenting his personal wealth by appropriating for himself the villager's limited resources.[24]

The historian Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, likened Cahuantzi to a quasi-Díaz. They were, he asserted, both members of an old military guard that had come to power through a coup called the Revolution of Tuxtepec (1876), and were ardent modernizers who had corrupted the principles of liberalism. However, Cuellar Abaroa stated that Cahuantzi had a greater propensity for brutality than even Díaz. Of Cahuantzi's arbitrary abuse of power Cuellar Abaroa wrote: "Cahuantzi did not prohibit Indians from kissing his hand, and the Indians also had to kneel down in the presence of the hacienda owners, and were forced to also kiss the hands of the priests. Cahuantzi felt exalted by those demonstrations of servitude and obeisance from peasants, those exploited and marginalized by the powerful."[25]

A member of anti-Porfirian political clubs since 1908, Juan Cuamatzi adhered to revolutionary principles, and he led a rebellion to oust an autocratic leading people from

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[23] Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *El Prosperato: el juego de equilibrios de un gobierno estatal (Tlaxcala de 1885 a 1911)* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1993), 23-30, 45-47; Zaid, "1905", *La Antigua Republica*, 1 January 1905, p. 1 & 2.
[24] Interview with Don "Horacio", 13 September 2014.
[25] Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *Juan Cuamatzi, Indio Tlaxcalteca; Precursor de la Revolución Mexicana: Apuntes para la Historia* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Grupo Tlaxcalteca de Difusión Revolucionaria, 1935), 30.

the "subordinate classes."[26] Cuamatzi led indigenous people who wanted to preserve their local culture and recover their local autonomy. When analyzing a mass upheaval that emerges and is led by members of a society's subordinated people, one thing that is difficult to determine is what makes the peasants who revolutionary. Eric Wolf argued that the peasantry's closed and highly organized village structure allowed rural people to combat collectively against the coming of capitalist intrusion. Regardless of the political contest of Madero and others, Wolf saw the Mexican Revolution as a conflict between the owners of haciendas and village neighbors, a form of conflict that originated in the colonial era when large haciendas, ranchos, and latifundios grew exponentially at the cost of the lands of the Indian villages. Each hacienda, Wolf explained, was a mini-republic, and so was each indigenous pueblo. In time, the people from the villages would attempt to recover the self-governance. In Tlaxcala, the rebellion of Juan Cuamatzi involved highland Indians, who were Nahuas, Otomi, and indigenized mestizo peasants against a governor and a predatory elite. The most intense conflicts in the history of modern México occurred where haciendas and free villages competed for fertile lands. Since the colonial era, most of the large estates had been established where peasant Indian communities were numerous and where indigenous peasants possessed rich soils.[27]

In his memoir focusing on the late Porfiriato in Tlaxcala (1905-1910), Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa noted that, prior to the Mexican Revolution, throughout the volcanic region of the volcano La Malintzin it was not uncommon to find on any particular road in the countryside, the body of an indigenous man hung from a tree. The corpse, he wrote,

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[26] Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 4.
[27] Eric R. Wolf, *Peasant Wars of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 3-13, 15-21.

would be laden with bullets, and with a sign on the deceased person's neck reading; "executed for the crime of rebellion."[28] Most of the violence was due to land disputes. Amidst the climate of mass discontent, the aim of these gruesome displays of brutality was to scare the indigenous peasantry into order and preclude the possibility of mass popular violence.[29]

Although without the precise archival evidence it is difficult to know how many indigenous peasants were executed extra-legally as was customary in the rural zones of the high sierras of central Mexico on the eve of the 1910 Revolution, we should not dismiss claims made by Cuellar Abaroa, as hyperbolic. The Porfirian authorities silenced dissenting voices through widespread killings, tortures, and deportations; and this brutality exposed the eviscerated underside of Porfirian material progress. The memoirs of the Constitutionalist Colonel Porfirio del Castillo also offer an in-depth look into one of the more egregious, but lesser-known episodes of Porfirian-era brutality. Porfirio del Castillo became a Maderista soldier in early 1911 in the districts of Tepexi, Huejotzingo, and Atlixco, in Puebla. He served as the Vicepresident of Puebla's Club Regeneración, and became a journalist in Tlaxcala. Eventually, he would serve as the Constitutionalist Governor of Tlaxcala from 1915-1917.[30]

In 1953, Porfirio del Castillo wrote *Puebla y Tlaxcala en los días de la Revolución*, and his book is a dramatic exposé that challenges the idea of the *Pax Porfiriana*. In 1890, five out of six people living in the state of Puebla were Indians.

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[28] Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *¿Paz o Terror?: Inquietudes en 1910* (Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala: Talleres Gráficos, 1952), 55-56.
[29] Cuellar Abaroa, *¿Paz o Terror?* 60.
[30] Estudio Biográfico del Coronel Porfirio del Castillo, AGN, Colección Documental del INEHRM, Caja, 13.4, Expediente, 28, Fs. 9-10.

Puebla's white people were still described as *gente de razón*-"people of reason," and these people dominated the state politically and economically. In 1890, the Popoloca Indians from the pueblo of Cuayuca in the district of Tepexi, elected a purely-indigenous village council. The Popoloca leaders, it appears, won a fair election; however, as newly-elected councilmen gathered in the home of a local indigenous notable to be sworn into office, a squadron of armed goons stormed into the house and shot down the indigenous elites. The masked thugs went after Jerónimo Gaspar, the village headman, and the town's local teacher, Pascual Alejandro Castillo. The henchmen also stormed into many homes, killing the people and razing the dwellings to the ground. In the aftermath of the attack, the henchmen had killed so many of the Popoloca Indians, caravans of burros had to be used to haul off the cadavers.[31]

Pascual Alejandro Castillo was the father of Porfirio del Castillo. The local political boss of Tepexi had ordered the arrests of Castillo and Gaspar on grounds of sedition. It was later reported that the henchmen were notorious bandits from rival pueblos, who were hired by the rural boss of Tepexi. Other members of the killing unit belonged to the personal escort of Governor Mucio M. Martínez.[32] The people from Cuayuca did not forget about the murders. Problems erupted again in 1909 in the district of Tepexi in Tehuitzingo when ranchers and indigenous peasants got together to contest the brutal rule of their local political boss, who was a close friend of Governor Martínez. Members of the jefe's circle had recently encroached upon the uncultivated landholdings of the local peasants. The people argued in Puebla's courts that they held legal

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[31] Porfirio del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala en los días de la Revolución: Apuntes para la historia* (Mexico City, 1953), 14-15.

[32] Luis Vargas Piñeiro, "En el Estado de Puebla solo falto el herraje de los Indios," *Excélsior*, 6 August 1939, Edición Adicional, pages 1-3.

entitlement to the land, but when their petitions were ignored by the local magistrates, they rebelled. The uprising, however, was ephemeral. Governor Martínez sent his personal rural guards to extinguish the rebellion. Tehuitzingo's abortive uprising, however, motivated Indians from Molcaxac, also in the Tepexi district to rebel against their local boss, Herlindo Lezama, who was a compadre of the governor. Collectively, the people resisted Lezama's unlawful land encroachments. Governor Martínez stated that the people from Molcaxac opposing Lezama were criminals, and the rural local authorities unleashed a wave of terror to deal with the seditionists.[33]

When Porfirio del Castillo was sent to Tlaxcala by Madero in early 1912, he discovered why that state had become a seedbed of mass discontent. Tlaxcala, like the southwest of Puebla from where Porfirio del Castillo came, was a place where a sizeable portion of the indigenous peasants had lost their most fertile lands to the local hacienda owners.[34] In the countryside of Tlaxcala; "columns of *rurales* [the rural constabulary] travelled through roads and pueblos, and the troop leaders' principal objective was to support and aid local authorities in the recapture of the exploited, hapless peasants who had fled to escape the onerous personal contributions to which they were submitted; others were captured simply to satisfy the whim of the local political bosses, or to exact revenge."[35] Those who resisted were conscripted to the army and were trained to assault other indigenous people. In late-nineteenth century Tlaxcala the rural *jefes politicos* were local overlords. Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa recalled; "I remember, as if it was yesterday, the stoic faces of the children and young peasants; that stoicism reflected pain and bitterness;

[33] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 16.
[34] Ibid, 35-36.
[35] Cuellar Abaroa, *¿Paz o Terror?*, 12.

those faces were a mirror of the abnegation of our race; brutalized and vilely exploited by the wealthy; those were the faces of an oppressed race, one thirsting for freedom and justice."[36] The Indian peasant, he added, were "the poorest people; with their dirty clothes, sutured and mended with cloths of other colors, they were the laughing stock of those of position."[37]

In the aftermath of the February 1905 murder of García, many peasants and their leaders fled from their villages to find a sanctuary within the forests of the volcano La Malintzin. In time, Juan Cuamatzi, Marcos Hernández Xolocotzi, and Pedro M. Morales, fled to the west of Veracruz to join their fellow local anti-Porfirians.[38] Most of Tlaxcala's rural leaders had gone to school. They had learned how to read and write in the adult schools established by Governor Cahuantzi. The construction of roads, bridges, and canals had facilitated trade within the Indian communities, allowing rural folks to sell their goods in the capital. Young people from the indigenous pueblos also sought and found work in the textile factories dotting the Puebla-Tlaxcala border region. With development, they exchanged their onerous daylong work in the fields for the drudgery of factory work, but as factory workers they earned extra money to buy additional seeds.[39] Porfirian progress, therefore, in paradoxical fashion created different avenues for common people to contest the rule of local autocrats such as Próspero Cahuantzi.

It is now time to insert a brief biography of Juan Cuamatzi into this chapter. Juan Cuamatzi was educated by Anastacio Cote, a schoolteacher from Contla. Cote reported

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[36] Cuellar Abaroa, *¿Paz o Terror?*, 21.
[37] Ibid, 22.
[38] Cándido Portillo Cirio, *Pedro M. Morales: Biografía, 1886 a 1921* (Zacatelco, Tlaxcala: Editorial CAZATMEX, 2003), 7-8.
[39] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución en el Estado de Tlaxcala Tomo I*, 25-28; Ricardo Rendón Garcini, *Breve Historia de Tlaxcala* (México D.F.: El Colegio de México, 1996), 89-92.

that Cuamatzi was brilliant and excelled in all subjects, but Cuamatzi attended school only until the third grade. Poor indigenous youths had to leave school to work in the fields and help their families. For rural families, survival took precedence over all other things. Cuamatzi's parents, Arcadio Cuamatzi and María de la Luz López, though poor, owned a decent amount of cultivable land.[40] Cuamatzi also worked temporarily as a field hand in the estates of the Bretón and Tamariz families in their agave haciendas in Huamantla, which produced much of the *pulque* and aguardiente consumed by the state's people. Villagers commonly found seasonal work in the agave-growing haciendas. Hired workers could leave the hacienda grounds after ten or twelve hours of work. The indebted peons, however, toiled miserably from the morning to the night for a few pesos a day and were actually locked away by the hacienda managers to sleep six hours before they resumed their daily labors. At the time he was a hacienda worker in 1900, Juan Cuamatzi was married to Cleofas Saldaña, a local of Contla who was a year older than him. The couple had their first daughter, Juana, when Juan was twenty. At this time, Cuamatzi also worked temporarily at a textile mill, and he also sold hand-crafted woolen clothing items. His father had taught him how to make Contla's traditional sarapes, with their intricate, multi-colored, and finely textured embroideries. The sarapes of Contla depicted popular themes such as religious festivities, village everyday life, and the local flora and fauna. These types of sarapes remain typical in Tlaxcala's highlands and peasants wear them in the winter to insulate their flesh from the bitter cold of the highlands. The sarape trade

[40] Expediente Particular de Guerra de Juan Cuamatzi, AHDN, Sección Archivo de Veteranos, D112/6737, fs. 1-2; Cuellar Abaroa, *Juan Cuamatzi*, 75.

allowed Cuamatzi to travel extensively by foot and establish firm ties with natives from the volcano La Malintzin's core region.[41]

Cuamatzi's pock-marked face showed that he had survived either smallpox or chickenpox as a child. He was of above-average height for a male, had a broad jaw, and wide shoulders, with a square head and smallish dark eyes. About the personal character of Cuamatzi, Candelario Reyes wrote: "The Indian virtues, which are so particular to that race, made Cuamatzi's inner soul strong; personally courageous, a keen observer and listener, sensitive to the suffering of his fellows, and endowed him with an intuitive knack for the principles of liberty and justice."[42] Although Reyes's words are tinged by romanticism, Cuamatzi often rose to the defense of his village compatriots. Cuamatzi moreover, even when he could not fully understand the discourses of the Magonistas, as the followers of the Flores Magón brothers were known, listened carefully and quietly to orators and willingly learned from anyone whom he could consider a potential ally against the local landholders and governor.[43]

During his exile in Veracruz, Cuamatzi befriended many ideologues from labor unions and radical Magonistas bold enough to utter the words "rebellion" and "revolution." What is more, his travels as a sarape vendor throughout the sierras of Tlaxcala and the Sierra de Puebla proffered him an intimate understanding of the plight of the region's indigenous highlanders.[44] In time, Cuamatzi would establish intimate connections with many local Indian leaders from the high-sierra communities, and he

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[41] Expediente Juan Cuamatzi, AHDN, 2.
[42] Candelario Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, AHET, FMM, Caja, 16, Expediente, 16, f. 4.
[43] Ibid, f.5.
[44] Ramón Lira Parra, "Hombres Ilustres de Tlaxcala" AHET, FMM, f. 191.

would use his knowledge to recruit numerous fighters against the Porfirians.[45] Indigenous communities such as San Bernardino Contla were rigidly stratified, and organized around the annual communal fiestas commemorating the local patron saints. Religious festivities such as All-Souls Day, and 12 December, the day of the Virgin of Guadalupe, necessitated that all able-bodied members perform specific duties, such as paying for the flower adornments of the local church. These obligations, however, brought people together and communal work fostered a deep sense of community and love for the indigenous people's patria chica.[46]

The fact that Cuamatzi came from a family that involved itself in land disputes enhanced his prestige. In a short time, people recognized Cuamatzi as the successor of the fallen Andrés García. The political ascent of Juan Cuamatzi, however, was complicated at times by political divisions from within Contla. The town registered its first twentieth-century land conflict in early 1902 when a group of villagers sold their lands to Governor Cahuantzi, who was expanding his Rancho La Concepción by purchasing *lotes baldiós*-fallow lands, adjacent to Contla's communal lands. The selling of the lands divided the pueblo. Although the group had sold their lands willingly, most of the villagers had resisted the governor's efforts to partition and purchase lands next to their own holdings.[47]

In early 1906, Cahuantzi's agents arrested Cuamatzi, and upon his release in 1907, the village elites from Contla, Tepehitec, and Xaltocan, which included the prominent women Paulina Navarrete, Calixtla Sandoval, Isabel Montiel, and family

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[45] Cuellar Abaroa, *Juan Cuamatzi*, 76.
[46] Monografía de San Bernardino Contla, Centro de Estudios Municipales, AHET, Fondo: Mercedes Meade (henceforth, FMM).
[47] Monografía de San Bernardino Contla, AHET, FMM, f. 84.

members Isabel and María Cuamatzi, appointed Cuamatzi as president of their newly-formed village defense association. Recognizing the threat Cuamatzi posed, Cahuantzi tried to appoint a political boss who was part of his patronage network. The local villagers, however, upon the "threat of a massive rebellion, forced the government of Próspero Cahuantzi to recognize Juan Cuamatzi" as their leader.[48]

Cuamatzi's own politicization heightened when Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval, an Apizaco native and former textile mill worker, arrived to Contla in 1907. During the 1905 persecutions, Hidalgo Sandoval had also traveled to the state of Veracruz where he participated in the strike that turned into the Río Blanco uprising, where numerous workers were killed by the federal army's 13th Federal Battalion. President Díaz himself ordered the attacks on the workers. The violence ensued, the government stated, after the disaffected workers looted the home of the Franco-Spaniard Don Víctor Garcín, and burned down his estate, taking with them many firearms. Río Blanco's finest residents, it was written, fled from the chaos, and when the 13th Battalion arrived, the strikers allegedly shot at the soldiers, prompting a swift and murderous retaliation.[49]

In reality, the workers became upset when Garcín hoarded food supplies, selling them at excessive prices, and limiting their distribution. What is more, a day before the strike, hungry workers had demanded their weekly provision of beans and rice, but Garcín instructed his managers to not "give those hungry peons a drop!" A woman sympathetic to the strikers then exclaimed: "Aren't you Mexicans, why do you allow such humiliations; cowards!" The woman waved a Mexican flag and her

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[48] Vecinos de Xaltocan, AHET, Caja, 6, Expediente, 17; Monografía de Contla, AHET, FMM, f. 84.
[49] Telegrama del Edo de Veracruz, "Obreros sublevados en Río Blanco y Nogales," *Diario del Hogar*, 9 January 1907, p. 2.

nationalistically-charged harangue incited the workers, who then refused to enter the worksite. Garcín then threatened to shut down the factory so “they could starve to death!” prompting the workers to sack the factory’s store. The rioters, however, killed a Spanish manager.[50] The *Diario del Hogar* reported that by 6 a.m. on Monday many of the stores were burning. The press reported that women rioters launched rocks at members of the federal army’s 13th Battalion. The soldiers retaliated by shooting a woman dead and then went into the factory to murder a multitude of rioters. The *Diario del Hogar* blamed “the ideologues” who had incited “the hordes” that rioted on that day for the outbreak of violence.[51]

With the outbreak of popular disturbances in nearby Orizaba, the Díaz regime flexed its muscles mightily, dispatching other federal army battalions from the state of Mexico, Puebla, and Vercruz to repress the Orizaba workers.[52] Hidalgo Sandoval had to escape to Tlaxcala; however, the government’s annihilation of workers in Río Blanco and Orizaba emboldened his resolve to revolt against the Porfirians. He travelled around the communities encircling the volcano La Malintzin to enlist anyone willing to pick up arms. His proselytizing efforts took him directly to Juan Cuamatzi.[53] When Hidalgo Sandoval met Cuamatzi he found an agrarian leader highly receptive to the politics of anarcho-syndicalism. As recalled by Hidalgo Sandoval, when he spoke to Cuamatzi

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[50] “Los conflictos de obreros,” *Diario del Hogar*, 10 January 1907, p. 2.
[51] “El enviado de “El Diario” a Río Blanco hace la narración de su viaje: Las fuerzas militares han restablecido el orden tras energética intervención,” *El Diario*, 9 January 1907, p. 1; “Los conflictos,” p. 2; “El Motín de Orizaba: Relato de una persona venida de esa ciudad,” *Diario del Hogar*, 11 January 1907, p. 2; “Sumario: Los tristes sucesos de Orizaba,” *Diario del Hogar*, 12 January 1907, p.1; “El Motín de Orizaba: Fusilamiento de Obreros,” *Diario del Hogar*, 13 January 1907, p. 2; “Los sucesos de Río Blanco,” *Diario del Hogar*, 15 January 1907, p. 2.
[52] “El reciente motín y la paz nacional,”; “Nuevos detalles sobre los acontecimientos en Río Blanco y Nogales, entrevista con el Sr. José Morales, testigo ocular de los sucesos,” *El Diario*, 11 January 1907, p. 1.
[53] Monografía de Contla, AHET, FMM, f. 84.

about launching a "revolution," "his eyes lit up as if charged by lightning…I knew then that he sympathized with all of my ideas and that only his duty as Municipal President of Contla prevented him from openly supporting my cause at that moment…in time, he became one of my most loyal and sincere comrades in struggle."[54]

Hidalgo Sandoval introduced Cuamatzi to the anti-Díaz circles in Puebla's capital. In Puebla City, Cuamatzi met Andrés Campos, the owner of a butcher shop where numerous political dissidents met regularly. In Puebla Cuamatzi also spoke regularly with Aquiles Serdán. Through the mentorship of Serdán, Cuamatzi joined the Club Luz y Progreso Cuamatzi and became an avid reader of *Regeneración*, the official newspaper of the Mexican Liberal Party headed by the anarcho-syndicalist and socialist firebrands Ricardo and Jesús Flores Magón, who while in exile in the United States worked to preclude another Díaz reelection.[55] One can infer that while Juan Cuamatzi possessed compelling motives for rebelling, his association with Sandoval Hidalgo and Serdán gave him a new political discourse, another language of resistance, a more modern political sensibility.

Contla, which in the Nahuátl language means "place of the pots," was originally populated by the Teochichimecs, and later by the central Nahuas. The town's earlier name comes from the Nahuátl language, Chicomiltepetl, meaning "place of the five hills." While the town only measures 16.8 square kilometers, located at the southern foothills of the volcano La Malintzin it was, and remains, a place of intense commerce, where numerous items grown locally were traded by members of various Indian communities. The people from Contla, some assert, self-identified as Ulmeca-Xicalanca,

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[54] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, AHET, FMM, Caja, 16, Expediente, 16, f. 5.
[55] Ibid, 10.

or simply as *indigena*-"Indian," and most spoke what was described as "mexicanismos," Nahuátl, or El Mexicano.[56] As described by Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, the hatred between rival Indian groups in Tlaxcala was intense and vicious; which in large part explains why Juan Cuamatzi and Governor Cahuantzi came to hate each other intensely. Cuamatzi was an Ulmeca-Xilanca, a descendant of the original founders of the pueblo of Contla, while Governor Cahuantzi came from the dominant Teochichimec clan from the pueblo of Ixtulco that neighbored the city of Tlaxcala.[57]

The Apogee and Twilight of Juan Cuamatzi

To Juan Cuamatzi and his followers it was the governor's conduct which left them no option but to rebel on 27 May 1910. The town leaders Juan Cuamatzi, Marcos Hernández Xolocotzi, Pablo Xelhuantzi, and the more politically conscious Máximo Rojas, Pedro M. Morales, and Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval counted with the backing of anarchists and socialists, many of whom were factory workers led by Aquiles Serdán in Puebla. A day before the outbreak of the rebellion, dozens of workers from the Metepec textile factory in Puebla left their stations to gather with their comrades in Tepehitec. On their way to Tlaxcala City, some of the workers dragged Pablo Pérez, Rafael de la Rosa, and Esteban Xochitiotzi, all prominent citizens with close ties to the governor out of their homes, handing them severe beatings. Others seized and injured by the rebellious factory workers were Nicolás Reyes, the municipal president of Contla, and his close associate

[56] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, 86.
[57] Interview with town elder Don "Horacio," 13 September 2014.

Cayetano Saldaña.[58] On the one hand, Cuamatzi, Marcos Hernández Xolocotzi, and Pablo Xelhuantzin, the movement's agrarian leaders, mobilized many of the rebels from within Tlaxcala's pueblos; this was evident in the profiles of their followers, which involved many peasant people with Náhuatl last names such as Cuatecontzi, Cuatecomatzi, Cuamatzi, Xelhuantzin, and numerous others who lived in the pueblos surrounding the volcano. The more politically conscious urban wing of the Cuamatzistas, Máximo Rojas, Pedro M. Morales, and Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval, counted with the backing of Francisco I. Madero, and were also supported city intellectuals in Tlaxcala and by anarchist workers. Most of these workers belonged to the *Unión Obrera de Orizaba*, an offshoot of the *Gran Círculo de Obreros Libres*, an organization in the Puebla-Tlaxcala border. Politically, the members of the Orizaba Union were organized by Aquiles Serdán, a radical urban intellectual who headed the state's Anti-reelection Party. Serdán had been planning an armed uprising in Puebla, and seeking support from the villages in Tlaxcala, he had been in close contact with Juan Cuamatzi from late 1909 to early 1910. Serdán politicized and inspired Cuamtzi. At the same time, Serdán was also an ardent nationalist on a "sacred mission to save the honor" of the patria. Unlike the other urban members of the National Anti-reelection Party located in Mexico City, Serdán declared himself a follower of Ricardo Flores Magón, and he invited all Mexicans with an altered political consciousness to tutor others lacking the political knowledge of the party.[59]

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[58] Próspero Cahuantzi to Cruz Guerrero, AHET, RRO, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 27 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 6.

[59] Gracia, *Los Tlaxcaltecas*, 8; Aquiles Serdán, "¡Fe y Civismo!" (1909) in *Documentos del Archivo Personal de Aquiles Serdán* (Mexico City: INAH, 1960), 13; Aquiles Serdán, "Pueblo Obrero," in *Documentos*, 16.

The fact that many urban intellectuals found inspiration in the countryside of Tlaxcala, or any other rural setting in a time of revolution, is not unusual. As noted by Samuel Brunk, a host of educated urban elites flocked to rural Morelos during the Mexican Revolution to find Emiliano Zapata. Most agrarian leaders had the loyalty of a wide peasant base, and among them were the village intellectuals who strategized and wrote political manifestos. Emiliano Zapata needed these city intellectuals to establish a political platform for Zapatismo and also to deal with the Mexico City politicians. In turn, these disaffected ideologues, which Brunk labelled the "City Boys," found their piece of the Revolution by providing rural rebels with intelligence, medical aid, the writing of political propaganda, and even by leading the Zapatista armies into battle.[60]

When Juan Cuamatzi returned to Contla after his exile in Veracruz and Puebla, he became the "rural-type" of intellectual, but remained "traditional" that is…linked to the social mass of country people and the town…"[61] In contrast to the everyday peasant, the rural intellectual possesses a higher living standard than that of the common folks, but remains immersed in village politics and therefore becomes the townsfolks' leader. The intellectuals, as conceptualized by Antonio Gramsci, aside from possessing vast knowledge acquired by their academic pursuits and their innate gifts, which is their superior intelligence, play social roles of tremendous transcendence: they lead, organize, and transmit information of practical use and value to others. To Gramsci, out of all the qualities an intellectual embodies none is of greater worth than the ability to organize. The peasantry in any given society will naturally look to the intellectual for guidance;

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[60] Samuel Brunk, "Zapata and the City Boys: In Search of a Piece of the Revolution," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73:1 (1993), 34-35.
[61] Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (New York: Lawrence & Wishart, 11th Printing, 1992) 14.

however, to Gramsci this relationship was complicated by Latin American development, which he did not view as fully modern and riddled by the power of the Church and a strong "military caste," inherited from a long colonial legacy.[62] Central México, however, had developed strong industry.

To the west of the La Malintzin volcano was the burgeoning town of Apizaco, where the railroad linked Tlaxcala to the rest of the central highland Mexican economy, and the border to the south of the La Malintzin was a place replete with many of the central Mexican factories. As stated by John Womack, Jr., who scorned the term "peasant," the Mexican rebels of 1910 were mostly agrarian folks, but they had grown up in a world of modernity.[63] Raymond Buve has identified Tlaxcala and its immediate environs in Puebla and Veracruz as "el Oriente"—the eastern portion of the mountainous central plateau, which given its local history of resistance to outside encroachment by the autonomous pueblos and the radicalization of workers in factories, became a fertile seedbed for popular upheaval during the Revolution. The escalation of rebellion, then, was due largely to the region's modernization.[64]

The ranks of the Cuamatzistas represented an eclectic lot of rebels. They were united mostly by the common goal of deposing Governors Cahuantzi and Martínez. Cahuantzi was aware of this fact thanks to the informants who kept him abreast of the

[62] Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, 15-18, 21-22.
[63] Womack, Jr., *Zapata*, x. The author also believed the Indian presence in the Revolution of the south rather insignificant. Morelos, his region of study, was but ten percent indigenous according to Womack's sources.
[64] Raymond Buve, "Tlaxcala: Los vaivenes del agrarismo entre Madero y Carranza (1910-1920)," in *Movimientos Sociales en un Ambiente Revolucionario: Desde el Altiplano Oriental hasta el Golfo de México, 1879-1931* (Puebla, Puebla: Benémerita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2013), 70-72.

planning coming from within the factories.[65] The rebellion, however, was wider and more organized than what Cahuantzi was aware. The regime did not know that the Metepec workers in Puebla had planned to link up with rebels operating in Tlaxcala, nor were they aware of a planned uprising to be led by Aquiles Serdán in Puebla de Zaragoza. The rebellion in Tlaxcala sprang from within two major centers; San Bernabé Amaxac, led by Hidalgo Sandoval, and San Bernardino Contla, led by Juan Cuamatzi.[66]

It was reported by the federal infantry leader stationed in Tepeticpac that "a group of rebels led by Antonio Hidalgo and other individuals from San Bernabé Amaxac passed through Tepeticpac in the early hours of the morning of [the 27th] on route to [Tlaxcala];" the infantry leader asked for a large contingent of men from the state capital to aid with the rebels' persecution.[67] While Hidalgo Sandoval had prepared to march his followers to Tlaxcala, he made a last-minute move, and decided to aid Cuamatzi who had decided to stay in Contla. Cuamatzi and Hidalgo Sandoval believed that the two-pronged attack and the surreptitious kidnapping of politicians close to Cahuantzi would allow them to topple the local authorities.[68] A day prior to the uprising, dozens of workers from the Metepec textile factory in Puebla left their stations to collect workers from other factories and support their comrades in Tepehitec.[69] On their way to Tlaxcala some of the Metepec workers dragged Pablo Pérez, Rafael de la Rosa, and Esteban Xochitiotzi, all

[65] Próspero Cahuantzi to José Ramírez, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 8.
[66] Miguel Chumacero a Roberto Xochitiotzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 27 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 2; S. Márquez to the Political Prefect of Calpulalpan, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 7.
[67] Infantry Captain of Tepeticpac to the Municipal Agent of San Mateo Huexoyucan, Tepeticpac, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, fs. 10-11.
[68] Cuellar Abaroa, *Juan Cuamatzi*, 79.
[69] Próspero Cahuantzi to Cruz Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 27 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 1

"prominent" citizens, out of their homes and handed them severe beatings. In San Bernardino Contla, the indigenous rebels broke into the municipal palace and abducted the municipal president Nicolás Reyes. They also kidnapped his close associate Cayetano Saldaña.[70]

The Cuamatzistas were going to use Reyes and Saldaña as live bait. If the plan had worked out as Cuamatzi had devised it, Reyes was to knock on the governor's door, which would then allow the rebels to invade the governor's home. The Cuamatzistas were going to either capture or kill the governor, and then proceed to attack the federal garrison stationed in Tlaxcala city.[71] However, when the indigenous rebels passed through the municipal palace of Apetitlán, they were met by armed guards and both parties exchanged shots and insults; amidst the melee Reyes fled and then alerted the military base in Tlaxcala. It was at around this same time that Cuamatzi received an urgent letter coming from Aquiles Serdán in Puebla. Serdán wrote that he was unable to mobilize enough people to carry out a rebellion in Puebla; Serdán then urged the Cuamatzistas to suspend all hostilities until further notice. Confused, the Cuamatzistas retreated to the nearby hills in Cerro Blanco, and from that point dispersed into three groups, which were commanded by Cuamatzi, Hidalgo Sandoval, and Xolocotzi.[72]

And thus ended the first armed insurrection intent on deposing the Porfirian order at the local level in any state. The rebels had high hopes. They had believed that they could not only topple Cahuantzi locally, but that they would unleash a movement that would also end the Porfirians in Mexico City. However, they were poorly armed,

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[70] Próspero Cahuantzi to Cruz Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 27 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 1.
[71] Cuellar Abaroa, *Juan Cuamatzi*, 80.
[72] Ibid, 80-81.

disorganized, and their plan was foiled by Reyes's escape. Serdán, the intellectual architect behind the uprising, was often restrained from within his own party, that is, Madero's National Anti-reelection Party, for voicing out his revolutionary zeal. Serdán and Madero held a close relationship. Madero was supportive of Aquiles Serdán, and praised him for possessing an uncanny ability to organize the factory proletariat on behalf of the *antirreeleccionistas*. But Madero also thought that Serdán had to show some restraint and do much self-policing vis-à-vis his political discourse and ultra-radicalism. Serdán and his siblings, Máximo and Carmen, had mentored many local leaders and labor organizers, but they had underestimated the Martínez regime's capacity to suppress a sudden insurrection. Serdán also admired Díaz, but like Madero, he believed it was the octogenarian's time to go. He had hailed Díaz as a "hero for his service to the nation during the Three Year's War and the [French] Intervention," but Serdán also believed that the president had "violated the rights" of all Mexicans by "perpetuating power" for an unduly long time. Díaz had sacrificed much for the health of the nation, Serdán wrote, but as president had also sold out much of the country's patrimony to foreign investors and to land speculators, augmenting the power, privilege, and wealth of the rich in hitherto unparalleled ways. Serdán believed that "ninety percent of all Mexicans did not support Díaz' [1910] reelection;" therefore, a sudden, popular mass conflagration in Mexico's center, he reasoned, would spread rapidly, and would do so equally in both rural and urban settings, resulting in the immediate defeat of the regime. Serdán wrote the rebellion would morph into a national revolution after the rebels swept through Mexico City. The plans of Serdán were made evident in his essays and letters to comrades; information collected when the rebel-intellectual fell at the hands of the urban

gendarmerie in Puebla on 18 November 1910. Most of his documentation was uncovered in the few days following his assassination.[73]

The Indian rebels from Tlaxcala's pueblos, for their part, went willingly into the rebellion, but were victimized by their own poverty: few of them had any firearms, and, once their plan fell, sticks and stones could do little against the government's military. Cahuantzi's rural forces were well-trained, loyal, and lethal; Tlaxcala's rural constabulary was a highly-mobile force led by famed Indian killers, Colonels Rafael Cuellar, and Agustín García, who in the high sierras had applied the *ley fuga* against rebellious Indians with great regularity.[74]

As has happened in the aftermath of many rural rebellions, the Cahuantzi regime launched a sweeping counter-insurgency campaign in the pueblos of the La Malintzin region. The government of Tlaxcala produced ample documentation on the 27 May rebellion granting us the benefit of analyzing fully the significance of this event. Florentino Xochitiotzi, who was apprehended by order of the municipal president of Apizaco Manuel Benavidez, and was then jailed in Tlaxcala by order of justice Lauro Cuatecontzi, declared that a group of insurrectionists, to whom he had belonged, led by Marcos Xolocotzi, Pablo Xelhuantzi, and Juan Cuamatzi, had invaded the home of Contla's president Nicolas Reyes. They forced Reyes out of his home and had beaten him to a pulp. The rebels' plan, the captive stated, was to kill Reyes once their plan came to

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[73] Francisco I. Madero, San Pedro, Coahuila, to Aquiles Serdán, Puebla, Puebla, 24 February 1910, *Documentos*, 19; Francisco I. Madero, Mexico City, to Aquiles Serdán, Puebla, Puebla, 7 May 1910, *Documentos*, 34; Aquiles Serdán and Rafael Rosete, "Manifiesto a la Convención Antirreeleccionista; Correligionarios," *Documentos*, 22; Corresponsal Especial de Puebla, "Catorce horas estuvo oculto el cabecilla Aquiles Cerdan antes de ser muerto por la policia," *El Diario*, 20 November 1910, p. 1 & 12.
[74] Cúellar Abaroa, *¿Paz o Terror?* 51-52.

fruition, but the municipal president managed to escape as his captors were engaged in a shootout with patrol guards on their way to Tlaxcala City.[75]

Another witness to the events, Juan Hernández, the chief justice of Amaxac, was called by a neighbor, Cresencio Hernández who led the justice to the home of Concepción Márquez, an elderly sick woman, who now close to dying, wished to make alterations to her will. As the men approached the home, they were intercepted and apprehended by a group of people led by Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval and Marcos Xolocotzi. The mutineers then "sacked the home of Antonio Hernández who was the rural patrol leader of Amaxac de Guerrero and took his weapons; they also took captive Lorenzo Hernández, and from there dragged Eugenio Pérez out from his home, and took two of his swords. They then marched to the District of San Bernardino Contla, where numerous local people waited for them."[76] A witness to the event recalled that several people from San Salvador Tzompantepec joined the insurrectionists from Contla and Amaxac. All who rose up were armed and had maddened looks on their faces. The individuals "sickened by rage," he testified, were joined by Hidalgo Sandoval and Xolocotzi on the outskirts of Amaxac "and proceeded to march to the capital without a clear motive…and inflicted serious beatings on the hapless individuals whom they had dragged out of their homes."[77] In the view of Juan Hernández, the rebels were aimless and were driven to rebellion by their sheer madness.

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[75] Lauro Cuatecontzi to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, fs. 13-14; Próspero Cahuantzi to Manuel Benavidez, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 15.
[76] Cresencio Hernández to Próspero Cahuantzi, Amaxac de Guerrero, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 17.
[77] Anonymous to Próspero Cahuantzi, no specific location, 27 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 134 a, 134 b.

On 30 May, Governor Próspero Cahuantzi himself provided a comprehensive account of the events. Cahuantzi showed how rapidly the regimes of Puebla and Tlaxcala responded to the outbreak of violence. Workers from the Metepec factory and other plants had met with neighbors from San Bernabé Amaxac and San Bernardino Contla. José Bautista from Ocotlán informed Cahuantzi of the rebels' every move. Bautista described the ferocity with which Hidalgo Sandoval and Xolocotzi beat Reyes, and told Cahuantzi that Juan Cuamatzi held the maximum authority from within the rebel ranks. The most useful information Cahuantzi had received came from Contla's President Nicolas Reyes. As explained by Reyes, he was dragged out from his home by the Indian rebels who then beat and insulted him. Reyes wrote that the Cuamatzi had planned to use him to get to Cahuantzi.[78]

At the point of Reyes's escape, about 70 to 100 rebels had fled to Cerro Blanco were they splintered off into groups. Aided by Colonel Cruz Guerrero, a noted leader of the rural constabulary in the La Malintzin volcano, Governor Cahuantzi and 80 mounted rural guards rode off into the sierras "to persecute the seditionists." The governor and Guerrero's mounted police combed Cerro Blanco from the night of the 27th to the morning of the 28th. Cuamatzi's Indian rebels, however, had crossed the Zahuapan River at 2 a.m. and evaded capture. Cahuantzi's list of "seditionists" involved all the known leaders, many of their followers, and the local judge from San Bernabé Amaxac, Juan Evangelista Hernández, who had galvanized a number of the local town councilors to join the indigenous insurrectionists. However, other members of the local town councils, including elders from Contla, aided the governor in the persecution of the Cuamatzi

[78] Próspero Cahuantzi to Tlaxcala's District Judge, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 118, fs. 20-22.

rebels.[79] There was no such thing as absolute indigenous unity. Rather, the elders' aid to Cahuantzi underscores the deep cleavages in the pueblos engendered by the local caciques, President Díaz's patronage and clientele networks, cliques fighting for resources, and the long-standing grievances between the inhabitants of the local Indian pueblos themselves.

Thanks to the intelligence that was gathered after the 27 May crackdown, Cahuantzi expected to defeat a more massive insurrection. Three days after the Cuamatzista rebellion was called off by Serdán, numerous, perhaps hundreds or thousands of "violators of the public order" were seen gathered in the outskirts of Apizaco north of the city of Tlaxcala. On the 29th of May, police chief Crisóforo Hernández placed his patrolmen on high guard; their main target was Marcos Xolocotzi who led many people, while in Contla the mounted police arrested local villagers Pedro Flores, Julian Tzompanzi, and Antonio Romero, who were all implicated in the 27 May disturbances.[80]

The news coming from Apizaco had placed Governor Cahuantzi under even greater stress. A member of the town councilmen told Cahuantzi; "I need to manifest that yesterday, I learned through various lose tongues that the members of the local Anti-reelectionist Party are planning to launch a massive rebel attack on the state capital. This *golpe* (coup) is going to either happen tomorrow on Friday morning, or the coming Sunday. These folks intend to make a mockery of your government. Those mostly

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[79] Próspero Cahuantzi to Tlaxcala's District Judge, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 118, fs. 20-22.

[80] Manuel Benaidez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 16; Crisóforo Hernández to Próspero Cahuantzi, Amaxac de Guerrero, Tlaxcala, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 17; Ygnacio Espinoza to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp. 34, f. 19.

responsible are the workers from the Apizaquito plant, and an agitator named Samuel Ramírez, who has seduced many in his pueblo of San Andrés with the talk of rebellion. A local of San Andrés named Antonio, who is an uncle of Samuel, is also orchestrating a mass disorder. The townspeople from Contla are also ready to join these insurrectionists."[81] Cahuantzi responded by ordering the prompt capture of Marcos Xolocotzi, who was rumored to be hiding in Amaxac, and also issued arrest warrants for the father of Xolocotzi, Antonio, and for Luis, Pilar, and Donaciano, the rebel's siblings. The rural police also went into the sierras looking for the followers of Josafat Nizehuátl, implicated in the beating of Contla's President Reyes, and placed the authorities on high guard in the surrounding pueblos.[82]

In the outskirts of Apizaco, on 30 May Cahuantzi's *rurales* caught a group of people who reportedly carried caches of arms and ammunitions, charging them with the crime of sedition.[83] Other people from the district of Cuauhtémoc, Carlos and Juan Santibañez, Encarnación Martínez, and Jesús Moreno, were captured by the leader of the 1st Rural Corps, Concepción Ramírez, in possession of "four firearms, two daggers, a barber's knife, and scissors," and were also charged as seditionists.[84] Despite the vigorous crackdowns led by Cahuantzi's police resulting in the arrests of some Indian

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[81] S.S. to Próspero Cahuantzi, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 29 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 23.
[82] Crisóforo Hernández to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernabé Amaxac, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 24; Timoteo Márquez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 28; Ignacio Espinoza to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 25; Miguel Chumacero to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 34; Manuel Carreto to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tepeyanco, Tlaxcala, 28 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja ,118, Exp., 34, f. 33; Minuta Número 3786, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 31 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 54.
[83] M.M. Benavidez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 35.
[84] Miguel Chumacero to Próspero Cahuantzi, Cuauhtémoc, Tlaxcala, 31 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 36; M.M. Benavidez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Cuauhtémoc, Tlaxcala, 1 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 37; Filemón Montealegre to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 31 May 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 38.

rebels, trouble loomed. In Atlixco, Puebla the rebel activity threatened to paralyze commerce; the businessmen from Atlixco knew that many of the indigenous insurrectionists came from Tlaxcala and urged the Cahuantzi administration to intensify its efforts, more so, when two individuals, presumably Cuamatzistas, were caught in Atlixco on 1 June intending to blow up the gates of the local jail to free prisoners and kill local authorities.[85]

That same day, Cahuantzi wrote a letter to Puebla's Governor Mucio Martínez explaining that Juan and Carlos Santibañez, Encarnación Martínez, Félix Pérez, and Jesús Moreno, who were caught with numerous weapons, had confessed that they came from Atlixco, had participated in the Contla uprising, and had traveled to the area of Santa Cruz, and looked for fresh adherents in the Trinidad, San Manuel, and San Luis Apizaco factories. Governor Martínez confirmed the identities of the rebels. They were indeed the same insurrectionists who had attempted to kill magistrates and policemen in Puebla, and had plotted to liberate prisoners from the Atlixco jail.[86]

Documentation on the government's crackdowns reveal that when the indigenous rebels dragged Contla's President Reyes out of his home, the rebel leaders were well armed, but when Reyes saw of one security guard from the hydroelectric plant he cried for help, which prompted a shootout between the guards and the Cuamatzi rebels. As Reyes fled, Florencio Xochitiotzi, one of Tlaxcala's most wanted fugitives, fired shots at the local president. Cuamatzi's followers were described as a "mob of armed men," and

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[85] Ignacio Machorro to the Cahuantzi Administration, Atlixco, Puebla, 1 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 44; Mucio Martínez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Puebla, Puebla, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 118, f. 45; Próspero Cahuantz to the political prefect of Barron-Escandón, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 4 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 118, f. 50.

[86] Próspero Cahuantzi to Mucio Martínez, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 1 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 45.

thought of as cowards for fleeing the scene when their plan was frustrated.[87] Jacinto Hernández, however, who was a member of the gendarmerie from Apetitlán, and one of the men who exchanged fire with the Cuamatzistas stated that only ten armed men escorted Reyes, while "a larger group of about 200 individuals took foot to Tlaxcala." Asked if he could identify any individual, Hernández responded that "he could not recognize a single one, and that the last of the group passed by running fast." Tlaxcala's police arrested Hernández for being in cahoots with the Contla rebels. [88]

Just as Cahuantzi had ordered his people to infiltrate the Anti-reelection Party of Tlaxcala, the Cuamatzistas had their own spies, and one individual named José de Jesús Sánchez from Tepehitec, who became a personal employee of Governor Cahuantzi, and "was greatly responsible for the agitations in the pueblos of San Bernabé and San Bernardino," The message urged rural corps colonel Cruz Guerrero to begin a vigorous persecution of Sánchez, recommending that if the culprit was not found in his home, "every home within the area [San Bernabé and San Bernardino] shoule be raided to find him."[89] Cahuantzi also established permanent patrol units in the volcano La Malintzi itself, from within the National Park Melendeztla, to the agave-growing area of Huamantla, a site of intense hacienda production, to where it was thought the factory workers had fled.[90]

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[87] Gabriel Carrillo to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 9 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 96; Minuta Número 4043 to the Magistrate of Tlaxcala, 11 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, 96,

[88] Miguel Chumacero to Próspero Cahuantzi, Hidalgo District, Tlaxcala, 15 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 99a, 99b; Minuta Número 4155 to the Political Prefect of Hidalgo District, 16 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 100, f. 101.

[89] Communiqué to Cruz Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 57.

[90] L. Pulido to the General Secretary of the State, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 1 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 61; Miguel Chumacero to the Political Prefecture of Hidalgo District, Chiautempan, Tlaxcala, 1 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 59.

The Porfirians knew that precluding the onset of a new rebellion entailed a concerted effort to patrol a wide area of the Oriente Central encompassing Cholula, Atlixco, Huejotzingo, and Puebla City, to the easternmost area of the Volcano La Malintzi in Tlaxcala and the state's border with Veracruz. This fact, however, actually gave the indigenous rebels a geographical advantage; they knew the terrain well, and the Indian pueblos, while small, were densely populated. Once the rebels reached the upper cordilleras of the volcano La Malintzin it became virtually impossible for the government's soldiers and rural police to penetrate these zones. The principal leaders, Cuamatzi, Xolocotzi, and Hidalgo Sandoval, fled to the volcano, where they established a hideout, but many of their comrades decided to hide in the pueblos instead, which facilitated their capture at the hands of the rural corps. Miguel Cuamatzi, a relative of the chieftain, was caught in Contla, and Victor Tzompantzi and Secundino Ayometzi were detained in Amaxac.[91] This gives us an opportunity to take pause and make an assessment on an important matter.

The state's documents say little about the fates of the rebels after they were captured. Indigenous rebels were often detained in the pueblos and then held in the rural constabularies for a time and were subsequently transferred to the authority of the rural bosses or were sent directly to Tlaxcala's central prison.[92] The most useful information the government received about the rebellion came from the detainees themselves.

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[91] Ygnacio Espinoza to the General Secretary, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 64; Communiqué to Cruz Guerrero, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 63; Minúta 3860, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 65.

[92] Communiqué to Ygnacio Espinoza on the capture of Miguel Cuamatzi and Victor Tzompantzi, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 66. The apprehensions of rebels, as the documentation shows, was clearly procedural and followed both the military and civil chains of command.

Cahuantzi officials learned that Pilar Pérez, a main “ringleader of the rabble-rousers” had “gone to the capital [of Tlaxcala], and disguised as an officer monitored all of the government’s movements.” What is more, the authorities discovered that peasants loyal to Hidalgo Sandoval continued to plot against Cahuantzi. As it turned out, at least one member of the governor’s police communicated with rebels in the troublesome Tepehitec. Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval had ordered his rebels to storm into the municipal palace in Santa Cruz and take the general secretary hostage. Individuals in cahoots with Hidalgo Sandoval had caused major disturbances in the pueblo of Atlihuetzían, inciting the indigenous *vecinos*-neighbors of the town to join the rebellion.[93]

Through the confessions of the prisoners, the regime discovered that Hidalgo Sandoval had been shot in a leg, was treated in a local infirmary and could barely walk. Authorities also learned that Xolocotzi’s son, Maclovio Hernández Xolocotzi was the major aid of Cuamatzi. Moreover, Porfirio and Francisco Cuamatzi, kinsmen of Juan, had also risen up in arms and commanded small rebel formations that now operated in the volcano. Governor Cahuantzi called for the suspension of the constitutional rights of all captured rebels and ordered that they be held in solitary confinement. They were charged for rebellion, for disturbing order and morality, injuring authorities, and for attempted murder.[94]

Although the regime denied this, the police learned that the Cuamatzi rebellion was driven by strong political motives. Cahuantzi also had enemies from outside of the

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[93] M. Benavidez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 2 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp. 34, f. 72 a, 72 b.

[94] Gabriel Carrillo to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 4 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 75; Minuta Número 3926, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 6 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 76; M. Benavidez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 13 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 81.

rebel communities. It turned out that the 1st Local Judge of the District of Guerrero, Juan Evangelista Hernández, participated in, and supported the rebels because he was an ardent enemy of Contla's Municipal President Nicolas Reyes.[95] Hernández, it was stated in a formal declaration, was himself responsible for delivering some of the blows suffered by Reyes. Hernández's charge was terminated, and he was branded as a fugitive, a noxious criminal on the loose.[96]

Being accused of rebellion was a serious charge, and it entailed grievous consequences, which prompted Porfirio Cuamatzi, a relative of Juan Cuamatzi, to write a letter to Governor Cahuantzi "in defense of his name." Porfirio Cuamatzi declared that "certain individuals [who are] determined to destroy the [public] order attempt to tarnish my name, and they won't allow me to live peacefully. Most of the people in my pueblo practice a [rebellious] form of politics, but because I have no interest in these individuals' political protests they have placed me under a form of house arrest…my profession does not allow me to partake in such political matters, I am deeply tied to my job, which is that of a Church *cantor* [leader of a church's liturgical music] not only in my pueblo, but also in nearby San Bernabé Amaxac, San Lucas, and Tlacho…now I am a persecuted man, unable to live peacefully in my own home."[97] Porfirio Cuamatzi assured Governor Cahuantzi that he was not an insurrectionist and pleaded for protection. He invited Cahuantzi to visit the pueblo of Amaxac and to ask the good citizens of the town about his righteous conduct. The local people, he wrote, would attest to his goodwill and

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[95] Minuta Número 4095 to the Political Prefect of Cuauhtémoc, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 14 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 82.
[96] Minuta Número 3966, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 7 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 88; M. Benavidez to the Municipal President of Guerrero, 15 June 1918, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 89.
[97] Porfirio Cuamatzi to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 9 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 102 a, 102 b.

"dispel any notion of his [supposed] association to the crimes." He professed loyalty to the Church and to the "honorable governor" from whom he "sought mercy."[98]

The governor's response to Porfirio Cuamatzi exemplifies the complexity of his character. Even in a time of great social stress Governor Cahuantzi exhibited a candid willingness to give someone the benefit of the doubt, more so if he felt the person was sincere. He therefore granted Porfirio Cuamatzi an opportunity to restore tarnished image on the morning of 14 June 1910.[99] Cahuantzi also showed extreme pragmatism. His dealing of Porfirio Cuamatzi surely divided local politics in Contla, and setting off members of the Cuamatzi family against each another. Cahuantzi never ceased being meticulous. That someone within his government had conspired with rebels, made the governor furious, and distrustful; therefore, he ordered the local political bosses to report "everything, regardless of how minute the events may seem." Cahuantzi knew that "any disturbance in any given pueblo could grow out of proportion affecting our capital city." Upon a "received notice that it would be very easy for a tumultuous crowd to disturb the order of this city," M. Benavidez instructed the member of the rural police to "be on guard to aid in the reestablishment of order at any moment's notice."[100]

President Díaz would not like any news of public disturbances. Cahuantzi pressured the local police in pueblos near Tlaxcala city such as Ocotlán, Acoxtla, and Metepec to apprehend any suspicious person. Consequently, even drunkards and

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98 Porfirio Cuamatzi to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 9 June.
99 Próspero Cahuantzi to Nicolas Reyes, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 10 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 103; Timoteo Xochitiotzi to Nicolas Reyes, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 14 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 104.
100 Próspero Cahuantzi to M. Benavidez, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 7 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 105 a, 105 b; M. Benavidez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 13 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 111.

vagabonds were incarcerated. Pedro and Gregorio Hernández, two men arrested for public drunkenness, were taken into custody on June 14, but the latter was so drunk he was first hospitalized to help relieve his alcoholic congestion. Altogether, from 12-14 June, the police "locked up sixty men, four women, and two federals" and, out of these, "the three most incorrigible ones were sentenced to public works projects."[101]

The government also forced everyday people to police their neighbors. The political prefect of the District of Hidalgo Miguel Chumacero went out to various pueblos "to pick up volunteers to serve in the patrolling" of potentially troublesome areas. As a result of the persecutions, the local jail in the city of Tlaxcala overcrowded by the middle of June. In other cases, Governor Cahuantzi encouraged his loyal citizens to remit to him lists of quarrelsome or potentially rebellious individuals.[102] Intensifying the policing of the troublesome villages produced two major effects; one was the regime's effective crackdown of actual rebels in the pueblos, which kept the communities relatively calm; the other provided results unfavorable for the government as more people fled from the pueblos and sought refuge in the La Malintzin volcano where the rebel base swelled.

The governor's persecutions also reveal the existing tensions and conflicts between the local villagers themselves. Case in point, in an effort to persuade Governor Cahuantzi to exonerate Juan Hernández from charges of treason and rebellion, a group of neighbors from Amaxac declared that Hernández's political enemies from Contla namely, "Gregorio Pérez and his son Modesto, of the same last name, and Esteban

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[101] Miguel Chumacero to Próspero Cahuantzi, District of Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, 14 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 108.

[102] Miguel Chumacero to Próspero Cahuantzi, District of Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, 14 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 110; Pilar Jimémez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 18 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 115; Minuta Número 4176, 17 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 116.

Xochitiotzi and Rafael de la Rosa" had provided authorities with false accusations of "the honorable Hernández by associating him with "those responsible for the disturbances that took place on the 27th of the past month, namely Marcos Xolocotzi and the coreligionists closest to this individual." The people from Amaxac stated that Hernández had been forced to join Xolocotzi and had thus been "jailed unjustifiably, victimized by the calumnies of the aforementioned people from Contla." Fermín Tzompantzi from Contla for his part, wrote to the governor to clean up his name, stating that "those from this pueblo who have insisted upon continually perturbing the peace have incessantly harassed me and members of my family… and, under such conditions, it is impossible to live a dignified and tranquil existence." Tzompantzi, who was also being persecuted by the authorities at the time for being an alleged rebel, appealed to the governor's "serene justness" stating that prior to the political turmoil of 27 May he "was a man who had never known jail." He claimed to have been harassed by rebels, who had forced him to flee the pueblo. Aside for pleading for clemency Tzompantzi urged the governor restore order. Cahuantzi, however, immediately inquired into the behavior of Tzompantzi by writing to Nicolas Reyes who responded that, "[Tzompantzi] emblematizes reprehensible behavior, and was in cahoots with the mutineers of the night of the 27th, which is why he has fled from the pueblo."[103] Cahuantzi would not be caught unguarded.[104]

The declarations of the captives were too inconsistent.

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[103] The Council of Amaxac, Distrito de Guerrero, to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernabé Amaxac, Tlaxcala, 16 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 118 a, 118 b; Fermín Tzompantzi to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 18 June 1910, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 119 a, 119 b; Próspero Cahuantzi to Nicolas Reyes, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 23 June 1910, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 120; Nicolas Reyes to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 123.

[104] Juan Hernández to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernabé Amaxac, 18 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 123, f. 124.

When Vázquez was caught in flight, he confessed that he had rebelled, but added that he had done so because his father-in-law, Marcos Xolocotzi, forced him to pick up arms. Vázquez confessed that Xolocotzi and his son Maclovio were hiding in Orizaba, Veracruz, and that Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval and Juan Cuamatzi could also be in Orizaba or in Puebla. Vázquez, however, received no clemency. In his possessions were found two incriminating letters; one was addressed to a comrade named Rosendo Sánchez, a Ferrocarril Mexicano in Apizaco worker, and the other note was to be delivered to José A. Brito, a textile factory worker in Río Blanco, Veracruz. Both men belonged to the radical opposition labor parties of their respective states and had been branded as rabble-rousers.[105]

On 7 July, Miguel Chumacero reported to Cahuantzi that Porfirio Cuamatzi never reported to his primary jurisdiction in the Hidalgo District, fleeing, more than likely, to rendezvous with the other Contla rebels in their holdout in the La Malintzin volcano.[106] After the crackdowns, the worker agitations and protests also continued. During the month of June the regime persecuted factory workers, asking the managers to present lists of the workers who were absent the day of the rebellion. These lists underscore interesting things. The general list of the textile factory, "La Josefina," shows the names of the Nahua people who came from Indian pueblos such as Carmén Xicohténcatl, Nicanor Xicoténcatl; altogether of the last name Xicohténtl (the last name's spelling varies) there were seven people listed. Two individuals had Tecohcoatzi and Tzempoaltécatl, in very old forms of the Mexicano language, as their last names. Last

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[105] Minuta Número 4319, Orizaba, Veracruz, a Cuauhtémoc, Tlaxcala, 28 June 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 125.
[106] Miguel Chumacero to Próspero Cahuantzi, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, 7 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 131.

names, however, do not represent complete listings of the textile workers' ethnicity; many people from the indigenous pueblos were baptized by priests with Hispanic last names during the colonial era, and out of 272 people employed by the "La Josefina" factory only 11 had Náhuatl last names, making it hard to imagine that only such a small percentage (<0.5%) were actually ethnic Nahuas or members of other indigenous societies.[107]

Most of the factory owners did provide Governor Cahuantzi complete lists of their workers. Anselmo La Puente, the owner of the "La Xicohténcatl" factory in Santa Ana Chiautempan added a letter to Governor Cahuantzi that stated: "I'm aware of disturbances that took place on the 27th [of last month]…but rest assured that no worker of mine is rebellious…quite to the contrary they have asked for my permission to organize a party for their manager on the 4th [of July] and to keep them happy I agreed, even if it hurts me economically, I keep my workers happy."[108] The list sent by La Puente not only listed the names of the workers, but included lists of the towns from where they came and most of the workers were from the indigenous pueblos, with several of them belonging to Contla.[109]

The letters from the factory owners show that the region's capitalists were completely loyal to the governor. The outbreak of the rebellion did shut down some businesses, so Governors Cahuantzi and Martínez urged the factory owners and their management to cooperate with them so that the "bad elements" could be identified and

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[107] Lista General de Obreros de la fábrica de hilados y tejidos "La Josefina," Xicohténcatl de Zaragoza, Tlaxcala, July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 136-140.
[108] Anselmo La Puente to Próspero Cahuantzi, Santa Ana Chiautempan, Tlaxcala, 2 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 141.
[109] Lista General de Obreros de la fábrica "La Xicohténcatl," Santa Ana Chiautempan, Tlaxcala, 2 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 143 a, 143 b, 144.

eliminated. Eugenio Montero, the manager of the factory "La Estrella," in Chiautempan, which was owned by Agustín del Pozo, wrote to Cahuantzi, lamenting that, due to the disturbances, the factory no longer operated. Fearful of retaliations, the management had fled, particularly its Spanish-born administrator. Conversely, in the nearby factory "La Trinidad" of Santa Cruz, the owner Fernando Zamora Gutíerrez reported that "all the workers were of an excellent conduct."[110] The statement made by Zamora Gutíerrez must have shocked the governor; out of a total of 276 people employed by the factory 60 of them (22% of the total) came from the pueblos of Amaxac and Contla, the epicenters of the 27 May uprising.[111] Moreover, the letter of Zamora Gutíerrez stands in stark contrast to that of don Demetrio García, the owner of the "El Valor" factory in Puebla, who informed the governor's office that, "some of my workers are dutiful, but a number among them have missed work on repeated occasions and these are perhaps the individuals that you should be suspicious of…" García declared "…of their place of origin, I cannot provide definitive information because they hardly ever tell the truth; however, to the best of my knowledge many of them originate from Santo Toribio [Xicohtzinco], [Santa Inés] Zacatelco, and Santa Catarina;…however, I must say that I take extreme precautions and prefer to hire people I'm familiar to than strangers."[112] García forwarded a list of 76 individuals, all potential suspects given their absences, a

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[110] Eugenio Montero to Próspero Cahuantzi, Santa Ana Chiautempan, Tlaxcala, 1 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 145; Fernando Zamora Gutíerrez to Próspero Cahuantzi, Santa Cruz Tlaxcala, 13 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 146.
[111] Lista General de la fábrica de hilados y tejidos "La Trinidad, Santa Cruz, Tlaxcala, 12 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 147 a, 147 b.
[112] Demetrio García to G. Márquez, Puebla, Puebla, 1 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 149; Demetrio García to G. Marquez, Puebla, Puebla, 1 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 150 a.

good number of them had last names such as Zempoalteca, Cuatenco, Xocoyolt, Tlecluyt, Xochical, Xilot, Ayhilt, Xochipiltecatl.[113]

The owners of all the major factories in central Tlaxcala and in the Puebla-Tlaxcala border provided the governor with lists and news, and none proved more useful to Cahuantzi than a report written by Nicolas Reyes, which stated that local factory managers had confirmed that Juan Cuamatzi was hiding in the Rancho de Ocotitlán, located in the Municipality of San Felipe Ixtacuitla. Another report stated that Marcos Xolocotzi had been seen by workers with a group of people wandering in the outskirts of Santa Cruz, where the rebel leader was last seen.[114] What is more, Reyes identified factory workers from Contla based on the information gathered from the lists; these individuals had not only missed work during the time of the rebellion, but had also fled to the sierras. Similar things occurred in Amaxac. Aside from Cuamatzi, those most wanted by the regime were Ascención Cuamatzi, Casimiro Xexhuantzi, Antonio Tetlalmatzi, Candido Tetlalmatzi, Rosa Cuamatzi, and Pilar Macehual. Implicated in the unrest were also many neighbors from the nearby small pueblo of Cuatenco, which Reyes described as a town filled with villainous and quarrelsome inhabitants, all presumably indigenous.[115] The rebellion of Juan Cuamatzi, therefore, at its structure, was largely indigenous, representing an indigenous peasant contestation to the state desiring to rid a region from its autocrats.

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[113] Lista de los operarios que trabajan en la fábrica "El Valor," Puebla, Puebla, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 150 b.
[114] Nicolas Reyes to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 14 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 167; Special Agent to Próspero Cahuantzi, Santa Cruz, Tlaxcala, 13 July 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 166.
[115] Nicolas Reyes to Próspero Cahuantzi, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, San Bernardino Contla, Tlaxcala, 13 August 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 169.

Well into the month of September the persecutions continued, but the government did not penetrate the volcano.[116] Tlaxcala proved a microcosm of the wider Porfirian system. The governor commanded the loyalty of federal units and of the rural constabulary led by Rafael Cuellar. Cahuantzi's clientele network was vast, and it included some prominent landholders, caciques, indigenous chieftains, and the region's industrialists. All members of Cahuantzi's circle were dutiful and cooperative. Governor Cahuantzi ordered factory workers to keep their workers on watch. The intensified surveillance, moreover, would maintain the region pacified; productivity would return to normal levels, and the area would once more be safe for foreign investment and further industrial development.

The swift end of the Juan Cuamatzi rebellion showed that the native leader's uprising had been precipitated. His insurgency failed to generate the widespread conflagration its leaders had envisioned. In his works *Juan Cuamatzi, Indio Tlaxcalteca*, and *¿Paz o Terror?* Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa wrote that Tlaxcala's society was divided between common indigenous villagers who the elite conceptualized as "beasts of burden," and the governor's circle. For indigenous people, life in the countryside was brutal; the punishment that the rural police inflicted on hapless peasants was often swift and lethal. The proliferation of agrarian rebellion concerned the government, but the growth of the anti-reelection movement was equally disconcerting. The outbreak of popular violence gave Cahuantzi the opportunity to brutalize and jail known

[116] Minuta Número 5616, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 13 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 118, Exp., 34, f. 171.

antirreelccionistas, “many of whom were killed by the local political bosses, the municipal presidents, or Cahuantzi’s personal “hangman,” Agustín García.”[117]

Amidst such repression, the indigenous insurgents remained fugitives and loyal to Juan Cuamatzi.[118] In its initial stage, the Cuamatzista rebellion was defeated rapidly mainly because its leadership had poorly organized their people and the government’s swift response sent others running to the hills. On June 10 the regime collected documentation which stated that rebel groups were planning to dissolve the state governments of Tlaxcala, Puebla, Sonora, Coahuila, and Jalisco. In Atlixco, Puebla, people who had followed Juan and Carlos Santibañez, who were captured in Tlaxcala for planning to kill the guards at the local jail, and who plotted to enter the local prison to liberate all the prisoners, had also planned to strike at the local authorities and murder the local political bosses of pueblos. Documents belonging to rebels in the city of Puebla revealed that rebels were going to invade the headquarters of the local gendarmerie and kill as many rural policemen to weaken the city’s defenses. The rebels would then hang the police chief and the city’s local political boss.[119]

In its coverage of the Atlixco revolt, the newspaper *El Diario* mentioned the “Maderista” influences that had perverted workers in the state.[120] Meanwhile, popular violence had also erupted in Valladolid, Yucatán. The rebellion in Valladolid was led by Victor Montenegro and Maximiliano Ramírez Bonilla, two notorious political dissidents.

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[117] Cuellar Abaroa, *Juan Cuamatzi, Indio*, 60; *¿Paz o Terror?* 28-33. Cuellar Abaroa stated that the members of the upper class systematically kept down Indians primarily by denying children the right to a compulsory education and instead perpetuated oppression by forcing children to work in the fields and as servants.

[118] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, 26.

[119] Corresponsales en Puebla, “Documentos de la conspiración descubierta en Atlixco contra las autoridades constituidas,” *El Diario*, 10 June 1910, p. 1.

[120] Corresponsales en Valladolid, “Tras sangrienta lucha ocuparon Valladolid las fuerzas federales,” *El Diario*, 10 June 1910, p. 1.

The government emphasized the Mayas' stern and almost heroic defense of Valladolid. The federal unit's dispatch stated that the Mayas' defense was tenacious. The "Indian insurgents" knew the "difficult topography very well" and made the federal soldiers wary of their "cunning ambushes." Moreover, when the federal soldiers pressed forward the Indian rebels "retreated to their traditional mode of fighting, which was their guerrilla formation."[121] In both Tlaxcala and Yucatán the Porfirian military took pride in subduing a difficult enemy. In Valladolid, the federal army continued its "civilizing mission" to pacify the far south. Their triumph at Valladolid represented a triumph of civilization over barbarism.[122] Similarly, the conflict in the high central Mexican sierras was also cast as a war between the forces of order and disorder, between civility and savagery. In both cases the Porfirians blamed the urban Maderistas for polluting the minds of Indians.

Elite society feared that, indigenous subversion, interpreted by the government as the proliferation of "caste warfare," threatened to undermine Mexican civilization. In both cases the government had to subdue a rebellious people and a difficult terrain; to save Mexican society the military had to penetrate the country's internal frontiers and establish a firm presence. These Mexican-Indian wars were neo-colonial wars. In the pre-Mexican Revolution's military forays into the internal colonies, populations were devastated, villages were razed, and indigenous people were driven further to the inhospitable frontiers. The jungled sierras of Yucatán and the volcanic highlands of Tlaxcala and Puebla were terrains difficult to traverse, map, and incorporate into the national territory. But, into the mid-summer of 1910, the Porfirians appeared content with

[121] "Telegrama para *El Diario*," 9 May 1910, printed on 10 May 1910, p. 1.
[122] Ibid, p. 1; Telegrama para *El Diario*," "Grandes Bajas en las fuerzas rebeldes; Se ha confirmado la ocupación de Valladolid," 9 May 1910, printed on 11 May 1910, p. 1.

keeping the people in contentious pueblos pacified and controlled, and the indigenous rebels locked in the wilderness.

Believing that the government had triumphed, the Cahuantzi regime prepared for its September 16 centennial celebration by "beautifying" the state's capital. That day was going to represent the zenith of Mexican nationalism, it was an event designed to commemorate the tempestuous birth of the nation and would also be a day of remembrances for the nation's pantheon of independence-era revolutionaries. Tlaxcala's local government would pay homage to Hidalgo, Morelos, Victoria, Guerrero, Vicario, Allende, and Aldama. Coinciding with the celebration would be the eightieth birthday of the nation's patriarch, President Díaz. However, on that day, the members of the anti-reelection party from Veracruz, Puebla, and Tlaxcala, planned to orchestrate a show of support for Francisco Madero in the town of Santa Inés Zacatelco. In a romantic tone, a writer from Tlaxcala stated that, born in struggle, September 16 represented the nation's "baptism" by fire; México had been erected by the flesh and blood of its revolutionary martyrs; furthermore, the Mexican nation could endure all, and Díaz embodied the valor and sacrifice that had made the country independent and free from foreign rule.[123]

Madero, who was derided by Díaz as a rich eccentric (he was known to practice Spiritism, a belief system he studied while he lived in France), but who also posed a viable challenge to Porfirian hegemony, had been imprisoned by Díaz on June 1910 while he spoke in a rally in Monterrey, Nuevo León. On 4 July 1910 all board members of the *Club Femenil Antirreeleccionista*, prominent among the ladies were the club's

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[123] Edición Conmemorativa de *El Diario*, "La Odisea de Hidalgo," 16 September 1910, Sección Histórica, p. 1; "El Iniciador de la Independencia," *El Diario*, 16 September 1910, Sección Histórica, p. 12; "Los dos Patriotismos," *Diario del Hogar*, 18 September 1910, p. 1.

president Dolores Jiménez y Muro and the vice-president Carlotta de Borrego, were jailed by Porfirian authorities for protesting Madero's incarceration.[124] Rafael Cuellar, the rural police chief, wrote to Cahuantzi stating that since the 13 September, "members of the Anti-reelection Party from Atlixco, Puebla" had first planned to stage their own centennial celebration and declare that their own patriotic junta. Cuellar argued that the formation of the junta "would give them the opportunity to spread their seditious ideas."[125]

During the celebration, the people's displays of defiance were quite colorful. At the 16 September protests in Zacatelco, young and old women danced and chanted to the tune of "death to Cahuantzi and to the pueblo's oppressors," and "death to the tyrant Díaz." The Rurales present deemed this type of behavior "unfeminine and grotesque." The rural police geared up for violence when the protesters "agitated" the local Indians, who had gathered to celebrate the nation's Independence in Zacatelco's zocalo.[126]

According to Rafael Cuellar around 250 to 300 *Antirreeleccionistas* from Puebla had arrived to Zacatelco to promote anarchy. At around 10 p.m. on September 15, the group marched into the town of Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco and requested a ballroom known as "La Fiscalía" to hold their festivity and the Municipal President José Maria Cote granted them permission.[127] The Atlixco party "behaved well" on that night, but at around noon of the following day they continued their procession, and those who marched became increasingly agitated. Amidst the ruckus, the deafening cheering of the

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[124] "Aprehensión de Antirreeleccionistas; Club Femenil Disuelto," *Diario del Hogar*, 5 July 1911, p. 1.
[125] Rafael Cuellar to Próspero Cahuantzi, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 16 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 1-2.
[126] Cuellar Abaroa, "Cuamatzi; Precursor de la Revolución Mexicana," in *La Revolución Tomo I*, 32-44; Gracia, *Los Tlaxcaltecas*, 12-15.
[127] Cuellar to Cahuantzi, 16 September 1910, f. 2.

crowd, and the firing of pyrotechnics, one member pulled out a "yellow banner with red letters that read, Viva Madero!" Upon seeing this, an irate Cuellar stormed into the crowd to remove the banner from the individual, intensifying the already tense situation. Those marching surrounded Cuellar and shouted "Viva Madero!" and "Death to Díaz!" When the crowd berated Governor Cahuantzi and called for his removal, an angered Cuellar ordered the local magistrate to go to Tlaxcala City and inform Cahuantzi that he had decided to use the rural guards to end the agitation in order to preclude a larger uprising. Cuellar wrote to Cahuantzi that, "those [agitators] were inciting the people to rebel, likening Madero to one the great heroes of Independence, urging the people to put an end, as they shouted, to the tyrants."[128]

At the time of the demonstration, Cuellar only counted with the backing of six armed rural patrolmen. Fearing that the demonstrators could free local prisoners, he ordered the other men under his command to guard the local jail. By 5 p.m. the jeering crowd had "swelled to an excess of 1,500 women and men from the different [anti-reelection] Clubs, most of whom were armed with pistols." In light of the situation, Cuellar asked Cahuantzi to send "as many men as he deemed necessary to suffocate the disorders that have begun."[129] In response, Cahuantzi ordered "the hangman" to go to Xicohtzinco and end the tumult. Upon arriving to the town, García approached a group in the pueblo's plaza, and upon first sight of García and the rurales the people shouted, "Viva Madero!" This act prompted the rural police chief to order "his men to shoot at the people who had manifested themselves as enemies." However, his forces were met by "a mob" that "launched insults, rocks, and shots" at the rural police. The police shot back,

[128] Cuellar to Cahuantzi, f. 3.
[129] Ibid, f. 4.

and the people fled when members of a federal army infantry came to the aid of García.[130] Left behind were the bodies of five of "the mutineers." The victims included four men and a woman, and the rural gendarmerie captured a man described as a "notorious outlaw named Cruz Rojas," while the rebels managed to wound several soldiers. The rurales and federal soldiers chased the rebels further south into the Puebla-Tlaxcala border when at the train station stop of the Ferrocarril Mexicano, which is located in the town of Panzacola, they were met by a group of people on board a train coming from the "El Valor" factory in Puebla. When the two groups met another violent skirmish ensued, and this time the federal army suffered some human loses. The indigenous rebels dispersed quickly into the nearby sierras of Tenaxac.[131]

During the melee, Agustín García was shot in the stomach and was rushed immediately to Tlaxcala's hospital, where he was treated and survived. Following the Zacatelco and Panzacola attacks, the sudden uprising reawakened fears of a possible national conflagration. Governor Cahuantzi's forces now felt that it dealt with an open rebellion, and had to decide if it was worth entering the sierras where they could be hit with guerrilla-style warfare. Federal infantry leader Manuel G. Bulman, who aided the forces of "el colgador," described the difficulty of fighting the Indian rebels in their own terrain; in the town of Panzacola the locals had shot at them from all directions. And the resistance was most intense in the high maize stalks surrounding the town's entrance. Bulman commanded 200 men, while García counted with a few dozen battle-hardened rurales. The federal soldiers captured 56 of the rebels, but many others hid in the local

[130] Agustín García to Próspero Cahuantzi, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 16 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 5-6.
[131] García to Cahuantzi, f. 6-7.

church and inside homes, and many more fled to the sierras. Bulman heard shouts of "Viva Madero!" "Death to Cahuantzi!" and "Death to Díaz!" from all directions, but chose not to follow the insurrectionists into the hills.[132] Governor Cahuantzi received an urgent message Puebla reminding local authorities that the Indian rebellion that sprang from Zacatelco was incited by "Maderistas."[133] The governments of Puebla and Tlaxcala would have to lead a coordinated effort to prevent the growth of the uprising.

The government of Puebla stressed that the people who rose against the government all belonged to a Maderista group led by Cruz Rojas, who was followed by Pedro Tuxpan and Juan Torres. These men, the Puebla Secretary of Government stated, were all anarchists "who were captured with other ringleaders; and, found in their possession, were six sticks of dynamite, four guns, cartridges, and manifestos containing seditionist discourse such as: "The pueblos are dignified by rightful law," "Long Live Hidalgo and 1810!" and "We die for democracy."[134] In light of the Maderista threat, Antonio Machorro informed Cruz Guerrero and Governor Cahuantzi that they would have to use sheer force to end the indigenous rebellion. Machorro expressed great indignation at the fact that a "group of insurgents composed of factory workers, and hitherto peaceful pueblo neighbors" had dared to dishonor Tlaxcala's governor. Machorro noted many people from the local pueblos now favored the Maderistas, and in particular many from San Lorenzo Axocomanitla, a town close to the border with Puebla,

[132] Manuel G. Bulman to Próspero Cahuantzi, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 17 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 7-9.
[133] Minuta Número 5753, f. 10-11.
[134] Minuta Número 5753, f. 11.

had joined the insurrectionists.[135] Machorro viewed Maderismo as a social contaminant that had infected many of the region's Indians. Cahuantzi dispatched Cuellar to Panzacola and Xicohtzinco, where Cuellar's men raided homes, interrogated captives, and "found many pistols and documentation of a seditious nature."[136]

On 20 September, an urgent letter by the Municipal government of Panzacola that was sent to Cuellar confirmed many of the colonel's fears. The letter read that: "Yesterday all of the workers from Santo Toribio [Xicohtzinco] and Zacatelco, did not show up to work because they feared being rounded up and arrested by the government; as a result all of the other workers staged a work stoppage and retired from the plants in an orderly manner."[137] Cuellar ordered the local governments of Nativitas and Tetlahuaca to "investigate and find the whereabouts" of "armed groups that were seen" walking through those pueblos, and to "remit them to [his] office."[138] The documentation on the Zacatelco, Panzacola, and Xicohtzinco uprisings are replete with reports of people who were simply picked up by authorities, arrested, intimidated, interrogated, and, when the government had exhausted all avenues designed to extract information, many people were freed for lack of incriminating evidence.[139]

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[135] Antonio M. Machorro to Cruz Guerrero, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 19 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 14 a, 14 b; Antonio M. Machorro to Próspero Cahuantzi, 17 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 15 a, 15 b.
[136] Rafael Cuellar to Abraham Nieva, Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco, Tlaxcala, 21 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 22.
[137] Minuta Número 1993, a Rafael Cuellar, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 21 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 17.
[138] Rafael Cuellar to Abraham Nieva, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 21 September 1910, AHER, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 23, 25.
[139] Minuta Número 5816, to the Municipal President of Nativitas, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 27 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 43; Macario Sánchez a Próspero Cahuantzi, Nativitas, Tlaxcala, 26 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 42; Minuta Número 5829, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala,, 27 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 39; José de Barbosa to Próspero Cahuantzi, Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco, Tlaxcala, 24 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 35.

On September 30, 2nd Infantry leader Abraham Nieva learned from informants in Panzacola that "many factory workers from the town now conspire[d] to exact revenge on the government." He learned also that "an individual named Franco Cortéz," and other rebels had infiltrated the government and regularly reported to the rebel leaders all of the military's maneuvers and plans. As informed to Nieva by his spies, a large group from Puebla would arrive by train at 10 p.m. on 27 September to join the insurrectionists in Tlaxcala and encourage "numerous people from the pueblos" to join in the uprising.[140]

On 2 October 1910, Tlaxcala's newspaper *La Antigua República* stated that a group of "anarchic workers" from Veracruz and Puebla had incited the local people to rebel. The group was made up of, the paper read, "criminals" and "lowly ruffians" seeking to destroy the peace "for the sake of undermining the authority of an honorable government and its governor."[141] The rebels were called unpatriotic and anarchic, and unprincipled people willing to destroy the nation at its Centennial, the most glorious moment. On the other hand, the odes and poetry produced by the state's preeminent literary artist, Manuel Márquez, honored the glory of the patria. The rebels, it was stated, stood against order and the pomp and pageantry, the adorned streets, the multitude of Mexican flags hanging from balconies and the facades of buildings. They hated Tlaxcala's "nicest, most well-to-do" citizens and loathed those insisting on holding the military parades celebrating the nation's heroes. While the Madero followers were

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[140] Minuta Número 2045, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 25-30 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 49; Ignacio Espinoza to Abraham Nieva, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 25 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 50; Abraham Nieva to Próspero Cahuantzi, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 27 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 51.
[141] Minuta Número 5753, to Governor Próspero Cahuantzi, Puebla, Puebla, 24 September 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 10-11; Editor, "Los Sucesos del Distrito de Zaragoza," *La Antigua República*, 2 October 1910, p. 3.

disloyal, Cahuantzi's group wanted prove to the country that Tlaxcala was a bastion of Mexican patriotism.[142]

On 19 October, the rebels remobilized. Bernabé Pérez was caught by the rurales while attempting to recruit people; however, he managed to flee moments after his capture near the factory "El Valor." The police had found in his belongings a stick of dynamite and a loaded pistol.[143] By October 28 an order was issued to remit all rebel leaders to Tlaxcala's Ixtacuitla prison.[144] With the persecutions, however, workers from "El Valor," "La Tlaxcalteca," and "Metepec" had fled to the sierras of the volcano, where the Cuamatzistas had established their own revolutionary government. Governor Cahuantzi now realized the groundswell of resistance that the Cuamatzi uprising had generated. Eleven days before the Mexican Revolution broke out, the government of Tlaxcala admitted that they dealt with an open rebellion, and that the people had risen up for political motives. The government blamed the growth of the rebellion, especially the heavy incorporation of indigenous fighters, on social contagion. They theorized Indians as easily corrupted, manipulated, pliable, lawless, superstitious, and ignorant. The rebellion's ringleaders had escaped since the night of 27 May and found refuge in the pueblos where many people loathed the government.[145]

Although President Díaz had established webs of patronage in Tlaxcala, this also gave some of the local strongmen—the caciques, rural bosses, political prefects, and

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[142] Manuel L. Márquez, "Musa Patria," *La Antigua República*, 2 October 1910, p. 3; Editor, "Las Fiestas del Centenario en Tlaxcala," *La Antigua República*, 2 October 1910, p. 1 & 2.
[143] Minuta Número 6257, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 19 October 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 58.
[144] M. Villegas Barrios to Próspero Cahuantzi, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 October 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 64, f. 66; Minuta Número 6601, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 9 November 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 68.
[145] Minuta Número 6601, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 9 November 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 69.

village elites, a heightened sense of local autonomy and some of the local caudillos resisted the efforts of Cahuantzi to centralize power when the rebellions broke out. The power of regional caciques, and the resistance to late Porfirian regime was greatest in the states of Chihuahua, Morelos, Puebla, and Tlaxcala. These were all states that, despite having strong governors, became the cradles of the national rebellion, and regions that, throughout the revolutionary decade produced continuous cycles of social maelstrom.[146]

Not only Indians, but a variety of everyday people in Tlaxcala protested against the hierarchical system Cahuantzi had created. In Contla, the peasants challenged the dominance of the local municipal President Nicolas Reyes. In Santa Inés Zacatelco the people rebelled against the local hegemon Rafael Cuellar.[147] The villagers also used the political pull of local caciques to their own benefit. On 12 November, the indigenous *vecinos* of Panzacola wrote a letter to Gildardo Márquez, the local cacique much favored by the governor, explaining the source of their recent frustrations: “It was not fair that their small town was at the mercy of the *antirreeleccionistas*.” The people believed the governor’s recent dictates, which demanded that the pueblos form volunteer patrol units to persecute the rebels and villagers pay for the maintenance of patrolmen and self-defense units, were extremely unfair. The rebellion itself, and the government’s response to it “had left the pueblo itself impoverished.”[148] The people, therefore, were attempting to use the caciques’ influence as a buffer against the governor’s unfair demands.

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[146] Raymond Buve, “Caciquismo; un principio del ejercicio de poder durante varios siglos,” *Relaciones* 96, (2003): 29-30.
[147] Buve, “Caciquismo,” 39.
[148] The Neighborhood Committee of Panzacola to Gildardo Márquez, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 12 November 1910, AHET, RRO, Caja, 120, Exp., 13, f. 70 a, 70 b.

Sometime in early November, Juan Cuamatzi left the La Malintzi and went to Puebla City to meet with his mentor Aquiles Serdán. The Puebla rebel, had met recently with Francisco Madero, and was overjoyed when Madero informed him that a national revolution would begin on 20 November, which made Cuamatzi ecstatic. This rebellion, Serdán told Cuamatzi, would end with the current regime's demise.[149] Madero had attained enormous popularity. In Puebla City alone, 25,000 people cheered him in mid-May, and in Mexico City he drew crowds of tens of thousands. Madero had been nominated as the presidential candidate of the Anti-reelection Party, with the venerable Emilio Vázquez Goméz as his vice-president. In their 16 April meeting, President Díaz had promised Madero and Vázquez that the presidential election would be fair. The regime, however, found Madero's June Mexico City speech, where he incited all people to cooperate in the regime's removal, most disconcerting.[150] To the shock of the Anti-reelection Party members, however, Díaz won the 1910 presidential election by a landslide.

Madero had been considered a dark horse to win the contest at the least, but the election results revealed that the election was grotesquely rigged. In Saltillo, Monclova, and Parras, Coahuila, all hotbeds of Maderismo, Madero did not earn a single municipal vote. Although Ramón Corral had wanted Madero executed, when Díaz won Madero was no longer perceived as a threat and was freed from a two-month house arrest in San Luis, Potosí. Once liberated, Madero sought refuge in the U.S. where he met with

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[149] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, 23-25.

[150] From the Mexican Press, "The Anti-reelecionist Convention," *Mexican Herald*, 23 April 1910, p. 8. Especial, "Don Franc. Madero fue preso en Monterrey," *El Diario*, 8 June 1910, p. 1; Special, "Flowing oratory at bustling Madero rally," "Madero rally is loquacious affair," *Mexican Herald*, 2 May 1910, p. 1 & 2.

coreligionists in Texas and wrote the Plan de San Luis, which stated that the revolution would begin at the beginning of nighttime on 20 November. Serdán had reunited with Madero in Texas, sometime in October. After the meeting Madero, who before the reelection of Díaz had been reluctant to even utter the word "revolution," sent Serdán back to Mexico to start the national uprising with his full blessing. Serdán agreed that he would start the rebellion in Puebla and Tlaxcala and that Madero would control rebel movements in the north.[151]

In a span of a few months Madero had gone from being a timorous leader to a zealous national liberator. Several uprisings had shaken up Mexico in the summer of 1910. Madero, for his part, had reprobated most of these upheavals and denounced the participants; however, these events, diverse in their localities, motives, aims, and politics, would set the precedent for the coming Mexican Revolution. The 20 November 1910 Revolution, as it was later framed, emerged as a series of different protests, revolts, rebellions, and armed mobilizations which aimed, for the most part, to depose local caudillos or redress problems of an intimate nature, such as the conflicts that pitted pueblos versus local governors; pueblos versus local caciques; cacique and pueblo versus the local rural boss, etc. In Sinaloa violence erupted when Gabriel Leyva, who was eventually executed by *la ley fuga* in the sierras near Culiacán in the middle of June, had opposed the *caciquismo* of the ultra-wealthy Daniel Burns of San Francisco, who owned fortunes in that state. In Veracruz, the social strife against the local elite coming from the factories was headed by labor anarchists Donato Padua and Santana Rodríguez. In

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[151] Francisco Madero, "Habla el Sr. Francisco Madero," *El País*, 17 June 1910, p. 1; Cumberland, *Mexican Revolution; Genesis*, 12-23; Michael J. Gonzales, *The Mexican Revolution, 1910-1940* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 2002), 72-75.

Torreón, Emilio Madero coordinated attacks on a major American-owned rubber company, and, sporadic rebellions, motivated both by local politics and agrarian disputes, also broke out in the Huastecas of San Luis Potosí and Hidalgo. There were talks of greater more organized subversion, most alarmingly when rebels from Orizaba, many coming from central Mexican cities, were caught with plans in their hands stipulating that they were ready to join the uprisings in Yucatán.[152]

The Mexican media expressed great concern and the Mexican elite urged President Díaz to prevent the proliferation of mass rural violence. In the Mexican far south the state of affairs proved most troublesome. Authorities in Yucatán blamed the "Indian violence" of June 1910 on the influence of Francisco Madero, and more specifically, on the local Maderistas led by General Francisco Cantón, a political idealist, who was loyal to Díaz, as he himself stated, but was an enemy to various regional caciques and plantation owners.[153] More than 5,000 Maya people, it was reported, participated in the uprisings. Neglecting to discuss at any length Yucatán's long history of racial violence, the editor of *El Imparcial* commented that "the Yucatec Indians who are generally peaceful," and had been "made submissive by work," were motivated to rebel by more "belligerent Indian factions" called the *cantonistas*, whom Valladolid authorities blamed for outbreaks of the "most savage banditry," and multiple "assassinations" of their personal enemies. One of the victims included the local political boss known by his last name of Regil and his personal escort of gendarmeries. According

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[152] Especial, "Planes Revolucionarios," *El Diario*, 10 June 1910, p. 1; Telegrama Especial, "Escandalo Antirreeleccionista: Captura de Leyva," *El Imparcial*, 16 June 1910, p. 3; Especial, "Movimientos disolventes iniciados en la República," *El Diario*, p. 1 & 3. Especial de Orizaba, "Consignación de presos políticos," *El Diario*, 17 June 1910, p. 1.

[153] Especial de Valladolid, Yucatán, "Grandes bajas en las fuerzas rebeldes," *El Diario*, 11 June 1910, p. 1 & 3.

to the paper the Maya redressed grievances against Regil's group by "cutting them to pieces with their machetes." The Valladolid dispatch to the Mexico City media was tinged with urban racism. The document stated that "among the heartless [rebels] there was a particularly savage one who delivered the initial blow to the defenseless local political boss, and then the others delivered multiple machete blows to the fallen body; it appeared that the smell of blood reawakened their ferocity as they proceeded to machete hack the lifeless bodies of the rural policemen, turning them into formless heaps." The writer of *El Diario*, for his part, based on a report dispatched by eyewitnesses and victims, wrote that "the idiotic," "imbecilic," and "unlettered Indians" of Yucatán were susceptible to seditious ideologies and "roused to commit gruesome acts" such as "hacking hapless victims to pieces." As happened during the Cuamatzi rebellion, in Yucatán the local Porfirian authorities launched a "vigorous defense" to end the "Indian violence" and "banditry," but Valladolid's indigenous fighters also retreated to their highlands, contesting the federal military with well-coordinated guerrilla assaults.[154]

Some of these summer 1910 revolts, which have been ignored in the historiography of the Mexican Revolution, were influenced by the Flores Magón family. It is unfair, however, to neglect the local conditions that engendered such discontent; and in our case study, only the insurrections in Tlaxcala and its neighboring Puebla Valley reflected how the national political contestation conflated with popular protests to create the possibility for a mass upheaval, which given the close proximity and population density of the high central plateau, threatened to spread from the hinterlands of the

[154] Telegrama Especial, "Los Indios Mayas, instigados por los agitadores, se entregan al asesinato y al saqueo, en la población de Valladolid," *El Imparcial*, 8 June 1910, p. 1; Especial, "Valladolid está en poder de indios levantados en armas," *El Diario*, 9 June 1910, p. 1; El Corresponsal, "Los Sucesos de Valladolid," *El Tiempo*, 9 June 1910, p. 1 & 2.

Oriente Central to Mexico City.[155] The fact that workers and peasants joined hands against Governors Cahuantzi and Martínez paralyzed the local elite with fear. The social composition of the Cuamatzistas, ethnically, politically, and ideologically, would prove as diverse as that of the Maderistas come 20 November 1910—in fact, if we can make an argument for Cuamatzismo as a precursor to the Maderista revolution, this is where it lies. Raymond Buve has identified this worker-peasant radicalization and its cohesion as a significant fighting force within the agrarian rebellion, as having had occurred much later, in the autumn of 1911, citing the fuller incorporation of Tlaxcala's artisans, peasants, and factory workers into the PAT (Anti-reelection Party of Tlaxcala) under the stewardship of Antonio Hidalgo Sandoval, who became governor of Tlaxcala under Madero's tenure.[156]

If we examine carefully the career of Juan Cuamatzi, however, we will note that this occurred much earlier. Cuamatzi had been the nominated as the leader of the anti-reelection movement in Tlaxcala since late 1909 by the more dominant chapter located in Puebla; this position was solidified when it was approved by the leftist urban intellectuals in Tlaxcala's capital. Many of the members of Tlaxcala's *antirreeleccionista* group, the precursor to the PAT, came from both the pueblos and cities of Tlaxcala City and Apizaco; however, they chose Juan Cuamatzi as their main leader because he was their liaison to the villagers. Aquile Serdán also respected Juan Cuamatzi and believed the union of urban and rural revolutionaries was vital. Serdán believed that rural allies such as Cuamatzi had taken the revolutionary theory and praxis of urban protest to the countryside. When Aquiles Serdán left to meet with Madero in the United States, his

[155] Archivo Militar de Juan Cuamatzi, AHDN, D/112/6737, Fs, 4-6.
[156] Buve, "Tlaxcala; los vaivenes del agrarismo," 72-73.

sister Carmen continued with his work, writing political manifestos and proselytizing workers and peasants. While in San Luis Potosí, Francisco Madero had given money to Carmen Serdán and orders to aid Francisco Cosío Robledo and other workers persecuted by the Martínez regime in Puebla.[157] For the pueblos, the national political conflict forced them to choose sides. Supporting Madero, as an associate of Aquiles Serdán interpreted the 16 September 1910 Santa Inés Zacatelco conflict, meant that the pueblos were making the necessary sacrifice to attain greater autonomy at the local level; this was a liberal promise the Maderistas would keep, he said, once power shifted in Mexico. The Puebla Anti-reelection Party also interpreted the Zacatelco and Santo Toribio affairs as manifestations of the dictatorship's "barbarity," evidenced by the regime's murders and injuries of 56 people. The Maderistas cited the killing of Mrs. Petronila Martínez, a coffee vendor, and the execution of Benito Quintos, a member of the Zacatelco Philharmonic at the hands of the rurales, as examples of the Porfirian cruelty.[158]

Juan Cuamatzi stood in the middle of the urban and rural worlds; tied inextricably to his pueblo's politics, he was not a puppet of urban ideologues, but was someone who had become, politically and ethnically, bicultural and bilingual. By late 1909 he could speak the political language of the city intellectuals. Cuamatzi established ties with both the Maderistas and the anarchists of the Magonistas, groups that did not necessarily agree in matter of approach vis-à-vis deposing the Porfirian regime and transforming Mexico. The political left was not a unified front and Juan Cuamatzi knew this, but he negotiated

[157] Francisco Madero to Aquiles Serdán, San Luis, Potosí, 6 July 1910, *Documentos Personales*, 61-62; Aquiles Serdán to Carmen Serdán, San Antonio, Texas, August 1910, *Documentos Personales*, 65; Francisco Madero to Carmen Serdán, San Luis Potosí, 24 August 1910, *Documentos Personales*, 66-67.
[158] Anonymous Puebla Anti-reelection Party Member to Aquiles Serdán, "Relato anónimo de lo ocurrido en Zacatelco, Panzacola y Santo Toribio de la Juridicción de Tlaxcala, el 16 de Septiembre," Puebla, Puebla, no date, *Documentos Personales*, 67-68.

with both groups at the individual level. Cuamatzi, for example, held good relations with Máximo Rojas, the representative of Maderismo, and members of the Serdán family, who remained tied to the tenets of Magonismo. In early November 1910 Governor Cahuantzi informed Tlaxcala's Congress that Juan Cuamatzi now counted with more than 600 elements under his command.[159]

By early November, the conflict in Tlaxcala had become a microcosm of the national political and social conflict between Díaz and Madero. The rebels had injured the pride of Governor Cahuantzi because he considered them fugitives and they remained armed in the volcano. On the other hand, rebellious villagers felt that, forced to retreat from their impoverished but once autonomous pueblos into a life of desolation in the volcano's cold cordilleras and forests, they had been once more dishonored by the government. Scores then, had to be settled on both ends, providing the fuel for the coming flurries of social violence.[160] In their final meeting, Serdán and Cuamatzi agreed that they would coordinate a definitive blow on their state governments on 20 November. But fate would have it otherwise.[161]

On 18 November violence broke out in the heart of Puebla City involving a coalition of the urban police, the state's rural battalions, and the federal army's eastern corps, against the family of Aquiles Serdán. The Serdán family, however, put up a vigorous defense from within their home.[162] Puebla's Police Chief Miguel Cabrera was ordered to enter the home of Aquiles Serdán to capture the revolutionary-intellectual. The

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[159] Informe del Corl. Próspero Cahuantzi ante el Congreso del Estado, 1º de octubre de 1910; Cuellar Abaroa, "La Revolución en el Sur de Tlaxcala," in *La Revolución Vol. I*, 38-40.
[160] Porfirio del Castillo, "Los Contingentes Revolucionarios," in *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 47-50
[161] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución Vol. 1*, 35.
[162] Del Corresponsal, "Las autoridades de toda la República están preparadas para soportar cualquier motín," *El Diario*, 20 November 1910, p. 1 & 12.

government had learned from spies that the Serdán family warehoused ample weaponry in their home. As communicated to the *Mexican Herald* by the government of Puebla, Aquiles Serdán was "a Maderist agitator who had long given trouble to the authorities." The Serdán family, comprised mainly of Aquiles, his brother Máximo, his sister Carmen, his wife Filomena del Valle, and his mother Carmen Alatriste, engaged the government in a heated combat that would claim the lives of 100 people.[163]

The Serdán family had been one of prominence: the patriarch, Manuel Serdán Guarios had been one of Puebla's most influential merchants, and the matriarch, Carmen Alatriste, was the daughter of General Miguel Cástulo Alatriste, a veteran of the U.S. invasion who had been the liberal Governor of Puebla from 1857 to 1861, when he dutifully resigned in peace having had kept Puebla's Republicans, "involved in every significant conflict that emerged in the Mexican east." Alatriste worked alongside President Juárez to make Mexico progressive and prosperous. General Alatriste was captured on 10 April 1862 by Conservatives loyal to Emperor Maximilian's forces in the major battle of Izucar de Matamoros, Puebla. Alatriste was shot summarily a day after his capture, becoming a martyr of Mexican Republicanism.[164]

Although the Serdán family had lost much of its fortune by the nineteenth century's end, they remained influential and were considered members of the Mexican elite, especially in Puebla, which was Mexico's second-largest industrial hub after Mexico City. The Serdán family members were highly cultured, respected, but as heirs of

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[163] Special Report, "Puebla Maderists oppose police and troops but are worsted," *Mexican Herald*, 19 November 1910, p. 1.

[164] Miguel Cástulo Alatriste, "A los Ciudadanos del Congreso del Estado, Puebla," 2 September 1861, printed in *El Siglo XIX*, 6 September 1861, p. 3; Josefa Cuesta de Alatriste, "Bienes del General Alatriste," Puebla, May 1862, printed in *El Siglo XIX*, 25 May 1862, p. 4; *Boletín Oficial de Puebla*, "El General Alatriste," printed in *El Siglo XIX*, 8 June 1862, p. 4.

the Benito Juárez liberal tradition, were staunchly opposed the Porfirian system. Governor Martínez saw the Serdán family as dangerous political eccentrics, who contaminated the uncouth masses with seditious ideas.[165]

When Miguel Cabrera knocked on the front door of the portico of the Serdán home, a boy opened the main gate, and "as soon as he took a few steps in he was met with a direct gunshot to the head, which killed him immediately, his second-in-command was wounded, and the rest of the gendarmerie were met by a volley of shots…" The Serdán family went to the roof to gain an advantage and Carmen also fired at the police from the home's second floor; when the shootout reached its climax, thousands of cartridges were spent. At least forty people, government officials and the media stated, were killed on the morning of the 19. Most of the killed and wounded were police officers. The editor of *El Imparcial* blamed the deaths on "the lunacy" of Aquiles Serdán, stating that the "cadavers that were picked up were the fruit of seditious propaganda."[166]

The rebels that were locked inside the home of Aquiles Serdán, which included most of his family, were well armed. When the rebellion broke out, Carmen Serdán harangued the people in the street of Santa Teresa to join the fight; when the people refused to rebel she called them dishonorable cowards, ran back to the home and continued shooting at the troops. When the troops and gendarmerie broke down the defenses of the Serdán home, Carmen was found lying on the floor, with a bullet in the back near her spine. Days after the uprising, Carmen Serdán, along with the mother and wife of Aquiles, were freed from prison after a stint in the hospital. Following the ousting of the Díaz regime, from the Madero interregnum onwards, Carmen Serdán became one

[165] Joaquin Pita, "Parte del Jefe Político," *El Diario*, 21 November 1910, p. 2.
[166] Corresponsal, "Un día sangriento en la Ciudad de Puebla, *El Imparcial*, 19 November 1910, p. 1.

of the most visible voices of the cadre of revolutionary-intellectuals. She grew up in Puebla City, an industrialized hub: at the twentieth-century's dawning only 22% of the people out of a population of 101,214 in the metropolitan region of Puebla worked in agriculture, and women, who made up 55,217 of this total population, still worked doing domestic chores in homes, and some supplemented their work by making food for prisoners and by working as prostitutes. Educated women like Carmen, who preached about gender equality and women's right to earn better wages, often became teachers and wrote for newspapers using male pseudonyms; they became just as staunchly anti-Porfirian through their involvement in the city's anti-reelection leagues as their male counterparts, and organized men in rallies and protests. The anti-reelection movement provided greater opportunities for women's involvement in politics. But Porfirian social norms, intimately tied to English Victorian mores, demanded that middle to upper class Mexican women remain chaste until marriage, be demure, proper, faithful, and obedient. These same women were steadfastly tied to their families and lived in a manner that would not dishonor them. They were encouraged to follow in the footsteps of their grandmothers and mothers. Respectable women needed to embody feminine qualities if they were to achieve their main aim, which was to marry a good husband. Carmen did not adhere to these conceptualizations: she was the eldest of the Serdán siblings. Although she was physically beautiful and had many eager suitors willing to take her to the altar, she did not marry. Carmen was orphaned very young, and she made it her mission to care for her siblings as a mother would, and she acted that way during the 18 November uprising.[167]

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[167] Gloria Armenda Tirado Villegas, "Carmen Serdán Alatriste: Icono Revolucionario," in *Miradas*

Carmen fought with such fervor the writer from the *Mexican Herald* blamed her for the murder of Police Chief Cabrera. Carmen had helped hide Aquiles Serdán in a makeshift small basement near the family's dining area that was replete with explosives, guns, ammunition, and political manifestos. Aquiles hid there for more than twelve hours; Governor Martínez had ordered his men to stay put inside the home. Perhaps unable to breathe, or overwhelmed by sheer desperation, Aquiles came out of the hideout shouting, "Don't shoot, I am Aquiles Serdán!" But, Porfirio Pérez, a member of the urban gendarmerie, answered the plea with a gunshot straight to Serdán's head. A subordinate of Pérez by the last name of Zaragoza administered the coup de grace to the squirming body. As reported by the *Mexican Herald* Serdán was not even given the opportunity to surrender.[168] The *Mexican Herald* capitalized on the death of Serdán to demonize Francisco Madero. Madero, "the dreamer from Coahuila" the paper stated, was as an arriviste while Aquile Serdán, was "a grandson of a famous revolutionary general, [who] comes of fighting stock" and possessed a "courage worthy of a better cause."[169]

The Serdán affair was filled with important subplots. Papers found in the Serdán home revealed that Francisco Madero, who corresponded with regularity with Aquiles, Carmen, and Máximo Serdán, supported the family's activities. While preparing to leave San Antonio, Texas and return to Mexico on November 19 Madero denied having any connection to the uprising.[170] What Madero desired was legitimacy; he wanted the elite

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Regionales de la Revolución Mexicana, 113-119.

[168] Especial, Serdán, resuelto a vender cara su vida, fue encontrado en un sotano entre un arsenal de armas, proyectiles y proclamas," *El Imparcial*, 20 November 1910, p. 1 & 7; Associated Press Dispatch, "Police shoot and kill Maderist leader of the Puebla outbreak as he emerges from hiding place," *Mexican Herald*, 20 November 1910, p. 1.

[169] "Complete story of the storming of the Serdán House," *Mexican Herald*, 21 November 1910, p. 2.

[170] Associated Press Dispatch, "Madero denies any connection with the revolt," *Mexican Herald,* 19 November 1910, p. 1.

society to be his political base. When the police read through the documentation, they discovered that Máximo and Aquiles would each lead 200 rebels in Puebla's streets on the 20th of November and meet with other rebels from the greater Tlaxcala-Puebla Valley to depose General Martínez. Authorities also learned that Aquiles Serdán would lead the Indian rebels in Tlaxcala.[171] The secret police of President Díaz also made arrests in Tlaxcala, Mexico City, Pachuca, Orizaba, and in the port of Veracruz.[172]

A day after Serdán's demise, Juan Cuamatzi and his forces, totaling "sixty or seventy, all Indians," remobilized in Tlaxcala. The Cuamatzistas, the military dispatch stated, "were Indians led by a man wearing a bright blouse…under the influence of Madero." After robbing many of the townspeople in several pueblos they "attempted to destroy the bridge of the Interoceanico Railway, but lacked the tools necessary to do so." The rebels sacked the main store in San Bernardino Contla and attempted to murder the local president Nicolas Reyes, yet were checked by federal troops and rurales led by Governor Próspero Cahuantzi in the train station of Santa Cruz, Tlaxcala. Armed with rocks, machetes, sticks, axes, and a few guns and old rifles, Cuamatzi's forces were overmatched and fled quickly to Barranca del Tesoro, which gave them direct access to the La Malintzin volcano, their main destination.[173]

As the governors of Tlaxcala and Puebla prepared to launch a full-scale attack to exterminate the Cuamatzistas in the La Malintzin, the Mexican Revolution, the supported

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[171] Special, "Madero's plans for uprising found among papers in Cerdan's home," *Mexican Herald*, 20 November 1910, p. 1 & 2.
[172] Especial, "Ha operado más detenciones la policia de la capital," *El Diario*, 20 Noviembre 1910, p. 1 & 13.
[173] Luis G. Valle to Mucio Martínez, Puebla, Puebla, 20 November 1910, AHDN, XI/481.5/299, f. 1-2; Luis G. Valle to Luis Anaya, Puebla, Puebla, 20 November 1910, AHDN, XI/481.5/299, f. 4-5; Especial, "Un grupo de revoltosos fue dispersado en Tlaxcala," *El Imparcial*, 20 November 1910, p. 7.

by Francisco Madero, broke out in Chihuahua. The local gendarmerie, which was hot on the trail of the Indian rebels, now had to worry about a greater threat giving Cuamatzi an opportunity to take his forces higher into the cordilleras of the La Malintzin and remain out of the military's reach. Along the way, the indigenous rebels, called "bandits," by the military, destroyed most telephone lines, leaving towns uncommunicated.[174] While in the volcano, the Cuamatzistas once more formed a revolutionary council, an alternative government, and following the lead of Máximo Rojas, became official Maderistas. The Cuamatzistas remained in the volcano's highest points, enduring the severe winter cold and many deprivations.

Colonel Luis Valle believed that suppressing the rebels would be easy. The government, he wrote, had many weapons and he offered to gather many volunteers from the pueblos, because he thought that "there were more than enough people who [were] willing to aid the government in the persecution of the wrongdoers in the La Malintzin."[175] Governor Próspero Cahuantzi was not as optimistic. He wrote to Díaz asking the president for the permission to conscript workers from the local haciendas. Cahuantzi proposed to discipline the conscripts into effective fighting forces, but he also needed to procure more sophisticated weaponry. This war model, Cahuantzi stated, should be implemented widely; conscripting workers into the federal army would preclude their entry into the rebellious agrarian ranks, and more men were needed, he wrote, to combat the multiple insurrections raging throughout the country.[176] The governor noted that with the coming of the Revolution Indians and peasants had become

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[174] Luis G. Valle to the War Secretary, Puebla, Puebla, 21 November 1910, AHDN, XI/481.5/299, f. 9.
[175] Luis G. Valle to the War Secretary, f. 9.
[176] Próspero Cahuantzi to Porfirio Díaz, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 8 December 1910, AHDN, XI/481.5/299, f. 10.

haughtier; therefore, in San Miguel Contla he ordered his subordinates to open fire on sixty drunken peasants. The majority were massacred for chanting "viva Madero!" The fact that a Cuamatzista leader, Felix Grande Matlacualtzi was found among fifteen other leaders who were captured alive convinced the regime that it was necessary to bleed out the potentiality of rebellion from the Indian districts.[177]

In late January 1911 Juan Cuamatzi wrote to Andrés Campos, who became a leading Maderista in Puebla, asking "for many *juguetitos bonitos*-pretty toys [as rural folks still call their guns] for my men" and asked for "an especially nice one [for him]." Cuamatzi was anxious to launch guerrilla campaigns, but he stated that in the rebel headquarters, which was high up in the sierra, his fighters were in short supply of essential items such as tortillas, salt, chilies, beans, huaraches, and sarapes.[178] The Cuamatzistas left Tlaxcala for the more pleasant climes of western Puebla where upon arrival they assaulted the Los Molinos factory. Cuamatzi then established a new headquarters in Tochimilco, Puebla, near the major town of Atlixco, where he found numerous adherents among the disaffected peasantry and factory workers.[179]

By late January, the Cuamatzistas arrived in Izúcar de Matamoros in the heart of southwest Puebla—a region which would become a bastion of Zapatismo by mid-1911. Along the way they recruited people. It is very likely that a good number of Puebla's Zapatistas began their revolutionary activity as Cuamatzistas. On February 24 the federal military reported that Cuamatzi had returned to the La Malintzin region and that he had

[177] Próspero Cahuantzi to the War Secretary, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 18 December 1910, AHDN, XI/481.5/299, f. 14-15; Luis G. Valle to Fernando M. Remes, Puebla, Puebla, 20 December 1910, AHDN, XI/481.5/299, f. 16.
[178] Reyes, *Biografía de Juan Cuamatzi*, 29; Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 51.
[179] Expediente Particular de Juan Cuamatzi, AHDN, D/112/6737, f. 5.

set up a headquarters in the ranch of Xaltelulco. It became clear that Cuamatzi had ventured into Puebla not only to help the Maderista efforts there, but also to procure the resources that were needed to set up a permanent headquarters in the La Malintzi volcano.[180]

It did not take long for the forces of Juan Cuamatzi to combat the government. On February 25 the Cuamatzistas were met by the forces of Colonel Cruz Guerrero and volunteers coming from Teolocholco. Though outnumbered, the Cuamatzistas defeated Guerrero's rurales, the federal soldiers, and the volunteers. But a day later Colonel Guerrero returned, this time backed by the 29th Battalion of General Aureliano Blanquet. The 29th Battalion possessed vast experience in exterminating indigenous insurgents. What is more, backing the 29th Battalion were the rural forces from Santa Inés Zacatelco, commanded by the political boss Colonel Rafael Cuellar. On February 26 the Cuamatzistas fought the government with uncanny bravery, but spent every single cartridge, and dispersed when Juan Cuamatzi, badly injured by a gunshot, fled to the pueblo of Papalotla higher into the sierras. *El País*, which was the only daily that wrote on the event, stated that the battle had taken "several hours," ending only when "the rebels exhausted every single munition." Many, "fled the scene and took foot to the mountain where they hid to secure more weaponry," but Cruz Guerrero and his men were able to penetrate the high area of the La Malintzin to annihilate the remaining insurrectionists.[181]

On the night of the 26, the forces of Blanquet, Guerrero, and Cuellar found a wounded Cuamatzi hiding in the home of his close friend Luciano Berruecos. According

[180] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 52.
[181] Telegrama Especial, "Combate entre rurales y rebeldes," *El País*, 27 February 1911, p. 2.

to some rebels, Cuamatzi was betrayed by Felipe Hernández who alerted the military to the chieftain's whereabouts; however, others stated that Hernández was beaten beyond recognition and that unable to bear the torture, he talked. In any case, Hernández was also executed by the 29th Battalion, summarily, and without trial, along with Juan Cuamatzi. The military's documentation states that the rebels "were executed by direct order of the governor." The execution was performed publicly, in front of the railway station of the Ferrocarril Mexicano in Panzcola, where the Cuamatzistas had vexed Governor Cahuantzi by disturbing the government's 16 September 1910 celebration. Cahuantzi showed that the rebels were not able to turn society upside down. The public executions were also an eerie showcase of the government's power vis-à-vis its willingness and capacity to exterminate Indian rebels and other undesirables that threatened to undermine the health of the state. The corpses, laden with bullets, were picked up by some of the townsfolk and they were administered proper burial rights by a priest in the pueblo of Santo Toribio Xicohtzinco. The Cahuantzistas, it appeared, had dealt a mortal blow to the newly formed Maderista juntas of Tlaxcala and Puebla. On 26 February 1911 the dream of Juan Cuamatzi ended, and his executors rode off triumphantly to alert the pueblos of the indigenous leader's demise.[182]

Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa explained the conflict between Cahuantzi and Cuamatzi through a provocative that may have been informed by the prejudices of a sympathetic member of an urban elite. The hatred between Indians, particularly between Indian chieftains, Cuellar Abaroa wrote, is always intense; the conflicts take a generation or two to be resolved and the personal animosity always ends with one contender's

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[182] Expediente Particular de Juan Cuamatzi, AHDN, D/112/6737, f. 5-6.

extermination. Such conflicts, Cuellar Abaroa explained, cannot be mediated diplomatically, or ever be settled peacefully. To Cuellar Abaroa indigenous people possessed an innate compulsion to fight. Cuellar Abaroa wrote; "[the] hatred between Indians runs deep; this is why Governor Cahuantzi, an Indian himself, would not spare the prisoner's life." In the view of Cuellar Abaroa personal hatreds also shed light on why so many Indians were executed in an extralegal manner in the mountains and sierras. Indians were conscripted into military, once in military garb they became de-Inidanized and were instructed to exterminate Indian rebels. To Cuellar Abaroa the demise of Cuamatzi cannot be qualified as a military execution, but a murder; the suspension of constitutional guarantees for rebels, highwaymen, and bandits was not put into effect by President Díaz until 17 March 1911. Juan Cuamatzi, Felipe Hernández, Luciano Berruecos, Anastacio Castro, and Antonio Flores, he added, were "patriots" killed in a cowardly manner. But "to the astonishment of their slayers [the victims] showed exemplary valor." The glory, Cuellar Abaroa wrote, would belong to Juan Cuamatzi who was hailed as "an Indian precursor to the Mexican Revolution" by Francisco Madero in a visit to Contla in July 1911.[183]

In the aftermath of the death of Juan Cuamatzi, the government's persecutions in the La Malintzin region continued, but the surviving rebels received much-needed support from the local townsfolk, who angered by the murders of their loved ones joined the surviving Cuamatzistas. When the rebel forces renewed their attacks on the ranchos and haciendas of Huamantla, Tlaxco, and Teacalco, they were joined by hundreds of villagers thirsting for revenge and justice. Vengeful indigenous rebels killed hacienda

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[183] Cuellar Abaroa, "Muerte de Juan Cuamatzi," in *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 59.

owners and managers. According to Cuellar Abaroa, with Cuamatzi dead the rebellion became perverted and the malcontents, galvanized by "the immolation" of their leader committed many outrages, such as invading the jail of Tlaxco, where they freed all prisoners who then helped the rebel forces occupy the town. These rebels were now led by a young Maderista General, Gabriel Hernández, but bereft of central command, the liberating forces looted stores, sacked haciendas, razed estates, killed the rich, and damaged public buildings.[184]

By wiping out members of the landed gentry, Indians and peasants redressed many grievances. But following the raids to the haciendas and ranchos, Cahuantzi's forces and the federal auxiliary corps also pursued and killed villagers and therefore the violence in the countryside snowballed. A clear dialectic of rebellion and counterinsurgency became evident. And with this, a wave of terror ensued. In the Indian town of Tezoquipa in San Pablo del Monte the men of Luis G. Valle stamped out a local uprising by wiping out most of the participants, and a similarly violent suppression occurred in Tlaxco when Governor Cahuantzi and his rurales rid the town of the eighty rebels that had occupied it.[185]

With the growth of the Indian rebellion the government began targeting and executing noncombatants. At the pueblos of Ixtacuixtla and Telanohcan dozens of *pacificos*—innocent villagers, were rounded up on 9 March 1911 and were summarily executed by order of Cahuantzi. On 11 March, the state's forces executed thirty villagers from San Bartolomé and Texoloc for their supposed involvement in the sacking of the

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[184] Cuellar Abaroa, "Su inmolación estimula a los revolucionarios tlaxcaltecas," in *La Revolución, Vol. I.* 61-68.
[185] Luis G. Valle to the Secretary of War, Puebla, Puebla, 6 March 1911, AHDN, XI/481.5/300, f. 23-26; Próspero Cahuantzi to the Secretary of War, Tlaxco, Tlaxcala, 4 March 1911, AHDN, XI/481.5/300, f. 4.

Mixco and La Soledad haciendas.[186] And with Díaz's formal suspension of constitutional guarantees, which was passed by the Mexican Congress on 16 March 1911, the executions intensified. Article 2 of the decree stipulated that all persons caught *"in flagrante delicto,"* participating in armed rebellion, attacking, derailing, or blowing up trains, sacking properties, or attacking and killing non-combatants would be executed.[187] The government, however, began executing suspects at whim, many times upon mere suspicion. As will be discussed subsequently, the terror gave birth to new revolutionary factions in Tlaxcala; some commentators would come to argue that the repression reawakened the ire of the spirits roaming the volcanic lair; and out of this wrath, emerged new indigenous caudillos, who would fight for control of the La Malintzi region in some of the Revolution's most horrid campaigns.

The Impact of Maderismo in Tlaxcala

Juan Cuamatzi was a faithful Maderista, and counting with the support of anarcho-syndicalists from Tlaxcala and Puebla, he had led a multiclass and multiethnic coalition. With his death in February 1911, new urban leaders emerged to lead the revolution in Tlaxcala. Although the movement's leaders never described themselves as such, Raymond Buve labeled this cadre of revolutionaries the Movimiento Revolucionario de Tlaxcala (MRT). Before the revolution in Tlaxcala assumed a stronger agrarian character, the leaders of the MRT were Porfirio del Castillo, Máximo Rojas, and Pedro M. Morales, who came from humble origins, but were educated in urban environments and professed a liberal ideology that was very open to agrarian reform.

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[186] Cuellar Abaroa, "Su inmolación estimula a los revolucionarios tlaxcaltecas," in *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 61-62.
[187] Cuellar Abaroa, "Salón de sesiones de la Comisión Permanente del Congreso General. México, 15 March 1911," Singed by S. Camacho, President of the Senate, in *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 63-64.

They also advocated giving land back to peasants who could provide legitimate land titles. Morales led the charge in wanting to solve the region's agrarian problems.[188]

Racial animosities, however, stood in the way of giving back lands to Indian peasants. Even after the death of Cuamatzi urban people remained fearful of the proliferation of an indigenous peasant rebellion, which had spread like wildfire in the south-central countryside. In the Tlaxcala-Puebla border the Indian rebel leader Joaquín Rosete was "apprehended attempting to rouse up others to rebel," and military dispatches informed Governor Cahuantzi that rebels from Puebla had encouraged the indigenous peasantry in Tlaxcala to remain in arms against the government. Rebel groups from Huauchinango in the Sierra Norte de Puebla had traversed the northern sierras of Tlaxcala and invaded ranchlands in Tlaxco and Apizaco, dangerously close to the capitals of Puebla and Tlaxcala.[189] To preclude the proliferation on Indian rebellion in quarrelsome districts the local political bosses ordered the arrests of any perceived seditious individuals. By order of Governor Cahuantzi, in late March and April the local authorities dragooned the arrested individuals into the federal army.[190]

The authorities knew that days before the death of Cuamatzi hundreds of Indians had armed themselves in the La Malintzin, and that these indigenous rebels were ready to fight. Governor Cahuantzi readied his forces to invade the high sierras, but the Díaz regime fell on 25 May, and many high-ranking Porifirians in Tlaxcala left the state. On 30 May, alluding to imperative personal exigencies, Cahuantzi resigned the governorship,

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[188] Raymond Buve, in *El Movimiento Revolucionario de Tlaxcala*, 138-193, 142-145.

[189] Próspero Cahuantzi to Juan Cruz, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 2 March 1911, AHET, Revolución Regimen Obregonista, Hacienda y Guerra (RRO, HG), Caja, 6, Exp., 90, f. No page number.

[190] Luis Bretón Mora to Próspero Cahuantzi, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 28 March 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 5, Exp., 1015, f., 2; Enrique Cahuantzi to Próspero Cahuantzi, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, 5 April 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 6, Exp., 105, f. 2.

and the State Congress of Tlaxcala appointed Diego L. Kennedy as the interim governor. Cahuantzi, however, had been forced to step down by Benigno Zenteno and his men, who had threatened to take the plaza of Tlaxcala through "blood and fire" in case the old Nahua chieftain refused to resign.[191] Zenteno and his men escorted Cahuantzi and his cabinet members to the outskirts of San Martín Texmelucan, threatening to execute the Porfirians if they dared stop their march out of Tlaxcala. Kennedy, for his part, was governor for two days only. Tlaxcala's urban revolutionaries did not want a landed scion to preside as governor. Fearing retribution, Kennedy resigned, and the state congress appointed Agustín Sánchez as interim governor on 2 June. Tlaxcala had remained a troubled state, and the Maderistas led by Zenteno, numbering more than 500, remained stationed in Texmelucan to prevent the usurpation of political power by any of the hacienda owners.[192] The appointment of Sánchez represented a compromise made by a conservative state legislature and the radical wing of Maderista rebels bent on preventing the reincorporation of Porfirians into the state government. Sánchez allowed the men of Zenteno to remain in the state, but vowed that his administration would terminate the region's endemic banditry and punish members of the radical wing who had roused the passions of people in indigenous districts.[193]

In late June 1911, the indigenous rebellion raged once more in Tlaxcala. It was reported that malcontents insistent on the removal of Sánchez had traveled to the sierras to renew the Revolution among "the Indians of Santo Toribio and San Pedro (San Pablo)

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[191] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 70-72.

[192] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 77-78, 81-82; Telegrama Especial, "Se aceptó la renuncia del Coronel Próspero Cahuantzi," *El Imparcial*, 3 June 1911, p. 6.

[193] Correspondencia Especial, "Tlaxcala: En el término de quince días deben reconcentrarse las fuerzas," *El Imparcial*, 10 June 1911, p. 6.

del Monte."[194] *El Imparcial* reported that more than 600 Indians had risen in arms in the La Malintzin when they received news that the local government had begun to disarm rebels in Tlaxcala, and upon hearing that "Maderistas" could have agitated the local Indians, Francisco Madero himself declared that preventing an indigenous uprising in Tlaxcala had become one of the new government's main priorities.[195]

Although the indigenous districts had rebelled again, the local authorities ignored the demands of the Indian people and referred simply to the indigenous insurrectionists as seditionists galvanized by Maderistas from outside of the state. Members of "the Liberating Army" of Madero, authorities declared, had assaulted government buildings, and despite cash payments made to them by the government to demobilize, they had stolen "large sums" from the local post office of Tlaxcala.[196] With the eruption of violence in Tlaxcala, it was not clear whom the insurrectionists were. In late June, the common people from Panzacola demanded the government's "immediate" distribution "of 50 firearms" to combat the rising tide of "banditry." Other local citizens asked for prompt military reinforcements, and demanded that the rural gendarmerie protect their lives and property.[197]

For the government, the specter of caste warfare arose again when the rural army corps leader reported in July that his men had observed the movements of armed rebels in the La Malintzin volcano, and that other insurrectionists had attempted to seize control of

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[194] Cuella Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 84.
[195] Correspondencia Especial, "Seiscientos hombres se levantaron en Tlaxcala," *El Imparcial*, 1 July 1911, p. 1 & 8.
[196] Circular del Subsecretario Chávez, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 26 June 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 5, f. 1.
[197] Ciudadanos de Panzacola to Agustín Sánchez, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 29 June 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 11, f. 2.

the La Covadonga factory in Puebla.[198] Governor Sánchez had not been able to act unilaterally as Cahuantzi had when dealing with the rural rebels. Under the command of Interim President Francisco León de la Barra, days prior to the Indian uprisings in the La Malintzin, he had to send soldiers to combat rebels in Querétaro.[199] Francisco León de la Barra and Francisco Madero had ordered the comprehensive demobilization and disarmament of all rebels not belonging to the federal military. In Tlaxcala, Governor Sánchez had even promised immediate cash payments to all rebels who abided by the president's orders. The office of Sánchez declared that with the "disarmament of these rebels we will ensure the complete pacification of the state," but the government also ordered local jefes and gendarmerie leaders to arrest all the people refusing to surrender their weapons since "the deadline to demobilize given by the government had expired."[200]

In fact, the men of Colonel Abraham Nieva, by order of Governor Sánchez, had conducted numerous arrests in Santa Inés Zacatelco. Moreover, other rebels had disarmed willingly, but by August the government had not terminated the violence.[201] On 18 August, for example, the local government of Santa Cruz, wrote to the office of Governor Sánchez pleading for help since "the social maelstrom of banditry that plagues many places in the country…is greatly affecting the people of this town." The councilmen also urged Sánchez to dispatch the local rural gendarmerie to protect the factories surrounding

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[198] Abraham Nieva to Agustín Sánchez, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 18 July 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 30, f. 5.
[199] Matías Chávez to Agustín Sánchez, Mexico City, 6 July 1911, AGET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 13, f. 1.
[200] Secretario del Gobernador Interino Agustín Sánchez, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 18 July 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 9, f. 2; Agustín Sánchez to José Ramírez, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 14 July 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 10, f. 1.
[201] Abraham Nieva to Agustín Sánchez, Panzacola, Tlaxcala, 26 July 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 30, f. 11.

the town of Santa Cruz.[202] When Madero had visited Tlaxcala in July, rather than attempting to mend the rifts between the state's elite political circle and radical revolutionaries such as Zenteno, he spent his time parading himself in a Pullman Coach enjoying the adulation of the crazed masses. The people, it was written, loved Madero and showered him with roses along his path.[203]

Madero insisted on demobilizing all agrarian rebels in Tlaxcala and Puebla, and fearing reprisals, on 1 October Agustín Sánchez left the interim governorship in favor of Ramón E. Maldonado, a political moderate who believed that the people "should enjoy the Revolution's fruits."[204] Maldonado, however, also surrendered the governorship due to the difficulties of governing Tlaxcala.

The state's legislature pushed for the official election of Antonio Hidalgo, and upon the establishment of six voting polls in the state, Hidalgo won the governorship by a landslide. On 1 December, Hidalgo vowed to govern fairly and for the people's benefit.[205] Barraquiel Alatriste, a Madero loyalist, warned that the appointment of Hidalgo would bring renewed bloodshed to Tlaxcala. The state's radicals, he asserted, had infiltrated the legislature to pursue Hidalgo's appointment; and in anticipation of renewed hostilities local "socialists" had armed "Zapatistas" in various Indian pueblos. On the other hand, the "former Cahuantzi" lackeys had also begun to mobilize to combat

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[202] Ayuntamiento de Santa Cruz al Gob. del Gobernador Sánchez, Santa Cruz, Tlaxcala, 18 August 1911, AHET, RRO, HG, Caja, 7, Exp., 48, f. 1.
[203] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 88-90; Corresponsal, "Hoy saldrá el caudillo Sr. Madero, va a Tehuacán," *Diario del Hogar*, 12 July 1911, p. 1.
[204] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 95-96.
[205] Cullar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 101.

the growing "socialist" threat. What Alatriste warned about was the renewal of ethnic and class conflict, which made Madero very nervous.[206]

The Hidalgo camp, for its part, also vied for Madero's patronage, and insisted that their candidate was an avid champion of progress, order, patriotism, and good mores. Hidalgo's coreligionists were Maderistas who desired to restore national peace by repairing a troubled region torn asunder by a long legacy of autocracy, subsequent political infighting, and constant plebeian rebellion, which had heightened in the Indian districts after Juan Cuamatzi rebelled.[207] Hidalgo, his allies, and their opponents all shared an earnest fear of a popular rebellion, and the Zapatistas were emblematic of this anxiety.

Governor Hidalgo had been a labor leader and had politicized factory workers in Puebla and Tlaxcala; however, as noted by Cuellar Abaroa, as state governor he crafted a discourse that Madero would find amenable. Hidalgo called for the mass disarmament of popular rebels and in doing so, allowed "old murderers from the past regime" to gain leadership positions in the state's rural gendarmerie.[208] Tlaxcala's Anti-reelection Club sent an urgent plea to Madero warning the president of Hidalgo's dangerous concessions to "blood shedders from the Díaz period." The Club members asked Madero for justice since the "murderers of their fallen comrade Juan Cuamatzi" were about to "torment the poor people again." The Club members informed Madero that "the salvation of the

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[206] Barraquiel Alatriste to Francisco Madero, Puebla, Puebla, 26 November 1911, Colección Revolución, Archivo General de la Nación, (CR, AGN), Política Interior, 137.
[207] Samuel Ramírez to Francisco Madero, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 20 November 1911, Archivo Madero (AM), AGN, Caja, 61, Exp., 58, f. 1-3.
[208] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 101-103.

patria" lied in his willingness to punish the Porfirians who attempted to reassert their political power.[209]

In an effort to pacify México, Madero had pandered to the old Porfirian guard, allowing the national army to assault rural communities in the nation's south-central region in 1912. The federal army would renew the murderous campaigns of General Victoriano Huerta's army, which stormed the Morelos countryside from August to October 1911. Zapatistas, the logic of the federal military generals stated, had become a scourge, a gangrene that had to be excised from the national body. The federal army likened all rebellions springing from the rural sector in any southern state to Zapatismo.[210] Another popular view of the Zapatista-Maderista rupture from within México attributes the violence from 1912 to 1913 to the Francisco León de la Barra Interim Presidency, which left agrarian communities on the defensive and therefore unwilling to demobilize, peacefully, as President Madero had insisted. In this view, Madero had no other alternative; he had to allow the federal army to assault the pueblos where rebels would not demobilize.[211]

When the Indian pueblos in Tlaxcala rebelled again, people feared that Governor Hidalgo did not possess the character to suffocate a mass insurrection. An observer stated that Hidalgo had done nothing to punish an individual who had freed prisoners from a local jail in the Nativitas Valley.[212] The state's hacienda owners reformed into the Liga

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[209] Club Mártires de Xicotzingo to Francisco Madero, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 21 November 1911, AM, AGN, Caja, 6, Exp., 89-2, f. 1-2.
[210] Miguel Sánchez Lamego, *Historia militar de la Revolución mexicana en la época Maderista. Tomo III* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1977), 31-32, 74-85.
[211] Juan Sánchez Azcona, *La Etapa Maderista de la Revolución* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1960), 46-50.
[212] Víctor Rodríguez to Francisco Madero, Puebla, Puebla, 16 January 1912, AM, AGN, Caja, 33, Exp., 891, f. 1.

de Agricultores and demanded special protection from the Madero government to counter the growing threat of indigenous rebellion. The Liga members had again become influential and entered local politics by serving in Governor Hidalgo's government. Some complained about the Liga members' growing power, and questioned why Hidalgo had not checked the renewed political ascent of the hacienda owners. The opposition claimed that the Liga members had bribed Hidalgo with large sums of money.[213]

On 20 June, Governor Hidalgo wrote that he neither supported the Liga nor the Anti-reelection's candidates for the upcoming governorship, and this non-partisan stance earned him President Madero's support. By late July, however, the state's woes worsened when many Madero loyalists withdrew from the Revolution.[214] Gerzayn Ugarte warned Madero that in such trying times political neutrality was dangerous. Ugarte told Madero that the Liga party members were tied intimately to the interests of the Church, which through its involvement in Tlaxcala's politics, desired to restore all privileges to the state's conservatives.[215]

Intent on securing Madero's recognition and local political power, neither of Tlaxcala's political contenders were able to mobilize the rural gendarmerie or federal army soldiers stationed in Tlaxcala City and contain the groundswell of peasant Indian insurgency. On 12 October 1912, Governor Hidalgo and Ramón Rosales received an urgent dispatch from the political boss of Apam, which Rosales sent immediately to

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[213] Liga de Agricultores to Abraham González, Mexico City, June 1912, AM, AGN, Caja, 33, Exp., 881, f. 881; Emilio Carbajal to Juan Sánchez Azcona, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 27 June 1912, AM, AGN, Caja, 7, Exp., 762, f. 1; José Covarrubias to Juan Sánchez Azcona, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 15 July 1912, AM, AGN, Caja, 8, Exp., 7, f. 1.
[214] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 109-110.
[215] Gerzayn Ugarte to Juan Sánchez Azcona and Francisco Madero, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 21 August 1912, AM, AGN, Caja, 12, Exp., 1, f. 336.

President Madero. Rosales informed Madero that in the Hidalgo-Tlaxcala border "200 Zapatistas" and numerous "bandits" had stormed the local haciendas, chief among them was the very productive Hacienda de Soltepec. The political boss asked Governor Rosales for weapons, ammunition, and reinforcements, and warned that if President Madero did not provide aid to the zone's rural military corps all members of the local defenses could perish.[216]

It was Tlaxcala's common people, however, who precluded Madero's efforts to help the Liga members. The people were fed up with the machinations of the Liga. In January 1913, 2,000 Indians from the neighboring pueblos occupied the government's state building, harassing the city's "good citizens." The delegates from the pueblos would not leave nor dissolve the human barricade until Governor Hidalgo pledged to them that he would govern Tlaxcala for the people's benefit and not to empower "privileged groups."[217] The people's rage, clearly, could no longer be contained.

President Madero had virtually given a free reign to the federal army under Victoriano Huerta to exterminate Zapatismo in 1911 and 1912. In the process, the army under Huerta attacked anything else resembling Zapata's rebellion. Madero's support of Huerta, coupled with U.S. Ambassador to México Henry Lane Wilson's mistrust and disdain for the Mexican president, proved deadly. News of Huerta's coup against Madero reached Tlaxcala's Maderistas immediately. Porfirio del Castillo recalled that Victoriano Huerta's betrayal of the president did not surprise him. After Madero's murder on 22 February 1913, the Huertistas deposed Governor Hidalgo, who had been perceived as

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[216] Ramón Rosales to Francisco Madero, Apam, Hidalgo, 12 October 1912, AM, AGN, Caja, 12, Exp., 272-1, f. missing.

[217] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 104-107.

Madero's governor, but allowed him to live. Conservatives in the state legislature had recognized Huerta's government, and in the process executed Madero loyalists such as Rafael Tapia and José Rumbia. By ordering the demobilization of much of his faithful, but poor and radical rebel base, President Madero had defanged his supporters and had strengthened his butcherers.[218]

On 14 March 1913, after a brief provisional governorship by Ramón Maldonado took place, the Huertistas in Tlaxcala appointed General Alberto Yarza as governor in early April. Tlaxcala, like the Mexican nation, would be governed by the military, but a resistance began to mount slowly when Pedro M. Morales, and his comrade, Felipe Villegas, a local agrarian caudillo from Santa Inés Zacatelco, who was connected to the Zapatistas from Morelos and Puebla, took to foot to the La Malintzin's sierras.[219]

With Huerta in power, a heavy federal military repression ensued in Tlaxcala. When the local political prefect of Santa Inés Zacatelco ordered his henchmen "to attack quarrelsome folks," the people went to the central government for protection. More than likely, they pleaded for help lacking knowledge that all the local politicians in Tlaxcala worked for the Huerta government. Many local politicians were former Porfirians who had waited anxiously for Madero's fall.[220] The local people writing to the federal government must have acknowledged this harsh reality when the government in Mexico City responded that they should first seek an official plea from Tlaxcala's governor.[221] People from San Pablo Apetitlán had also complained of the numerous unlawful and

[218] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 115-119.
[219] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 129-134.
[220] Eugenio Guevara to the Secretaria de Gobernación, Puebla, Puebla, 5 April 1913, Secretaria de Gobernación (SEGOB) AGN, Caja, 1, Exp., 32, f/ 1-2.
[221] Secretaria de Gobernación, Mexico City, 10 April 1913, Minuta Número 13784, SEGOB, AGN, Caja, 1, Exp., 31, f. 3.

"arbitrary" persecutions against citizens from their pueblo. Common people were, the town's councilmembers reported, at the mercy of vengeful and predatory authorities.[222] The state's nominal Huertistas were prominent Liga de Agricultores members, and were indeed vengeful. On 26 March 1913, by order of the governor, five jail guards executed the Maderista General Gabriel Hernández in his prison cell.[223]

Hernández had been the state's main agrarian leader. On 3 May 1913, the state's conservatives got the man they wanted when through a rigged election, Manuel Cúellar became Governor of Tlaxcala. Manuel was the brother of the rural gendarmerie commander Rafael Cuéllar, who vowed that like President Huerta he would rid his region "of the banditry that threatened public wealth." He had made a pledge to the state's hacienda owners to eliminate the agrarian rebels who caused so much trouble, and also armed the hacendados.[224] With Cuéllar in charge, the government of Tlaxcala cooperated with the government of Puebla to persecute all known Maderistas, but the rebels from Tlaxcala and Puebla formed two large groups. One group led by the followers of the deceased Hernández concentrated in the volcano Iztaccíhuatl. The other rebel group was led by the Zacatelco and Contla factions and they established a headquarters in the La Malintzin's cordilleras where they linked with the people led by Morales.[225] From the La Malintzin, the Morales rebels launched strikes against the local haciendas. On 20 July, "a numerous band of Zapatistas" assaulted the Hacienda del Pinar in Huamantla, owned by the Spanish-born Francisco Ortiz Borbolla. In the process, the Zapatistas of Villegas

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[222] Pueblo de San Pablo Apetitlán to the Secretaria de Gobernación, San Pablo Apetitlán, Tlaxcala, 1 April 1913, SEGOB, AGN, Caja, 1, Exp., 43, f. 1-3.
[223] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 137
[224] Ibid,
[225] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 126-131.

assaulted and murdered Jesús Lavín Ruíz, a Spanish-Cuban visiting México to claim an inheritance.[226] The federal government ordered a swift persecution of the rebels, ordering Tlaxcala's government to exhaust all the resources needed to eradicate Ruíz's killers. The government conducted mass arrests, rounding up and jailing dozens of innocent indigenous peasants in the process.[227]

Tlaxcala's Maderistas Reform

In late October 1913, a large group of Indians from Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte de Puebla led by Pedro M. Morales formed the Revolutionary Government of the volcano La Malintzi. The revolutionary government, Morales stated, arose from a state of emergency precipitated by the repression of Huerta's regime. Morales stated that his government would remain in place until "peace reigned again" in the high-sierra communities. Like so many indigenous peasants before them, those following Morales into the intricate foothills of the volcano La Malintzin had fled from their villages to remain out of the military's reach. Hidden within the shadows of the volcano, they found a safe haven: they knew the volcanic high-sierra terrain well, and the local villagers, the tough serrano indigenous people who made a living herding sheep, and planting and foraging, supported them. Some of the people gathered in the cordilleras had been subjected to government repression since 1905. They had followed García, Cuamatzi, and Madero. Their old leaders were all dead and they had scores to settle.[228] Their new leader Morales, declared that his army of Nahuas and Otomíes were the new defenders of the

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[226] Ministro Español de México to Secretaria de Gobernación, Mexico City, 22 July 1913, SEGOB, AGN, Caja, 12, Exp., 33, f. 7-8.
[227] Secretaria de Gobernación, Minuta Número 1079, Mexico City, 24 July 1913, SEGOB, AGN, Caja, 12, Exp., 33. F. 8-9.
[228] Pedro M. Morales, "Manifiesto al pueblo de Tlaxcala, conciudadanos," in Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 153-55.

fallen Madero.[229] As a biographer of Madero noted, the president became greater in death, and was seen after his demise as an icon of the people, who ended the tyrannical regime of Díaz.[230]

Some of the Indians following Morales, had gone into hiding simply because the forces of Victoriano Huerta had annihilated indigenous villagers in indiscriminate fashion since February 1913.[231] Nahua and Otomí Indians deposited their faith on a non-Indian, but Morales knew them well and spoke for them. Morales drafted a revolutionary manifesto, which became the rebel government's constitution.[232] Morales had earned his place among the Indian people; he had gained their trust through the military prowess he exhibited against the federal army in multiple battles in the La Malintzin from May to early October of 1913.[233]

Morales told the Indian leaders that defending their patria chica was sacred: its defense was synonymous with the protection of their ancestral communities and the defense of their honor. Morales also stated that the people he led were "proud Indians from Tlaxcala, a mighty race which had, from the Aztecs' heyday to the present," resisted all the foreign oppressors that dared trespass upon their zone threatening to destroy their native culture. To cower before a murderous usurper like Huerta, Morales wrote, would bring them an ignominious death. Morales warned them that Huerta's perpetuation of power would result in the annihilation of all Indians.[234] By this, Morales could have

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[229] Morales, "Manifiesto", 153-55.
[230] Jesús Romero Flores, *Don Francisco I. Madero, "Apóstol de la Democracia."* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de las de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1973), 57.
[231] Morales, "Manifiesto."
[232] Ibid.
[233] Secretaria de la Defensa Nacional, México: Dirección de Archivo Militar, Ref.: Servicio Militar del General Constitucionalista Pedro M. Morales, AHDN, C-354.D/111/15---16151, f. 156-157.
[234] Morales, "Manifiesto."

alluded to an actual physical death, a very real possibility given the heightened state of war after Madero's murder, or more symbolically, of a spiritual death, coming from a conscious surrender to Huerta. In addition to leading the heavy contingent of indigenous rebels, Morales had also established close connections with the Zapatistas.

When the Zapatistas from the states of Morelos, Puebla, and Guerrero first entered Tlaxcala in early 1912 they helped Cuamatzi's surviving rebels eliminate many of the local Porfirians. Moreover, the Plan de Ayala had denounced President Madero for "waging a war of extermination," and "suffocating the pueblos in blood." Popular rebels found Zapata's call to end local political bossism appealing and a surefire way to restore their village autonomy. One of Zapatismo's major aims was to eradicate the remaining Porfirian clienteles that "kept the people enslaved." In its more succinct language the Plan de Ayala guaranteed the end of unjust governance. Zapatista ideology, while discursively progressive, also acknowledged and respected the nation's profound indigenous heritage.[235]

At the closing of 1913, the Indian brigades led by Morales had defeated the Huertistas on numerous occasions. Colonel Porfirio del Castillo, however, felt that the Indian rebels had to be remade into "military men." Del Castillo also worried about the quality of these rebels because Rojas had pardoned bandits caught *in flagrante delicto*, dragooning them subsequently into the armed ranks of the MRT.[236] Porfirio del Castillo

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[235] Emiliano Zapata, Otilio Montaño, *Plan de Ayala: Plan Libertador de los hijos del Estado de Morelos*; Archivo General de la Nación, Emiliano Zapata (AGN, AZ), Documentos de Boveda, Colección Especial (DBCE), f. 11.
[236] Porfirio del Castillo to Pedro M. Morales, "Sobre el Bandidaje" in *The Revolution, Vol. 1*, INERHM; For greater information on the counterinsurgent campaigns in the volcano La Malintzin and the military's treatment of "bandits," see, Joaquin Mass to the Secretary of War, Puebla, Puebla, 25 August 1913, AHDN, XI/481.5/219, f. 425-426.

stated that incorporating men from society's bottom into a revolutionary force "worthy of being the inheritors of the mantle of the apostle of democracy, Francisco Madero," required great discipline. Disgusted by the rebels' use of guerrilla tactics, which involved attacking the enemy at dawn or the dead of night, Del Castillo questioned not only their moral worth but their "manliness." According to Del Castillo revolutionaries could not act like "vandals." The colonel warned against internal divisions within the ranks, which he felt ran the risk of unleashing blind plebeian rage. Del Castillo was a self-described "Indian who had been made a soldier and patriot." Del Castillo told Morales that banditry, which had been the modus vivendi of many of these indigenous fighters in the years prior to the Revolution had no place within their ranks.[237]

Heeding to the advice of Del Castillo, Morales formed a more disciplined rebel group, drafted yet another Tlaxcallan revolutionary constitution. Morales filled his new rebel ranks with organic village leaders and intellectuals who commanded the loyalty of hundreds of battle-hardened insurgents. Notable among these new recruits was Domingo Arenas, a young Indian leader from Santa Inés Zacatelco. Along with his brothers, Cirilo and Emeterio, Domingo Arenas had first followed Felipe Villegas when rebellions erupted in Zacatelco in 1910 and 1911. In the spring of 1914, Morales had acquired much support in many of the La Malintzin communities. He alluded to Tlaxcala's glorious

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[237] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, *130*-31; Report on the military career of Colonel Porfirio del Castillo, Colección Documental, DC, INHERM, AGN, Caja, 13.4, Exp., 28, f. 10. Del Castillo had joined the opposition group called Club Regeneración in his native Puebla. The anti-reelection meetings were headed by the Puebla intellectual Aquiles Sérdan. In those meetings, Del Castillo met Juan Cuamatzi, but the colonel did not participate in the 26 May 1910 uprising. Del Castillo joined the Madero rebellion in November 1910 and was ordered to operate in Puebla's center taking part in decisive combats in Puebla City, Cholula, Huejotzingo, and Atlixco. Upon the revolutionary victory, saddened by Madero's insistence in the disarmament of the victorious rebel forces, Del Castillo demobilized his men and retired to private life. However, after Madero's murder at the hands of Victoriano Huerta on 22 February 1913 in the famous coup at the national palace in Mexico City, Del Castillo declared war against the new regime. Del Castillo prided himself on his well-mannered behavior, and was opposed to extralegal executions.

history of resistance stating in a manifesto written with the purpose of recruiting more people: “Never has the precious blood of the race of Xicohténcatl shed vainly…never have we trembled against tyrants and usurpers!”[238]

Morales then named the volcano la Malintzin the new state capital and wrote that the liberation of Tlaxcala’s people would begin in the pure terrain of the volcano’s high sierras and not in the city of Tlaxcala, which had been stained by the politics of despots.[239] Morales then informed his comrades that he needed a general who could assist him in the crucial task of boosting the local morale. This individual, Morales stressed to his people, should be someone they already loved, trusted, and obeyed.[240] The Revolutionary Council of the La Malintzin suggested appointing Máximo Rojas, but Morales cited Rojas’s forays into banditry. At such a critical juncture, Morales needed a young leader “unstained by any association with brigandage” and therefore named Domingo Arenas the “Revolutionary General of the Opposition in Tlaxcala.” Arenas, however, did not accept Morales’s offer. As it had happened to Villegas, Arenas became enamored by the Zapatistas’ discourse, particularly with the promise of immediate and effective land redistributions to the peasantry as it was outlined in the Plan de Ayala. Rather than accepting the position Morales offered him, Arenas became a lower-ranked general. He wanted to have more freedom to maneuver independently, and in December of 1913 with the help of the Zapatistas, his forces battered a contingent of five hundred Huertistas at the Hacienda La Cañada in the Atlixco-Cholula Valley. The Huerta army, however, retaliated by killing indiscriminately in a series of punitive counter-insurgency

[238] Del Castillo, *Puebla and Tlaxcala*, 136-39.
[239] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 141-42; Pedro M. Morales, CD, INERHM, AGN, Caja, 13.4, Exp., 28, f. 30-31.
[240] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 130.

campaigns. The Tlaxcallan countryside became a mass gravesite in late 1913. There were too many battles to enumerate, but *Correo Español* described a horrific battle in September. The Huertistas, the paper informed its readers, "left behind countless cadavers, some peasants and workers were left hanging on trees, others were executed in the interiors of prisons and in the military headquarters."[241]

Despite the repression, the resistance against Governor Cuéllar in Tlaxcala snowballed. After they convinced Domingo Arenas to join them, the MRT began to salivate at the prospect of launching a massive counterattack against the Huertistas stationed in the zocalo of the city of Tlaxcala. The urban cadre of the MRT--Morales, Del Castillo, and Rojas--would have to devise clever strategies to contain the furies the Revolution in Tlaxcala had reawakened in the Indian pueblos. They believed that, despite the young general's flirtations with Zapatismo, which Porfirio del Castillo found revolting at times, Arenas was their liaison to the deep high-sierra Indian world.[242]

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[241] Corresponsal, "Notas de la Revolución," *Correo Español*, 30 September 1913; "Se intensifica la lucha contra la usurpación, noviembre 1913" in *The Revolution, Vol. I,* INERHM, 163-164; Pedro M. Morales, Dirección del Archivo Militar, DAM, AHDN, C-354.D/111/15-16151, 27 December 1913, fojas, 152-157.
[242] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 157.

Chapter 3:

"The Eagle Falls: General Domingo Arenas, and the Revolution in the Los Volcanes, 1914-1917"

"Together we must amend past transgressions… and elevate the Indian, from his wretched condition as a hacienda slave, to the category of a citizen and small property owner; we [must] awaken that class to a different reality, one which makes the Indian feel that he is, finally, owner of the ground upon which he sets foot…"

—Domingo Arenas to Porfirio del Castillo, 20 March 1917.[1]

Prologue

Since the winter of 1914, when Tlaxcala's urban Constitutionalist revolutionaries and the Convention's rural rebels failed to create a national program to reconstruct México, Domingo Arenas became a loyal servant of Zapata and of the national agrarian banner, the Plan de Ayala.[2] On 1 December 1916, however, General Domingo Arenas and his followers, known in the central-eastern zone of the country as the Brigada

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[1] Domingo Arenas to Porfirio del Castillo, "Se trata de impulsar los trabajos para restitución de tierra en pro de la raza indígena," letter printed in *El Demócrata*, 20 March 1917, p. 3.

[2] Much of the documentation held by Fortino Ayaquica, his private archive, remains outside of the public domain; however, the matter concerning the murder of Arenas, and the revolutionary career of Tlaxcala's agrarian rebel leader, was reprinted in the newspaper *El Hombre Libre* throughout much of 1937 as a result of an accusation coming from a presumed Zapatista named F.P. Hernández from Tlacoapan, Tlaxcala, who implicated Gildardo Magaña, who was then the governor of Michoacán, and Fortino Ayaquica and Encarnación Vega Gil, in the execution of Domingo Arenas. The former Tlaxcallan ex-Zapatista insisted that the generals had throughout the summer of 1916 connived Arenas' murder by agreeing to surrender their forces and a large cache of arms to the Constitutionalist army, but then betrayed and murdered Arenas. To read the report by Hernández see, "Como fue asesinado el Gral. Domingo Arenas: Carta de un ex-Zapatista al Gral. Gildardo Magaña," *El Hombre Libre*, 26 February 1937, p. 3 & 4. Ayaquica, Magaña, and Vega Gil, all wrote retorts, published also in *El Hombre Libre* responding to the letter of Hernández, and Ayaquica then released much of the documentation he held about Arenas, (much of it from August to November 1937), which is comprised of a bevy of letters and dispatches about the movements of the Tlaxcallan general when Ayaquica was headquartered in Tochimilco, Puebla. When the Zapatistas killed Arenas Ayaquica collected much of the documentation from coming from Domingo Arenas' camp in San Martín Texmelúcan and Santa Rita Tlahuapan in Puebla.

Arenas, the División Arenas, and as El Ejército Libertador del Oriente, had departed from the ranks of Zapata's Liberating Army of the South and joined the army of Constitutionalist President Venustiano Carranza. Arenas' defection from Zapatismo paid dividends for him; by the winter of 1917, Arenas headed the Constitutionalist army's División del Oriente, which gave him the command of more than 10,000 federal soldiers. Javier Garciadiego observed that, in negotiating with both Zapata and Carranza, Arenas "gamble[d] on two horses," but he did so, this work will argue, not to play a game of politics, but to redistribute as much land as he could to his Indian followers (the issue of the land redistributions by Arenas will be covered in greater depth in the following chapter).[3] By 1917, however, despite the land reform program he had implemented, a disillusioned Arenas stated that Mexico's Indians, the people he fought for, and battled alongside with, remained the nation's downtrodden.[4] In the letter cited above, Arenas wrote that the people who followed him did not possess a voice in the national political life. What is more, Arenas felt that the indigenous people's contributions to the making of the Mexican Revolution were too crucial to remain unnoticed. Arenas believed that, ultimately, the Mexican Revolution, which had led to a war between brothers, would benefit Indians.[5]

Introduction

This chapter on General Domingo Arenas and his followers, the Brigada Arenas as they were known commonly, will show that the highland indigenous people of the

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[3] The quote comes from Raymond Buve who cites an unpublished text by Javier Garciadiego from "Neither Carranza nor Zapata! The Rise and Fall of a Peasant Movement that tried to Challenge Both, Tlaxcala, 1910-1919" in *Riot, Rebellion, and Revolution: Rural Social Conflict in Mexico*, Ed. Friedrich Katz, (New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1988), 347.
[4] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.
[5] Ibid.

Oriente Central fought in the Revolution for the recovery of their communities, which had been under constant attack since 1856, and for regional autonomy. Through his experiences in the Revolution, which pushed him out of his own zone in the Tlaxcala-Puebla border, Domingo Arenas became even more aware of the indigenous people's extreme poverty.[6] Domingo Arenas noted that, throughout the course of Mexican history, national leaders had attempted to improve the lives of Indians but, despite their earnest efforts, greed overtook good intentions and indigenous people remained impoverished. Arenas possessed a critical understanding of Mexico's history in relation to the social and economic underdevelopment of Indians.

Gillermo Bonfil Batalla, who has likened Indians and indigenous culture to the nation's "profound" basis, notes that: "the diverse national projects that have attempted to organize Mexican society in the diverse phases of the nation's independent life have been designed exclusively under the framework of western culture, in reality the profound Mexico has no place in the nation and is only conceptualized as a symbol of backwardness and as an obstacle needing to be removed." As "Indians," indigenous people were imagined as inimical to the Mexican leaders' vision of national progress and modernity. Mexican statesmen conceptualized indigenous people pitifully, inured to exploitation and brutality, and as people unwilling to better their collective condition through an embracing of modernity.[7] Bonfil Batalla notes that although national projects have attempted to "de-Indianize" México, indigenous cultures persisted, creating "two different civilizations," which often clashed, but the Hispanic culture has remained

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[6] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.
[7] Guillermo Bonfil Batalla, *México Profundo: una Civilización Negada* (Mexico City: CIESAS, SEP, 1987), 11.

dominant. The celebration of the Hispanic roots has come at the expense of the loss and deprecation of native cultures.[8]

Domingo Arenas acknowledged that the immense weight of historical injustices pressed down upon the shoulders of Indians, impeding their full and equal inclusion in the national life, he argued that the "Revolution's liberating impulse" would destroy the *latifundios* and exterminate local corrupted governance, ending the greatest sources of Indian oppression.[9] Arenas believed that the indigenous revolutionaries, particularly those conscious of their oppression, possessed an uncalculated potential; he therefore wrote that, unified in single cause, they could create a just and equitable Mexico. Arenas referred to Indians not only as a distinct racial group, but also as an exploited "class." He suggested that more Indians had to become conscious of their oppression to break their shackles.[10]

Mexicans know little about Domingo Arenas and even less of his revolutionary project, which I describe as Arenismo. Arenismo was premised upon the prompt redistribution of lands to indigenous peasants through the formation of both military and agrarian colonies in the Oriente Central of México. Aside from the knowledge vacuum, those who know anything about the Tlaxcallan caudillo think of him mostly as a traitor to Zapatismo. According to don Elpidio Morales, a "local chronicler" from Santa Inés Zacatelco who knows the Arenas family intimately, the people from his town have wrongly pegged Arenas as a traitor for turning away from the Zapatistas and joining the army of President Carranza in December 1916. As a schoolteacher, Mr. Morales imparted

[8] Ibid, 14.
[9] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," 3.
[10] Ibid.

lessons on Arenismo and on the Revolution's local impact in Tlaxcala. Now retired, don Elpidio asserts that young people know virtually nothing about the principles of Domingo Arenas "and much less of the Arenistas" who once dominated the region.[11]

As a Zapatista, Domingo Arenas was very committed to the cause, and had acquired significant notoriety, primarily through his military exploits against the Carranza federal army. Arenas had also been loyal to Zapata. Prior to the rupture, Arenas had declared to Tlaxcala's rebels that Emiliano Zapata was the agrarian people's supreme leader. Arenas contended that Tlaxcala's peasant Indian people and the Zapatistas embraced "the same flag"—that of "the South." Moreover, Arenas claimed to obey "the Plan de Ayala, the fundamental law" of the Convention.[12] What precipitated the violent rift between Zapata and Arenas was the fervent regional autonomy of Arenas, a sentiment his people shared, and what Arenas would come to describe as the criminal unruliness of some of the Zapatista commanders. As explained by Elpidio Morales, Domingo Arenas was not a separatist, but "a man of his own ideas." Morales contends that Arenas was motivated by his own convictions, but did "find inspiration in the form of Emiliano Zapata, who he considered a brother." Domingo Arenas, he adds, "was a natural leader, brave, was a cunning warrior and a competent military strategist, who led his own people, and had his own aspiration, which was to give back land locally."[13] Initially, Arenas believed that Zapatismo would bring his people the opportunity to run their own affairs, not replace a dominant program with another one.

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[11] Interview with don Elpidio Morales, *orador* of Santa Inés Zacatelco, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 26 August 2014.
[12] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, 11 March 1916, in *El Hombre Libre*, 11 August 1916, p. 3.
[13] Morales Interview, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala.

The Arenista-Zapatista rupture, therefore, was inextricably linked to the problem of implementing land reforms by two agrarian leaders coming from different social environments. Domingo Arenas represented the paragon of the *serrano* Indian caudillo—a fiercely-autonomous defender of the local corporate villages; while, with his home base in the more Hispanicized sugar-growing heartland of Morelos, Emiliano Zapata was the iconic leader of the nation's mixed-race lowland peasantry in Morelos and the lower Mixtec Sierras of Puebla, Guerrero, and Oaxaca. This chapter deals with Arenismo, but it is also very much about the decline of Zapatismo. Beginning in 1916 the Zapatista movement had begun spiraling out of control, and was faced with growing popular discontent and mistrust engendered by untrammeled waves of everyday violence. Fearing a total collapse of Zapatismo, Zapata made desperate, and very costly, alliances, ultimately explaining the ill-fated attempted union with Constitutionalist colonel Jesús Guajardo in the famed Hacienda de Chinameca betrayal, which resulted in the death of the Morelian chieftain.

This chapter contends that the Zapatista-Brigada Arenas rupture contributed greatly to the demise of Zapatismo. The Zapatistas' execution of Domingo Arenas, which some surmised was ordered by Emiliano Zapata himself, effectively precluded any hope Zapata had of securing the loyalty of central Mexico's Nahua people. This chapter, therefore, is also a reinterpretation of Zapatismo as an actual movement that aimed to reconstruct México, but failed because Zapatistas were unable to attain the loyalty of scores of thousands highland Nahuas. When considering the Zapatista decline, which historians, have argued, began with severe factional strife, impunity and impulsivity on the part of unruly soldiers and Zapatista leaders, betrayals, and with a heightening of

banditry from within the movement,[14] one should not ignore the role Consitutionalist agrarian reforms played in the decline and demise and collapse of the Zapatista movement.

Javier Garciadiego has suggested that efforts by the Constitutionalists to reach out to the country's impoverished peasantry adversely impacted Zapatismo's popular appeal. This, of course, was exacerbated by the criminal behavior of uncontrollable Zapatistas, especially those operating outside of Zapata's core region, who Zapata could not control. The waning prestige of Zapatismo, Garciadiego contends, coincided first with Carranza's commitment to bleed out Zapatismo in 1915.[15] I contend that Domingo Arenas believed firmly in the Plan de Ayala and in Zapatismo, but believing Zapata had failed in his stated promise to redeem the peasantry, he turned to Constitutionalism to apply Constitutionalist law, in the form of the Carranza 6 January 1915 Agrarian Law, to validate his own program of effective land redistributions to the indigenous peasantry.

In reference to the opening statement made by Domingo Arenas, this chapter provides readers a genealogy of the ideological transformations of the native leader from late 1914 when, serving under Emiliano Zapata, he took command over Tlaxcala's agrarian forces, to 30 August 1917 when the Zapatista generals killed him in Tochimilco, Puebla. Also underscored is how the experiences of Arenas in the high sierras of the Oriente Central transformed him from a fervent defender of his *patria chica*, to a revolutionary leader envisioning larger national transformations for the betterment of all

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[14] Womack, *Zapata*, 290-293; Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Vol. 2*, 393-394; Samuel Brunk, *¡Emiliano Zapata! Revolution and Betrayal in Mexico* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995), 176-191;

[15] Javier Garciadiego, "El Declive Zapatista," in *Ensayos de historia sociopolítica de la Revolución Mexicana: Vínculos artísticos e identitarios* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 2011), 174-180.

the nation's Indians. Although Arenas' primary identity was tied to his experiences as a native of Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, as the Revolution progressed, he spoke of creating a pan-Indianist movement.

In late 1916, Arenas began acquiring a larger following of indigenous people in the wider Oriente Central, and he in time dominated a zone stretching from the volcano La Malintzin in Tlaxcala and central Puebla, to the Popocatepétl and the Iztaccíhuatl in western Puebla and Morelos. The Arenistas also established a strong presence in the states of Mexico and Hidalgo. The eastern portion of the Oriente, which begins in Orizaba and extends to the coast of Veracruz, is known as the Oriental; Hidalgo and Mexico State are referred to as the Occidental, and portions of Morelos, central volcanic Puebla and its Sierra Norte, and all of Tlaxcala, comprise the Oriente Central.[16] The Arenista area of operations, therefore, unavoidably shared territory with the zone controlled by Emiliano Zapata, who, as his movement grew outside of his core region in

[16] There is a town located near the city of Tlaxcala named Los Volcanes, but it is a very small colonia. The reference to the Los Volcanes in this chapter, and the next, corresponds to the wider area controlled by the Arenistas from the better part of 1915 to 1920, which came to encompass the land lying outside of the volcanos Iztaccíhuatl and Popocatépetl in mostly central Puebla and a small part of Morelos, but which also covered much of the Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley border region, the many indigenous towns and villages that surround the volcano La Malintzin, and, to a lesser extent, the neighboring areas in the states of Mexico, Veracruz, and Hidalgo. The Los Volcanes is a major geographic area within the high central plateau zone, which is known in Mexico as the Oriente Central. Outside of Puebla and Tlaxcala, however, the Arenista hold on other regions, given outside pressures from the Constitutionalists and Conventionists, but also from the local chieftains who also negotiated and fought for the control of their zones, was always tenuous. The only book in the Anglophone writing that pays attention to this region during the Porfirian period, the Mexican Revolution, and the post-revolutionary phase is that by Timothy J. Henderson, *The Worm in the Wheat: Rosalie Evans and Agrarian Struggle in the Puebla-Tlaxcala Valley of Mexico, 1906-1927* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), 57-64. Henderson writes that the problem of the land grabs by wheat exporting haciendas had made the Puebla-Tlaxcala border a nest of contention since the Reform War of 1858, but he also sees the Arenista land reform as anarchic and plagued by problems stemming from the corruption of the Arenista chiefs. Henderson states that Arenas' ideology, his creation of independent communes, bespoke of utopianism and therefore gave the land reform program an "unreal" feeling among the peasants who were instructed by Arenas to drop their weapons and cultivate land.

the sugar-growing region of Morelos, settled for nothing short of the nationalization of the Plan de Ayala.[17]

The Politicization of Domingo Arenas

Domingo Arenas espoused a redemptive agrarianism unlike any other indigenous caudillo during the Mexican Revolution. Being literate, Arenas wrote much, mostly in the form of letters to his allies, and his writings express his ideas about Indianness, nationality, citizenship, and about the ends the Mexican Revolution could achieve. Stating that the Mexican Revolution represented the first spark in a global revolution of the proletariat, Arenas was influenced by Marxism. Historians studying the Mexican Revolution in Tlaxcala have argued that Domingo Arenas was essentially a reactionary character who sided with whichever regime offered him the greatest opportunity to attain local autonomy for his people and for his own political ascent.[18]

Raymond Buve has written that Domingo Arenas took an active role in spreading Zapatismo's agrarianism, and after securing a convenient alliance with Emiliano Zapata, he then focused on regaining local autonomy, but was forced to adopt a model of agrarianism based on the rule of law promoted by Carranza once he became a federal general. When Carranza gained a loyal following with Governor Máximo Rojas in Tlaxcala, the Constitutionalists decided to demobilize and eliminate the agrarian-based Arenistas, ending their practice of what the president determined were extra-legal land redistributions. Buve contends that, ultimately, the Constitutionalists surmised that the

[17] The core region of the Zapatistas lied in northwestern and southern Morelos; however, the zone of Arenas also included Tetela del Volcán and Yecapixtla in the state's eastern volcanic portion. The volcanic highlands of Morelos share borders with the states of Mexico and Puebla, and the altitude in the eastern portion differs dramatically from the sugar-growing Zapatista core of Morelos.
[18] Buve, "¡Ni Carranza, ni Zapata!" in *El Movimiento Revolucionario en Tlaxcala*, 488.

Arenistas, as people began describing the followers of Arenas, were too radical and therefore unfit to serve in the federal army. When General Obregón rebelled against President Carranza in April 1920, many former Arenistas became adherents of the Sonoran Plan de Agua Prieta. Worried about Villa, Obregón had decided to negotiate land for peace and many Zapatistas in Morelos surrendered, as did Arenista leaders in Tlaxcala. The void in local leadership allowed the Sonoran generals to incorporate indigenous and peasant rebels into their new national army.[19] At the Revolution's end, the victorious Sonoran faction allowed Tlaxcala's peasants to stake a claim at their desired land reform, and the peasants formed the state's *Confederación Social Campesina, "Domingo Arenas,"* which allowed for the formation of post-revolutionary *ejidos*-communal lands in territories where the Arenistas had already redistributed lands to indigenous peasants.[20]

Mario Ramírez Rancaño, a sociologist by training, wrote a political biography of Domingo and Cirilo Arenas that praises their revolutionary exploits, underscores their forces' multiple victories over the Zapatistas and Carrancistas, and lauds their agrarianism, most notably through the formation of agrarian colonies. Ramírez Rancaño has observed that Arenas' greatest accomplishments came as a federal general and that he had assumed the task of pacifying the region by eliminating Zapatismo with fervent gusto. His work, however, does little to explain how Arenismo emerged, and neglects to

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[19] Womack, *Zapata*, 365.
[20] Raymond Buve, "Del rifle al burócrata: un estudio comparativo sobre las pautas de movilización campesina en dos estados céntricos de México: Morelos y Tlaxcala (1880-1940)," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario en Tlaxcala*, 421-429; Buve, "Tlaxcala y San Luis Potosí bajo los sonorenses (1920-1934): grupos revolucionarios de poder regional y el estado nacional," in *El Movimiento*, 443-448; Años 20 en Tlaxcala: la consolidación de un cacicazgo," in *El Movimiento*, 485-488; Movilización campesina y reforma agraria en los valles de Nativitas, Tlaxcala (1917-1923)," in *El Movimiento*, 152-159.

tell of the local Indian people's long history of resistance against the state.[21] Masae Sugawara, for his part, contends that when Tlaxcala's rebels reformed under a multiclass coalition to oust the Huerta regime in March of 1913, Arenas remained a committed Maderista and therefore joined the Constitutionalist band led by Máximo Rojas until 19 September, when General Pablo González demoted Arenas' recognized title of brigadier general to that of a colonel. According to Sugawara, Arenas joined the Zapatistas out of an injured pride, therefore, irrespective of the politics of Zapatismo.[22]

Sugawara notes that, despite serving both the Conventionists and Constitutionalist factions, Arenas implemented an organic agrarian reform in the Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala apart from both Zapatismo and Carrancista rule.[23] As noted by Buve, when the civil war intensified in 1917, Domingo Arenas divorced himself from a parochial localism motivating his actions, one that had pulled him into the Zapatista ranks in 1914, and pushed for the wider fulfillment of land restorations in the wider Oriente. In doing so, Arenas espoused a somewhat contradictory form of thinking--he remained a steadfast adherent to the Plan de Ayala, but was no longer a follower of Emiliano Zapata.[24]

The Arenas brothers' dealings with Zapatistas had occurred since before 1914. Domingo, Cirilo, and Emeterio Arenas had participated in the September 1910 indigenous uprisings that sprang up in the Tlaxcala-Puebla border, and then fought

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[21] Mario Ramírez Rancaño, *La revolución en los Volcanes: Domingo y Cirilo Arenas* (Mexico City: Instituto de Investigaciones Sociales (UNAM), 1995), 103-127.

[22] Masae Sugarawa, "Bosquejo Histórico de Tlaxcala," in *Diccionario Histórico y Biográfico de la Revolución Mexicana, Tomo VII: Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Yucatán, Zacatecas* (México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1992), 250-252.

[23] Sugarawa, "Bosquejo Histórico de Tlaxcala," 252.

[24] Raymond Buve, "Agricultores, dominación política y estructura agraria en la Revolución Mexicana: el caso de Tlaxcala (1910-1918)," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario en Tlaxcala*, 245-246; Buve, "Movilización campesina y reforma agraria en los valles de Nativitas, Tlaxcala (1917-1923)," in *El Movimiento*, 156-159.

against federal troops in Atlixco, Puebla in November and December. The Santa Inés Zacatelco rebels fought under the Maderista banner from late 1910 to the middle of 1911. Domingo Arenas "retired to private life" in May 1911 after the fall of President Díaz, but returned to arms on 15 January 1912 when envoys of Emiliano Zapata established communication with the people of Santa Inés Zacatelco asking the locals for help. Many agrarian rebels had resented President Madero's forced disarmaments of rebels not belonging to the federal military. The town's mayor, Magdaleno Paredes, enlisted 123 of his constituents in Zapata's liberating army. Records from the Zapatista general Fortino Ayaquica show that Domingo Arenas was among the conscripts.[25] The Arenas brothers remained Maderistas until the president's execution in February 1913.[26] Zapata and Madero had become avowed enemies by November 1911, and Arenas served them both; therefore, to go back to Garciadiego's observation, early in the Revolution, Arenas had already bet on "two horses."

Domingo Arenas: The Indian Leader of the Central Sierra

When the Tlaxcallan revolutionaries splintered in numerous directions in November 1914 after the Aguascalientes Convention debacle, Domingo Arenas became the representative of the high-sierra Indian peoples' struggles. We do not know if Arenas spoke Náhuatl; nevertheless, based on the high-sierra networks he established, he likely

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[25] Fortino Ayaquica, "Como perdió la vida el General Domingo Arenas,"—"Hoja de servicios del General Arenas," in *El Hombre Libre*, 4 August 1937, p. 3. Containing a bevy of letters and documents on Domingo Arenas, which General Fortino Ayaquica kept in his personal archive and then released to the press through *El Hombre Libre*, this newspaper is an invaluable source on the life of Domingo Arenas. Many of the letters that Arenas wrote to Emiliano Zapata, and details of Arenas' early life, are only found in this source.
[26] Fortino Ayaquica, "Como perdió la vida el General Domingo Arenas: "Hoja de Servicios del General Arenas," and "Año de 1914," in *El Hombre Libre*, 4 August 1937, p. 3-4.

did. All who met Domingo Arenas described him as an Indian, but he did grow up an increasingly Hispanicized pueblo. Many of his Nahua coreligionists were bilingual, and, as evidenced by Zapata's production of two Náhuatl proclamations in 1918 that were supposed to be distributed among the local people, others who followed him were exclusively monolingual speakers of the Náhuatl language, which was also referred to by the local indigenous people as "El Mexicano" (with an emphasis on the x—"*shu*" sound in Náhuatl). What is more, Arenas had worked in factories since he was a teenager, so he was not an indigenous peasant in the traditional sense. Arenas went to elementary school and sold bread to help out his family, who worked the land all day.[27]

In one picture taken of Domingo Arenas during the Mexican Revolution, much in the manner of indigenous serrano males, he is sitting down on a wooden chair clutching his rifle with his right hand. At the time the photograph was taken, Arenas no longer had his left arm. He is also wearing a straw sombrero, as opposed to wearing a cowboy hat, sports a traditional serape with horseshoe designs, white *calzones* (cloth pants), and is barefooted. Anyone looking at the picture, if asked to give a description of the man photographed, may say that he was a common indigenous rebel posing with his rifle. Given the manner of his dress, nothing in the photograph distinguishes Domingo Arenas as a leader. He appears as one man out of many. In another picture, Domingo sits alongside his brother Cirilo and they are both donning finely adorned Texan-style hats, called *tejanas* in Spanish, wear three-piece suits, black leather boots, and both men are adorned with jewelry dangling out of their dress shirts and ties. However, a caption under

[27] Candido Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Hermanos Arenas* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Editorial CAZATMEX), 9-11, 41-44; Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *Domingo Arenas: Caudillo Agrarista* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Difusión Cultural del Estado, 1961), 18.

the photograph of Domingo Arenas reads “agrarian caudillo” in addition to his being a general of the Conventionist forces. The discussion above shows that the identity of the Arenas brothers was divided between their village’s indigenous traditionalism and the Hispanicized Porfirian modernity to which they were exposed since their childhood. Domingo Arenas welcomed modernity yet wished to retain the communal integrity of the indigenous towns. Arenas also believed that for the indigenous peoples’ benefit, retaining their traditional values walked hand-in-hand with a firm embracing of modernity.

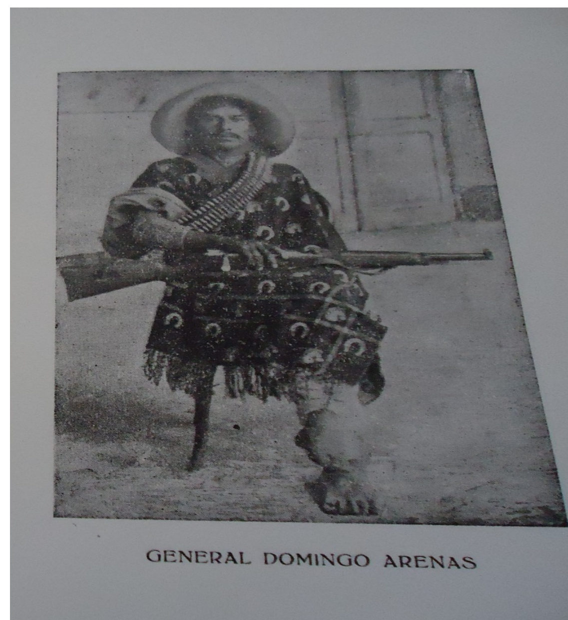

Figure 3: Photograph Source: Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *Domingo Arenas: Caudillo Agrarista* (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: Difusión Cultural del Estado, 1961), 5.

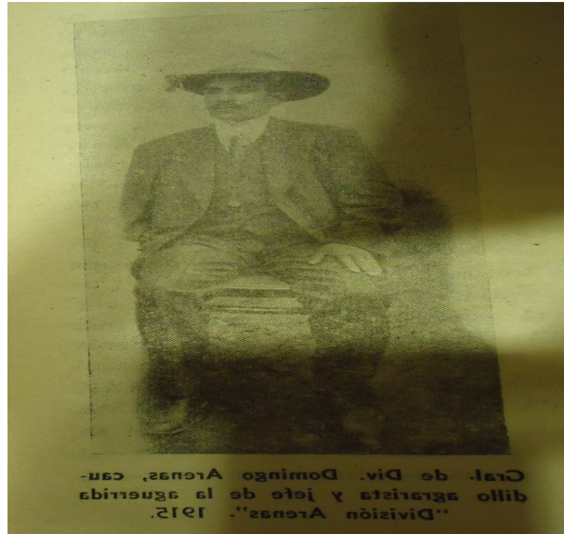

Figure 4: Source: Porfirio del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala en los Días de la Revolución*, 137.

Although both the Zapatistas and Constitutionalists viewed Arenas as a champion of agrarianism, his methods for achieving indigenous redemption were always violent. Following his direct orders, when the Arenista army attacked the local latifundios they immediately gave the booty to the poor. The Robbin Hood-like character of Arenas earned him the trust of the indigenous people in the zone he dominated. Even without Zapatismo, Arenas was a hero to many indigenous peasants, but his actions also earned him the ire of the landed class and of the urban bourgeois from the cities. And, even as a Constitutionalist general, Arenas exercised swift justice against his enemies. As former followers of Domingo Arenas asserted in 1937, their leader had served Zapata under a firm conviction; "for the ideals he espoused in favor of the man from the fields…and, to

give back, in every pueblo he conquered, the lands the hacienda owners had taken, to their rightful owners."[28]

The desire to reestablish local governance after redistributing lands fueled the desire of Arenas to rebel. In mid-December 1916, for example, Arenas called for new elections in the pueblos of the Los Volcanes of Puebla. Arenas argued that the people from the local communities favored direct governance over military rule—even his own, and with the reestablishment of popularly-elected town councils Arenas ordered the prompt execution of persons he considered the people's enemies such as the local caciques Mariano and Hilario Espinosa, Vicente Curiel, and Genaro and Cipriano Barba. Arenas contended that the crimes these individuals had committed justified their swift executions. When his soldiers lacked provisions during a harsh winter, Arenas ordered his men to seize an entire year's harvest from the Hacienda de Mixco in the Natívitas Valley of Tlaxcala.[29]

Arenismo as a form of "History from Below"

As Allen Wells and Gilbert Joseph explain through their work on the Maya peasantry of Yucatán during the Díaz era and Mexican Revolution, even the historians writing subaltern narratives must rely on the state's archive. Wells and Joseph read the

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[28] Arenistas to Diego Arenas Guzmán, "En defensa del Buen Nombre del Gral. Domingo Arenas: Una carta de algunos revolucionarios que militaron a sus órdenes," *El Hombre Libre*, 27 December 1937, p. 1-4.

[29] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. II*, 91-92. This two-volume work by Cuellar Abaroa, which contains a vast array of primary sources, provides an excellent analysis of Arenas' autonomy; however, the author is more concerned with analyzing the main governorships in revolutionary Tlaxcala, those of Próspero Cahuantzi, the long power tenure which the author surmises is responsible for the outbreak of revolutionary violence, the alternative revolutionary tenures of Pedro M. Morales, an autonomist movement that contended Huertismo, and the Constitutionalist tenures of Porfirio del Castillo, Daniel Ríos Zertuche, and Máximo Rojas. The author wrote a short biography of Domingo Arenas titled, *Domingo Arenas; Caudillo Agrarista*, but the book contains no archival or bibliographical references and relies overly on anecdotal evidence gathered from Del Castillo's semi-autobiographical work *Puebla y Tlaxcala en los días de la Revolución*.

archive differently, however, and interpreted discourses describing "nests of bandits" as pueblos resisting the state. Likewise, the historian of colonial India, Ranajit Guha noted that British colonial authorities in India during the nineteenth century criminalized peasant insurgency through the use of terms such as "banditry" and "criminality." Colonial discourse was impregnated with racism and therefore in India the British vilification of peasant insurgency obfuscated the people's anticolonial aspirations. Guha read the colonial documentation differently, deconstructed the British discourse, and re-fleshed his narrative with the desires and deeds of the rebellious South Asian peasantry.[30] In his study of popular religious fervor and rebellion in Chihuahua northern México in the late nineteenth century, Paul Vanderwood noted that the government labeled the rebels of Tomochic led by Cruz Chávez as Indians. The government knew that the group of Chávez was ethnically mestizo, but likened the rebels to Indians to wage just warfare and therefore exterminate the rebel resistance. Moreover, to further delegitimize the group, the governor of Chihuahua also stated that the religious *tomochitecos* were bandits. The government of Chihuahua also charged them with the accusation of being religious *fanaticos* (fanatics). Bandits were seen as criminals, not political rebels, and the employment of the discourse of Indian violence reawakened fears of racial warfare, caste warfare, justifying the federal army's extermination of the rebels. Vanderwood reminds

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[30] Allan Wells and Gilbert Joseph, *Summer of Discontent, Seasons of Upheaval: Elite politics and rural insurgency in Yucatán, 1876-1915* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 13-17; Ranajit Guha, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999 Edition), 12-17.

us that during the nineteenth century the bandit caught was executed summarily. This practice did not end with the Revolution.[31]

Borrowing from Guha's and Vanderwood's framework, we can observe that Tlaxcala's indigenous peasants were neither apolitical nor unresponsive to the great commotion shaking up the nation. This work on Domingo Arenas also responds to Gayatri Spivak's, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" which concludes that subalterns cannot speak, but in postcolonial societies are spoken for by the dominators. This focus on Mexican indigenous peasants during a time of national rebellion allows us to analyze those people living on the margins of society, whom Spivak describes as "the men and women among the illiterate peasantry, the tribals, the lowest strata of the urban subproletariat."[32] Arenas believed that his rebellion, Arenismo, his movement, and the Arenistas, his people, embodied the peasant Indian people's collective aspirations. Arenas spoke for voiceless Indians through his manifestos and therefore argued that he rebelled for the Indian people and to transform a system that kept his people in misery. This is important because an earnest appraisal of indigenous identities and indigenous struggles are missing in the immense historiography of the Mexican Revolution.

The writing of the Mexican Revolution has paid much attention to figures such as Álvaro Obregón, Venustiano Carranza, Plutarco Elías Calles, Lázaro Cárdenas, Emiliano Zapata, and Pancho Villa. While the politicians considered them villains in life, after their executions the government converted Zapata and Villa into symbols of popular resistance. In the 1930s, mostly through the efforts of the SEP (Secretary of Public

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[31] Paul Vanderwood, *The Power of God Against the Guns of Government: Religious Upheaval in México at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 1998), 135-140

[32] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" 78.

Education) the Mexican government transformed Emiliano Zapata into an iconic yet sanitized national "symbol" of state-sponsored agrarianism.[33] It was not only the state, but fiction and non-fiction nationalist writers from the 1920s to 1950s as well, who transformed Zapata and Villa into demigods. Scores of thousands of unheralded Zapatistas and Villistas, however, remained an undifferentiated mass. After the Revolution they were only conceptualized by the state as de-Indianized campesinos.[34] Domingo Arenas and the Arenistas fit into this category of whitewashed historical actors. Arenas, however, planned to launch a program of national reconstruction that would begin with massive land reform and this work will begin to bring the unfulfilled dreams of an Indian leader to light.

Explaining the Ideology of Domingo Arenas

Domingo Arenas is an unsung revolutionary, but his ideology mirrored that of Lázaro Cárdenas, Andrés Molina Enríquez, and José Vasconcelos—all celebrated Post-revolutionary socio-political architects. Where Arenas differs from others is in his desire to keep indigenous people Indian in character. Arenas, like the intellectual architects of the Mexican state, believed that Indians desperately needed to become educated to climb out of misery. This belief was also shared by General Felipe Ángeles when he wrote to General José María Maytorena on 10 April 1917: "You know my theory on how people become civilized…I am only one generation removed from ignorance and this is only thanks to the excellence of our democratic institutions, which have pulled me out of the

[33] Lynn Stephen, *Zapata Lives!* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 41-47.
[34] Lola Elizabeth Boyd, "Zapata in the Literature of the Mexican Revolution," *Hispania*, 52,4 (1969): 905-910.

indigenous "stock," elevating me with the breath of schooling."[35] Arenas argued that with the benefit of a system of a nationalized education program, and with their lands back firmly in their possession, Indians would finally break the cycle of poverty.[36]

In 1934, President Lázaro Cárdenas declared that: "The mass of rural people …necessitates emancipation, lands, needs to become incorporated to civilization, and, for that to materialize, it is indispensable to think of solving the rural problem as an integral part of our social Revolution."[37] Cárdenas believed that ejido redistributions would fix existing land disputes, and that the Departamento Autónomo Indigena (which later became the Department of Indian Affairs), would help his government study the Indians' "most intimate necessities…[38] The president felt that the hacienda owners had converted Indians into "exploited meat," and he likened the "emancipation of the Indian…to the emancipation of the proletariat in any other country." Cárdenas observed that Indians had "not been indifferent to progress" and had participated "in the overthrow of dictators," but were always manipulated by the bourgeoisie that ended up controlling their labor. With regards to remedying the plight of indigenous people, Cárdenas concluded: "Our Indian problem does not rest on conserving the Indian an "Indian," nor on indigenizing México, but rather on Mexicanizing the Indian."[39]

For Domingo Arenas the desire to help his brethren was born out of the need to give Indians opportunities to own land and mature intellectually through study. Arenas

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[35] Odile Guilpain Peuliard, *Felipe Ángeles y los destinos de la Revolución Mexicana* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1991), 9.
[36] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," 3
[37] Centro de Estudios de la Revolución Mexicana Lázaro Cárdenas, *Palabras y Documentos Públicos de Lázaro Cárdenas, 1928-1970: informes de gobierno y mensajes presidenciales de año nuevo, 1928-1940*, *Vol. 2* (México: Siglo XXI Editores, 1978), 67.
[38] Cárdenas, *Palabras*, 69.
[39] For the quotes and thoughts on Indianness and the plight of Indians by Cárdenas, please consult *Palabras y Documentos Públicos de Lázaro Cárdenas*, pgs. 187-189.

viewed Indians as a "race" of people thirsting for knowledge. A free education, Arenas wrote, would provide Indians the framework to reconstruct a Mexico divided by ethnicity and class. The access to a good education, Arenas reckoned, would help lift up Indians from poverty, which became a major project of Cárdenas, but unlike the president, Arenas did not equate the Mexicanization of indigenous people with deracination.[40]

In his reflections on the problems of Mexican agrarian history, Andrés Molina Enríquez wrote that the Indians' backwardness came from the elite's unwillingness to promote education and an ethic of industriousness in the thinking of indigenous peasants. The elites' aversion to remedying the Indian plight, he argued, was a replication of a colonialist practice that kept Indians submissive and as "beasts." Molina Enríquez observed that, historically: "Indians were never able to have coin; they were unable to produce on their own accords; they could not capitalize; they neither formed small nor large industries, or commerce." Molina Enríquez blamed the Mexican hegemonic culture's prejudice for likening Zapatismo to mob rule and for failing to give the Plan de Ayala the opportunity to modernize rural Mexico. Zapatismo, he argued, had not represented rural anarchism, it was conceptualized as such by the dominant class that profited from the exploitation of Indians and peasants. Zapata, he wrote, had merely wanted peasants to prosper from private ownership and by owning the local means of production.[41] In his reflections on the poverty of indigenous people, Molina Enríquez concluded that "the road towards the bettering of their condition is a long one." A major

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[40] Arenas, *Se trata de impulsar*, p. 3.
[41] Andrés Molina Enríquez, *La Revolución Agraria de México* (México: Talleres Gráficos del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnografía, 1937), 38-39, 26-29, 83-93, 102-111.

aim of Molina Enríquez, however, was creating one Mexican race. He, like other post-revolutionary elites, stressed that Indians should become revolutionary citizens.[42]

Domingo Arenas too had urged revolutionaries to limit the power of the *terrateniente*-landholder, and to exterminate the *"negrero acaparador de los brazos del campesino,"*- "exploiter of peasant laborers," *"y al monopolizador de todas las riquezas naturales,"*- "the monopolizer of all the natural resources." Punishing those responsible for the Indians' misery, he believed, was a pivotal step in helping indigenous people achieve their redemption—that long road ahead to becoming a prosperous people described by Molina Enríquez.[43] Arenas wrote that the revolutionaries had to "provoke in their souls [of the indigenous peasants] a thirst for instruction."[44] This desire was shared by the post-revolutionary statesmen. On 1 September 1921, President Obregón created the National Secretariat of Education, which headed by José Vasconcelos, the rector of the National Autonomous University, set out to educate all Mexicans. Vasconcelos preached that alternative pedagogical mediums, which included state-sponsored mural art, would begin to impart the rudiments of Mexican revolutionary nationalism to the most abnegated Mexicans.[45]

Vasconcelos sent "into the field specialists in farming, carpentry, art, religion, citizenship, and elementary reading and arithmetic." And he referred to rural teachers under his stewardship as "modern missionaries…their tasks as comparable to that of Vasco de Quiroga, Bartolomé de las Casas, and Pedro de Gante"—the friars who had

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[42] For the quote see Gillermo Bonfil Batalla, *Andrés Molina Enríquez y la Sociedad Indianista Mexicana: el Indigenismo en Vísperas de la Revolución* (México: Instituto de Historia de la UNAM, 1965), 226.
[43] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Louise Schoenhalls, "Mexico Experiments in Rural and Primary Education," *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 44, 1 (1964): 25.

proposed the radical notion that Indians were children of God, possessed souls, and were therefore human beings.[46] Vasconcelos argued that teaching simple hygienic practices would eliminate the digestive ailments that accounted for the nation's high mortality rate in poor areas (42/1,000 deaths in Mexico were due to digestive illness). Rural teachers taught peasants practical things such as handwashing before eating.[47] Vasconcelos's circulars on personal care, cleanliness, and nutrition, promoted personal hygiene in a country where people commonly believed that taking frequent cold showers caused pneumonia. The Vasconcelos method taught Mexicans that malnutrition and poor hygiene, and not changes in weather, caused most diseases. In his Circular II, the rector wrote that Japanese people were healthier than Mexicans simply because they showered frequently.[48] Vasconcelos's work, however, emphasized correcting the habits of children.

To Vasconcelos, indigenous youths possessed "much promise," but "they first had to learn the Castilian language." Indigenous children had to embrace the dominant Hispanic culture and Vasconcelos criticized ultra-nationalists, who demonized Spaniards. He invited all Mexicans to rid themselves of their "ill-informed Hispanophobia," adding that all Latin Americans were part of a larger Latino family, which was "a vigorous race," and the harbingers of a brighter future. Vasconcelos felt that the future belonged to his people, and that change began by forming the nation's young, and more so the Indians who were the nation's abnegated.[49] Vasconcelos conceptualized Indians, Mexicans, and

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[46] Schoenhalls, "Mexico Experiments," 26.
[47] Claude Fell, *José Vasconcelos; Los Años del Águila (1920-1925): Educación, Cultura e Iberoamericanismo en el México Posrevolucionario* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1989), 28-29.
[48] José Vasconcelos, "Antes que el Alfabeto, la Higiene," Mexico City, 25 June 1920, *El Universal*, printed 27 June 1920, p. 3.
[49] Vasconcelos. "Antes que el Alfabeto," p. 3.

all Latin Americans, as members of "the cosmic race." The members of the cosmic race were, he wrote, one in heart, ideology, vision, and voice.[50] A contemporary of Vasconcelos likened him to a prophet whose dream of propagating the virtues of a vigorous "cosmic race" throughout the Americas was akin to a reawakening of Simón Bolivar's dream of creating a unified America, and added that this "reawakened race" would push the world forward to a new era of prosperity unstained by the racial prejudice and hatred of the Anglo-Saxon race, which had eradicated most of North American Indians.[51]

Informed by their teleological version of history, Vasconcelistas observed that indigenous Latin Americans were forming into a people "of one nerve, one vibration, and one song."[52] Carlos Deambrosis Martins wrote that the educational reforms of Vasconcelos had penetrated the jungles and high sierras of Mexico deeper than the nineteenth-century railroad, transforming Indians and campesinos into enterprising citizens.[53] The expressed sentiment by Deambrosis Martins echoed Domingo Arenas' earlier vision of creating a nation where members of a free and enlightened Indian "race" could enjoy a firm, equal footing.[54]

Though historians have painted Domingo Arenas as a conservative caudillo, he was a radical revolutionary. Arenas developed his vision of redeeming Indians in great

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[50] José Vasconcelos, "Un patriótico llamado a los intelectuales," *Excélsior*, 20 December 1922, p. 1 & 4; Rosalinda García Sierra, et al. "Educadores Latinoamericanos: José Vasconcelos y Lázaro Cárdenas," *Anuario 2000* (2001): 417-423.

[51] Armando Vargas de la Maza, "La Raza Cósmica," *El Heraldo de México (Los Ángeles, California)*, 28 August 1927, p. 3.

[52] Crónicas de Loreley, "Vasconcelos; Candidato de la Juventud," *El Heraldo de México (Los Ángeles, California)*, 18 October 1928, p. 3.

[53] Carlos Deambrosis Martins, "¿Vasconcelos, Presidente de México? Cuidemos la Vida de Vasconcelos," *La Prensa, (San Antonio, Texas)*, 19 November 1928, p. 3 & 6.

[54] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.

part because he became literate in public schools. Arenas also felt that indigenous people should remain dutiful citizens. He was formed by an educational system that honored sacrifice to the nation. The ideology of Domingo Arenas, therefore, like that of the elite actors mentioned above, was the product of Porfirian schooling and of his interactions with labor organizers. These experiences helped Arenas earn the respect and trust of his fellow Nahuas. As communicated to his followers, Arenas interpreted the Plan de Ayala as an instrument guaranteeing the justice and equality for which they longed. Arenas raved about the promises of Zapatismo, declaring that "the Plan de Ayala had triumphed by becoming part of the new National consciousness."[55] In other words, Arenas believed the language of the Plan de Ayala, its spirit, spoke for a new national citizen, the Indian peasant emanating from Mexico's rural highland zones. The ideology of Domingo Arenas, therefore, was complex and multilayered. Living in revolutionary times had endowed Arenas with an altered awareness of the problems dividing Mexican society. As a teenager he worked in various textile factories, the emblems of Mexico's nineteenth-century modernity. And at these worksites anarcho-syndicalists, socialists, and other utopians politicized and mobilized workers. The employment of words such as "exploiters," "exploited class," "yoke," and "monopolizers," show that Arenas was familiar with the discourses of the radical left. Through an active involvement in radical labor politics he had acquired a more modern sensibility.[56]

Union leaders in factories taught their members about the inexorability of revolution as a final stage of class conflict. Moreover, many labor leaders imparted

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[55] Domingo Arenas, "Manifiesto a los Habitantes del Estado de Tlaxcala," Calpulalpam, Tlaxcala, 26 April 1915, AHET, Ayuntamiento, Caja, 306, Exp., 2, f. 452.
[56] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.

watered-down socialist teachings to their chapter members through their understanding of the political and economic philosophies of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and applied these theories to eradicate what Ricardo Flores Magón described as a capitalist society ruled by a dictatorship. The anarcho-syndicalists of the Partido Liberal Mexican (PLM) viewed Porfirio Díaz as a leader who forgot he was a "servant," who had failed the Mexican people. The PLM leaders also borrowed the idea of establishing communalistic mutual aid as an alternative to Díaz's land-grabbing capitalism as proposed by the anarchist communist, Peter Kropotkin.[57]

The PLM leaders, Juan Sarabia and the brothers Jesús, Enrique, and Ricardo Flores Magón, argued that the Díaz system "had prostituted the wealth of the nation," thereby situating Mexico at the epicenter of Latin American class conflict.[58] To members of the PLM the Mexican state and its capitalist cronies had institutionalized feudal forms of servitude, thriving economically from the mistreatment of factory workers and Indians; however, the PLM leaders felt that peasants possessed an enormous, yet unexploited revolutionary potential. The PLM newspaper *Regeneración* communicated to its readers that this explained why the military "had waged an exterminatory war" against the Yaqui in Sonora, and had slaughtered rebellious Indians in other regions. The Díaz regime had also deported thousands of "incorrigible" Yaquis and Mayo Indians into the darkest slavery in the valleys of Oaxaca and Yucatán.[59] The Porfirian system's brutalization of

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[57] Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "Regeneración en su puesto: Nuestras esperanzas," *Regeneración*, 1 February 1906, p. 1; "Rusia en México," p. 4; Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "Resoluciones tomadas por por la "Junta Organizadora del Partido Liberal Mexicano," *Regeneración*, 15 February 1906, p. 3.
[58] Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "La venta de la Nación: Porfirio Díaz se enriquece," *Regeneración*, 15 February 1906, p. 1.
[59] Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "El éxodo de los trabajadores," *Regeneración*, 1 April 1906, p. 4; Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "Los esclavos Yaquis," *Regeneración*, 1 July 1906, p. 4.

Indians, and the violent suppression of the 1 June 1906 Cananea, Sonora labor strike, through which Mexican cooper workers had united to demand from the Cananea Consolidated Cooper Company (CCCC) a wage equal to the one U.S. laborers earned in Mexico, had motivated the PLM to write a national *Programa* demanding sweeping changes in Mexican society. The fact that the Texas Rangers and Mexican *rurales* had jointly persecuted and killed Mexican workers convinced the PLM that the Mexican people were in dire need of change and that a national revolution had to remove the system.[60]

The *Programa* of the PLM, which was also the movement's "Manifesto to the Mexican People," outlines precisely what their leaders envisioned. Article 9 of the Reform demanded the abolition of military courts in times of peace. Articles 17 to 20 sought to limit the power of the Church, and Article 20, specifically, called for the abolition of schools led by priests. Article 24 stated that no factory owner would hire children younger than fourteen, and Article 28 nullified all workers' debts, while Article 26 stressed the need of providing workers with affordable and clean housing. Article 32 demanded that the land barons pay field workers wages in cash, and called for the abolition of *tiendas de raya* the hacienda stores that had kept workers in perpetual bondage through credit.[61] Article 36 stipulated that the state should grant lands to any person soliciting plots for agricultural production, and it also specified that the workers would not be able to sell these nationalized lands. Article 37, moreover, called for the creation of an Agrarian Bank that would lend poor workers the resources they needed to

[60] Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "Los sucesos de Cananea: La verdad completa," *Regeneración*, 1 June 1906, p. 1.
[61] Ricardo Flores Magón and Juan Sarabia, "Programa del Partido Liberal Mexicano," *Regeneración*, 1 June 1906, p. 3.

maximize production from the redistributed lands.[62] The PLM's *Programa* concluded that the state had to offer special "protection for indigenous people," who were theorized by PLM ideologues as the nation's disinherited.[63] Ricardo Flores Magón's discourse was tinged with paternalism, but he wrote that the members of the proletariat, to which indigenous peasants overwhelmingly belonged, had "the right" to rebel against a state that failed to serve their interests.[64] Domingo Arenas had come into contact with many labor organizers in factories in the Puebla-Tlaxcala border, an environment that had nurtured the ideology of Aquiles Serdán, and was geographically situated between the social world of indigenous village culture, his Santa Inés Zacatelco and its immediate environs, and organized labor's proponents of Marxism, who worked in factories that increasingly dotted the Puebla-Tlaxcala border region. Arenas possessed both a local sentiment rooted in customary behavior, and a modern political awareness seeking sweeping national changes. The conflation of village politics and ideologies of the left formed Domingo Arenas as a unique individual during the Mexican Revolution, and that thought was reflected in his writing.

The Revolutionary Indigenism of Domingo Arenas

On 15 September 1916, Domingo Arenas wrote a long and detailed letter to Emiliano Zapata, which shows the complexity of his political sentiments. The analysis of this letter from Arenas to Zapata jumps chronologically in this work, but is intended to show that Arenas possessed what I frame here as a "revolutionary indigenism." In the 1916 communique to Zapata, Arenas boasted about the "valiant Tlaxcallans" he led, who,

[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid. These feelings, of course, led many anarcho-syndicalists to feel that they were the saviors of Indians.

"along with other Conventionists under his command controlled a vast zone encompassing the Huasteca of Veracruz, an immense portion of territory in the state of Hidalgo, and huge parts of Tlaxcala, Puebla, and Mexico."[65] Arenas counted with two types of loyal revolutionaries; the rebel fighter, who "willingly exposed his chest to the enemy's bullets," and those who "employed the brain" to "disseminate [their] revolutionary principles and stimulate the march of the Revolution."[66]

Arenas informed Zapata that he had disciplined and professionalized "independent guerrilla fighters," who "were used to fighting enemy forces 1,000 times their size," into an army of the "Oriente" composed "of ten brigades." Moreover, Arenas added that the "intellectuals" within the movement had educated the peasantry, convincing national and international audiences that the flag they had lifted stood for the people's emancipation.[67] Arenas communicated to Zapata that he hoped that Zapatismo, their movement, would eventually "inspire people throughout the world, who were oppressed by regimes that kept the proletariat downtrodden," to rise up as a united mass "against their exploiters" and put an end "to capitalist oppression."[68]

Arenas wrote that if Zapatismo could gain wider support in México, the nation's agrarian rebels would win the war. With a Mexican victory Zapatismo, Arenas believed, would become a global Marxist movement since around the world "too many common people were exploited by capitalists." Arenas felt that his people, who were now an integral part of Zapatismo, formed part of a global "disinherited" caste that had been

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[65] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 15 September 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 57, f. 11.
[66] Arenas to Zapata, f. 11.
[67] Arenas to Zapata, f. 12.
[68] Arenas to Zapata, f. 13.

deprived of their wealth by the capitalists. Arenas was conceptualizing a potential global solidarity amongst the world's downtrodden through his conceptualization of Zapatismo. He believed the time was ripe for the oppressed people of the world to wage a great "social revolution" to overthrow the "decadent" dominant class ravaging the working poor. Arenas argued that the Mexican Revolution could become the catalyst for a mass global upheaval; with Mexico won by rebel armies the world revolution would follow. While the discourse of Arenas underscores a critical understanding of Marxist tenets, such as the inevitability of a global revolution waged by the proletariat to rightfully seize the means of production, he also asserted that his fighters had learned to resist because they "were the men of the mountain [la Malintzin], which was their great book of nature."[69]

Arenas felt that the Convention was the only revolutionary movement espousing the "spirit of the nation's hallowed" nineteenth-century liberalism. He urged Zapata to avoid replicating the mistakes of other national leaders who, "since 1821, had used political office for private enrichment." By referring to the Liberalism of the nineteenth century Arenas must have referred to the national progress Benito Juárez had envisioned, and not the reforms such as the Lerdo Law of 1856, which entailed the disentailing of many communal lands, which entailed much Indian landlessness. Domingo Arenas feared that, even if the Convention won the Revolution, some their revolutionaries lacked "goodwill" and "firm political principles," and the movement could fall to "chaos and disorder."[70] According to Arenas, every Zapatista should be committed to accomplishing two main objectives: destroying the landed class "that preys upon the defenseless

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[69] Arenas to Zapata, f. 13.
[70] Arenas to Zapata, f. 14.

campesinos," and to giving land back to the neediest people.[71] Arenas alerted Zapata to the indiscipline of many Zapatistas, who exhibited the poorest behavior, and spoke of the need to discipline rebels, who "should not seek to overthrow a dominant landed class" to "become "exploiters themselves."[72]

Arenas wrote that "too many fighting men" of noble ideals in Mexico's past, "had become conservatives" and "supporters of the dictators."[73] To quell the rising tide of abuses, Arenas had "been very scrupulous," and prohibited the "taking of [confiscated] hacienda lands" for personal gain. "The poor people of the pueblos" he noted, "were tired of all the suffering and calamities, and now deserve to work freely and peacefully on the lands we have given them back."[74] Arenas, however, wrote that his "beautiful labor" had earned him the enmity of villainous Zapatistas who were now smearing his name. These were the same Zapatista leaders, he wrote, who stole cattle, maize, and other valuable property from the peasants the movement had sworn to protect. Arenas informed Zapata that, rather than submitting to calumnies, he would punish all "perverse individuals who only wear the masks of revolutionaries and have used the Revolution to enrich themselves." While he mentioned no one specifically, Arenas likened all unruly Zapatistas to ruffians and to "sores" that had to be removed from the Revolution.[75]

The letter to Zapata was one of the first open manifestations of the independent character and principle of Arenas, and attempted to convince Zapata of the "crucial" need to impose stricter discipline among the ranks: he wrote that many fighting men took to

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[71] Arenas to Zapata, f. 14.
[72] Arenas to Zapata, f. 15.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Arenas to Zapata, f. 15.
[75] Ibid.

looting because inflation was so high, most people could buy little, and an air of despondency prevailed among the common farming people. He also believed that the southern forces would emerge victorious because the middle class and the rich would turn against Carranza, "who was on the verge of abdicating the presidency to Pablo González or Cesáreo Castro." Arenas also observed that "Obregón would also quit" the federal army, which would work in the favor of the rebels.[76] Arenas urged Zapata to call upon all Zapatista jefes to fix the problem of unruliness, and reiterated his commitment to Zapatismo by stating: "The División de Oriente is deeply obligated to the triumph of the Revolution's Ideals, which are condensed in the Plan de Ayala, and in the program of governance emanating from the Sovereign Revolutionary Convention."[77]

Arenas mentioned the spiritual force of the indigenous people, and of "the magic of the terrain" inhabited by his people. The revolution of the south, he wrote, was strong because it counted not only with "the energies of all the aborigines, but also with the strong winds of Puebla's sierras, the freezing chill of the volcanoes, and even the birds of prey of the mountains."[78] Arenas wrote that the mountain Indians possessed a special force drawn from their environment: "We the Indians have to triumph because all of our generations, and own selves, have assimilated the strength of the sierras' beasts, the firmness of the immovable volcanic basalt, the resistance of the roots that firmly support the mountain's rocks, and the divine song of the forests." Here, he was capitalizing on what people perceived as the Indians' mystique, a belief that Indians possessed a preternatural connection to nature and spiritual forces. Arenas was underscoring his own,

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[76] Arenas to Zapata, f. 16.
[77] Arenas to Zapata, f. 17.
[78] Arenas to Zapata, f. 18.

and his people's distinct sentiments as Indians, their ethnic identity, their Indianness. Although his discourse was also the product of a fantastic romanticism, Arenas reminded Zapata that the pristine quality of Indians made them strong, brave, and loyal. He assured Zapata that in a time of need: "Here you will find a safe cover" because the sierras "were a safe haven for all free and sincere revolutionaries."[79] As will be observed below, the decisions of Domingo Arenas were largely motivated by his revolutionary indigenism. His revolutionary action, loaded with Marxist ideology as it was, was tied inextricably by what Arenas felt was his duty to serve the indigenous people. He fought to give them back land, restore their local autonomy, and improve their material conditions.

Arenas and Zapatismo: A Complicated Relationship

Throughout 1914, Domingo Arenas had distanced himself from the MRT urban cadres, Del Castillo, Rojas, and even Morales, and began flirting with Zapatismo. Upon establishing a permanent headquarters in the Los Volcanes of Puebla in December 1914, Arenas immediately began giving back lands to Indian peasants as a form of revolutionary justice, and this immediately bolstered his already fast-growing popular appeal. The fuller extent and effect of the land redistributions of Arenas will be discussed at length in the next chapter, but it must be stressed that the need to give back lands to his people motivated the decision of Arenas to become a Zapatista leader. Moreover, as a Zapatista leader Arenas could better protect his people in the Oriente Central. The ability of caudillos to protect communities in stressful times strengthened their reputations and legitimized their hold over local rule. The autonomous caudillos and caciques (Alan

[79] Arenas to Zapata, f. 18.

Knight contends that it is mostly the longevity of political tenure associated with caciquismo that separates the two categories) of the Mexican Revolution were notorious for exhibiting a reluctance to become fully incorporated into Maderismo, Huertismo, Carrancismo, and even Zapatismo: in this respect Domingo Arenas was a caudillo who displayed a local autonomy similar to that of Juan Francisco Lucas and Gabriel Barrios in the Sierra Norte de Puebla. During times of conflict these men became the warlords of their zones, and they only joined outside factions when they needed to make calculated alliances to protect their people. Domingo Arenas became what Knight defines as a "classic" or "subnational" caudillo, who was very strong at the regional, municipal, and local level.[80] Arenas, however, never pursued political office.

As a Zapatista general, Arenas kept his dominance in the Oriente Central's pueblos localized, and remained a grassroots leader. He declined Tlaxcala's governorship on several occasions and decided instead to remain a general: he had felt that his enemies attempted to neutralize him with political appointments, and he disdained city politics. Domingo's dislike of formal politics, however, did not preclude the entry of city and rural intellectuals into his ranks. As discussed above, Arenas conceptualized intellectuals as the transmitters of the movement's ideologies to the people from the pueblos and outsiders, and he also felt that the intellectuals conferred political legitimacy on the agrarian rebellion. Anastacio Meneses, for example, who was a longtime confidant of Arenas, ran for the governorship of Tlaxcala in mid-1916, and helped Arenas set into

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[80] Raymond Buve, "Caciquismo, un principio de ejercicio de poder durante varios siglos," *Relaciones* 96, (Otoño, 2003): 33-36; Keith Brewster, "Caciquismo in rural Mexico during the 1920s: the case of Gabriel Barrios," Journal of Latin American Studies 28:1, (Feb., 1996): 110-112; Alan Knight and Will Pansters Eds., *Caciquismo in Twentieth-Century Mexico* (London: Institute for the Study of the Americas, 2005), 24-25.

motion the formation of *Clubes Liberales* (Liberal Clubs) in Tlaxcala and Puebla.[81] Raymond Buve states that many of the local caudillos who rose in arms in late 1910 helped Madero pulverize the Díaz system; however, once in power, these caudillos also wished to control the land, water, and other vital natural resources to better protect their communities from rapacious outsiders. These cuadillos like Arenas sought the counsel of intellectuals to organize their communities and discipline their rebels.[82] Moreover, Arenas was drawn to what he must have perceived as Zapatismo's own Indianness.

Emiliano Zapata and the urban intellectual Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama had made earnest promises to the indigenous communities and communicated to their followers that the Mexican gentry had gotten rich by exploiting Indian people. They promised that at the conflict's end the Liberating Army of the South would emancipate all "indigenous campesinos" from "the yoke of debt peonage." Zapata and Díaz Soto y Gama wrote that the "Revolution belonged to the Indian" and vowed that, unlike Madero and Carranza, the Zapatistas would remain loyal to the promise of helping the indigenous people get back the fields they had worked and restore their pueblos. All villagers supporting Zapatismo, the Zapatista leaders added, would benefit from the Plan de Ayala's land

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[81] Raymond Buve, "La Revolución Mexicana; El caso de Tlaxcala a la luz de las recientes tesis revisionistas," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario en Tlaxcala*, 338-344; Buve, "¡Ni Carranza, Ni Zapata!", in *El Movimiento*, 279, 286-295. Buve notes that Arenas gained his zone's autonomy in two years, but argues this was futile and damned by Carranza's consolidation of power over the eastern frontier. Carranza, like Madero before him, became extremely wary of armed groups that emanated from the country's deep agrarian base—the only difference is that Carranza never insisted on demobilizing the Arenistas while Domingo Arenas led the movement, but the same would not apply to Cirilo Arenas; and the insistence on disarming and dismantling Arenismo under the tenure of Cirilo would fuel the fire of the Arenista rebellion against the federal government up to the Revolution's end in 1920.

[82] Raymond Buve, "Peasant Movements, caudillos and Land reform during the Revolution, (1910-1917) in Tlaxcala, Mexico," *Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, 18 (June, 1975): 119-121.

redistributions.[83] Díaz Soto y Gama and Zapata contended that once the Zapatista agrarian aims were fulfilled a new emancipation for indigenous people would follow. The Zapatistas had to win the Revolution because the Independence War of 1810-1821 had not brought "…independence for the Indian."[84]

Díaz Soto y Gama was one of the major ideologues within the Zapatista movement, one of Zapatismo's "City Boys," as Samuel Brunk has defined these individuals.[85] To appeal to the indigenous people Díaz Soto y Gama wrote that "the Creole race and the white inheritors of the conquest continue to fool the oppressed Indian…" However, he also conceptualized indigenous people as inarticulate, broken by oppression, and as the cannon-fodder of armed conflicts.[86] In his view, Indians had degenerated. Díaz Soto y Gama contended that the full implementation of the "Plan de Ayala would restore the Aztec *calpulli*," the small communities that formed the base of the larger *altepétl*, the Mexica-Aztec city-states. The ideologue echoed a common sentiment; he believed that the vigorous Aztecs had been transformed by conquest and colonialism into miserable Indians. Díaz Soto y Gama also knew that at the core of the Mexican Revolution lay a fierce competition for natural resources, and he therefore suggested that the members of local communities should control their local mode of production, but only through the mentorship of Zapatismo. Mexico's mass upheaval, he explained, was different from all other revolutionary conflicts. Díaz Soto y Gama wrote that: "The Russian Revolution had its ideological roots in the theorizations of Karl Marx,

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[83] Emiliano Zapata y Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama, "Al Pueblo: El Zapatismo es la Revolución del Indio, no peleara por la Presidencia," CR, AGN, Caja 1, Exp., 14.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Samuel Brunk, "Zapata and the City Boys: In Search of a Piece of the Revolution," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73 (1993): 39-43.
[86] Zapata, "Al Pueblo: El Zapatismo es la Revolución del Indio," CR, AGN, Caja 1, Exp., 14.

and Lenin, his genius disciple," but unlike the Russian case, the Mexican Revolution "was owed to the unfulfilled" needs of "the poor pueblo, the pueblo of the fields, [and] the suffering masses." Mexico had not industrialized, so it was the agrarian sector, composed of "rustic, ignorant and uncouth campesinos," which spearheaded a movement fighting for national liberation. Inarticulate as the Indian was, Díaz Soto y Gama stated that it was the job of the revolutionary intellectual to give meaning to collective peasant violence.[87]

After the fall of Huerta and the failed Aguascalientes Convention of November 1914 the Zapatistas and the federal army actively competed for the territory and the people of the Los Volcanes in Puebla. The federals had expelled many Zapatistas who had occupied Puebla's San Martín Texmelucan region in late November 1914. With the help of Domingo Arenas the Zapatistas regrouped after losing Texmelucan. Arenas gave the Morelos Zapatistas a safe haven in the Nativitas Valley.[88] Arenas began working on implementing a comprehensive land reform program that would create agrarian collectives, which he hoped would improve the living conditions of indigenous people. In December 1914, the rupture of Tlaxcala's multiclass coalition resulted in Arenas' emergence as the clear leader of the region's agrarian forces. The Rojas Constitutionalists, known locally as the Rojistas, pulled most of the urban rebels to the federal army's side and controlled the cities.[89]

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[87] Pedro Castro, *Antonio Díaz Soto y Gama: Historia del Agrarismo en México: Rescate, Prólogo y Estudio Biográfico* (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Iztapalapa, 2002), "El Plan de Ayala," 601-603.
[88] Corresponsal, "Puebla preparada en caso de emergencia: Los Zapatistas en el Estado de Tlaxcala demuestran mucha actividad," *La Opinión (Veracruz)*, 18 November 1914, p. 1 & 3.
[89] Corresponsal, "El Gral. Hidalgo va a Tlaxcala," *El Diario del Hogar*, 3 September 1914, p. 1; Álvaro Obregón to Pablo González, Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, 29 April 1916, Expediente Militar Máximo Rojas

The urban members of the Constitutionalist coalition, Pedro Morales, Máximo Rojas, and Porfirio del Castillo, all considered themselves the heirs of President Madero and were locally the proponents of the fallen president's liberal policies. These progressive revolutionaries (and this even included Morales, who had led the largely-peasant Indian movement in the La Malintzin) in the unified fight against Huertismo, were reluctant to share or delegate power to an agrarian sector they considered unfit to rule. Just as President Madero had demanded the demobilization of all rural rebel factions that did not submit to federal army control in 1911 and 1912, shortly after the 15 July 1914 fall of the Huerta regime, the dominant urban wing called for the disarmament of its rural rebels.[90]

The agrarian rebels under Arenas did not disarm, however. The counterinsurgencies during the Huerta tenure had placed the rural communities around the Nativitas Valley and the La Malintzin volcano region in greater peril. When the agrarian rebels toppled the Huerta regime locally, the members of the Brigada Arenas exacted horrid vengeances on Tlaxcala's remaining Huertistas. With the ousting of the Governor Cúellar regime, which had been a common goal of the rebel coalition, the ensuing level of violence waged by rural rebels shocked and horrified Tlaxcala's urban leaders, who blamed the violence on the Zapatista outsiders.[91] The Zapatistas from Morelos had operated in the volcanic zone before the ascent of Arenas. Felipe Villegas,

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(EMMR), AHDN, XI/III/2-1168, f. 9; Alvaro Obregón to Máximo Rojas, 30 April 1916, EMMR, AHDN, f. 10.

[90] Expediente Militar de Domingo Arenas, Colección Documental, Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revoluciones de México, Archivo General de la Nación, (DC, INEHRM, AGN), Caja, 13.4, Exp., 28, f. 6. For more on the failure of President Madero's Liberal policies see, David G. LaFrance, *The Mexican Revolution in Puebla, 1908-1913: The Maderista Movement and the Failure of Liberal Reform* (Wilmington, SR Books, 1989), 23-30.

[91] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 134-142.

the Nativitas Valley chieftain and heir of Cuamatzi's agrarian rebellion, had cooperated with the Zapatistas in battles against the federal army in February and July 1914, and the Zapatistas operating in Tlaxcala's communities had in turn recognized Villegas as a general and as the leader of the La Malintzin resistance. The army of Villegas, of which the Arenas brothers were an integral part, aided Emiliano Zapata's army in the invasions of Chignahuapan, Tetela de Ocampo, and Zacatlán, in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, an area the Zapatistas had not until then penetrated with success.[92]

Felipe Villegas, who formed the strong Nativitas Valley rebel faction of the MRT, had been one of Tlaxcala's major Maderistas. His military record shows that the Liberating Army of Madero granted him "revolutionary merit," for "furthering Madero's cause in Tlaxcala and Puebla."[93] And Villegas had participated in the agrarian disturbances led by Juan Cuamatzi in 1908.[94] He was also one of the main agrarian rebels who combatted the 29th Battalion of General Aureliano Blanquet in February 1911 in the La Malintzin sierras, a murderous federal army campaign that culminated with the execution of Cuamatzi. Villegas led the surviving Cuamatzistas in battle against Blanquet's 29th Battalion between 12 and 13 July 1911; however, as the Tlaxcallans regrouped and planned to assault the cities of Tlaxcala and Puebla, President Madero ended the conflict when he ordered Villegas's forces to demobilize on 20 July 1911. The faithful Villegas stepped down, but then returned to arms in February 1913 with

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[92] Fortino Ayaquica, "Año de 1914" in *El Hombre Libre*, 6 August 1937, p. 3.
[93] AHDN-Gral. Felipe Villegas, Ejército Maderista, Tlaxcala, 1910-1911. D/112/14-1466, M/C 30482, "Unión de Precursores y Veteranos de la Revolución Mexicana," "Carta de Servicios." f. 1.
[94] AHDN-Gral. Felipe Villegas, Ejército Maderista, Tlaxcala, 1910-1911. D/112/14-1466, M/C 30482, "Unión de Precursores y Veteranos de la Revolución Mexicana," f. 2.

Madero's murder.[95] The San Marcos Contla leader commanded the agrarian forces independently, cooperating at times with the state's Zapatistas, but on 7 May 1913 he made a pact with Máximo Rojas in "Siete Canoas," in a rebel hideout located within the volcano La Malintzin. The multiclass coalition had reformed under the stewardship of Rojas, and Villegas's forces then stormed Tlaxcala's Monte de Guadalupe on 26 August.[96]

The battlefield successes of the Nativitas group convinced Rojas that the aid of agrarian rebels was indispensable to the MRT. In early October 1913 Villegas marched his army, first to the rough Espolón de Alcazaba in the Sierra Nevada portion of the La Malintzin, and then to the Sierra Norte de Puebla, taking the military plaza of Teziutlán on October 7. Days later, Villegas's forces returned to the La Malintzin and combatted the Huerta army at Cerro de Xochimilco, which, based on the number of federal soldiers that lay dead and the ground they had regained, became the most successful indigenous rebel counteroffensive against the Huertistas in Tlaxcala. With the conquest of the volcano, Villegas marched his army back to the Sierra Norte and the Indian rebels again won stunning battles in Chignahuapan on 28 December.[97]

In early January 1914 the rebels of Villegas invaded the Hacienda de Hueyapan in Hidalgo, which lasted ten hours. The seemingly indefatigable forces of Villegas finally began to wilt after heavy days of fighting in Zacatlán in the Sierra Norte from 4 to 10 February.[98] Despite incurring heavy loses, Villegas had controlled much of the high

[95] AHDN-Gral. Felipe Villegas, Ejército Maderista, Tlaxcala, f. 2.
[96] AHDN, Villegas, f. 2.
[97] AHDN, Villegas, Ejército Maderista, Tlaxcala, "Carta de Servicio Militar," Preparada por el Mayor, Ascensión Minero Torres, f. 4.
[98] AHDN, Villegas, "Carta," f. 4.

sierras. He had to leave the people from the volcanic communities to their fate, however, when in the middle of February Rojas ordered his army to protect recent rebel advances against the Huertistas in central Puebla. Rojas instructed Villegas to link with the "Guillermo Prieto Brigade" of Pedro M. Morales.[99] Fortino Ayaquica stated that at this juncture the mounting resistance against Huerta had formed a wider rebel alliance, which brought the men of Villegas into Zapatismo's orbit. Ayaquica claimed that during Villegas's 1914 military operations in Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte Villegas had helped to establish a permanent Zapatista presence in the high sierras. At this time, Domingo Arenas, who Morales and Rojas had favored already, became a major leader of the Villegas Nativitas rebel group.[100]

In the opinion of Porfirio del Castillo the people of Villegas had joined Morales and cooperated with the Zapatistas solely to avenge the federal army's recent outrages against their families. In the absence of the Villegas rebels, in the spring of 1914 the Huerta military had devastated indigenous towns in Tlaxcala's lower La Malintzin region, wiping out hundreds of noncombatants. Del Castillo wrote that General Blanquet, who had declared all the local villagers to be spies and rebel sympathizers, "ordered his men to shoot at everyone," including the hapless folks fleeing from the carnage. The soldiers, in "plain sight, burned the heaps of corpses" along with the homes of their victims.[101] The Villegas rebels retaliated against the Huertistas in Puebla and Tlaxcala until the early summer of 1914, when Villegas died during an army counteroffensive at

[99] AHDN, Villegas, "Carta," f. 4.
[100] Fortino Ayaquica, "Año de 1914" in *El Hombre Libre*, 6 August 1937, p. 3.
[101] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 136.

the Hacienda de San Juan Itzcoalco on 29 July 1914. Emeterio Arenas was also killed in that assault.[102]

Decades after his death, the federal army recognized Felipe Villegas "as a precursor of the Mexican Revolution," and as an instrumental figure in the fight against the "Porfirian Dictatorship" and the "Huertista Usurpation" in the "First and Second Periods" of the Revolution "corresponding to the years 1910-1911 and 1913 and 1914."[103] Villegas had remained unknown to the federal military until 1951 when Colonel Pablo Xelhuantzi de León compiled all of Villegas's existing military records. Villegas was a man of the likeness of Mariano Azuela's Demetrio Macias; he became a military caudillo not because of his formal military training but through blood and guts. At the time of his death, in the absence of an official birth certificate, the military did not even know his actual age. Villegas had acquired his ideology of indigenous political autonomy through Juan Cuamatzi, who as we explained in the previous chapter became politicized through his interactions with ideologues such as Juan Sarabia and Aquiles Serdán. Cuamatzi had rebelled to expel not only Cahuantzi locally, but the entire Porfirian system nationally.[104]

As we learned through the Juan Cuamatzi rebellion, although someone like Porfirio del Castillo conceptualized his Indian brethren as essentially apolitical, indigenous rebels had possessed their own motives for wanting to overthrow the Díaz system. The Madero rebellion gave birth to new leaders such as Villegas, who organized

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[102] AHDN, Villegas, "Carta," f. 4.
[103] AHDN, Villegas, Ejército Maderista, Tlaxcala, "Estudio de los Antecedentes del C. Extinto Felipe Villegas Gutiérrez," f. 9.
[104] AHDN, Villegas, Ejército Maderista, Tlaxcala, "Nota Oficial de Veteranía Militar," Preparada por Pablo Xelhuantzi de León, México, D.F., 17 March 1951, f. 11-12.

armies of otherwise scattered indigenous high-sierra rebels and gave them an identity as members of a well-organized rebel force. Tough high-sierra men, such as the Arenas brothers, who under Domingo and later Cirilo would give the agrarian rebellion in the south-central sierras a different direction, followed Villegas "in various combats, since the precursor period. Together they conducted expeditions in the volcanoes Popocatepetl, Iztazihuat, and in the sierra of Puebla, they combated together in Atlixco, Chignahuapan, Zacatlán, Tétela, Tlatlahuqui, Teziutlán and Texmelucan, Puebla." Portillo Cirio, the author of the quote above, considers Villegas one of "the patriarchs of the south," and adds that the men who became the region's "southern caudillos, the Arenas," attacked "the wolf in its lair" (the hacienda where Villegas and Emeterio Arenas fell belonged to Governor Cúellar) to "avenge the humiliation and suffering of their parents and grandparents."[105]

Portillo Cirio concludes that Felipe Villegas gave what survived of the Cuamatzi rebellion a new impulse. The author adds that Villegas recruited powerful regional chieftains such as Isabel Guerrero from Tlaxcala's southern sierras, who helped Domingo Arenas reform a resistance against the Huerta regime in July 1914, to reorganize an agrarian rebel army that eventually birthed Arenismo in the Nativitas Valley.[106] The experience of Felipe Villegas shows that rural rebel leaders from Tlaxcala thought of themselves as Mexican patriots as well. On 22 April 1914, a group of Huerta emissaries

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[105] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Hermanos*, 13-14. I have kept the author's original spelling of the places to retain the document's character. Although the author does not provide citations accurately many of his claims are on-point and can be corroborated with the use of official military records.
[106] Ibid, 15. Portillo Cirio's text is laden with quotation marks coming from people he interviewed such as friends and family members of the Arenas brothers. Though the book does not cite many sources the use of the interviews does offer readers a grassroots perspective of the Arenista movement. The text, in the spirit of Vicente Guerrero, recounts that for agrarian leaders such as Emeterio Arenas losing their life did not matter more than their collective struggle for "their patria came first."

reached the Villegas rebels at Calpulalpan, offering them amnesty in return for military service against "the Yankee invaders" occupying Veracruz at the time. Writing from the *Campamento Revolucionario del Estado de Tlaxcala*, Villegas and Higino Rodríguez responded that: "as good Mexicans…we will fight against the invasion with our Constitutionalist forces." Pánfilo Villegas informed the Huertistas that Felipe Villegas commanded a loyal army of 1,000 fighters, but that only 600 were armed and agreed to a temporary armistice if the government provided munitions for Villegas's group. Villegas also demanded full control of all the train lines running from Apizaco, Tlaxcala to Mexico City.[107] On 2 May, however, agrarian rebels led by former governor Antonio Hidalgo and Pánfilo Villegas combated the federal army in Zacatelco. Pánfilo, the main emissary, died, and documents from 27 April reveal that the government decided ultimately to reject the offers of Villegas, who was "a bandit" leading a bunch of "bandits who would never fall to order."[108]

The deep ideological and class divisions in the MRT had again precluded any chance of achieving peace and Pedro M. Morales himself earned a great deal of scorn for unleashing the "furies of the rural masses" in the sierra.[109] Rojas, Morales, and Villegas, who had reformed the resistance, came from diverse backgrounds, possessed different ideologies, and had united only because they staunchly opposed Huerta and the dominance of the "Santa Liga de Agricultores," the state's agrarian league. This grouping was comprised of the agave-growing magnates that supported President Huerta and Governor Cúellar. Porfirio del Castillo noted that with Villegas dead, and the rebels now

[107] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Tomo I*, 166-171.
[108] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 172.
[109] Ibid, 174.

under the leadership of Domingo Arenas, the rural rebellion in Tlaxcala assumed an even more zealous and dangerous character. With Arenas leading the movement the animosity between rural and urban rebels widened and Del Castillo defined the new movement led by Arenas as radically violent.[110] Reared under the rigorous discipline of federal military training, Porfirio del Castillo had no patience for what he considered the criminal antics of the Zapatistas, and he feared that Tlaxcala's agrarian rebellion had degenerated simply into Zapatismo's revanchist impulses. In late 1913, back when the Huertistas in Tlaxcala had destroyed much of his army in the La Malintzin and Iztaccíhuatl volcanoes, Del Castillo had traveled to Puebla's southwest and found a refuge in Cuayuca de Tepexi in Puebla's Mixteca zone. While at Cuayuca the colonel noted "that region was under the dominion Zapatismo and its uncontrollable chieftains."[111]

Tlaxcala's chieftains had agreed to set aside their differences for the sake of peace, and in August, with Huertismo fully destroyed, Morales, Rojas, Arenas, and Porfirio del Castillo submitted to the overall command of General Pablo González. However, the annihilation of the local Huertistas, which necessitated the aid of the forces of Emiliano Zapata, had opened ground for "strong Zapatista factions" to attack the major plaza of Tlaxco on 25 July 1914. And González had feared that Zapata's largely agrarian faction could gain control of the state.[112] To counter the Zapatista threat González tried to appoint Vicente Escobedo, a former secretary of Cahuantzi, as provisional governor. An open letter signed by Tlaxcala's revolutionaries, however, informed González that

[110] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 143.
[111] Ibid, 130.
[112] Cuéllar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. I*, 179-183.

"Tlaxcala's rebels" had deposited a "blind faith" in him.[113] They warned González of the danger of supporting Escobedo, who "had collaborated with the Cahuantzi regime in its effort to exterminate the poor people," adding that Escobedo was "tied to the ruling families by kinship and friendship." Heeding the warning, González then appointed Máximo Rojas as governor, a decision fully supported by Carranza. With a Constitutionalist regime set in place in Tlaxcala, upon reviewing the ranks of the Brigada Xicohténcatl, González demoted Domingo Arenas and Pedro M. Morales to the rank of colonels and only respected Rojas's standing as Constitutionalist general. Infuriated, Domingo Arenas withdrew immediately from the Brigada Xicohténtcatl and joined a contingent of Zapatistas already operating in Tlaxcala. Arenas had developed a deep hatred of González. The general had injured his pride further by occupying San Martín Texmelucan, and proclaiming military authority over all of Puebla and Tlaxcala.[114] The promise of immediate land reform in the Plan de Ayala of Zapata also influenced Domingo Arenas to join the Zapatistas.

As his rebels became formal Zapatistas, Domingo Arenas named them the Brigada Arenas, which very rapidly became a people's army. Under Arenas the indigenous rebellion intensified because as Zapatistas, Tlaxcala's agrarian rebels now began avenging past injustices, which often involved the killing of hacienda owners and of federal army leaders. In October 1914, for example, the Brigada Arenas executed the bulk of the military commanders they had captured, but spared the lives of conscripts.[115] Moreover, many of their enemies had remained in charge of political posts and some of

[113] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 152-153.
[114] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 154-155.
[115] Buve, "Agricultores, dominación política y estructura agrarian," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario de Tlaxcala*, 243-245; Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 254-257.

Tlaxcala's more moderate Constitutionalists were reluctant to punish former Cahuantzi followers and the state's deposed Huertistas, a refusal that had heightened the ire of Domingo Arenas. As a case in point, on 6 October 1914 the Constitutionalist local authorities arrested former Governor Próspero Cahuantzi and some of his associates in the state capital.[116] A month later the local Constitutionalist authorities set the former governor free, however, when he promised that he would no longer meddle in local politics nor raise arms against the government.[117] Próspero Cahuantzi, who as Governor of Tlaxcala had been one of the most influential politicians of Porfirian-era México, died a captive of Pancho Villa in Chihuahua. Villa had abducted Cahuantzi on 6 June 1915. At the time of his death, Cahuantzi, a diabetic, was nearly blind. It is believed that the former strongman died of hunger in a cold prison cell. His remains were returned to family members in 1947 and he was buried in his hometown of Ixtulco.[118]

On 28 October Domingo Arenas wrote a letter to Emiliano Zapata informing him that ever since he joined the Revolution in November 1910, he had admired all that Zapatismo stood for. Arenas also wrote that he shared Zapata's desire to "fulfill the promises of the Plan de Ayala." He told Zapata that his men were ready to "follow any order," and that he "counted with 1,100 men, out of which 800 rode on horseback." The letter was a formal surrender of the Brigada Arenas to the Zapatistas' control, but Arenas also alerted Zapata to the fact that he was not a common rebel: he led a popular army sharing Zapatismo's aspirations. Moreover, the Tlaxcallan leader contended that many of his men were veterans of the 1910 struggles and were therefore "men of unwavering

[116] Corresponsal, "Fue aprehendido Próspero Cahuantzi," *Diario del Hogar*, 7 October 1914, p. 1.
[117] Corresponsal, "Notas y Ecos," *Diario del Hogar*, 8 November 1914, p. 2.
[118] Mario Ramírez Rancaño, "Próspero Cahuantzi en la contrarrevolución." *Revista Mexicana de Sociología* 57, 3 (1995): 188-189.

convictions." Arenas also sent Zapata recent photographs of his major generals, "as a sign of respect and his admiration."[119]

By late November 1914, the army of Domingo Arenas was comprised of more than 1,500 people. In a year's time it would nearly quadruple in size. Yet the Brigada's effectiveness did not rest on numbers but on its swiftness. Close to half of Arenas' rebels fought mounted on horses. The majority of the rebels serving Arenas came from the indigenous pueblos, and these *pueblerinos* at one time had their own local chieftains. Once Arenas and Paniagua disciplined the agrarian rebel army, they fought collectively in the Brigada Arenas, and once they adhered to the Plan de Ayala, all rebels under their charge also became formal Zapatistas. On 12 November, Domingo Arenas openly denounced Tlaxcala's Carrancista state government and published a manifesto lambasting President Carranza, after which Zapata named Arenas the "Chief of Arms" in Tlaxcala. Zapata soon discovered that Arenas was an able leader and his ideological counterpart. The military organization of the Brigada Arenas had impressed the Zapatistas, but Arenas' fervent desire to hand back lands promptly to the indigenous peasants won Zapata over even more strongly.[120]

The Brigada Arenas amassed a rapid string of military successes as it counted with hundreds of horses and its rebels charged at federal armies swiftly, sometimes surreptitiously, and always with lethal effect. Moreover, the Arenista foot soldiers were adept at travelling long distances in considerably high altitudes. The rebel army's swiftness allowed Domingo Arenas to regain ground in Tlaxcala in November, and on 10

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[119] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 October 1914, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 1; Domingo Arenas, Alberto L. Paniagua, and Isabel Guerrero to Emiliano Zapata, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 28 October 1914, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 2.
[120] Fortino Ayaquica, "Año de 1914," in *El Hombre Libre*, 6 August 1937, p. 3.

December 1914, aided by peasant uprisings in San Bernardino Contla, Santa Ana, and Apizaco, Domingo Arenas and his rebels regained control of the city of Tlaxcala.[121] The Brigada Arenas, however, took advantage of all its victories to assault haciendas. Zapata, for his part, fully supported the Brigada's moves because with the help of Domingo Arenas the Zapatistas had finally established what Zapata believed was a permanent presence on the Puebla-Tlaxcala border.[122]

Alan Knight notes that much of the resistance that formed against Huerta in 1913, and then reformed against Carranza a year later, was carried on by the revolutionary families that had organized in the La Malintzin sierras since 1910. Knight contends that Tlaxcala was one of Mexico's regions where *serrano* (highland people) and *agrarista* (lowland peasants or subsistence farmers, which also includes hacienda peons) sentiments conflated. Knight viewed the *agrarista* rebellion, as exemplified by Zapatismo, as only partially articulate (it had, the author points out, a political base in the Plan de Ayala), and *serrano* protest, often captained by conservative, traditional, and isolated caciques, as significantly inarticulate. Knight contends that the *serranos* of Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte were socially conservative and therefore initially rejected Carranza and joined Zapatismo to better defend their communities.[123] What Knight overlooked, however, were the dramatic shifts in leadership from Cuamatzi to Villegas, and then to Arenas, who grew up in a conservative milieu, but as we observed earlier was radically progressive.

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[121] Año de 1914, 3.
[122] Fortino Ayaquica, "Nombramiento de Gral. de División para el Gral. Domingo Arenas (1915)," reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 9 August 1937, p. 3; Expediente Arenas, DC, INEHRM, AGN, f. 6.
[123] Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Vol. II*, 55.

When he took command of Tlaxcala's rebel army, Domingo Arenas earned the trust of the people from San Bernardino Contla, the historical epicenter of agrarian contestation with the state, and he also recruited many people from other rebellious pueblos. Along with other "coreligionists" from the Los Volcanes of Tlaxcala and Puebla, Arenas formed the Junta Revolucionaria de Puebla y Tlaxcala, and in a manifesto to Zapata asked the Morelian chieftain for his formal approval of this new group since the Junta Revolucionaria would join "the *Ejército Libertador*-Liberating Army."[124] The pueblo of Contla then reformed an organized resistance under Domingo Arenas, and Contla's indigenous fighters joined the Zapatista ranks.[125] The growth of the Brigada Arenas shows that Domingo Arenas had gained considerable appeal. He wrote manifestos to show he knew political principles, but he also possessed two essential leadership qualities: he was beloved by legions in an area stretching beyond his native Tlaxcala; and he also counted with the proper lineage as a rebel leader emerging as a successor to the martyrs of the region's agrarian causes. Arenas told Indians that once his army cleansed the landed gentry from the rural zones, they would reclaim their lands and form autonomous pueblos. In control over his zone, Arenas proved that his adherence to the Plan de Ayala was serious when he implemented a form of "effective suffrage" that he believed was more responsive to the concerns of villagers. In power, Arenas could allow pueblos to be governed organically, by elected village leaders and not by outside revolutionary councils. As a general in the Zapatista army, in time Arenas implemented a

[124] Domingo Arenas, Antonio Sevada, y la Junta to Emiliano Zapata, Puebla, Puebla, 26 October 1914, Cuartel General del Sur (CGS), AGN, Caja, 5, Exp., 46, f. 1.
[125] Archivo del General Felipe Villegas, AHDN, Expediente, D/112/14-1466, Fojas, 1-3.

form of popular suffrage, which gave greater political autonomy to the local villagers of the Oriente Central, particularly in Pueblas Los Volcanes.[126]

Possessing clear aims and political motives would be highly useful when the Tlaxcala-Puebla border region became a major war theater in 1915 as Carranza and Zapata fought for the control of the south-central Indian zones. Both Zapata and Carranza tested out their own programs for land redistribution. Carranza believed land reform was an item of prime necessity to pacify Mexico and win over the Indian peasants; however, he considered immediate land reform barbaric and instead set up a commission to "study the subject and formulate a plan." Plebeians, too, followed Carranza. As a North American traveler noted, the "Indian hordes" largely made up Carranza's army.[127] Zapata, for his part, contended that land reform was essential for fulfilling the people's thirst for justice and for remedying Mexico's Indian problem. Zapata also acknowledged that the Indians had made the Revolution and stated that at the heart of the conflict was the indigenous people's need to recover their communities. This, however, remains unrecognized in the vast historiography concerning the Revolution. In exclaiming that "Zapatismo is the Indian's revolution; it will not fight for the presidency!" in the summer of 1915 Emiliano Zapata boldly announced that his revolution, his tenets, as outlined in the Plan de Ayala, would better the lives of Indians. Affirming a position stating that neither he nor any cadre in the movement desired the Mexican presidency, Zapata told Mexican Indians that the Revolution, and the great joys and triumphs the end of the conflict would bring, belonged to them. He acknowledged that thousands of indigenous

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[126] Domingo Arenas to Ignacio Enríquez, Chiautzingo, Puebla, Puebla, 26 December 1916, AHDN, Expediente, X1/111/1-19, Foja, 1.

[127] Arthur Constantine, "Carranza at Close Range," *The North American Review* 205 (1917): 570.

people served in the Liberating Army of the South; in fact, he noted that the indigenous people were the backbone of the agrarian cause. And he wanted Indians to become conscious of their roles as revolutionaries fighting for a larger cause, the fulfillment of the Plan de Ayala.[128]

To drum up further support for the Conventionist cause, Zapata cited numerous crimes that had been committed by Carranza's forces. These were some of the same crimes that the Carrancistas had accused the Zapatistas of perpetrating, including arson, the indiscriminate executions of villagers, the mass rape of women, and the pillaging and plundering of the defenseless Indian and peasant pueblos. Zapata stressed in his manifesto that the Constitutionalists were leaving the "campesinos" in greater penury, and further contended that the Zapatistas cherished the traditions of the indigenous people. The Constitutionalists, Zapata wrote, were as merciless and bloodthirsty as the Huertistas.[129]

According to Zapata, Carranza's military had forced employers to expel workers from factories and conscripted them into the military. He vowed, on the other hand, that he would not scare indigenous people into submission, and perpetuate the Carrancista renewal of the Porfirian "blood tribute."[130] Zapata invited indigenous Mexicans to participate "in their own emancipation by swearing allegiance to the Plan de Ayala," galvanizing them to "rebel, invade federal garrisons, and take their weapons! And exterminate the hordes of Carrancista bandits!"[131] While the Zapatistas and

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[128] Emiliano Zapata, "Al Pueblo: El Zapatismo es la Revolución del Indio, no peleara por la Presidencia," 1915, Colección Revolución, CR, AGN, Caja 1, exp., 14.
[129]Emiliano Zapata, "Al Pueblo:"
[130] Emiliano Zapata, "Al Pueblo:"
[131] Ibid.

Constitutionalists battled for indigenous hearts and minds, Carranza worried that the proliferation of Zapatismo into the Sierra Norte region would heighten the disorder in those zones. The president knew that at the heart of the conflict in the Oriente Central was the potential control of an enormous territory and people, and both factions understood that their dominance of the region would bring an endless stream of resources to their war effort. As mid-December 1914 approached, the Constitutionalist General Francisco Coss had written several urgent letters to Carranza relating the gravity of the situation in the Puebla-Tlaxcala border. The Zapatistas led by Domingo Arenas had created a strong military cordon around the city of Cholula, a site of recent intense skirmishes won by the Zapatistas. From Cholula, the rebels mounted an attack on the city of Puebla. The Conventionists under Arenas also made multiple forays into the Sierra Norte de Puebla where the federal army had to fight for every inch of their advancement.[132]

As 1914 closed, General Salvador Alvarado advised President Carranza to entrust General Pablo González with the task of wresting away San Martín Texmelúcan from the control of the Zapatistas under Arenas. Considering that the central Puebla Valley was a gateway to Mexico City, Alvarado reckoned that this should be a most vigorous offensive.[133] So three federal columns stormed into Tlaxcala; González took Tlaxcala's capital, and two of his brigadier generals fought fever-pitched battles against the

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[132] Francisco Coss to Venustiano Carranza, Puebla, Puebla, 12 December 1914, AHDN, XI/481.5/220, f. 709; Francisco Coss to Venustiano Carranza, Puebla, Puebla, 13 December 1914, AHDN, XI/481.5/315, f. 695; Ricardo López to Venustiano Carranza, Veracruz, Veracruz, 16 December 1914, AHDN, XI/481.5/315, f. 705-707; Antonio Medina to Venustiano Carranza, Tezuitlán, Puebla, 22 December 1914, AHDN, XI/481.5/220, f. 740-741.

[133] Salvador Alvarado to Venustiano Carranza, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 13 December 1914, AHDN, XI/481.5/315, f. 692-693.

Zapatistas in Huamantla and Apizaco. Domingo Arenas led a strong indigenous contingent from the Nativitas Valley, against the combined armies of the army generals. The battles, which began in the Nativitas Valley, bled out to several other towns in the Puebla-Tlaxcala border. The Constitutionalist generals called upon General Álvaro Obregón to invade Tlaxcala. On 31 December Obregón informed President Carranza that "in three days of battle, [his forces] had destroyed the enemy columns that had been garrisoned in Tepeaca and Amozoc." Obregón had arrived to Tlaxcala with a group of well-trained, heavily-armed soldiers.[134] However, the Brigada Arenas gave the Obregón army a tough battle in Tlaxcala city.[135] Obregón had also arrived with numerous Yaqui troops who were seasoned combatants, and his invading force also included scores of ragtag conscripts from Veracruz. In what the media described as a bloodbath on all sides, the Obregón army made a strong push into Tlaxcala on 30 and 31 December, and Domingo Arenas had to take his army into higher sierras after sustaining a gunshot wound to the stomach.[136]

At the dawning of 1915, the Constitutionalists under Obregón entered the capital of Tlaxcala and then travelled to Apizaco, escorted also by an army unit from Mexico City in military trains. In Apizaco, Obregón made a public declaration to the local people and claimed to have cleansed the area of Zapatistas. Believing he had pacified Tlaxcala when his forces occupied Huamantla, he did not realize that the larger rebel units of the

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[134] Álvaro Obregón to Venustiano Carranza, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 31 December 1914, AHDN, XI/481.5/303, f. 126-127.
[135] Corresponsal, "Tlaxcala City tranquil under Conventionists," *Mexican Herald*, 30 December 1915, p. 1.
[136] Corresponsal, "Puebla environs is made scene of fierce battle," *Mexican Herald*, 6 January 1915, p. 1 & 2.

Brigada Arenas were concentrated deeper in the cordilleras of the volcano.[137] Obregón immediately put the Constitutionalist form of rural land reform to effect. While in Apizaco he communicated to Carranza that he felt an obligation to the local people to "comply with one of the most valuable principles of their flag, which is to give *ejidos* (common lands) back to the peasants, and take care to determine how much of the land that was given back actually belonged to the people individually…" Obregón decided to give back land "lawfully" and "convoked all the *vecinos* (villagers), to elect a 3-5 person commission comprised of the most venerable community members to negotiate [land settlements] with his staff." Obregón had felt that with these measures he had secured the loyalty of the locals.[138] In addition, in trying to solidify the Constitutionalist command of Tlaxcala and Puebla, Obregón asked Carranza to dismiss generals Francisco González and Francisco Coss.[139] With his attention set upon returning lands to the villagers, Obregón wanted to avoid replicating the mistakes made by other generals who had terrorized the peaceful villagers. Obregón therefore promised the village leaders greater local autonomy and vowed to give their people other guarantees, mainly the assurance of their collective safety, if the village councils provided the federal military with fresh army recruits. Obregón knew from his experiences in fighting the Yaqui Indians in Sonora that counterinsurgencies had embittered the indigenous rebels and emboldened their resistance. The damage, however, had been done by González and Coss; Obregón

[137] Álvaro Obregón to Venustiano Carranza, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 1 January 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 1-3; Álvaro Obregón to Cándido Aguilar, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 1 January 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/316, f. 4-7; Álvaro Obregon to Venustiano Carranza, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 1 January 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/303, f. 11-12; José Isabel Bonilla to Manuel Palafox, 8 January 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 3, Exp., 3, foja, 133; Manuel Palafox to Alberto L. Paniagua, 8 January 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 3, Exp., 3, f. 134; Manuel Palafox to Manuel Bonilla, 8 January 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 3, Exp., 3, f. 135.

[138] Álvaro Obregón to Venustiano Carranza, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 3 January 1915, AHDN, 481.5/304, f. 7-8, 20.

[139] Álvaro Obregón to Venustiano Carranza, Puebla, Puebla, 5 January 915, AHDN, 481.5/221, f. 48.

ignored the temperament of the locals, and a day after he set up a military encampment in the town of Santa Inés Zacatelco, he reported feeling surprised and deceived when his camp "was attacked by the local Zapatistas."[140]

Obregón wrote of "everyday shootouts" and "sneak attacks" and realized that controlling the Tlaxcala-Puebla border would be difficult. The indigenous rebels had resorted to guerrilla tactics and had therefore ambushed, run, and attacked the federal soldiers in the early morning and at night. With an indigenous insurrection mounting outside of Apizaco as well, Obregón feared he would not be able to leave the zone in time to terminate the recent outbreak of peasant violence in Veracruz.[141] Obregón would not have time to assess the outcome of his land redistributions to peasants, nor end the Arenas resistance: his occupation of Tlaxcala was called to a halt when Carranza entrusted the task of executing a more vigorous pacification of the zone to Máximo Rojas.[142]

It would not take long for the Arenas army to frustrate Rojas as well. On 6 February, rebels stormed the Zaragoza railway station killing dozens of federal soldiers. Recuperated from his stomach wound, Domingo Arenas now concentrated a greater number of his rebels in the pueblos outlying the volcano La Malintzin's southern foothills.[143] Despite Obregón's efforts to give land back, by late January many Indians had joined the Convention's army. On 23 January, Zapatistas led by Arenas retook their

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[140] Álvaro Obregón to Venustiano Carranza, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 4 January 1915, AHDN, 481.5/304, f.28-29.
[141] Jesús González Morín to Venustiano Carranza, Tehuantepec, Oaxaca, 11 January 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 97-98.
[142] Máximo Rojas to Venustiano Carranza, Santa Ana Chiautempan, Tlaxcala, 14 January 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 40-41.
[143] Military Dispatch to the General Headquarters by Ascensión Salvador, Santa Ana Chiautempan, 8 February 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 45-46.

headquarters in San Martín Texmelúcan, and the Zapatista general Antonio Sevada warned Zapata to exercise great caution since, given the strong federal army presence, "the area had to be occupied permanently by the Conventionist army." In the wake of the battles, entire areas had been left devastated, and Sevada asked Zapata for 5,000 pesos to reestablish telegraph and telephone lines while also requesting large shipments of firearms and ammunitions.[144]

Throughout the winter of 1915, and amidst the federal army's forays, Domingo Arenas kept proving himself an able military leader to Emiliano Zapata. And, in turn, Arenas took advantage of the Liberating Army's victories in Puebla to expand his zone of operations into Atlixco, which he occupied on 17 March at the head of more than 700 fighters. Arenas then divided his forces in Tlaxcala, ordering his rebels to assault all trains. Rebels commanded by Francisco Mendoza, the powerful chieftain from Izúcar de Matamoros in Puebla's southwest, and Zapatistas from Cuautla, had supported Arenas' invasion of Atlixco, likely upon Zapata's orders, who checked the power of his subordinates to maintain stability and order within the ranks. Carranza dispatched 20,000 soldiers to the city of Puebla to prevent a rebel invasion.[145]

Despite the greater military power of the Constitutionalist army, the Zapatistas under Arenas defeated the federal military in Tlaxcala and the Los Volcanes of Puebla, and at Churrubusco and Tlalpan, in Mexico City, and his Brigada had also invaded haciendas in Mexicaltzingo in the state of Mexico in February 1915. These advances allowed the southern forces to establish a heavily garrisoned military headquarters in

[144] Antonio F. Sevada to Emiliano Zapata, Texmelúcan, Puebla, 23 January 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 78, f. 8.
[145] Corresponsal, "Atlixco fue ocupado por las fuerzas surianas," *Mexican Herald*, 18 March 1915, p. 1.

Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, near the volcano Iztaccíhuatl.[146] The Arenas rebels were now strong enough to halt most trains going into southern Tlaxcala, capturing many provisions and war materiel.[147] The Brigada Arenas had gained much ground, and Domingo Arenas wrote to Zapata assuring him that the people he led "fought for the Plan de Ayala," vowing never to operate independently.[148] Arenas dutifully abided by the Morelian chieftain's instructions, calling his men to renew their loyalties to Zapatismo, and blowing up trains in Apan, Soltepec, and in San Lorenzo on the Hidalgo-Tlaxcala border region. And this was no mindless sabotage; Zapata's aim was to cut off all lines of support to Mexico City and Veracruz.[149]

Arenas proffered Zapata detailed description of his operations; Zapata learned that the Brigada's army members were indefatigable warriors. From 15 to 20 March the Brigada attacked federal army garrisons stationed in Santa Ana Chiautempam, and then launched a massive strike on San Martín Texmelúcan on 27 March. On 29 April they assualted the haciendas of Cuamancingo, Soltepec, and Guadalupe. Subsequently, the Arenistas took Ometusco and Irolo on 16 May, followed by attacks at Santa Ana and Sanctorum on May 31. From 1 to 6 June, the Brigada Arenas fought the federal army in Zacatelco, San Antonio Cuamanala, Zacualpán, and Ixtacuitla. The deadliest

[146] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 13 February 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 3; Dispatch by Rafael Espinoza to the Ejército Libertador del Sur, Brigada Ayala, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, 3 April 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 54; Rafael Espinoza to the Secretary of War, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, 4 April 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 50; Everardo González to Emiliano Zapata, Otumba, Tlaxcala, 10 April 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/316, f. 110.

[147] M.F. Ochoa to Mario Méndez, Apizaco, Tlaxcala, 29 April 1915, AHDN, XI/481.5/304, f. 6

[148] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tenexyocan, Tlaxcala, 16 February 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 4; Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tenexyocan, Tlaxcala, 16 February 1915, f. 5. The other letter written to Zapata highlights in some detail the ground the Brigada Arenas had reclaimed and the number of Carrancistas they had executed in the name of the agrarian rebellion.

[149] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Cuernavaca, Morelos, 1 February 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 4, Exp., 3, Foja, 39.

engagements occurred at Calpulalpan in the middle of June.[150] Arenas always asked Zapata for new direction, reckoning that he would "fight for the fulfilment of the Plan de Ayala, to the death."[151] When the Arenistas invaded the city of Tlaxcala on 30 May, they killed old political opponents and Arenas boasted that his army had spent more than 20,000 cartridges in the re-conquests of pueblos.[152]

The manifesto Domingo Arenas wrote to the people of Tlaxcala on 26 April 1915 shows that at this juncture he respected and obeyed Zapata, adhered firmly to the project of Zapatismo, and believed that the movement stood for the interests of the poor whose redemption he sought.[153] The manifesto, which also reveals the ideology of Arenas, is worth analyzing at length. In its contents we can observe that Arenas expresses a great faith in the Revolution's promises, which he had dubbed a "sublime cause," and urged the indigenous people of his home state to join him and Emiliano Zapata, whom everyone should recognize as "the Supreme Chief of the Liberating Army of the South."[154] As related in his manifesto, Arenas wanted the "suffering sons of Tlaxcala" to defend the Plan de Ayala, the official "flag of the Revolution in the South." In writing that the Indian people of Tlaxcala descended from "a heroic race," Arenas appealed to a sense of pristine Indianness he believed Tlaxcala's indigenous people possessed. And, he communicated to his people that serving under Emiliano Zapata stood for "the redemption" of the Indian

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[150] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, San Vicente Xiloxochitla, Tlaxcala, 30 June 1915, reprinted by Fortino Ayaquica in *El Hombre Libre*, 6 August 1937, p. 3.
[151] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tenexyecac, Tlaxcala, 16 February 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57 f. 4-6.
[152] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Teotihuacán, México, 12 May 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 9; Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, La Trinidad, Tlaxcala, 30 May 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., f. 10-11.
[153] Domingo Arenas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo de Tlaxcala: Conciudadanos," Calpulalpam, Tlaxcala, 26 April 1915, AHET, Fondo, Ayuntamiento, Caja, 306, Expediente, 2, foja, 452.
[154] Arenas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo de Tlaxcala," 452.

peasantry, of which the "Tlaxcallan pueblo was part." For Arenas working for the peasantry's revitalization was a "patriotic duty."[155]

Domingo Arenas stated that the "Sovereign Revolutionary Convention," which fought for "the spirit" of the "Zapatista Law," was responsive only to the needs and "aspirations" of a humble pueblo. If for Domingo Arenas General Zapata represented national "redemption" and justice, Carranza, conversely, stood for "shame, theft, pillaging, and murder."[156] Domingo Arenas wrote that in the past few months the "barbaric" "Constitutionalist hordes" had brought much death to the pueblos they had occupied in Tlaxcala, and argued that those within their territory following Carranza had been deceived by greedy and wicked caciques. Moreover, Arenas urged the indigenous rebels to: "Remember our ancestors, let us imitate the value and virtue of Xicohtencatl and other paladins and warriors of our glorious past…"[157]

At this point in the Revolution, it is clear that protecting his *patria chica*, the border region of Puebla and Tlaxcala, remained his prime concern and he therefore harkened to his people's heroic indigenous past, which was an important part of Tlaxcala's identity as a pueblo that had stood in the way of Aztec-Mexica hegemony. Arenas urged the Indian people to continue to resist. He probably likened the Carrancistas to the new Aztecs. Ultimately Zapatismo, the rebellion of the Indians, Arenas vowed, would prevail. Arenas' manifesto concludes by stating: "Tlaxcallans, the Plan de Ayala condenses all of our aspirations, everything we cherish…Let us fight united, and with all

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[155] Domingo Arenas, "Tlaxcala called upon to support the Convention," *Mexican Herald*, 11 May 1915, p.1.
[156] Arenas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo de Tlaxcala," 452.
[157] Arenas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo de Tlaxcala," 452.

the faith of our consciences for it, let us also sustain the Sovereign Convention, for that is where the salvation of the Patria lies."[158]

Zapata had also spoken of indigenous liberation. Declaring that "Indians were the spiritual and material inheritors of Father Miguel Hidalgo and Vicente Guerrero," on 15 March 1915 Zapata wrote a manifesto to the people of Totolalpán, Guerrero highlighting his thinking on the deplorable "Indian situation" in Mexico. Zapata told Guerrero's Indians that his movement fought for liberty and "for the restoration of their dignity."[159] Zapata's aim in writing this manifesto is evident; Zapatismo needed the support of Indians, it needed their fighting spirit to create a "free and civilized" Mexico. "The political and social evolution" of Mexico, Zapata added, "must continue, and Indians must reap the benefits of belonging to an enlightened nation grounded upon noble principles such as freedom and compulsory education." Through the document Zapata informs the indigenous people that Carranza was ignoble and treacherous, issuing stern warnings for those wishing to "follow the old murderer:" "Like the Huertistas preceding them, the Carrancistas bring to light only demons…Carrancismo will precipitate the pueblos' extermination through perpetual famine and war." Zapata accused the Carrancistas of perpetrating "innumerable and grotesque crimes," and of the "scores of daily executions" made possible by "the [federal army's] suspension of individual guarantees."[160] Zapata believed Carranza was a greater monster than Díaz, Madero, and Huerta, and a "beast exterminating all" the people refusing to bend to his whim. Zapata concluded that the Indian pueblo could not survive without Zapatismo, and that the

[158] Arenas, "Manifiesto al Pueblo de Tlaxcala," 452.
[159] Emiliano Zapata, "Manifiesto al Pueblo de Guerrero, San Miguel Totoloalpan, Distrito de Mina," 15 March 1915, CR, AGN, Caja, 3, Exp., 61, Foja, missing.
[160] Zapata, "Manifiesto al Pueblo,"

movement itself could perish without their support.[161] The letter by Emiliano Zapata underscores that Zapatismo and the pueblo were one; however, the protection that his army offered to villagers was conditional. Zapata stressed that Zapatismo had always to take precedence over all the local loyalties. While for Zapata the relationship between the Zapatistas and the pueblos was a symbiotic one, he increasingly assumed a paternalistic stance. People from the pueblos, however, understood this patriarchal structure and also used Zapata's power to place firm demands on him.

Indian villagers from San Pedro Coaco, for example, wrote letters to the Zapatista chieftains in their headquarters in Tochimilco, Puebla, demanding the prompt restitution of their lands. And in Huatlatlauca, Puebla, Cipriano Aguilar asked Zapata for personal protection since some of Zapata's men had sacked his home, storming away with his food, animals, and clothes. Zapata condemned all those who exploited the villagers and issued stern warnings by declaring that all Zapatistas who committed crimes against the rural poor would be handled as "traitors to the agrarian cause."[162]

Arenas agreed wholeheartedly with Zapata's stance on rural crime, and once well established in the Nativitas Valley, he wrote another manifesto to his people on 10 May. He called for greater order, forbade all "unlawful apprehensions," and outlawed "the taking of seeds and other goods that may occasion great harm" to the local people. Evidently, Arenas was concerned with the poor behavior of some of his men and responded proactively to the complaints of native villagers. Matter of fact, the fourth article of his manifesto encouraged the native people "to report any crime against their

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[161] Ibid.
[162] Emilia Romero to Emiliano Zapata, Chietla, Puebla, 9 June 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 19, Exp., Foja, missing number; Cipriano Aguilar to Emiliano Zapata, Huatlatlauca, Puebla, 14 February 1914, AZ, AGN, Caja, 20, Exp., 3, Fojas Sueltas.

persons or interests committed by any member of [his] Brigade." Moreover, the second article of his proclamation read that any rebel who seized the peasantry's belongings would be "severely punished as has been dictated by the General Headquarters of the Liberating Army" in the state of Morelos. He also warned against the personal appropriation of "goods taken from the enemies of the Revolution." All confiscated wealth, he added, had to be redistributed by the Brigada's authorities, and careful accounts of all booty collected from assaults on trains and landed estates had to be reported to Zapata at the central headquarters.[163]

Arenas developed a habit of reporting everything to Zapata, writing, for example, that when his forces stormed Otumba in Mexico State on May 12, they "had lost eight men," but had "killed 196 enemies, taken 26 prisoners, and forty women." What is more, he wrote that the Brigada had seized from the enemy, "many weapons, ammunition, horses, boxcars full of many cereals, and four tanks of gasoline." Arenas, therefore, acted as the responsible regional commander and showed that he led a well-disciplined rebel army.[164] Although the taking of women may seem striking, the Zapatistas habitually stormed off with women from pueblos and Zapata tolerated these actions. Arenas also wrote to Zapata on 30 May that his army "had wiped out enemies of the people" such as former governor Diego Sánchez, and the municipal president of Tlaxcala. He felt that all reactionaries should be purged.[165] Zapata would not consider the killing of pro-Constitutionalists as a crime and he now also needed the Brigada Arenas for a special

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[163] Domingo Arenas, Nativitas, Tlaxcala, 10 May 1915, "Jefe de las Armas del Estado: a los Habitantes," AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 8.
[164] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Otumba, Mexico State, 12 May 1915, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 9.
[165] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, State of Tlaxcala, 30 May 1915, Caja, 77, Exp., 57, f. 10.

mission involving "the mass recruitment" of Nahua fighters from an area he described as the "difficult Sierra Norte de Puebla," ruled by "a mystical caudillo, named Juan Francisco Lucas." Zapata entrusted Domingo Arenas with the duty of "recruiting and mobilizing men in that region, which finds itself infested with Carrancistas." As noted by Zapata, unlike his other generals, Arenas knew the "ways of the sierra's people." And he also referenced the "dogged provincialism" of the "Sierra Norte Indians," noting that their insularity had time and again complicated the Zapatistas' advance into the high sierras. But in need of more men he entrusted that task to Arenas.[166]

When the Zapatistas entered the Sierra Norte with the Brigada Arenas, Emiliano Zapata had to tolerate the dealings of Arenas with the people of Higinio Aguilar. Having sided with Victoriano Huerta, and then with Félix Díaz and the *Soberanistas* in Oaxaca, Aguilar had been a constant thorn on Zapata's side. Zapata described Aguilar as a committed but "unruly element" in the war against Carrancismo. Aguilar, for his part, claimed that he had made past alliances, which Zapata considered dishonoralbe, out of necessity. Such was his hatred of Carranza that he called the president "the new Judas Iscariot," an "automaton of the [U.S.] White House." Aguilar accused Carranza of "prostituting the nation's wealth and becoming extremely wealthy by selling off the patrimony of Mexico's autochthonous race." Aguilar wrote that to "serve the old bigot was akin to serving Lucifer." Aguilar had promised his Indian followers "lands and water."[167] On 13 April1915, he told Zapata that he was loyal to the Plan de Ayala, and had distributed copies of the Plan to the various communities under his control in the

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[166] F. Cortes to Emiliano Zapata, Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 18 July 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 3, Exp., 32, f. unclear.
[167] Higinio Aguilar, "Declaración Anticonstitucionalista," Teotitlán del Camino, Oaxaca, 26 February 1915, Política Interior, PI, AGN, Documento 506, Caja, 3, Exp., 51.

forests of Veracruz and Puebla. He had concentrated his greater efforts upon liberating Oaxaca where he wished to "impart to its masses the glorious and sacred tenets of *their* Plan de Ayala…"[168]

Aguilar proved that he indeed was a complicated character: that same day, he wrote an open letter to the "unruly Zapatista chieftains" operating in Oaxaca denouncing their abuses and declaring war against them. Arguing that he was not the traitor, he stated that his people remained loyal only to the Plan de Ayala, but not Zapatismo. In Aguilar's mind Zapatismo, as a political project, had betrayed the principles outlined in the Plan de Ayala. Aguilar pledged to rid Oaxaca of villainous Zapatista cadres "with whom I will never cooperate." Aguilar's letter ended ominously. Zapatismo, he warned, would ultimately fail because many of the movement's chieftains were "ruffians who subscribe to the Plan de Ayala only to amass personal fortunes."[169]

Zapata understood that Zapatismo was increasingly becoming a loser confederation of agrarian chieftainships. For him, this invariably entailed learning how to tolerate the heightened autonomy and unruliness of the powerful regional chieftains that had recently joined his revolutionary program. This included bringing Aguilar into the fold, whom Arenas trusted fully. In attempting to fish for greater adherents to the cause, Zapata had cast a wider net over the Indian central zones. The active recruitment of Indians involved forays into the Mixtec region of Oaxaca. Since late 1914, the Mixtec highlands had become a protracted battleground between Zapatismo, Carrancismo, and the forces of Higinio Aguilar. Zapata dispatched Miguel Salas, an ardent loyalist and an

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[168] Higinio Aguilar to Emiliano Zapata, Teotitlán, Oaxaca, 13 April 1915 Política Interior, 506, CR, AGN.
[169] Higinio Aguilar to Emiliano Zapata, Teotitlán, Oaxaca, 13 April 1915 Política Interior, 506, CR, AGN; Higinio Aguilar to the Zapatista chieftains, Teotitlán, Oaxaca, 13 April 1915, Política Interior, 506, CR, AGN.

enemy of Aguilar, to Huajuapan de León, Oaxaca, to gain adherents in a door-to-door fashion in a region where local Indians had proven "indifferent to the great commotion shaking the whole nation." The townsfolk in the La Mixteca feuded amongst each other and Zapata urged them to "do away with their petty family feuds…and collaborate with Zapatismo for the betterment of your race and salvation of the nation." Zapata entered the La Mixteca seeking a union with General Juan Andreu Almazán, who controlled a vast zone stretching from the Oaxacan Mixtec highlands to the mountains of San Felipe Maderas in Veracruz. To show Almazán he meant business, Zapata ordered the execution of Alfonso Santibáñez, who was "a ruthless local politician," and also had General Enrique San German shot in the head "for terrorizing people" and for "misappropriating public goods." Zapata defended his decision to execute his enemies by citing the disorder and corruption plaguing the ranks and zones under his control.[170]

Although Arenas personally hated Almazán (Zapata knew that Arenas and Almazán had competed for the control of areas in Puebla's Sierra Norte) he found Zapata's display of strength appealing. Arenas was impressed by Zapata's disciplinary methods, which involved executing people he perceived as the people's enemies, and Arenas now believed that only Zapata's revolution could help the indigenous people get back their land and water.[171] Fortino Ayaquica, a major Zapatista leader who along General Gildardo Magaña commanded the Tochimilco, Puebla Zapatista headquarters, lauded the efforts of the faithful Arenas who "with limited resources" combatted gangs of

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[170] F. Cortes to Emiliano Zapata, AZ, AGN, Caja 3, Exp., 32, Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 18 July 1915; Faustino Rojas to Emiliano Zapata, July 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja 10, Exp., 62, Foja, 62.
[171] Porfirio del Castillo, "Memorias del General Domingo Arenas," in *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 156-57.

marauders and defeated the Carranza army in dozens of pueblos.[172] At the head of the Brigada Arenas, and with Cirilo Arenas, Antonio Mora, and Isabel Guerrero serving under him, Domingo Arenas assisted the loyal Zapatista Porfirio Bonilla in the taking of the Irolo railroad station in Tlaxcala.[173]

With repeated battlefield successes came a renewed pledge of loyalty through a letter from Paniagua to Zapata on behalf of the Brigada Arenas, in which he informed the chieftain that he and Arenas would write another manifesto to the local people underscoring their need to further support Zapata.[174] On 27 May, Paniagua wrote to Zapata reporting that since so many men from the Brigada Arenas operated in different zones, the emissary Zapata had sent, Ignacio Flores had not enlisted all of the 2,450 people commanded by Domingo Arenas.[175] Bernardo Porta then produced a full report for Zapata that explained the rankings and charges of each Brigada Arenas chieftain.[176] Arenas continued betting on Zapata, and his own fame and prestige among the movement soared when he and Eufemio Zapata led a combined force that battered Carrancista strongholds throughout the Puebla-Tlaxcala border area. Furthermore, the reclaiming of territories did much to mend animosities caused by miscommunications and mistrusts within the Arenas camp. With Eufemio Zapata's help, in June 1915 Arenas had regained control of his hometown, Santa Inés Zacatelco. The combined Arenista-Zapatista force

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[172] Domingo Arenas and Alberto L. Paniagua to Fortino Ayaquica, 30 May 1915, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 6 August 1937, p. 3.
[173] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Calpulalpam, Tlaxcala, 6 May 1915, CGS, AGN, 6, Caja, 5, Exp., 46, f. 1.
[174] Alberto L. Paniagua to Emiliano Zapata, Ciudad de México, 12 May 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 8, Exp., 2, f. 12.
[175] Alberto L. Paniagua to Emiliano Zapata, Ciudad de México, 4 June 1915, CGS, AGN, Caja, 5, Exp., 46, f. 1.
[176] Bernardo Porta and Alberto L. Paniagua to Emiliano Zapata, Ciudad de México, 2 June 1915, CGS, AGN, Caja, 5, Exp., 46, f. 2.

then stormed into the city of Puebla, dismantling the forces of General Lino Ruiz, the commander assigned to occupy Puebla since Obregón had left the region. With this, Eufemio Zapata regained ground in the valley outlying San Martín Texmelúcan, which meant that the Zapatistas now had total control of the Sanctorum Valley and the central Ferrocarril Interoceánico. Eufemio Zapata boasted that with Domingo Arenas at his side all of Puebla would soon be secured for Zapatismo, and that Mexico City would surrender to Emiliano Zapata by the summer's end.[177] Domingo Arenas, for his part, felt that his brass ring, achieving local autonomy for the pueblos of the Los Volcanes, was within reach.[178]

Once the Zapatista movement spread beyond its core region in Morelos, however, it could not escape being damaged by the personal ambitions of its leaders, and Arenas began finding the proliferation of Morelos's Zapatistas into his zone disruptive. Some of the southern generals competed not only for Zapata's preference, but for higher positions; other rebel cadres cared for little more than the complete control of their immediate zones. Some leaders attempted to reorder their subordinates, but in response, new chieftains emerged and formed their own gangs, heightening animosities. Arenas stated that the internecine struggles within the Zapatista ranks could potentially weaken the movement in the Los Volcanes.[179]

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[177] War Corresponent, "Son Tomadas Plazas de Zacatelco y Panzacola," *El Combate*, 18 June 1915, p.1; War Correspondent, "Las Tropas Constitucionalistas están en Peligro de ser flanqueadas por las Tropas del General Eufemio Zapata," *El Combate*, 18 June 1915, p.1.
[178] Maurilio Mejía to Emiliano Zapata, San Vicente, State of Mexico, 28 June 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 8, exp., 6, foja, 63; Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 15 July 1915, AZ, AGN, Caja, 9, exp., 2, no page.
[179] Crisanto Cuellar Abaroa, *The Revolution, Vol. 1*, 184-86.

While serving Zapata, the Brigada Arenas had grown in size tremendously. Arenas reorganized his army, and by 15 October 1915 he informed Zapata that he had renamed his army, as Zapata had instructed, the *Ejército Convencionista, División de Oriente, Brigada Arenas*--Conventionist Army, Division of the Orient, Arenas Brigade, but only the name Brigada Arenas stuck. The major *jefes*, the *Estado Mayor*, was comprised of Domingo Arenas, Alberto L. Paniagua, and Isabel Guerrero.[180] The revamped Brigada Arenas had 30 high officers, 180 lower officers, and 3,560 troops. Ayaquica noted that new regiments were forming under the title of the División Arenas, led by General Trinidad Sánchez at the command of 400 men. Even with the growth of Arenas' popular army, Zapata possessed the final word in all crucial decisions, and Arenas stated that he was ready to obey "any dictate" coming from Zapata himself. By January 1916 Arenas controlled a large zone in the Oriente Central and, needing money, asked Zapata for 30,000 pesos in "small bills" for the purchase of everyday items.[181] Zapata worried about the growth of the División Arenas, which was comprised of many former federal soldiers, but Arenas assured him that the men were loyal to the "Revolutionary Convention" and committed to forming a government in accordance with the tenets of the Plan de Ayala.[182]

On 10 March, at Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Arenas gathered the regional chieftains from the Los Volcanes pueblos and, much in the manner Zapata himself had done in

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[180] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Cuernavaca, Morelos, "Ejército Convencionista," 15 October 1915, reprinted by Fortino Ayaquica in *El Hombre Libre*, 9 August 1937, p. 3.
[181] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Nanacamilpa, Tlaxcala, 7 January 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 1; Domingo Arenas to Emilano Zapata, Nanacamilpa, Tlaxcala, 21 January 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 2.
[182] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Jojutla, Morelos, 27 March 1916, reprinted by Fortino Ayaquica in *El Hombre Libre*, 9 August 1937, p. 3.

Ayoxuxtla, Puebla in November 1911, he had them profess an unwavering loyalty to the Plan de Ayala and the Conventionist Government. Arenas then wrote to Zapata that all the new men serving him were "committed patriots" who had set aside their local loyalties to serve the greater agrarian cause. Arenas had provided Zapata with the names and ranks of the 37 regional chieftains who had recently enlisted in the Brigada and División Arenas.[183] Days later, Zapata wrote to Arenas to inform him that swearing to "uphold the Plan de Ayala to the bitter end" was more important than his men's adherence to the Convention. Zapata, however, did thank Arenas for his "proven valor and revolutionary principles." Zapata also wrote to General José Sabino Díaz, who operated in Santa Rita Tlahuapan, to alert him to the maneuvers of the new recruits of Arenas. More than likely, Zapata wanted Sabino Díaz, one his most trusted allies, to supervise Arenas.[184] Zapata gave General Francisco Mendoza the complete control of the major military plazas stretching from Izúcar de Matamoros to Atlixco, so now Mendoza's authority bled into the territory of Arenas. Zapata had endowed Mendoza with greater authority, but warned that he would hold Mendoza responsible for the loss of any territory or pueblo. Nevertheless Mendoza, and not Arenas, now possessed the Convention's political authority of Zapatista-held Puebla. With that measure Zapata attempted to curb the regional influence of Arenas.[185]

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[183] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, 11 March 1916, reprinted by Fortino Ayaquica in *El Hombre Libre*, 11 August 1937, p. 3.

[184] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 17 March 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 72, Exp., 17, f. 417; Emiliano Zapata to José Sabino Díaz, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 17 March 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 72, Exp., 17, f. 418.

[185] Emiliano Zapata to Francisco Mendoza, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 17 March 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 72, Exp., 17, f. 429; Emiliano Zapata to Francisco Pliego and other Revolutionary Jefes, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 17 March 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 72, Exp., 17, f. 426. Zapata informed Mendoza, a trusted general from the southwest of Puebla, that he would no longer tolerate any loss of territory to the Carranza army, especially in a region in Puebla's west where every centimeter of territory had been won by blood.

Arenas knew that Zapata had appointed Mendoza, but he expressed no resentment and decided to help Zapata in the matter of stamping out the rural crime plaguing central Puebla. As a case in point, on 21 March 1916, the men of Arenas helped General José Sabino Díaz punish Tranquilino García and his subordinates, all former Zapatistas, for stealing the food that had been stored in the warehouse of the general headquarters in Santa Rita Tlahuapan. Domingo Arenas set up the war council to judge the unruly elements.[186] Zapatismo, Arenas made clear, should not be understood solely as a movement, but as a philosophy; if land was to be returned to the people it had to be taken from the haciendas, and to better coordinate the rebel movements and land invasions, he called upon the local generals and other military cadres in Puebla to punish rural criminals, impart the tenets of the Plan de Ayala, and "defend the principles of the sovereign revolutionary Convention."[187]

The Twilight of Domingo Arenas

Although Arenas had given back lands to peasants in his zone and had tried to cooperate in the matter of administering revolutionary politics with the members of the Zapatista high command in Puebla, the Zapatista leaders stationed in Tochimilco had not looked with great favor at the growing influence of Arenas. As for Arenas, in the late spring of 1916 he stated that he was disgusted by the endemic banditry plaguing his home state. In the hilly outskirts of San Martín Texmelucan the Brigada Arenas attacked a group of Zapatistas Arenas claimed "had turned to banditry." Arenas reported the numerous abuses committed by the unruly Zapatistas, involving arson and the murder,

[186] José Sabino Díaz to Emiliano Zapata, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, 21 March 1916, AZ, AGN, Caja, 7, Exp., 6, F. 62.
[187] Acta del Secretario Joubert, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, 10 March 1916, AZ, AGN, Caja, 7, Exp., 7, F. 63.

rape, and kidnapping of native villagers, to the main headquarters in Tlaltizapán, Morelos. The Zapatista Generals Gildardo Magaña and Fortino Ayaquica refused to acknowledge the accusations made by Arenas and instead questioned his loyalty to Zapata.[188] Despite the festering animosities, by giving Arenas the authority to invade the state of Mexico and capture Tlalmanalco and Chalco in June, Zapata showed that he trusted Arenas. Zapata told Arenas that he had to cooperate with other leaders and carry out murderous attacks on the enemy "to avoid wasting time, valuable war supplies, and lives."[189]

Believing his army had served Zapata well in previous campaigns, Arenas wrote to Zapata on 12 August to persuade the Morelian leader to dispel false rumors that circulated about the Brigada Arenas. Zapata had received a communique from the Zapatistas on 28 July stating that the Brigada Arenas was rife with internal conflict. But Arenas denied any existence of "dissension" and "intrigue." Rather, he let Zapata know that other Zapatistas had vilified him for exercising order, and for reminding them that: "The Revolution was made for the Pueblo, not for the revolutionaries."[190] Arenas let Zapata know that he had instructed Paniagua and other chieftains in the Los Volcanes to "begin working on the formation of *colonias*-settlements, while others worked on the provisional redistribution of lands."[191] Arenas also remobilized men in the sierras of Puebla and tightened his control over parts of the state of Mexico and Tlaxcala. The aim

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[188] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Tlaltizapán Morelos, 10 April 1916 AGN, AZ, Caja 13, Exp., 10, F. 12; José Espinoza Barreda to Emiliano Zapata, 9 June 1916, Tochimilco, Puebla, AGN, AZ, Caja 13, Exp., 16, F. 42; Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, AGN, AZ, Exp. 2, f.8, July 1916.
[189] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 25 June 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 72, Exp., 17, f. 452.
[190] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 12 August 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 3-4.
[191] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 14 August 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 7.

of Arenas was to control most of the Oriente Central, and had begun to honor the Plan de Ayala, and, more importantly, his people, by giving back lands to indigenous peasants.[192]

The rivals of Arenas argued that he had only reformed some colonies to please Zapata, and warned the Morelian chieftain about the duplicitousness of the Tlaxcallan leader. Trouble brewed again in Puebla when Arenas asked José Sabino Díaz to demobilize and surrender all the weapons his men possessed to the Brigada Arenas headquarters in Santa Rita Tlahuapan. Much of the weaponry Díaz possessed was given to him by Zapata himself. Díaz also told Arenas that he and his men only responded to Zapata's orders.[193] On 23 August, Benigno Zenteno reported that an angry Arenas had vowed to "wipe out all the jefes [Zapata] had appointed in the zone." Zenteno also reported, falsely, that Arenas had "executed Sabino Díaz at Tlahuapan after sacking his headquarters."[194]

Everardo González also reported to Zapata on 25 August that Arenas was out of control. González accused Arenas of executing Díaz, and of stealing cattle to feed his men. Moreover, according to González, Arenas had cooperated with the Felicistas in recent campaigns and was now "a reactionary," who "used Zapatismo to advance his own interests."[195] González and Zenteno had misinformed Zapata about the death of Díaz. The Brigada Arenas had indeed attacked the headquarters of Díaz, but the general himself survived the assault. On 26 August, Zapata received a lengthy letter from Díaz stating

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[192] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 26 August 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 9.
[193] José Sabino Díaz to Emiliano Zapata, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, 25 August 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 13 August 1937, p. 3.
[194] Hilario Ramos to Emiliano Zapata, Juchitepec, Estado de México, 23 August 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 13 August 1937, p. 3.
[195] Everardo González to Emiliano Zapata, Juchitepec, Estado de México, 25 August 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 13 August 1937, p. 3.

that "Domingo Arenas had kept close contact with enemy emissaries and had agreed to meet with federal army leaders at Nanacamilpa." Díaz also stated that Arenas carried two letters from Máximo Rojas proposing an armistice between the Brigada Arenas and the federal army. Arenas, Díaz wrote, "had joined [Zapatismo] to advance his own interests," committing countless depredations "in the name of the Plan de Ayala."[196]

Perhaps unaware of the scathing letters accusing him of great misdeeds, on 28 August Arenas dispatched General Antonio Mora to occupy the state of Hidalgo at the head of 1,000 men. Mora had commanded 5,000 men in an attack the Brigada Arenas had launched against the federal army in Puebla's capital in late August. Arenas, however, asked that Zapata endow him with "greater authority." He needed "to incorporate into his forces all revolutionaries who lacking direction have caused great harm to the pueblos and have tarnished the Revolution with their constant robberies and raping [of women]…moreover, they refuse to fight the enemy, and, under the pretext of serving only the General Headquarters, they refuse to follow my orders."[197] Arenas further informed Zapata that, as the Zapatista leader had requested, his army had attacked the Constitutionalists in the Huasteca of Veracruz and the Sierra Norte de Puebla.[198]

Despite allegations that Arenas plotted to destroy Zapatismo and had agents infiltrate Zapata's main headquarters, Zapata wanted to set up a meeting with Arenas on 8 September to clear up the growing conflict.[199] However, Everardo González and

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[196] José Sabino Díaz to Emiliano Zapata, Santa Rita Tlahuapan, Puebla, 26 August 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 16 August 1937, p. 3.
[197] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 31 August 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 18 August 1937, p. 3.
[198] Arenas to Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 31 August 1916.
[199] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, no date, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 18 August 1937, p. 3; Everardo González to Emiliano Zapata, Tulapan, Veracruz, 6 September 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 18 August 1937, p. 3. In this letter González wrote that, wishing to undermine the

Antonio Beltrán informed Zapata that Arenas "had ordered the executions of Zapatistas," and warned Zapata that Arenas "was a Felicista" and had acted as a "virtual tyrant in small pueblos in Hidalgo." Arenas, they said, exercised "terror" to intimidate populations and had "killed General Cázarez and General Castañeda who had opposed him."[200] Fortino Ayaquica reported to Zapata of recent allegations by the Zapatista "Hilario Ramos confirming that Arenas was a vile traitor, who was attempting to exterminate all who opposed his local dominance."[201]

The September 8 meeting never materialized; and by 16 September, Arenas had graver things to worry about because he had divided his army among long stretches of territory running from "the Huastecas" to "regions far-removed in the north of Puebla." Moreover, the federal army had sent large units of battle-hardened Yaqui fighters to hunt down the Brigada Arenas. And Arenas worried that without greater economic aid from Zapata the Brigada Arenas could lose the area of Apizaco, which had given the Convention army the control of the trains coming into Tlaxcala from the east.[202] Believing that he and Zapata could coordinate a definitive attack on the major plaza of Texcoco and take the state of Mexico, Arenas remained hopeful and thus continued betting on the Morelian chieftain.[203] By 9 October the army of Arenas had mobilized fully into Hidalgo and, as stated in his own words, "the indefatigable Brigada Arenas

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Revolution, Arenas had executed numerous Zapatistas, and had done so in extralegal forms. Unfortunately, we do not know how Zapata responded to González's accusations of Arenas.

[200] Everardo González to Emiliano Zapata, Tulapan, Estado de México, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 20 August 1937, p. 3.

[201] Fortino Ayaquica to Emiliano Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 12 September 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 20 August 1937, p. 3.

[202] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 18 September 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 19-20.

[203] Arenas to Zapata, 18 September.

defeated so many federal soldiers" they were able to collect more than 300 horses, giving his army greater mobility in the higher sierras.[204]

Any hope of coordinating a definitive attack with Zapata to take Texcoco, however, was thwarted completely in late October when Zapatistas presumably serving under Fortino Ayaquica attacked members the Brigada Arenas in the Los Volcanes of Puebla. Arenas excoriated Ayaquica for leading the attack, telling the Zapatista leader that his group "professed the religion of revolutionary principles." Arenas then warned Ayaquica adding that "just as we have fought against Porfirismo, Huertismo, and Carrancismo, we possess more than the necessary vigor to combat bad revolutionaries whom, driven by lowly passions, turn their weapons against this group of real revolutionaries."[205] Ayaquica's response to Arenas did not wait. He told Arenas that he "never acted without conviction," and that "he was a greater human being and revolutionary" than him.[206] Knowing that Ayaquica was a major Zapatista general and had Zapata's ear, however, Arenas attempted to persuade Ayaquica to meet with him and sign a pact to end their conflict "for the Revolution's benefit."[207]

Domingo Arenas probably wanted to mend his feud with Ayaquica because he had already acquired a mortal enemy in the form of Everardo González, whose men, in addition to "attacking members of the Brigada Arenas," had "killed defenseless people, had raped numerous women and young girls, and had looted the homes of honest families

[204] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 9 October 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 22.
[205] Domingo Arenas to Fortino Ayaquica, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 31 October 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 23.
[206] Fortino Ayaquica to Domingo Arenas, Tochimilco, Puebla, 2 November 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 24.
[207] Domingo Arenas to Fortino Ayaquica, Los Ranchos, Puebla, 5 November 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 25; Domingo Arenas to Fortino Ayaquica, Los Ranchos, Puebla, 6 November 1916, f. 27.

and comrades." Arenas was committed "not to leave the zone," vowing instead to "hunt down and kill [the men of González] not as revolutionaries, but as bandits."[208] Arguing that all the Zapatista leaders had a common enemy in Carranza, Arenas suggested purging the noxious elements such as González from within Zapatismo to proceed to the Revolution's victory. Arenas trusted that Zapata still found him an honest and diligent revolutionary, but stated that, "should the recent intrigue tarnish my name it will only be natural for history to put all men in the place that they deserve."[209] Arenas declared that his army had waged a "war of extermination" against the "reactionary" Felicistas, "who had been the cause of many calamities" in the state of Hidalgo. When Enrique Bonillas did not arrive to the Brigada Arenas camp as Arenas and Zapata had agreed, the Tlaxcallan chieftain worried and moved his forces to the higher sierras. The plaza of Zacatlán was already in Arenas' sights, and the invasion of the Sierra Norte de Puebla would proceed without Zapata's blessing on 17 November.[210]

The rival Zapatista leaders interpreted the foray of the Brigada Arenas into Zacatlán as an act of treason, and "the ultimate betrayal by Arenas" came when he signed a pact of unification with envoys of President Venustiano Carranza "at the Hacienda de San Matías Atzala, in the District of Huejotzingo, Puebla," on 1 December 1916. At the meeting, Luis M. Hernández, in "representation of General Cesáreo Castro, the Military Commander of the State of Puebla," approved the "adhesion, and not the surrender" of

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[208] Domingo Arenas to Everardo González, Los Ranchos, Puebla, 6 November 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 26.
[209] Domingo Arenas to Fortino Ayaquica, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 9 November 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 30.
[210] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 18 November 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 32.

the Brigada Arenas into the federal army.[211] The federal army representatives and the Brigada Arenas generals must have engaged in serious negotiations. The unification pact was signed and made official after the federal army leaders agreed to make Domingo Arenas a major federal army general, the military commander of the San Martín Texmelucan headquarters, and commander of all the federal army forces of the zone stretching from San Martín Texmelucan to Calpulalpan in Tlaxcala. In Puebla and Tlaxcala, only Castro would have greater authority than Arenas. All the jefes under Arenas signed the unification pact, and all the involved parties agreed that Arenas would subsequently aid Castro in the federal army's reorganization in the Los Volcanes of Puebla.[212] Domingo Arenas had received what he wanted, real authority over the Los Volcanes, which included his native Zacatelco, so that now he could give land legally to the zone's indigenous peasants. With all that was at stake, Arenas decided to bet on Carranza on 1 December 1916.

Arenas wrote that he had still not lost hope on Emiliano Zapata. On 27 November he had received a letter from Zapata in which the Morelian chieftain expressed a deep gratitude, thanking Arenas for his efforts in the matter of "bettering the individual and collective lives" of the common people in the Los Volcanes. On 7 December, Arenas wrote back to Zapata vowing that he would terminate the "reactionaries" who stormed the pueblos. Arenas' mention of fulfilling "their ideals" referred to the fervent agrarianism shared by both men, and Arenas vowed that he would not stop fighting to realize them. "Innumerable lives," he wrote, "had been lost already" and his army had

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[211] Alberto L. Paniagua, "Declaration of the unification," Puebla, Puebla, 1 December 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 1 September 1937, p. 3.
[212] Paniagua, "Declaration," p. 3.

sallied forth in their mission to "give back land to every inhabitant [of their zone] who needed land."[213] Arenas claimed that he had not turned his back on Zapatismo; rather, he wrote to Zapata that the unruly and nefarious generals Benigno Zenteno, Everardo González, Próspero Cornejales and others" had attacked the Brigada Arenas, forcing him to depart from the Texmelucan territory. Arenas accused Zapata's generals of pillage, murder, rape, and other outrageous crimes. He also stated that the recent negotiations of the Villistas and Zapatistas with Félix Díaz and Higinio Aguilar had prompted his decision to separate, "perhaps permanently," from the Zapatistas.[214] Another letter from Arenas to Zapata on 7 December shows that the Brigada Arenas leaders claimed "that they had left the [Zapatistas] because no one in that camp offered them any guarantees" of their survival. In other words, the Arenas chieftains feared for their lives.[215] In his dealings with Zapata, it is difficult to appreciate the real intentions of Arenas.

On 21 December Arenas sent an envoy to Zapata in Morelos to read out a letter he had written to the Morelian chieftain which stated that he "had never surrendered" to "Them who will never be friends or protectors of the proletariat." Moreover, Arenas informed Zapata that "he had not attacked men whom he considered comrades," adding that he "continued to hold Zapata in the highest esteem." Arenas added that "to defeat the enemy, guile was more important than sheer military power."[216] Arenas wanted to convince Zapata that he remained loyal to him and attempted to dupe the Carrancistas.

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[213] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 7 December 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 33.
[214] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 7 December 1916.
[215] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 7 December 1916, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 3 September 1937, p. 3.
[216] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 21 December 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 34.

Arenas had refused to arrest an envoy of Zapata carrying a message written by Zapatista sympathizers from the United States. Such a move, Arenas argued, "would have garnered me the adulation of the camp that some people claim I surrendered to, but would have tarnished my reputation as a man committed to the defense of the Pueblo."[217] In wanting to meet with Zapata, Arenas may have plotted a capture of the Zapatista leader, or, it may be possible that his affection for Zapata remained genuine, and that he wanted Zapata to separate from unruly elements whose behavior disgusted Arenas. Ayaquica, however, counseled Zapata on the matter of Arenas, instructing the Morelian chieftain to proceed with great caution. Arenas, Ayaquica stated, was a shameless traitor. Ayaquica recalled that Arenas had once pronounced Zapata the heart of the Revolution. How could Arenas, then he asked, "betray a man for whom he fervidly professes such a great admiration?"[218]

Arenas attempted to set up a meeting with Zapata on several occasions, but Alberto L. Paniagua and other generals from the Brigada Arenas cautioned against this. Arenas had claimed that the failure of his attempt to meet with Zapata largely informed his decision to join the federal army; he had first to confer with the other chieftains, however, who unanimously opted for their departure from the Zapatista ranks. On 1 December, therefore, although the army of Arenas had diminished significantly after the recent fighting against the federal army units in the high sierras of Hidalgo and Puebla, the Constitutionalist army gained anywhere from 7,000 to 8,000 adherents with his defection from the Zapatista ranks. Soon the image of Arenas, which had once been tarnished by the Constitutionalist press, was revamped, and by March 1917 he was hailed

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[217] Ibid.

[218] Fortino Ayaquica, "Como perdió la vida el General Domingo Arenas," *El Hombre Libre*, 1 September 1937, p. 3.

as a great Indian liberator and a patriot who was restoring peace to Puebla and Tlaxcala in battle after battle against the Zapatistas.[219]

Unification with the Carrancistas, however, meant that Arenas now had greater control over his zone. The Brigada Arenas then battered the Zapatistas in several battles throughout central Puebla. In the spring of 1917, the fields lying between Cholula, Huejotzingo, and Atlixco became pools of blood, but the forces of Arenas emerged victorious against the Zapatistas, gaining much of the territory that stretched from the Cholula Valley to the foothills of the volcanoes Popocatépetl and Iztacíhuatl. The Constitutionalists were pleased with Arenas' expansion into this zone since the region had been a contested territory since 1914, and the control of this large stretch of land had allowed the Conventionists to invade Mexico City in 1914 and 1915. Pablo González and Carranza felt that with Arenas in control of the Los Volcanes of Puebla the Zapatistas would no longer threaten México State and Mexico City.[220]

The Zapatistas had lost much ground in the Oriente Central, and the Brigada Arenas was largely responsible for this loss of territory. Zapata's generals informed the Morelian chieftain about Arenas' latest movements. Arenas wrote to Zapata again in the winter, assuring him that other Zapatista generals had lied to him and, through intrigue, had caused the great rift that now separated the Revolution's true agrarians.[221] Arenas argued that he had joined the Constitutionalists and had redistributed lands under

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[219] Expediente Particular del General Domingo Arenas, AHDN, XI/111/1-19, f. 23-33, 37-41; "Han cooperado a la pacificación de Puebla y Tlaxcala las tropas del General Domingo Arenas; Los Indígenas han recibido especial protección y el problema agrario está casi resuelto en esas regiones," complete interview found in *El Demócrata,* 21 March 1917, p. 5.
[220] Partes de las Operaciones de Guerra en el Estado de Puebla, Pablo González to Venustiano Carranza, in Expediente Particular del General Domingo Arenas, AHDN, XI/111/1-19, f. 55-61.
[221] Fortino Ayaquica, "Como perdió la vida el General Arenas," *El Hombre Libre*, 6 September 1937, p. 3.

Carranza's authority not to augment his power, but to make life better for the region's indigenous peasants. Zapata, however, asked Arenas to prove his loyalty, "by striking mortally" at the Carranza army.[222] Arenas never responded in the manner that Zapata had demanded. To Zapatistas such as Ayaquica and Everardo González, Arenas had betrayed the movement and had become a reactionary, and an enemy of the Liberating Army of the South, an offense punishable by death.[223] Zapata though about giving Arenas another chance, but he also realized that such a move would have caused greater dissension in his own movement, which he wanted to avoid at all costs; therefore, demanding hard proof of loyalty from Arenas made sense to Zapata.[224] Zapata would push further for a show of loyalty and put his men to work on the matter of reaching out to Arenas.

Sometime in March 1917, the Zapatista general Juan Barreda attempted to persuade Arenas to defect from Constitutionalism. Barreda reminded Paniagua that he and Arenas were serving the loathsome Carrancistas, enemies of the people who were "monsters" far worse than Juvencio Robles. Barreda cited the recent crimes of the Carranza army in Atlixco, which included the "indiscriminate" and "cowardly" executions of "women, children, and the elderly." What is more, the Carrancista soldiers, Barreda wrote, had raped women to the point that, disgusted and seeking redemption, the region's women had risen up in arms for the Revolution. Barreda urged Arenas and Paniagua to return to Zapatismo and honor their commitment to "Land and Justice!"[225] General Marcelo Caraveo also attempted to intervene on behalf of Arenas. He told

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[222] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Expediente Particular de Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 15 February 1917, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 8 September 1937, p. 3.
[223] Fortino Ayaquica, "Como perdió la vida el General Arenas," *El Hombre Libre*, 8 September 1937, p. 3.
[224] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Expediente Particular de Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 15 February 1917.
[225] Juan Barreda to Alberto L. Paniagua, Tochimilco, Puebla, March 1917, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 10 September 1937, p. 3 & 4.

Ayaquica and Zapata that Arenas possessed many redeemable qualities. Caraveo claimed to have "spoken to many Zapatista chieftains, and they are willing to assist General Arenas in launching a MASSIVE ATTACK ON PUEBLA against the enemy Carrancistas." To Caraveo, the rifts between Arenas and the Zapatistas had been caused by petty feuds and misunderstandings. Arenas, Caraveo wrote, was "one of those revolutionary jefes who live for the Revolution and he fights for our same cause, his work has proven it."[226]

Rhetoric would no longer convince Arenas to bet on Zapata again. Under the command of Carranza, the Brigada Arenas now controlled an area stretching from Río Frío in the state of México to Poza Rica, Veracruz. Possessing military jurisdiction of such a vast zone, Arenas began to dream of liberating all the nation's Indians. In late March, the Brigada Arenas made new forays into the domains of the recently- deceased Chieftain Juan Francisco Lucas in the Sierra Norte de Puebla,[227] separating further from Zapata. With this move into La Montaña, as the Sierra people under Lucas called their zone, Arenas now operated in a wide area inhabited by Nahua Indians, one that the Zapatistas had proven unable and even fearful to penetrate. Regarding his recent advances, Arenas explained the following to a comrade in Texmelucan, Puebla:

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[226] Marcelo Caraveo to Fortino Ayaquica, Tochimilco, Puebla, 23 March 1917, reptinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 4 October 1937, p. 3.
[227] Editorial, "Los Tres Juanes de la Sierra de Puebla." *Excélsior*, 30 November 1919. The Carranza army and the Zapatistas had feared Juan Francisco Lucas, who, according to those who travelled the Sierra de Puebla, possessed the unwavering loyalty of the Montaña people. The government believed that Lucas could raise an army of thousands, which could potentially decide the fate of the Revolution, in less than a week. See, Corresponsal, "Son fieles los indios del Patriarca Juan Fco. Lucas," *El Demócrata*, 6 February 1916, p. 1 & 4. The U.S. press through *The New York Times* wrote that, by raising and army of 15,000 Indians in Puebla, and, by recruiting Indian deserters from Huerta's army in the La Malintzin volcano, Juan Francisco Lucas, who was "the Patriarch of the Indians and a Methodist preacher," had tilted the balance of power in favor of the Constitutionalists. See, Associated Press, "Large Rebel Army is Menacing Puebla," *The New York Times*, 22 May 1914, p. 1 & 2.

"Together, with the hundreds of thousands of Indians living in a vast area encompassing the states of México, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, Puebla, and Veracruz, watchful and zealously with arms on hands, and willing to fight for the benefit of a disempowered peasantry, are all the fighters serving under the powerful Arenas Division." Arenas then continued "my men fight not to benefit themselves or a single person, but to bring forth the realization of the Revolution's promises."[228] Whereas Arenas had at one time filled the División Arenas with federal army defectors, he now recruited Indians whom he felt his army had "liberated," as he wrote, from marginalized highland pueblos. The Zapatistas had taken note of this, and Ayaquica concluded that Domingo Arenas and his brother Cirilo had acquired great fame and prestige in those zones by actually giving lands back to the needy indigenous peasants.[229]

It was at this juncture when on 20 March, Domingo Arenas wrote the letter cited at the beginning of this chapter to the Constitutionalist colonel, Porfirio del Castillo. The men should fight together, Arenas stated, because they belonged to the same "indigenous race." As Indian leaders, they were committed to the fulfillment "of the Revolution's sublime promises." Arenas stated that he "served the ranks of the Constitutionalist army with great honor," but he also sought to establish "permanent unions with all revolutionaries" who professed "…a great love for the land." What mattered most to Arenas, "was solving the nation's gravest problem, the agrarian one, which is a vexing issue impacting the welfare of the indigenous people and our national development."[230]

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[228] Domingo Arenas to Mariano Plaza, Texmelúcan, Puebla, AGM, UNAM, 31 March 1917, Caja 28, Exp., 1, foja, 476.
[229] Fortino Ayaquica, "Como perdió la vida el General Domingo Arenas," *El Hombre Libre*, 6 October 1937, p. 3.
[230] Arenas to Del Castillo, "Se trata de impulsar," *El Demócrata*, p. 3.

Arenas believed that the hacienda owners had kept the "nation unproductive and backwards" and he therefore wanted "to eliminate that class."[231] He may have believed that the Constitutionalists were committed to the fervent agrarianism to which he subscribed. Arenas may have attempted to cement a union with Porfirio del Castillo to return to Tlaxcala and actualize "the beautiful ideal" of redeeming the indigenous peasantry through land redistributions and creating "a México belonging to Mexicans."[232]

The Eagle's End

The union of the Brigada Arenas with Carranza did not last long. In May, José Hernández, a subaltern of Pablo González, wrote to General Fortunato Maycotte relating that he had been imprisoned by Domingo Arenas who "worked for the bandit leader Emiliano Zapata." Moreover, the letter read that Arenas and "the bandit Zapatistas" were "planning a definitive and destructive assault" against the federal army. The letter was supposed to be sent to Carranza, but it was intercepted by men working for Ayaquica and was relayed to Zapata instead.[233] Zapata and Arenas had communicated. In a communique Zapata sent to Arenas, "ordered to be read to all the people serving in his zone," the Morelian chieftain declared that his Liberating army "would no longer attack the forces of Domingo Arenas."[234]

1917 had been a tough and trying year for Zapata, and one of his envoys, Enrique Bonilla, had even attempted to negotiate a Zapatista unification, by order of chief, with General Pablo González, despite the general's egregious history of counterinsurgent

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[231] Ibid.
[232] Arenas to Del Castillo, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.
[233] José Hernández to Fortunato Maycotte, Tochimilco, Puebla, 15 and 18 May 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 14, f. 9.
[234] Emiliano Zapata to Domingo Arenas, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 16 April 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 10, f. 12.

terror. According to some information Zapata had received, González was in agreement with plans to "eliminate Venustiano Carranza." Zapata began reaching out those he believed were disaffected Constitutionalists. He was told by Magaña in Tochimilco that Carranza had fallen out of favor with González, and stationed almost motionless in Tlaltizapán to protect that zone in Morelos, Zapata was forced to place full trust in whatever his general's words.[235] Magaña informed Zapata that his men, namely one Dr. Ollivier y Novoa, who worked diligently for the victory of the "South," had established communications with Arenas, who had interviewed with Ollivier y Novoa and three other Zapatista jefes. Arenas had given the men "safe passes" from the Sierra Norte de Puebla, where they campaigned, to his headquarters in Texmelucan, where he showed them his real motives for having joined the Carrancistas, "an enormous cache of war materiel…which they were now willing to use against Carranza…"[236] Moreover, the communique stated that Arenas was now willing to put all his men and supplies at the Zapatistas' service. Arenas had had problems with generals González and Maycotte, and desired to assist the Zapatistas in a definitive attack on the city of Puebla to acquire "two million pesos in silver and gold…" Magaña told Zapata that Arenas had even cautioned against laying any trust in General González, whom he considered disingenuous to the core. Zapata had been convinced, and agreed to convene a meeting with Arenas at the earliest time possible.[237]

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[235] Emiliano Zapata to Enrique Bonilla, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 13 May 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 14, f. 8; Gildraro Magaña to Emiliano Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 29 May 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 14, f. 15-16.
[236] Gildardo Magaña to Emiliano Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 30 May 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 14, f. 64.
[237] Emiliano Zapata to Gildardo Magaña, Tlaltizapán, Morelos 1 June 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 16, f. 1.

One of Zapata's most trusted allies, Juan Espinoza Barreda had conferred with Arenas in the home of Paniagua in Texmelucan on 9 June to gauge at the leader's intentions, and learned at the meeting from Arenas that he had signed a unification pact with the Carranza army to "buy needed time" and acquire war materiel. Moreover, Arenas had "time and again" disobeyed the federal military's orders to return confiscated land to hacienda owners, whom he had dispossessed "to form several agrarian colonies in his zone" to the benefit of the indigenous peasants. Arenas, Barrera wrote, had behaved with decorum by "liberating war prisoners" and treating those who surrendered with respect. Arenas' rejected the notion that he was a traitor and only expressed hatred toward Everardo González, whom he likened to a monster for invading and razing agrarian colonies to the ground, killing innumerable unarmed people.[238] What we observe from the behavior of Arenas, therefore, going back to Garciadiego, was his dangerous attempt to bet on the better horse.

In another bold move, Arenas approached the Zapatistas once more in June to propose a reunification of their forces. Zapata agreed to meet Arenas, but busy with his headquarters at Tlaltizapán, he sent Fortino Ayaquica and Gildardo Magaña, two of his most trusted generals, to confer with Arenas. The meeting took take place near the Zapatista headquarters in Tochimilco.[239] On 11 June 1917, Arenas met with Gildardo Magaña, Fortino Ayaquica, and Ismael Velasco at Atlixco. According to the diary of Ayaquica, the Zapatistas gave Arenas an ultimatum; in a month's time he should break with Carranza and issue a formal declaration of surrender to Zapata. Ayaquica wrote that

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[238] Juan Barreda to Gildardo Magaña, Tochimilco, Puebla, 9 June 1916, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 16, f. 41-42; Gildardo Magañ to Emiliano Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 9 June 1916, AZ, AGN, Caja, 13, Exp., 16, f. 47.
[239] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, July 1917, AZ, AGN, Caja, 78, Exp., 2, f.8.

Arenas honored neither request.[240] Contrary to what historians from Tlaxcala have written about the Arenas-Zapata conflict, the men had attempted to sort out their differences diplomatically. Arenas was not obsessed with acting entirely independently nor with achieving Zapata's demise.[241]

The agrarianism of Domingo Arenas kept him tied to the people's interests, and not with the needs of the Zapatistas or the Carranza government.[242] It was the commitment of Arenas to the peasantry which complicated his ability, or willingness, fully to serve Zapata *or* Carranza. In that sense, Raymond Buve's thesis is correct: Arenas would serve neither master fully. The fervid autonomy of Arenas, however, was driven primarily by his need to serve the needs of the dispossessed indigenous peasantry, a class of people he believed were the nation's disinherited.[243]

Arenas showed this commitment on 24 January 1917 when he wrote to the Comisión Local Agraria del Estado de Tlaxcala (Tlaxcala's Local Agrarian Commission) that he would begin a vigorous campaign to "redistribute lands to the indigenous race." He described such labor as "patriotic," arguing that that "was the minimum the heroic people of this state deserved." In time, Arenas planned to create large "agrarian colonies" in the "form of *ejidos*."[244] Porfirio del Castillo responded that the "government that he and [Arenas] served" had already begun benefitting the landless indigenous people by putting into vigorous effect the application of the "6 January Agrarian Law" of Carranza.

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[240] Miguel León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl de Emiliano Zapata* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978), 23-24.
[241] Ramírez Rancaño, *La Revolución en los Volcanes*, 140-146; Portillo Cirio, 52-53.
[242] Miguel León Portilla, "El agrarismo de Domingo Arenas," in *Tlaxcala, textos de su historia: Siglo XX, Vol. 14*, Lía García Verástegui, Comp. (Tlaxcala, Tlax.: CONACULTA, 1991), 372-374; 377.
[243] Buve, *¡Ni Carranza ni Zapata!* in *El Movimiento Revolucionario*, 279-280; Arenas, "Se trata," p. 3.
[244] Domingo Arenas to Comisión Local Agraria del Estado de Tlaxcala, San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla, 24 January 1917, AGET, RRO, Caja, 209, Exp., 22, f. 81.

Del Castillo contended that the "pueblo *campesino* possessed the right to benefit from the Revolution's fruits," but cautioned that all future action had to obey the Constitutional law.[245] By January 1917 the Constitutionalists had attempted to truncate Arenas' plans. The endemic warfare and poverty had heightened Tlaxcala's problem of banditry, and notable landholders near the La Malintzin such as Diego de Haro complained that local bandit Cruz Carcilaso maneuvered to join his bandit gang to the notorious Márquez brothers, heavily-armed rebels from the Sierra Norte de Puebla. The Leales de Tlaxcala had a simple solution to remedying the problem of rural banditry: Arenas should mobilize his Brigada and División to hunt down bandits and protect the interests of landholders.[246] But Arenas would not be a tool of the Carranza government, and much less of the local hacienda owners whom he had sworn to eliminate. All of this contributed to the growing disaffection of Arenas.

On 30 August, after renewed negotiations that had dragged on since June, the Zapatistas summoned Arenas to a second meeting at the Hacienda de Huexocoapan, in the immediate vicinity of their Tochimilco headquarters. The Zapatista representatives again were Ayaquica and Magaña, and this time they were accompanied by General Encarnación Vega Gil. Ayaquica wrote that much was discussed, but that all parties involved agreed that they should unify to advance "the national agrarian cause."[247] Since June to August Ayaquica had complained about the Brigada's violation of their

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[245] Porfirio del Castillo to Domingo Arenas, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 27 January 1917, AGET, RRO, Caja, 209, Exp., 22, f. 82.
[246] Andrés Cervantes to Porfirio del Castillo, Actltzayanca, Tlaxcala, 18 January 1917, AGET, RRO, Caja, 208, Exp., 34, f. 227; Comunicado de A. Maldonado, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 6 February 1917, AGET, RRO, Caja, 208, Exp., 26, f. 183.
[247] Fortino Ayaquica, "Primera Entrevista con Arenas," San Baltasar, Puebla, 11 June 1917, excerpted from, "Como perdió la vida el General Domingo Arenas," *El Hombre Libre*, 3 November 1937;

agreements when Zapatistas were attacked on several occasions by the Brigada Arenas in the Puebla-Tlaxcala sierras. Arenas made a serious promise to Ayaquica, committing himself to punish the culprits.[248] Porfirio del Castillo had confirmed the fact that Arenas had been zealous in his agrarianism, adhered steadfastly to the Plan de Ayala, and had refused to surrender to the Constitutionalists.[249] Arenas may have felt that the time was ripe to bet on Zapata again.

When Arenas arrived with his emissaries to the 30 August meeting, however, the conference room was filled with tension, and minutes into the meeting there was an erruption of gunshots, fistfights, and stabbings. In the aftermath, Domingo Arenas lay mortally wounded. Versions of what transpired on that fateful day differ dramatically. In his memoir, Colonel Porfirio del Castillo stated that Arenas agreed to meet with the Zapatistas believing they would "surrender their Tochimilco headquarters to the Constitutionalists." The Zapatistas, the colonel wrote, had made Arenas believe they would surrender all their fighters in the Cholula Valley and turn over a large cache of weapons and ammunition. What is more, according to Del Castillo, Arenas had told him that if the government of Carranza gave him trains replete with food, material to rebuild homes and schools, and if he also counted with the backing of civil engineers to reconstruct war-torn Morelos, he would win over the hearts and minds of the poor villagers in Zapata's zone. Into the summer of 1917 Arenas was thinking of rebuilding and reconstructing all of central México. Arenas informed Del Castillo that with the help of the government and many able teachers willing to work in rural schools he would

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[248] Domingo Arenas to Fortino Ayaquica, San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla, 9 August 1917, reprinted in *El Hombre Libre*, 5 November 1937, p. 3.
[249] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 157.

"pacify Morelos in six months." In the assessment of Porfirio del Castillo, Domingo Arenas paid with his life for attempting to implement competing agrarian reform on the terrain of the treacherous Zapatistas.[250]

Ignacio Coca Mendieta, one of the Arenistas escorting Domingo Arenas to Tochimilco, also wrote that Arenas was betrayed by the Zapatista generals. In his account, when the meeting began the Zapatista leaders embraced Arenas; pleasantries were exchanged followed by an amenable conversation. However, suddenly Domingo and his small band of followers found themselves surrounded by armed men. Ordered by General Magaña, Zapata's men jumped on the Arenistas with knives in hand, and the fallen bodies were then loaded with bullets. Coca Mendieta signaled Gildardo Magaña as Arenas' slayer. Believing that the Zapatistas had met them at the hacienda to surrender, the Tlaxcallan guard was literally defenseless before the attack.[251]

The account of Fortino Ayaquica reveals the differences in ethnicity and language that separated the people from the sugar-growing region of Morelos and Puebla, from the people from the high sierras of Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte. Ayaquica wrote that Arenas' men "had indigenous features and acted as such." Ayaquica did not trust the high-sierra Indians. He disliked the fact that the men following Arenas wore huaraches, white calzones, and the more traditional straw sombreros, as opposed to the vaquero sombreros worn by some of the Zapatista leaders. During the meeting, moreover, the men of Arenas spoke Náhuatl, which made Ayaquica very nervous. The "Tlaxcala Indians" and the Zapatistas, Ayaquica wrote, observed each other's every movement. Ayaquica

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[250] León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl*, 28-29; Del Castillo, 251-255; "Siguen rindiéndose jefes Zapatistas al Gral. Arenas; Autorizado por la superioridad," *El Nacional*, 11 August 1917, p. 1.
[251] León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl*, 30-31.

did not like the Indians' "dark penetrating eyes." In the culmination of the Ayaquica account, in the midst of the conversation, Arenas stormed out of his seat clutching his pistol, which prompted the Zapatistas to fire at him. Arenas, however, was not hit, and grabbed Magaña. Although Arenas had only one arm he defended himself well enough to fire a shot at Magaña, but missed. The two men then wrestled each other on the floor. Magaña finally managed to land on top of Arenas, pulled out his knife, and stabbed Arenas multiple times in the belly. Badly wounded, Arenas was barely able to muster the necessary strength to stand up. Ayaquica wrote that when the wounded Arenas attempted to flee, Gildardo Magaña and the others shot him down. To Ayaquica, Arenas was "a victim of his own conduct.[252]

Zapata had shown a willingness to forgive Arenas' transgressions. However, it had been some time since the Zapatistas in Tochimilco, an area that Zapata did not know well, had considered Domingo Arenas a "positively dangerous" foe. Since the Tochimilco generals harbored an intense hatred for Arenas his death occurred in a most ignominious fashion. They decapitated his lifeless body, and, in the same manner in which John the Baptist's severed head was showcased on a platter to Queen Salome, who by her own whim had ordered the Baptist's death, the generals delivered the severed head of Arenas to Emiliano Zapata as a trophy.[253] Tlaxcala's people would not forget that Arenas, who had been the people's selfless agrarian hero, was murdered in the most dishonorable way by Magaña. They also surmised that Zapata had ordered the murder of Arenas.[254]

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[252] Ibid., 31-38.
[253] Cuellar Abaroa, *Domingo Arenas*, 17-18.
[254] Ibid, 19.

To the Tlaxcallans, the murder of Domingo Arenas only reinforced prevailing beliefs about the Zapatista's "barbarity." More than a bandit and savage, Emiliano Zapata was also pegged a traitor of the agrarian revolution. A popular ballad (*corrido*) by an anonymous author declared Zapata's rebellion a—*causa perdida*--"lost cause." Rather than saving, the Mexican people, the song states, Zapata punished them. He was likened to a ruthless mercenary who persecuted and exterminated noble patriots such as Domingo Arenas.[255] Controlled by President Venustiano Carranza's Constitutionalists, the national media seized the opportunity to demonize Emiliano Zapata and followers in the wake of Arenas' execution. The media described the Zapatistas as "savage hordes," capable of committing the most nefarious acts.[256]

In the wake of the murder of Arenas, the Constitutionalists declared that the Zapatistas were nothing more than vile murderers. Judging by how Arenas' lifeless body was handled, it is clear that his slayers loathed him. The first major Constitutionalist military leader to learn of Arenas' demise was Colonel Porfirio del Castillo who was supposed to meet with him to discuss the particulars of the Zapatistas' surrender. When the surviving Arenistas reached Texmelucan and talked to Del Castillo, the colonel sent an urgent dispatch to Carranza's Secretary of War.[257]

On the morning of 2 September 1917, *Excélsior* printed a report of Arenas' death. Prior to his detachment from the 5th Division of the Orient, Arenas had been commissioned by General Pedro Villaseñor to protect all life and cargo traveling along the Ferrocarril Interoceanico in Puebla, an area where the Zapatistas had been derailing

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[255]Anonymous Author, Popular Corrido (Ballad), *Asesinato del Valiente General Domingo Arenas*.
[256] "Acto de Salvajismo de los Bandidos Zapatistas," *El Demócrata*, 14 January 1917, p.3.
[257] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 160.

many trains and making off with the cargo coming in and out of Puebla.[258] General Paniagua provided the media further details of the slaying. Paniagua stated that Arenas was caught off guard by the "Zapatista savages." The "Communist Mastermind," as some called Paniagua, wrote a letter to *Excélsior* stating that Domingo Arenas did not in fact die at the hacienda. He had been stabbed repeatedly by Magaña and was shot multiple times by his men, but was taken away "half dead" to the Tochimilco headquarters.[259] At Tochimilco, Magaña administered a coup de grace to Arenas. The Zapatistas then decapitated the lifeless body of Arenas, and kicked the head around. Subsequently, "they paraded the disfigured face around the town." Even more gruesome details followed. Paniagua wrote that the Zapatistas threw the headless body down a cliff to pick it up later but, realizing that it could be devoured by ravenous scavengers, they recovered it. To prevent the body from rotting on its long way to Tlaltizapán, which entailed a couple of days travel on horseback, they removed all the organs and drained out most of the blood, stuffing the insides with dry leaves and grass. They then stitched up the corpse with maguey thread and mounted it on a horse.[260] It may be that Paniagua embellished the details of his comrade's murder; however, the gory description of Arenas' murder may also showcase the Zapatistas' execution of their foes in spectacular fashion, and made of this type of murder a public display to dissuade others from challenging their rule. Zapata may have indeed ordered the execution of Arenas. Any talks of seeking a peace accord with the Tlaxcallan chieftain were part of a Zapatista ruse to kill Arenas.

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[258] Telegrama Especial, "El Gral. Arenas fue Víctima de una Infame Traición," *Excélsior*, 2 September 1917, p.1.
[259] "Fue verdaderamente salvaje el asesinato del Gral. Domingo Arenas," *Excélsior*, 5 September 1917, p.1.
[260] "Fue verdaderamente,"

Zapata had suffered much at the hands of the Arenas brothers; he knew that they and Alberto L. Paniagua were involved in the murder of his brother Eufemio at the hands of Sidornio "Loco" Camacho. Moreover, Domingo Arenas' men had been hunting down Zapatistas in Morelos, and Cirilo Arenas had offered "Loco" amnesty and guarantees if he joined the Constitutionalists.[261] Zapata would make the Arenistas suffer for the indignities he felt the leaders had inflicted upon him.

On 9 September, Zapata wrote a circular entitled, "Al Pueblo," in which he vilified Domingo Arenas. The circular, which in large part also provided Zapata's justification for Arenas' murder, stated: "Domingo Arenas, the traitor to the revolutionary cause, has paid with his life for the large series of crimes and infamies that he has committed, which tarnished the glorious Revolution of the South." The document also reckoned that Arenas was a hypocrite driven only by his unrestrained ambition."[262] Arenas had zealously guarded his domains; on 28 June 1916, he ordered his forces to attack the military camp of the Zapatista General Benigno Zenteno, a man Arenas had feuded with in Tlaxcala since 1914. The Brigada Arenas had resented the fact that Zenteno had set up a camp within the communities of the volcano Iztaccíhuatl. During the raid, the Arenistas killed Colonel Angel Zenteno, the brother of Benigno and burned the Zenteno archive. Zapata wrote that the local villagers of the Los Volcanes had reported that Arenas had forcefully conscripted their fellow villagers into his army when he turned against the Zapatistas in December 1916. Arenas had forced the indigenous

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[261] Corresponsal, "El Bandolero Eufemio Zapata, ha muerto, en Cuautla, Morelos," *El Demócrata*, 20 June 1917, p. 1 & 5; Cirilo Arenas to *El Demócrata*, "Las hordas del "Atila" pretendieron vengar la muerte de Eufemio Zapata," 1 July 1917, p. 1 & 6.

[262] Emiliano Zapata, "Al Pueblo," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 6 September 1917, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 5, f. 7.

peasants to war against the Zapatistas. What is more, "those who refused conscription were immediately taken before a firing squad."[263]

Zapata stated that the agrarianism of Arenas and the general's land redistributions "were a pitiful sham, a mockery of land reform." Arenas, Zapata added, "had charged the peasants for land he had taken from haciendas; Arenas then collected larger sums from the hacendados." Such was the case of Alberto González Montalvo, the owner of the Hacienda de Ixtafiayuca, who had been declared a loathsome *científico*—a reactionary Díaz crony, in the Arenista newspaper *Cauterio*, but actually got back his landholdings. Zapata stated that "with the treacherous Arenas dead," the peasants who had received lands could keep their landholdings. "The Plan de Ayala, had declared that peasants could keep their lands without having to pay a single peso." Zapata invited the former followers "of the traitor Arenas" to join the Zapatistas "in the final reconquering of the land."[264] Zapata stated that the Arenistas (in life, Domingo Arenas never described the people who followed him as "Arenistas") and Brigada Arenas supporters who renewed their pledge to honor and serve the "South's Revolution," would keep the land they had received from Arenas.[265] Ultimately, Zapata wrote, Arenas had been nothing more than an insignificant lackey of Carranza, who had only gained some notoriety because his "insignificant deeds" had been embellished by the pro-Carranza press.[266]

Conclusion

This chapter examined the demise and fall of Arenas, a leader loved by the indigenous people of the Oriente. It showed how his execution at the hands of the

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[263] Zapata, "Al Pueblo," AGM, f. 7.
[264] Zapata, "Al Pueblo," AGM, f. 7.
[265] Archivo Zenteno, AHDN, Cancelados, D/M2/14-133, f. 32.
[266] Zapata, "Al Pueblo," AGM, f. 7.

Zapatistas in the summer of 1917 represented a symptom of the growing ailment of widespread disorder within the Zapatista ranks. Outside the land redistribution program promised by the Plan de Ayala there was little else that united the agrarian rebel factions from Tlaxcala's high sierras and the Sierras of Puebla, with the rebels from the Zapatista Morelos-Puebla sugar-growing heartland. Differences related to the rebels' race, ethnicity, geography, ideology, and class, creating deep fissures within the ranks of the Liberating Army of the South. This chapter argued that these divergences created deep schisms within the Zapatista ranks, and by the summer of 1916 the agrarian "Revolution of the South," to borrow Zapata's term, began to implode from within. Amidst the growing insubordination within the Zapatista ranks, which as the Revolution progressed past 1916 proved more and more difficult to control, Emiliano Zapata still insisted on the possibility of widespread land restoration. Many other chiefs within his ranks did as they liked, however, and their brutalization of a peasantry they had sworn to protect, inside and outside their traditional zone, precluded any hope of nationalizing Zapata's Plan de Ayala. Likewise, with Arenas dead, the indigenous peasantry also lost an avowed champion of agrarianism. Much to the dismay of Emiliano Zapata, many of his chieftains were too powerful within their regions and some operated with impunity. Holding firm control of their zones, and even amidst loud accusations of widespread banditry by Arenas and others, these leaders operated nominally as Zapatistas and used the Revolution to fulfill their own goals.

Arenas and Zapata shared a similar vision. Aside from wishing to nationalize all the tenets outlined in the Plan de Ayala, they both wanted to lift up the landless peasant from a state of abject poverty. But it is possible that their union may never have worked

out: both men were intimately tied to the historical realities and needs of their particular patria chica. To Arenas, the untrammeled banditry of some of the Zapatistas signaled the entire movement's decay and he thought that Zapata's inability--or worse, his unwillingness--to discipline his unruly chiefs reflected Zapata's decline in authority and prestige. In the Revolution's latter phase the Zapatista movement had arguably degenerated to a state of murder and chaos, and Arenas sought to eradicate this anarchy from below which had hampered his dual aim of creating agrarian colonies and ensuring local autonomy for the benefit of the local indigenous peasants. What is more, Arenas would never see Zapata as an Indian brother. Arenas told Del Castillo that he had yearned for a union of the Tlaxcallans with all the indigenous highland people, because they shared the same indigenous heritage. What had divided them were the unpredictable politics of revolutionary-era Mexico. All of Tlaxcala's major leaders--Rojas, Del Castillo, Arenas, Morales, Meneses, and Villegas--had served Madero, and even when the president called for the disarmament of all rebels not aligned with the federal military in 1911, they remained Maderistas. With the Huerta regime in place the Tlaxcallans formed a multiclass alliance against the local Huertistas, and from this mobilization Domingo Arenas emerged as the main agrarian leader. But the coalition was short-lived, splitting after the 1914 Aguascalientes Convention in many directions, and Arenas then pulled most of his agrarian fighters with him to swell the ranks of Zapatismo. The Plan de Ayala made sense to Arenas. The indigenous peasants would get their land and autonomy back; however, when Arenas assessed the situation after 1916, and noted that the problems with Zapata were worsening, he decided to bet on Carranza. As he informed Zapata time and again, he harbored no personal animosity, at least, initially, toward the Morelian

chieftain, but he did loath individuals whom he considered particularly troublesome such as Everardo González and Benigno Zenteno. With the Arenas-Constitutionalist unification, Zapata, for his part, felt betrayed, excoriated Domingo Arenas, and vowed he would never forgive a traitor. After the Zapatistas murdered Domingo Arenas, Colonel Del Castillo tried to reunify all the Tlaxcallans, but remaining loyal to Carranza and Governor Rojas, he was unable to negotiate a permanent peace with many of the units that now served Alberto L. Paniagua and Cirilo Arenas.[267]

Cirilo would take the Arenistas, as his followers would be called, in radical directions. Unlike his brother Domingo, Cirilo would not feel the pull of full responsibility to the people that always gripped Domingo, and, to be fair, he could not. Persecuted by many foes, and in flight constantly, Cirilo would have to become a master of guerrilla warfare to survive; he would not espouse the redemptive agrarianism that characterized Domingo. Cirilo would not express an earnest desire for the Indians' full incorporation into the Mexican body politic; rather, he would reason that Indians could only be saved by greater revolutionary violence, by washing all sins of the past with greater blood. Cirilo Arenas would be the last of the Revolution's major Indian caudillos. As a guerrilla leader, the Mexican press with its discourse so tinged with urban racism, would frame him as an invincible bronze Indian warrior; some would say that he was "indomitable"—an archetype of the indigenous warrior: cunning, fearless, but also savage. Cirilo and the Arenistas, as they were called under his stewardship, would carve out a different niche and search for their own piece of the Revolution.

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[267] Del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 185-187.

Chapter 4:

Redemptive Agrarianism in a Revolutionary Era: The Land Reform of Domingo Arenas, 1915-1928

"Domingo Arenas was not a traitor, but Zapata believed him to be a traitor, and Zapata once said that he could forgive anyone, except a traitor. Let me tell you why Arenas was not a traitor. He fought, bled, and sacrificed much for his peasant followers. He was loyal to them and not to Zapata. He gave them back many lands and restored their dignity."

--Don Elpidio Morales, Santa Inés Zacatelco.[1]

The issue of land tenure remains contentions in Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala. On 28 August 2014, the day I first met with Jesús Arenas, the grandson of Domingo Arenas, in his Zacatelco home, he had just returned from a land dispute involving his neighbors and representatives from the government of the state of Tlaxcala. The local people, he said, meet "just about every week to fight for their *ejido*…we get together and talk, because they [the government] continue to try to deny our land rights, trying to take what is ours." "The greatest failure of the Mexican Revolution was in its failure to redistribute lands adequately to the peasants, a cause to which my grandfather devoted his life." About the land reform, during the Revolution, Jesús Arenas stated, "the Carrancistas were just like the Zapatistas. The paradigmatic ideology of land reform remained the same: Indians needed lands. They promised lands, but none were ever given back—at least none were given back [by the government] around here. Domingo and

[1] Interview with don Elpidio Morales, *orador* of Santa Inés Zacatelco, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, 26 August 2014.

Cirilo were the only ones that ever gave back some lands; therefore, they deserve all the respect."[2]

Jesús Arenas states that people from Tlaxcala, and primarily the townsfolk from Santa Inés Zacatelco, continue to revere Domingo Arenas because he stayed true to his promise of putting into effect immediate land redistributions. That day, through the words of Mr. Jesús Arenas, I learned that the struggles and zealous agrarianism of Domingo Arenas resonate in his patria chica. Jesús Arenas said that the land he fought for now, "belonged to the people of Zacatelco; it had been given to the locals in 1917 by Domingo Arenas; however, although the National Agrarian Commission had pushed for its validation, that particular land grant was not recognized officially by the government."[3] As we will observe below, President Álvaro Obregón did order the Comisión Agraria of Tlaxcala to give back more than 2,000 hectares to the people of Zacatelco, but the farmers continue to struggle and feel that they desperately need good farming land. The local peasants still view the lands lost in the past as theirs. To the local people like Jesús Arenas, more than material benefit, the lands they use for the planting of their crops also represents the enduring legacy of Domingo Arenas.[4]

About the relationship that Domingo Arenas established with the indigenous peasantry, Jesús Arenas stated: "Arenas was a blessing to many around here. Before Domingo Arenas and his brothers Cirilo and Emeterio became revolutionaries, the campesinos wanted land, but they were very afraid to ask the government for it." Mr. Arenas used the term "campesinos," a word which acquired great political impact in

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[2] Interview with don Jesús Arenas, Santa Inés Zacatelco, 28 August 2014.
[3] Jesús Arenas.
[4] Ibid.

Mexico's rural sector during the country's post-revolutionary apogee, to describe his town's farmers. This illustrates the hegemony of the revolutionary party's discourse. In post-revolutionary México the "campesino" became celebrated as a privileged child of the Mexican Revolutionary Family. As explained by Chris Boyer, Mexican peasants, many ethnically indigenous, had in the early Post-revolutionary epoch lost their identities and political and economic autonomy. In regions where the people's identity was collective, the advent of the term "campesinos," as a political and cultural category, restored a sense of shared identity by the 1930s.[5]

Jesús Arenas has no problem labelling himself as an indigenous "campesino." He embraces that identity (*campesino indigena* more specifically) because, just as many of his kinsfolk, he feels that the ejido lands that they did receive mostly through his grandfather's efforts were a form of just retribution for the lands that were taken away from his people. The difficulty lays in the people's inability to retain the lands. Their land loss was a historical process. The people of Zacatelco, Jesús Arenas stated, "were and are still afraid. They are afraid to say the wrong things [Jesús Arenas alluded to the region's history of violence and government repression caused primarily by unresolved land conflicts]. But Domingo Arenas was brave. He talked about giving lands back to the peasants." Domingo Arenas sacrificed himself for the peoples' struggles, Jesús Arenas contends, because he "was the bravest of many brave men in the community."[6]

Elpidio Morales, the official chronicler from Santa Inés Zacatelco, believes that the bravado Jesús Arenas spoke of is part of a larger local sentiment coming from the

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[5] Chris Boyer, *Becoming Campesinos: Politics, Identity, and Agrarian Struggle in Postrevolutionary Michoacán, 1920-1935* (Stanford, Cal.: Stanford University Press, 2003) 4-5, 23-26.
[6] Interview with don Jesús Arenas.

people's historical defense of the land. Morales also attributed the violence to the villagers' ethnicity. "They are violent because they are Indians."[7] Morales believes that indigenous people have been made violent because other people have always tried to take away their lands: "We are Indians. I am an Indian. That must not be ignored. This was a revolution (alluding to Arenismo) by Indians." It pains Mr. Morales to discuss the history of Domingo Arenas: "Arenas remains shrouded in obscurity while Zapata is hailed as the Revolution's greatest agrarian hero." Mr. Morales concluded his thoughts on Arenas, Arenismo, and on the Mexican Revolution by highlighting that, due to the problem of the unresolved land tenure issues, not everything left behind by the Revolution was beneficial or heroic.[8] The revolutionary era, Morales posits, left a history of *pistolerismo*—gun violence, and of "extreme machismo" in Zacatelco.[9] The Revolution marked the patterns of local conflict for the decades that followed. All personal feuds in Zacatelco, don Elpidio explains, used to end in bloodshed, with someone's death: "For a long time many people trembled at the idea of coming to Zacatelco. It was Tlaxcala's most violent place. People killed others here without remorse."[10] Don Elpidio's description of the situation in Zacatelco reminds us of the poem, *Los Pistoleros* by Manuel Sánchez Chamorro, which tells of outlaws who "have no destiny" and who "wander roads aimlessly" and: "Draw their guns out first, and then forget."[11] Although the failure of revolutionary-era land reform left behind legacies that continue to haunt the common people in México, during the Revolution many people believed that the

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[7] Interview with don Elpidio Morales.
[8] Elpidio Morales.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Manuel Sánchez Chamorro, *Los Pistoleros* in *Crucigramas* (Sevilla: Editorial Renacimiento, 1996), 34.

cataclysmic violence sweeping their patrias chicas would at least benefit them by restoring what they most desired; land and local autonomy.

This chapter deals with the land reforms of Domingo Arenas, which came in the form of effective land redistributions. More importantly, this chapter will show that the agrarianism of Domingo Arenas was intense. I describe it as a zealous agrarianism because the armies of Arenas, in its different forms, the Brigada Arenas, División Arenas, División del Oriente, or Arenistas invaded large agrarian estates, ousted the owners, and disentailed hacienda and rancho lands to give them back to the indigenous peasantry so the hitherto landless peasantry could form or reform their pueblos by staking a permanent claim to the land. The agrarianism of Arenas benefitted the indigenous peasantry of the Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala's La Malintzin during the Revolution itself, and for years to come. Land reform was one of the pivotal issues surrounding the Mexican Revolution. The indigenous peasantry from the Oriente Central desperately sought different avenues to acquire or recover lands, and amidst the violence engulfing the countryside during revolutionary-era México, Domingo Arenas emerged as a champion of land reform for the indigenous peasants. The Zapatista Plan de Ayala of November 1911, to which Domingo Arenas became an avowed follower in late November 1914, had stated that the Liberating Army of the South would expropriate 1/3 of all "lands, hills, and water," which had hitherto been monopolized by hacienda owners. Moreover, the Liberating Army would nationalize the wealth of the owners who opposed the redistribution of lands, with 2/3 of the expropriated wealth to be used for the pensions of

orphans and widows.[12] The Plan de Ayala had given legitimacy to Zapatismo, and by the middle of 1912 the promise of effective land reform had earned Zapata numerous adherents in Morelos, Puebla, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Hidalgo, and Tlaxcala. Adolfo Gilly observed that the Zapatistas began redistributing lands by expropriating hacienda lands throughout central México since early 1912, only months after the Plan de Ayala was put into effect in Morelos after November 1911.[13]

The 6 January 1915 Agrarian Law of the Constitutionalist President Venustiano Carranza posed a very grave challenge to the Plan de Ayala, which Emiliano Zapata and his generals failed to nationalize.[14] In a speech given on 2 December 1912, Luis Cabrera, the architect of Constitutionalism's agrarianism, had stated that in order to protect small private property in México it was necessary to liberate the pueblos from the oppression of the haciendas. Moreover, the first step in promoting small private landownership was disentailing large estates and recreating communal landholdings, the *ejidos*. Cabrera declared himself an enemy of the megafundios that left the landless masses impoverished.[15] Cabrera had a simple solution for remedying the country's great poverty: placing more lands in the hands of the poor, and helping this population produce greater harvests.[16] The Disamortization Laws of 1856, which destroyed communal properties, Cabrera argued, converted freeholding peasants into "*finca* (estate) serfs," and the industrialization of President Díaz only encouraged greater land privatizations.[17]

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[12] Gilly, *La Revolución Interrumpida*, 98.
[13] Ibid, 102-103.
[14] Knight, *The Mexican Revolution, Vol. II*, 258-259.
[15] Luis Cabrera, Discurso del 2 de diciembre de 1912, in *Expedición de la Ley Agraria; 6 de enero de 1915* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana), 18-19.
[16] Ibid, 24-29.
[17] Cabrera, *Expedició*n, 30-34.

Cabrera contended that the state had to nationalize many *latifundios* for the peasantry's material benefit. Abuses, he noted, ran rampant in large agrarian estates. While some contended that the *tiendas de raya* (the hacienda stores) which kept workers virtually enslaved to the estates where they labored by devouring their salaries with overprized goods were a myth, Cabrera, who worked as a schoolteacher inside a hacienda in Tlaxcala, argued that in 1895 virtually all of the hacienda field workers were illiterate.[18] Cabrera told the Mexican Congress that the reconstitution of *ejidos* was not the main solution to solving the nation's problem of landlessness, but a pragmatic first and crucial step towards promoting individual properties, "and a perfect countermeasure to the question of Zapatismo" [Cabrera alluded to Zapatismo's growth in early 1912]. Moreover, in agreement with the mid-nineteenth century Liberals, Cabrera argued that the Church possessed no legal basis for holding excess lands. That land, he argued, should be disentailed, given to peasant communities, and then put to productive use.[19] Cabrera's agrarianism largely influenced Carranza's decision to implement, into national law, the 6 January Agrarian Law of 1915, to "give *ejidos* (communal lands) to pueblos lacking them."[20] For peasants, therefore, revolutionary-era México provided a wide legal framework (and an extra-legal one as well with Zapatismo's Plan de Ayala) for peasants to fight and hope to reclaim the lands they had lost during the Reform and the Porfiriato.

Members of the indigenous peasantry felt that the Revolution had opened new ground for land reforms benefiting the dispossessed Indians. The politicians putting together the 6 January 1915 Agrarian Law, stated that during the nation's colonial era,

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[18] Ibid, 34-35.
[19] Ibid, 44-45.
[20] Venustiano Carranza, *Expedición*, 54-56.

vice royal decrees had granted "land to Indians," but by bending the letter of the law, the landed elite had dispossessed the indigenous people, removing them from their ancestral lands to claim private ownership over the communal territories. Moreover, Indians had not recovered lands because "with the passing of time Indian communities had lost their land titles." The problem of landlessness, the Constitutionalists observed, became the Indians' gravest issue during the Revolution.[21] Counseled by the political theorist Luis Cabrera, on 12 December 1914 Carranza had decreed that Constitutionalism would dismantle large landed estates, ranchos, and haciendas, "to fulfill the Constitution of 1857 and create a nation of private landholding." Cabrera and Carranza stated that the Mexican people would use the nation's natural resources such as mines, petroleum, forests, and waters to elevate their social and economic standing.[22]

As Cabrera had contended in 1912, President Carranza thought that, working within a legal framework, the Constitutionalist Agrarian Law of 1915 was a perfect countermeasure to the Plan de Ayala's "immediate and unlawful land redistributions." The Constitutionalists believed that the forces of reaction (alluding to the fall of Huerta) had been defeated and that the time was ripe for implementing policies designed to improve the living conditions of the poor classes.[23] President Carranza appointed a nine-person commission to fulfill the application of the January 1915 Agrarian Law, which included the secretaries of hacienda, water, forests, agriculture, governance, and justice, and named this the National Agrarian Commission (Comisión Nacional Agraria). The

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[21] Venustiano Carranza, "Decreto: 6 de enero de 1915," *El Dictamen*, 8 January 1915, p. 2.
[22] Venustiano Carranza, "El Decreto de 12 de Diciembre de 1914," full text found in, Andrés Molina Enríquez, *La Revolución Agraria en México* (Mexico City: Biblioteca INEHRM, 1976), 481.
[23] Venustiano Carranza, Secretaria de Fomento, "Ley Agraria: Decreto," printed in full text in the government newspaper, *El Constitucionalista*, 9 January 1915, p. 1.

Commission's aim was to ensure the rightful return of lands to peasants and Indians who had been dispossessed illegally; otherwise, the people from the pueblos also had the option of getting land if they proved that their material poverty was great.[24]

With the application of the 6 January 1915 Law, Carranza claimed that his regime did not attempt to "revive the communities of antiquity, nor create similar ones," but "endow a miserable rural population with the land it now lacks, so it can develop fully its right to live, and free itself from the economic servitude to which it has been reduced…" The new method of land reform, the Constitutionalist President contended, would prevent the usurpation of lands by the landed magnates, as occurred after the Revolution of Ayutla in 1855, when land was given back to peasants communally, complicating later Liberal efforts to privatize landholding.[25] The Carranza regime stipulated that it intended "to divide the land in a civilized manner, different from the "criollo-mestizo" Villistas," as they described the people of the Mexican north, and the "*indios*" Zapatistas from the center-south they "exterminated daily."[26] Arenas could not ignore the larger Constitutionalist-Zapatista feud, and he took the opportunity to use both the Plan de Ayala and Constitutionalism's 5 January Agrarian Law to give back lands to the local peasantry. Domingo Arenas formed pueblos from his land redistributions, but with such a strong Carrancista and Zapatista presence in the region of the Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala after 1916 he found it very difficult to do so independently and therefore encouraged the people to use the Constitutionalist law to their advantage.

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[24] Venustiano Carranza to Pastor Rouaix, "Comisión Nacional Agraria," Telegraph of full text sent by M. Cantón to *El Demócrata*, printed in 23 January 1916, p. 1.
[25] Carranza, Secretaria de Fomento, "Ley Agraria: Decreto," p. 1; Telégrafo de M. Cantón para *El Demócrata*, "La Comisión N. Agraria iniciara los trabajos para la restitución y dotación de ejidos a los pueblos." 23 January 1915, p. 1.
[26] Molina Enríquez, *La Revolución Agraria*, 480-481.

Domingo Arenas had already given back many lands as a Zapatista drawing inspiration from the Plan de Ayala when as a Constitutionalist general he declared on 1 December 1916, the day he defected in Chiautzingo, Puebla, that his forces would exercise their full liberty to expropriate lands to liberate the region from the control of the haciendas and large ranchos. This shows, conclusively, that Domingo Arenas had defected to the federal ranks to give back more lands to the region's indigenous peasantry. Even as a Constitutionalist, however, not everyone looked favorably at the zealous agrarianism of Domingo Arenas. As early as 5 December 1916 the hacienda owners of the Oriente Central had complained that the División Arenas, or División Oriente, had dispossessed them through violence. Cristanto Cuellar Abaroa, who wrote a biography on Domingo Arenas lionizing the agrarian leader's deeds, argued that with the general's switch to Constitutionalism, Arenas felt even more entitled to dispossess hacienda owners "strengthened only by the force of arms."[27]

The zealous agrarianism of Domingo Arenas was similar to the fervent agrarianism of Emiliano Zapata, who early in the early phase of the Zapatista revolution confiscated numerous haciendas to give back lands to the peasants of Morelos, Puebla, and Guerrero. Zapata's agrarianism had motivated scores of thousands of peasants to reclaim lands, any lands, for that matter, earning the Morelian leader the scorn of the nation's landholders and politicians. Felipe Arturo Ávila Espinosa contended that early in the Revolution Zapata's rebellion unleashed the pent-up hatred of the dispossessed masses.[28] Hacienda owners in Morelos argued that the "Indians" who invaded their lands

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[27] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución en el Estado de Tlaxcala, Vol. II*, 91-93.
[28] Felipe Arturo Ávila Espinosa, *Los Orígenes del Zapatismo*, (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2001), 193-201.

possessed no legal right to do so. The indigenous peasantry, they reckoned, had never been dispossessed, much less violently, or illegally, and Zapata's rebellion had allowed the barbarous classes to unlawfully seize their properties. Nevertheless, the idea of immediate land reform drove thousands of indigenous peasants and poor mestizos to the battlefields against the government.[29] In reflecting on the effective and immediate land redistributions performed by Domingo Arenas, the Constitutionalist colonel and Governor of Tlaxcala, Porfirio del Castillo, stated that Arenas had been the most able and selfless of the Tlaxcallan chieftains who rose in arms from 1910 to 1914. Some, Del Castillo noted, pegged Arenas as a mercenary and thief, but the former governor wrote that Arenas' revolutionary altruism was reflected by the fact that in 1953 his family lived in poverty in Santa Inés Zacatelco. Del Castillo described Arenas as "the Zapata of the valleys that run from the Los Volcanes and La Malintzin," but he did consider the agrarianism of Arenas dangerous and disruptive of the progress and peace that Constitutionalism sought to achieve.[30]

Effective Land Reform in the Oriente Central

The Oriente Central was a site of intense conflicts over land tenure. On 23 October 1915, citing the Constitutionalist Agrarian Law of 6 January 1915 as the validation for their defense, dozens of neighbors from the towns of Santa Inés Zacatelco, Axcomanitla, Teacalco, La Concordia, Coamilpa, and Zacualpan, all belonging to the Districts of Zaragoza and Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, sent a petition to the Constitutionalist Governor of Tlaxcala, Mariano Grajales, demanding the return of lands they had lost

[29] Moisés González Navarro, "Zapata y la Revolución agraria mexicana," *Cahier du monde hispanique et luso-brésilien*, 9 (1967): 3-7.
[30] Porfirio del Castillo, *Puebla y Tlaxcala*, 156-157.

back in 1883. In 1882, 96 people from the towns of Zacatelco, Nativitas, and Zacualpan had assembled and gathered 38,400 pesos to purchase four horse steads of considerable size that encircled the estates of Labor Venturero, Ahustlale, Atoyac, and also a portion of the Hacienda Los Portales--all properties claimed by Mr. Gullermo Zeleny. The purchase made by the townsfolk had been validated by the official public notary of Zacatelco. In 1886, under Próspero Cahuantzi, the town's debt collector ordered the seizure of the four horse steads arguing that the neighbors owed the sum of 101 pesos in back taxes. Before the neighbors could pay, or knew that they should pay, the debt collector first embargoed, and then placed the disputed properties on the public market. This was done in a matter of two days, and Zeleny then purchased the lands. Incensed, the local people tried to reclaim the lands, first in the local court of Zacatelco, then followed by a trial in the central court of the state, and subsequently in an appellate court in the city of Tlaxcala. Although the city court had considered granting the neighbors the appeal, the state Supreme Court of Tlaxcala declared that the neighbors had infringed upon the rights of Mr. Zeleny, and the office of Governor Cahuantzi ordered the termination of the case.[31]

In 1915, upon reviewing the literature concerning the case, Constitutionalist Governor Porfirio del Castillo stated that in 1886 the local justices had committed a grave injustice, declaring "that the neighbors were entitled to the land under dispute" and therefore revoked the 1886 decision. On 23 November 1915, the local peasants got their lands back, and the governor stated that this had been more than a matter of a just

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[31] Vecinos de los pueblos to Porfirio del Castillo, Santa Ines Zacatelco, Tlaxcala, Archivo General de la Nación, Archivo Comisión Nacional Agraria: Resoluciones Presidenciales (AGN, ACNARP), Libro 1915, f. 52-53, 6 January 1915.

compensation. Del Castillo felt that the locals had benefited from the application of "the [Constitutional] Agrarian Law of 6 January 1915, which acts to benefit the pueblos and ranchos."[32]

The people's victory, however, was ephemeral. President Carranza himself took an interest in the case and determined that the National Agrarian Commission, which oversaw the application of the 1915 Agrarian Law, could not sidestep the Constitution and deny an individual the right to hold private property. Moreover, the Law would not privilege a "civil association, a grouping with no formal judicial standing, to reclaim land." On those grounds, therefore, Carranza "revoked the resolution pronounced by the Governor of Tlaxcala on the day of 23 November 1915," ordering the prompt "restitution of the land to the proprietor."[33] The president stated that peasants demanding land directly to the Agrarian Law's officials, with the possession of documents proving ownership, or, proof of poverty, had a greater opportunity of receiving an *ejido* the government-granted communal lands. A major aim of Carranza was to ensure "the continued existence and prosperity of indigenous communities." Carranza stated that the Constitutional Agrarian Law had been designed primarily to restore the lands of peasant communities that had been disentailed after the 1856 during the Liberal Reform.[34]

Such was the case when the vecinos of San Cosme Xalostoc, Tlaxcala, "proved, unquestionably, through the possession of a primordial title," that in the late-nineteenth century corrupted authorities in cahoots with landholders had "deprived" them of their lands. On this occasion, President Carranza validated the land restoration case given to

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[32] Vecinos de los pueblos, 6 January 1915.
[33] Ibid, Revisión de Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, 31 May 1917, f. 55.
[34] Presidente Venustiano Carranza, Arteaga, Querétaro, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Octubre-Agosto, 1916-1915, f. 17.

the local Indian peasants by Governor Porfirio Del Castillo in May 1916.[35] Carranza's Comisión Nacional Agraria also acknowledged that, as occurred with the community of San Lorenzo Axecomanitla, some indigenous pueblos possessed fake primordial titles, invalidating a land claim based on a dispute with the Hacienda de los Reyes dating back to 1767; however, a map also possessed by the pueblo showed that the hacienda had taken a portion of their land known as Los Portreros back in 1876 during the Revolution of Tuxtepec, and Carranza himself legalized that portion of their land claim. The 6 January 1915 Agrarian Law, therefore, gave indigenous peasants room to maneuver and negotiate their land claims with the Constitutionalist regime.[36]

The Comisión Agraria lawmakers also contended that indigenous pueblos had endured great calamities and therefore vowed to arbitrate "in their favor when real hardship" was proven. When the neighbors from the pueblo "La Concordia" in the southern Nativitas Valley brought forth a land petition before Governor Del Castillo and Tlaxcala's Comisión officials claiming legitimate land loss and an ensuing great poverty, their land claim was validated. Even without a formal land title, the Comisión members acknowledged that the pueblo, which had been founded since 1530, had lost much land when the Río Zahuapan flooded and destroyed their fields in 1887. It was known, however, that nearby haciendas had taken possession of the inundated lands. The neighbors pleaded for lands, claiming that they only possessed 39 hectares for 494 people, made up of 166 families. In response, citing Article 3 of the Agrarian Law, which declared that "materially deprived pueblos were entitled to communal lands," the

[35] Ibid, 18-20.
[36] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 17-20, 26 September 1917.

government expropriated 500 hectares from the haciendas Segura Michac, Santa Bárbara, and Santo Tomás Xostla to give the Indian pueblo "a formal *ejido*."[37]

On 31 January 1918, the Comisión granted the people from the Indian pueblo of Santa Catarina Ayometla 255 hectares expropriated from the Rancho Palula, leaving the landed estate with only 50 hectares protected by Circular 21 of the Agrarian Law.[38] The government stated that its inspectors had observed that the townsfolk, numbering at 1,425 people with 334 heads of family possessed only 694 hectares, and that these were "lands of very poor quality" (*zacates malos*) and therefore had demonstrated great material need.[39] In the case of the neighbors of San Nicolás Panotla, although the indigenous townsfolk did possess some "good lands," 1,096 people comprised of 263 families held only 107 hectares. The neighboring haciendas Santa Maria and Aculco, however, held 550 and 400 hectares, respectively, numbering at a total of 950 hectares. Considering the vast discrepancy in landholding, the Constitutionalists decided to fraction the haciendas, granting each family with 3 hectares of fertile land.[40]

With time, the common townsfolk from the Los Volcanes recognized that the Constitutionalist Agrarian Law provided them with the legal framework to demand lands, and Domingo Arenas had encouraged the people to use the Constitutional law to gain validation for their possession of lands he gave them when he was a Zapatista. The indigenous farmers could also petition for lands through Article 27 of the 1917

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[37] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 42-44, 15 November 1917.
[38] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 48-49, 31 January 1918.
[39] Carranza, Mexico City, 31 January 1918, f. 48-49.
[40] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico Cit, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 82-83, 14 February 1918.

Constitution. In 1916, the people from San Tadeo Huiloapan, in Panotla, Tlaxcala requested from the Comisión of Tlaxcala for a "land restitution," which a judge had granted the pueblo on 18 January 1861 against the Hacienda de San Francisco la Blanda declaring its proprietor had invaded the pueblo's lands. The indigenous townsfolk did not possess legal title to the land. Nevertheless, a Comisión surveyor observed that the pueblo, which was comprised of 754 neighbors made up of 199 families, held only 1,500 hectares, and that "their grasses" were of the lowest quality. Citing Article 27 of the Constitution, the Comisión decreed that the pueblo of San Tadeo possessed legal entitlement to 199 additional hectares in the form of an *ejido* of very high quality soil, or 298 hectares of "medium quality" soil. The Comisión settled the arbitration between the pueblo and the estate at 300 hectares, leaving the hacienda with land of high quality, but endowing the pueblo with a modest amount of productive lands.[41] When Carranza approved a land grant to the people of Ascensión Huizcolotepec in Xaltocan, the Comisión defended the local government's expropriation of lands from the haciendas of La Virgen, La Presa, and Zavala simply because the people living around the estates needed fertile lands.[42]

Indian pueblos in Tlaxcala also attempted to settle land disputes against rival pueblos by seeking out counsel from the National Agrarian Commission. On 7 May 1917, councilmembers from the town of Santa María Atlihuetzia submitted a land restitution petition to the office of Governor Porfirio del Castillo, claiming 175 hectares from an estate known as Xalac. However, the people of Atlihuetzia had feuded with

[41] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 140-141, 21 March 1918.
[42] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 10-11, 30 May 1918.

people from the pueblo of San Matías Tepetomatitlán over the possession of Xalac since 1772. The conflict was so grave, in 1820 the Vice regal authorities of Tlaxcala called upon the representatives of the pueblo to settle the dispute, declaring that: "the pueblo of San Matías will enjoy, now and forever, their ancient property and possession…of the land known as "Tepoxcolco," [and] Xalac"…"[43] Declaring that all the pueblos were entitled to communal lands under the 1917 Constitution, the Carranza government stated that the material needs of the people had changed, and so had the law protecting the people's interests, and were not convinced of the necessity to arbitrate solely to benefit the people of Atlihuetzi based on colonial-era legislation.[44] Indigenous citizens also attempted to use the law to regain lands lost to corrupted officials during the Porfirian and Huertista periods.

On 5 November 1915, the people from the pueblo of San Francisco Atezcatzingo declared before the Comisión authorities that Mr. Refugio López "had extorted their lands using his political influence since the previous dictatorship, under which he had held several public authority positions, such as serving as a judge."[45] According to the townsfolk, Refugio López kept expanding his estates by taking their lands and forcing the poorer farmers to sell their lands. The Comisión members observed that López indeed possessed vast landholdings: his Rancho de Cuacuatla measured at 363 hectares, and his Hacienda de Aticpan was comprised of 584 hectares, while his haciendas of Ahuatepec and Tlalcoyotla measured at 1,091 and 1,325 hectares, respectively. Although it was

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[43] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 63, 22 August 1918.
[44] Ibid, 64.
[45] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, f. 22, 1 July 1919.

known that López had dispossessed several other pueblos, in the case of San Francisco Atezcatzingo, its people, who did possess some good lands, only received 250 hectares from the government's expropriation of the rival estate. The lawmakers decided that, lacking any proof of landownership, the townsfolk could not reclaim all the lands they wanted.[46]

The town of San Luis Apizaco was home to many factory workers and, alluding to the fact that many field workers also lived in the town, the government defended recent land restitutions made to 125 locals. With presidential approval, the local Constitutionalists expropriated 144 hectares of fertile land from the Hacienda San Diego Apatlahuaya, and Governor Del Castillo claimed that, although much of the land was held in excess, the estate's proprietor had received a full repayment. Moreover, Carranza wrote that the local peasants had lacked communal lands since the Liberals had disentailed their communal landholdings in 1856.[47] Similarly, in agreement with Del Castillo, Carranza contended that the people from Santa Catarina Ayometla, "a town of indigenous farmers," did not possess enough land to satisfy their material needs and therefore approved for the expropriation of lands from Rancho Llano de Santa Catarina, which "contained very fertile soils." Carranza approved Del Castillo's formation of an *ejido* from the expropriated lands once the owner had received a full repayment.[48]

Carranza's own agrarian program, therefore, had given indigenous peasants an opportunity to fulfill their aspirations and possess lands suitable for agriculture. Domingo Arenas, for his part, used both Constitutionalism and Zapatista law to achieve what he

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[46] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, 1 July 1919, f. 22-224.
[47] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Octubre a Agosto, f. 98-100, 27 July 1917.
[48] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número Dos, Septiembre a Diciembre, 1917, f. 48-49, 31 January 1917.

thought was the peasantry's redemption through immediate land redistributions. The agrarian ideology and praxis of Domingo Arenas was manifested by his movement's establishment of multiple agrarian colonies. When Arenas served Zapata from the middle of 1914 to the end of 1916, many of the agrarian colonies the Brigada Arenas formed were made possible by his rebel army's invasions and subsequent fractioning of large ranchos and haciendas. To accomplish such feats, the Brigada Arenas virtually rid the area from the control of the local hacienda owners from 1915 to 1916.[49] As a Zapatista general, Domingo Arenas felt that eliminating the power of the landed class alerted the nation to the Indian peoples' will to resist the oppressors alienating them from their ancestral lands. At this juncture Arenas had disavowed Tlaxcala's Constitutionalists. The government of Tlaxcala and the national press, primarily through the pro-Constitutionalist daily, *El Demócrata*, had vilified constantly Arenas' method of reclaiming territories, likening him to a murderous "reactionary," a "Villista," and a common "bandido."[50]

The cases cited above, however, underscore that the Indian people from Tlaxcala and the Los Volcanes of Puebla explored any avenue they could to acquire lands, and they found a viable ally in Domingo Arenas. The indigenous people felt that the application of revolutionary law, whether Zapatista or Constitutionalist, would amend the

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[49] Fortino Ayaquica, El Ejército Convencionista-División de Oriente-Tlaxcala, México, 1915: Relación de los Jefes, Oficiales y Soldados que corresponden a la División "Arenas," in *El Hombre Libre*, Serie, "Como perdió la vida el General Domingo Arenas," 9 August 1937, p. 3.

[50] Alberto L. Paniagua to the National Press, "Tlaxcala taken by Arenas Forces," *Mexican Herald*, 3 June 1915, p. 3; Press Dispatch, "Arenas' forces have 10 days of fighting," *Mexican Herald*, 12 June 1915, p. 4; Press Dispatch, "Gen. Arenas takes Sta. Ana, Tlaxcala," *Mexican Herald*, 1 June 1915, p. 1; Porfirio del Castillo to *El Demócrata*, "El Ejecutivo del Estado labora por la consolidación de los ideales revolucionarios," p. 1 & 2; Corresponsal, "Asesinato del Cabecilla Zenteno," *El Demócrata*, 8 April 1916, p. 8; Corresponsal, "El bandolero Domingo Arenas fue derrotado en Nanacamilpa, E. de Tlaxcala," *El Demócrata*, 6 October 1916, p. 1.

past injustices, which had impoverished them. As a Zapatista in May 1915, Domingo Arenas issued a manifesto, through which he informed the people that his army "guaranteed the life and property of all the citizens and foreigners living within his zone." The local people, however, had to share his desire to "revamp agricultural productivity and establish colonies to produce grains."[51] Land reform, Arenas believed, would redeem the indigenous peasants and also help feed a growing army. Arenas argued that his stated aims necessitated the peasantry's control over the region's most productive lands. Moreover, in addition to harvesting ample amounts of maize and wheat, maintaining an army that stretched from the Los Volcanes region to Amecameca in the state of México required considerable sums of money, and Arenas had complained to Zapata that his army had received very little pay. It was difficult to sustain a growing rebel army under such circumstances, so the agricultural yields from the new agrarian communities he formed would balance out his army's financial woes.[52]

As stated by the national media, while serving in Zapata's Liberating Army of the South, in April 1915 Domino Arenas and his army had already stormed a large number of haciendas in Tlaxcala. Many of these properties were abandoned by owners fleeing from the violence in the Oriente Central, and Arenas took the opportunity to give back lands immediately to the indigenous peasants. Arenas had told the newspaper *The Mexican Herald* that, "The work of tilling will be entrusted to the residents on these haciendas." Arenas contended that the farmers, and no one else, would benefit from their agricultural production. As informed to the press by Alberto L. Paniagua, in Tlaxcala,

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[51] Manifiesto de Domingo Arenas, Nativitas, Tlaxcala, 10 May 1915, Reprinted in the *Mexican Herald*, 14 May 1915, p. 1 & 2.
[52] Ibid, p. 1; Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Nanacamilpa, Tlaxcala, 21 January 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 2.

Arenas "instructed that all haciendas abandoned by the owners be cultivated by the residents and neighboring villages for their respective benefit, so as to prevent these lands [from] remaining unproductive when the food supply of the state is scarce and limited."[53]

The Mexican Herald writers, who took every opportunity to excoriate and vilify Emiliano Zapata, actually followed every move of Arenas in the spring of 1915, praising his peasant army's efforts against the larger Carrancista army in Puebla and Tlaxcala. They also praised Arenas' ability to organize people. Only Domingo Arenas, the newspaper stated, had actually helped the impoverished peasantry, and the local people of the Oriente Central acknowledged this and aided in their leader's efforts to create new towns.[54] Whereas the paper reprinted the 1915 manifesto of Arenas in its pages, in 1911 it had ignored Zapata's writing of the Plan de Ayala and instead denounced Zapata for leading "bandits."

As a Zapatista general, Arenas and his army had invaded the properties of the local landed magnates in Tlaxcala and Puebla to improve, as he stated, the material conditions of his region's indigenous people.[55] The documentation found in the archive of the National Agrarian Commission shows that, for the most part, President Carranza seldom validated any of the land redistributions made by Arenas when he had been a Zapatista. The Comisión Agraria members honored the petitions of pueblos that already existed, but not of those "formed illegally."[56] Carranza, however, could not ignore the

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[53] Associated Press, "Estates of absentee owners to be worked," *The Mexican Herald*, 25 April 1915, p. 6.
[54] Jerry W. Knudson, "The *Mexican Herald*: Outpost of Empire, 1895-1915, *Gazette* 63, 5 (2001): 393-395; Associated Press, "Gen. Arenas moves his base from Calpulalpam to Nativitas," *The Mexican Herald*, 14 May 1915; Associated Press, "Huejotzingo taken by Ayala Brigade," *The Mexican Herald*, 7 April 1915, p. 2; Associated Press, "Generals cooperate to recover Tlaxco," *The Mexican Herald*, 22 September 1915, p. 4.
[55] Associated Press, "Gen. Arenas moves his base from Calpulalpam to Nativitas."
[56] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, Libro Número 5, Enero a Junio, f. 59, 2 February 1919.

impact of the land redistributions made by Arenas. In August 1917, the newspaper *El Demócrata* noted that Arenas and his people had redistributed many lands to Indian peasants in Tlaxcala and Puebla, and argued that this was a good revolutionary deed. *El Demócrata* contended that Arenas had worked to undermine recent efforts by the landed magnates to recover the lands they had "stolen" from native communities. When he became a Constitutionalist general, Arenas continue to give back lands to the indigenous peasantry "on an emergency basis." His claim was that the peasantry needed land urgently. These lands had "become *ejidos* and *dotaciones* (land endowments)" and plenty were granted provisional status, contingent upon Carranza's review and approval, as communities by Tlaxcala's Constitutionalist local Comisión Agraria. As one Comisión member contended, Arenas "worked well within the legal framework to help people from the pueblos exercise their right to possess the lands that had been taken from them [illegally], and which they now sorely needed to ensure their daily subsistence."[57]

El Demócrata wrote favorably on the land redistributions made by the Brigada Arenas, celebrating the general's commitment to redistribute land for the benefit, primarily, "of the indigenous race." The paper noted that not many people had done much to better the lot of the indigenous people, collectively the war's greatest victims. *El Demócrata* contended that Arenas had emerged as the heroic defender of Indians, and his greatest success had been manifested by his land redistributions.[58]Although it is nearly impossible to corroborate his claims with archival sources, Jesús Arenas too credits his grandfather with "redistributing lands and recreating indigenous pueblos in mostly all of Tlaxcala, Puebla, Hidalgo, México State, Veracruz, and even the volcanic zone of

[57] Corresponsal, "Rechaza los ataques de un diario al General Domingo Arenas," *El Demócrata*, p. 7.
[58]Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.

Morelos, where people revered Domingo Arenas…which surely angered General Emiliano Zapata. The Indian people from those pueblos in the volcano Popocatépetl still look up to Arenas and remember him warmly.” [59]

In the indigenous peasant communities of the Los Volcanes of Puebla and Tlaxcala the provisional possession of disentailed lands to the pueblos was in many instances first given by Domingo Arenas.[60] After the land redistributions had taken place, both the villagers and the hacienda owners fought tenaciously for water and fertile lands, however. On average, it took the Comisiónes Agrarias from the states of Tlaxcala and Puebla close to three years to come to definitive conclusions on who could possess the lands in question. Such was the case when the people of San Antonio Tlaltenco in Chiautzingo, Puebla, had asked Domingo Arenas for lands on 20 August 1916 when he disentailed landholdings from the haciendas of San Esteban and San Juan Tetla and the Rancho de Aitec. Ultimately, the owner of these estates was able to keep much of the territory's water, but noting that the pueblo's Indian people possessed lands of "very poor soil," on 3 September 1919 President Carranza gave back 440 acres of land he denominated as containing "good soil" to the town's peasants.[61]

The reform initiated by Domingo Arenas set in motion vigorous contestations for land in the Oriente Central. On 18 October 1915, the people from Santa María Tocatlán presented a primordial title from the year 1594 to Governor Porfirio del Castillo showing that the Hacienda de Acotla y la Concepción had been established, in large part, in lands

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[59] Interview with don Jesús Arenas, Santa Inés Zacatelco, Tlaxcala. Don Jesús mentioned that the people of Tetela del Volcán erected a small statue of Domingo Arenas near their presidential municipal palace, which I did not see when I visited the picturesque town overseeing the volcano.
[60] Corresponsal, "Rechaza los ataques," p. 7.
[61] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número 6, Julio a Diciembre, f. unreadable, 3 September 1919.

belonging legally to their pueblo.[62] The people had requested lands back in 1733, 1771, and showed partial ownership of the lands under question dating back to 1814. The Comisión ignored the 1915 land claim, but the people insisted and pressed forth with a new claim on 17 September 1917. President Carranza then observed that the pueblo of Santa María counted with a small strip of "sandy lands in one of the sierras of the La Malintzin," which was "almost useless for agriculture." Although the Comisión of Tlaxcala had stated that the pueblo did not possess the necessary documentation to get land, on 6 June 1919, Carranza gave the people 500 hectares of more fertile land and manure. The newer land claim had been first made by the people in late-July 1917 when Domingo Arenas served as Carranza's Oriente Central general.[63]

In the town of San Nicolás Zecalacoayan, in the district of Huejotzingo, Puebla, on 30 March 1917, as Constitutionalists, the Brigada Arenas invaded the properties of Gregorio Encinas and Paz Fernández Molina to give land back to the local people. Encinas and Molina were the proprietors of the Hacienda de San Juan Tetla and the Rancho de Aitec.[64] On 20 August 1916, while still serving as Zapatistas, the Brigada Arenas had stormed the Rancho de Aitec and the nearby haciendas of San Esteban and San Juan Tetla to grant "provisional possession" of the "expropriated lands to the local indigenous people."[65] Arenas had given lands back on an emergency basis to the people of San Nicolás Zecalcoayan because, as the local Comisión noted, its 562 inhabitants were very poor. The locals had told Arenas that they possessed the poorest "sandy-

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[62] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número 5, Enero a Junio, f. 148, 17 September 1918.
[63] Carranza, 6 June 1919, f. 149-150.
[64] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, ACNARP, AGN, Libro Número 6, Julio a Diciembre, f. 66-68, 79, 15 September 1919.
[65] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, Libro Número 6, f. 87.

clayey" soils, while the owners of Aitec and Tetla counted with the richest lands.[66] After Arenas died, the local people began losing lands again, and they appealed to the Comisión of Puebla for help. The Comisión members only ceded 210 hectares to the pueblo, in the form of an *ejido*, and did so because on 15 September 1919 President Carranza considered that indeed the town's "people were actually very poor." The Comisión had determined that 210 hectares represented a just settlement since "the people were unable to provide real proof of dispossession."[67] On 25 October 1917, the people from the Rancho de Tlahuapan, also in the Huejotzingo district, sent their representatives Pedro Narciso and Aurelio Crispin to the Governor's Office in Puebla to have their land claims validated by the local Comisión of Puebla.[68]

The people from Rancho Tlahuapan had a document in their possession written by the Brigada Arenas General Santos Hernández, who had given back land to the people "in representation of General Domingo Arenas, Division Leader of the Conventionist Army." The document was made official by Arenas on "25 October 1916, in full compliance with the Plan de Ayala." On 18 September 1919, obeying the law of President Carranza, the Comisión Agraria of Puebla, however, stated that the hacienda's proprietors had fled "due to the high insecurity in the area." For that reason alone, the Comisión declared, the government had denied the people's land request petition. It was determined that the property owners had vacated under duress.[69] Although the document does not mention it, in all likelihood President Carranza had decided that the local

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[66] Carranza, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 6, f. 79.
[67] Carranza, Resolución, 15 September 1919.
[68] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 6, Julio a Diciembre, f. 91, 18 September 1919.
[69] Carranza, 18 September 1919, f. 91.

peasants were not poor enough to get back any lands. Carranza also disliked what he had considered Arenas' extra-legal land redistributions.

This became evident with how the president dealt with the people from the Colonia de Guadalupe, in Calpulalpan, Tlaxcala, where the townsfolk had created an agrarian colony after the Brigada Arenas expropriated good lands from the Hacienda Nazapa. The local indigenous peasants had held on to the hacienda lands until 2 February 1919 when President Carranza stated that Colonia Guadalupe was "illegal, the product of a usurpation." Carranza instructed the local Comisión to remove the people from the Colonia de Guadalupe since that pueblo, "possessed no legal character whatsoever."[70] A similar case occurred in Españita, Tlaxcala, where on 14 November 1919 the resident peons of the haciendas San José Bellavista and Ameca had risen up, driving out the hacienda owners. On 29 November 1916, Domingo Arenas had allowed the laborers to form what they named as the Colonia de la Reforma. On 25 February 1919, however, Carranza declared that although the people from Colonia de la Reforma did need lands, the Comisión Nacional Agraria "could not respect the protests made by new pueblos." The Comisión, Carranza observed, would only give lands back to pueblos that had existed already, by this he meant pueblos possessing a legal title before 1856, otherwise he stated that it was illegal to create new pueblos through acts of violence.[71]

On those same legal grounds, and employing a similar discourse, Carranza denied the land claim made by workers from the Ixtafiayuca, San Nicolás, Cuautepec, and the Tlatzale haciendas, who under the instruction of Domingo Arenas had formed an agrarian

[70] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 5, Enero a Junio, 1919, Petición Nula, f. 59, 2 February 1919.
[71] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 5, Enero a Junio, 1919, Petición Nula, f. 60-61, 25 February 1919.

colony named Santa Cruz Portezuelo in 1916. The workers, which included 35 male household heads, had taken 900 hectares of rich soil from the haciendas, all located in Españita. On 19 November 1917, the neighbors had petitioned for more lands.[72] On 23 March 1919, however, Carranza dismissed the land claim altogether stating that the townsfolk "possessed no legitimate claim to the land." Carranza wrote to the Comisión in Tlaxcala that Santa Cruz Portezuelo "was like the other colonies of a military character that the extinct General Arenas had attempted to form in other parts of the state." No colonies, pueblos, or agrarian estates, Carranza observed, could be created by military authority alone.[73] Shortly before his death, Arenas had helped workers from the Hacienda El Corte in Calpulalpan, Tlaxcala form the Colonia San Felipe Hidalgo. The workers had formed their agrarian colony from within the hacienda grounds itself, and on 22 November 1917 they asked the Comisión of Tlaxcala for their official recognition as a new pueblo. On 23 March 1919, President Carranza ordered the local Comisión to deny the workers' land claim, and he observed that the agrarian or military colonies formed by Arenas had "no official legal authorization." Although Arenas had served Carranza at the time the colonia had been established, the deed was without the president's consent, so Carranza ordered that the "lands be returned, promptly, to the original proprietor," who Carranza told to the Comisión, had been dispossessed violently.[74] After 1917 under Carranza, only pueblos formed by the Comisión Nacional Agraria itself stood a chance of

[72] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 5, Enero a Junio, 1919, Petición Nula, f. 78, 23 March 1919.
[73] Carranza, 23 March 1919.
[74] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Númro 5, 1919, Enero a Junio, Petición Nula, f. 78-79, 23 March 1919.

procuring federal official status. The local indigenous peasants, however, pursued all avenues possible to attain expropriated lands.

Such was the case with the people of San Antonio in Calpulalpan, Tlaxcala, who on 15 May 1917 put together their own agrarian committee to request lands.[75] The people of San Antonio first claimed that they had a land title given to them by Viceroy Antonio de Mendoza in 1545, but the Comisión of Tlaxcala would not honor titles given, as the peasants claimed, since "time immemorial."[76] The people then contended that both Pablo González and Domingo Arenas had encouraged them to form an agrarian colony. The people told the Comisión that "the deceased General Domingo Arenas" had given them lands back since 1914.[77] Their population numbered at 1,194 people, which divided into 440 families, counting with only 759 hectares of adequate farmland. Moreover, their neighbors committee stated that their pueblo had a long history of grievances and with the haciendas Amantla y Capellanía, Mazapa, Coecilla, and San Miguel. All of these haciendas, they claimed, had since about two centuries back to the present taken all the land that yielded good cereals and maguey.[78]

The pueblo's committee showed that, in cahoots with the local vice regal court of Tlaxcala, in 1718 the hacendados had taken their community's best lands. The Comisión of Tlaxcala stated that "the Agrarian Law would only grant lands for cases [of proven land loss] after 1856." Utlimately, on 24 October 1919, President Carranza gave the neighbors 1,000 additional acres, to be taken from the aforementioned haciendas, "in

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[75] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 5, 1919, Enero a Junio, Petición Nula, f. 154, 24 October 1919.
[76] Ibid, 152.
[77] Carranza, 24 October 1919, f. 152.
[78] Carranza, 24 October 1919, 152-153.

light of the people's poor living conditions."[79] Complicated as the case was, Carranza showed that he held final authority on all National Agrarian Commission decisions. The San Antonio land restitution shows that the local indigenous peasants would exhaust all avenues--historical memory, the Plan de Ayala, Arenismo, and Constitutionalism--to get what they claimed were their lands back. The cases show that the agrarianism of Arenas was the catalyst for many of these land restoration claims and actions taken by indigenous peasants to regain their communities.

Under the rule of the Brigada Arenas, on 15 March 1917 the residents from San Bartolomé Tenango in Tetlatlahuca asked the local Comisión of Tlaxcala for the return of their farmlands now under the possession of the owner of the Hacienda de San Juan Mixo. The people of Mixo claimed "that Hernán Cortés had given their ancestors the land in 1525 as gratitude for their armed services to the Spaniards." Since Domingo Arenas served the federal government at the time of the land reclamation, and since Carranza acknowledged the townsfolk's legal right to own at least a portion the disputed lands, on 6 June 1919 the Comisión of Tlaxcala gave back 214 hectares of rich soil to the town's 57 farmers.[80]

After the Revolution's violent phase culminated in April 1920 with the murder of Carranza, President Álvaro Obregón inherited the problem of land reform in the Oriente Central, and the indigenous peasants in Tlaxcala continued to press forth the same demand: official recognition for their pueblos. The Obregón administration, for their part, stated that, with respect to the creation of government-sponsored *ejidos*, the nation's

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[79] Ibid, 154.
[80] Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 5, 1919, Enero a Junio, f. 119-120, 6 June 1919.

woodlands and other material riches could be exploited by the campesinos, within reasonable bounds, and with thought to maintain the area's ecological balance, for their common good. Obregón took this into consideration when he granted the people of San Juan Bautista Ixtenco, who had feuded with local hacienda owners since early 1917, 1,655 hectares of land expropriated from the Hacienda Mier y Anexas, which were some of Tlaxcala's most productive. Moreover, the Comisión of Tlaxcala, Obregón observed, was obligated to help the local peasants establish the necessary hydraulic infrastructure to water their lands. The availability of water, the National Agrarian Commission under Obregón noted, had been a major point of contention between the pueblos and the haciendas.[81]

Obregón also forced the Comisión of Tlaxcala to overturn some of its previous rulings. In the case of the pueblo of La Magdalena Cuextotitla, the people had not vacated 400 acres of land under litigation since May 1917 when Domingo Arenas and his men invaded, or encouraged the invasion, of many, if not all, the haciendas in Españita, in the state's northern border with Hidalgo.[82] The Comisión discovered that because in 1920 it had nullified the peasants' land claim of 400 acres, 72 families possessed no lands. Moreover, through a meticulous revisiting of the documentation the Comisión discovered that on 25 June 1856 the people had lost a considerable amount of land to the Hacienda Concepción Axolotepec, which had purchased much of the pueblo's land divided by the Liberal reformers. On those grounds, the proprietor Manuel de Drusina, the Comisión observed, possessed no other verifiable "proof of legitimate acquisition"

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[81] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 18, 1924, Marzo a Junio, f. 13-15, 20 March 1924.
[82] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 18, 1924, Marzo a Junio, f. 208, 26 June 1924.

since the land had been parceled by the government.[83] The people, therefore, had time and again been cheated, and Obregón ordered the 1920 Carranza decision overturned. The Comisión of Tlaxcala did, however, stress a need to "obligate the neighbors to, maintain, safeguard, and foment the forest and vegetation existing on their territories' surface."[84]

Under Obregón, the Comisión of Tlaxcala validated a land claim made by the townsfolk of Arenas' Santa Inés Zacatelco, which had been a major point of conflict since 1915. The Comisión Nacional Agraria had ratified the land claim of the Zacatelco people on 11 April 1917. At that time, Zacatelco had 5,504 inhabitants and all the household heads were listed by the Comisión of Tlaxcala as farmers.[85] In 1923, the people still felt that their land claims were not being respected. The Brigada Arenas had exercised military control over Zacatelco up until 1918.[86] In 1919, to protect their landholdings, the town's many farmers created an agrarian council led by the town's chieftain Gregorio Serrano del Castillo.[87] The haciendas, however, had regained much of the disputed lands after the Revolution. The situation in Zacatelco boiled on 5 March 1922, when sixty neighbors led by Serrano del Castillo, who had joined an armed movement that arose in the La Malintzin commanded by the former Arenista Antonio Mora, invaded the Hacienda San Isidro Cuacualoya to take some of its animals. The men of Serrano del Castillo were armed with sticks, carbines, and shotguns, and killed four

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[83]Obregón, 26 June 1924, 209-210.
[84] Ibid, 210.
[85] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 13, Enero a Septiembre, f 63, 5 July 1923.
[86] Correspondent, "Arenas' forces have 10 days of fighting," *The Mexican Herald*, 12 June 1915, p. 4; Corresponsal, "Quedo ya reintegrada la Comisión Nacional Agraria," *El Demócrata*, 16 May 1917, p. 3
[87] No Author, "Los Comisionados verdaderos del pueblo de Zacatelco," *El Universal*, 21 September 1919, p. 11.

soldiers in a fight that ensued when the peasants occupied the property. A day later, on 6 March, the local authorities arrested Gregorio Serrano del Castillo, and his father, Nicanor. The authorities worried about the situation in Zacatelco. The Mora rebellion, the government observed, had extended to Panzacola, Puebla.[88]

On 5 July 1923, after examining the Zacatelco case carefully, President Obregón ordered the Comisión of Tlaxcala to give back lands to the local farmers in the form of an *ejido*. The Comisión reported that the haciendas Los Reyes, Santa Agueda, San Miguel Xostla, San Isidro Pinillos, San Isidro Cuacualoya, San Jacinto, and Dolores, encircled the town of Zacatelco. By order of Obregón, the Comisión then expropriated 574 hectares of good land from the haciendas Santa Agueda and Dolores, owned by Ignacio Morales y Benítez, and took an additional 460 hectares from the San Isidro and Cuacualoya haciendas owned by Antonio Reguera Pérez.[89]

The Comisión then stripped an additional 1,400 hectares of fertile land from the local ranchos, which must have been large since they did not commonly expropriate lands from smaller estates, to give back a total of 2,434 hectares to the Zacatelco townsfolk, the largest *ejido* land grant made in the Puebla-Tlaxcala border region in the early 1920s.[90] Moreover, President Obregón observed that the Zacatelco people needed "an educational institution, which will be the basis for the organization of the *ejidos*." The school would also instruct the people "on the experimentation and teaching of agrarian science," and

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[88] El Corresponsal, "Otra asonada," *El Universal*, 8 March 1922, p. 12.
[89] Obregón, 5 July 1923, f. 63.
[90] Obregón, 5 July 1923, f. 64.

"on the collective exploitation of the soil's natural riches," stressing the preservation of the area's natural forests.[91]

Under the Obregón-Calles period, the federal government endowed pueblos of "an agrarian character" with land. These pueblos, it was made clear in the literature, possessed long trajectories of the communal defense for land rights against the latifundios. In Tlaxcala, the pueblo of San Juan Bautista Totolac, which was founded in 1600 by "colonizers who had fought for that land," was designated as one of these pueblos. San Juan Bautista Totolac, Obregón noted, had diminished in size in relation to the growth of the Hacienda La Santa and Rancho San Isidro. The litigation between the pueblo and the estates began on 24 October 1710, and the colonial records the Comisión examined revealed that the vice regal authorities had granted the pueblo with additional lands in 1767. By 1910, with the hacienda's encroachments upon the townsfolk's productive soils the people virtually possessed no land.[92] On 25 May 1917, Obregón noted that the Comisión of Tlaxcala had approved a land restitution for the pueblo's 1,080 inhabitants, but because the people had only received seventy hectares in four years, he ordered that they receive all the lands from the Hacienda La Virgen, a property the Comisión had disentailed previously.[93]

The post-revolutionary regime made a point of revoking what they believed were Carranza's unfair rulings. Case in point, on 14 October 1921, he ordered that the Comisión of Tlaxcala annul Carranza's 11 April 1918 decision to negate a land restitution case brought forth by the people from San Miguel Contla. Obregón simply

[91] Ibid, 64-66.
[92] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 10, Marzo a Julio, f. 80, 27 July 1921.
[93] Obregón, 27 July 1921, 81.

considered the people from San Miguel Contla good rebels, and struck out Carranza's ruling. The president wrote that the people from San Miguel Contla would become the prime beneficiaries from the recent Comisión's disentailing of the Hacienda San Diego Apatlahuaya. More than the latifundistas, the local people, who had fought for the Revolution, Obregón reckoned, possessed the right to own the area's most productive lands.[94] What is more, on 23 November 1922 Obregón also validated a land claim previously nullified by Carranza, which had been made by the rebellious people from the La Malintzin pueblo of San Juan Bautista Ixtenco. The local people, Obregón wrote, needed fertile soils, and these were to be taken from the wealthy agave-growing Hacienda de San Juan Bautista Mier in Huamantla, which had been dominated by the Tamaríz and Haro clans, who were among the notable landed scions dominating the Santa Liga de Agricultores.[95] Obregón then stated that the pueblo needed ample water to irrigate their new lands and exploit the land communally.[96]

The Obregón regime expressed a different political sensibility when considering which communities were entitled to expropriated lands. Carranza had stated that new communities created by the military rule of the Arenistas were formed in an extra-legal fashion; however, on 10 April 1922 the Obregonistas decided to grant a *dotación* (endowment) "of 900 hectares of good soil" to the Pueblo de Atotonilco. The people had asked for official federal government recognition for their pueblo and additional lands on 8 April 1920, and again on 9 September 1920. The problem was that prior to 1916 the

[94] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 10, Marzo a Julio, f. 242, no clear date given.
[95] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 11, 19 de Mayo a 22 de Junio, 1922, f. 90, 23 November 1922.
[96] Ibid, 91.

pueblo had not existed. That year, the Brigada Arenas gave "provisional military possession" to the indigenous peasants who themselves had expropriated lands from the Rancho de Atotonilco, renaming the reclaimed territory Pueblo de Atotonilco.[97] To Obregón this was a matter of justified, swift justice and he used Article 27 of the 1917 Federal Constitution to validate the people's land claim. The pueblo got lands "through a communal title" and access to water to irrigate the communal land in 1925.[98] Obregón, who as a federal general had combatted the Brigada Arenas during his brief occupation of Tlaxcala in 1915, honored the agrarianism of Domingo Arenas by validating the lands the deceased general had given back to the region's indigenous peasantry.

As president, Plutarco Elías Calles continued to expropriate haciendas and create *ejidos* for the indigenous people of the Oriente Central who, as he wrote, "were extremely poor." Calles described the people from the pueblo of San Marcos Guaquilpan in such a manner. The Hacienda de Malpaís, which had been the target of sustained rebel attacks during the Revolution, covered a territory of 5,000 hectares in the states of Hidalgo and Tlaxcala; therefore, Calles called for the hacienda's expropriation to give 1,160 hectares of its landholdings in Tlaxcala to the indigenous *vecinos*.[99] The town's people had fought in the Revolution, but the land records reviewed by President Calles showed that the "people had lost everything by act of dispossession." Writing that the people had gained nothing materially for their contributions to the Revolution, Calles also ordered the Comisión of Tlaxcala to take lands from the Hacienda de San Cristóbal to add to the land endowment to the people from Guaquilpan. The stance of Calles in relation to the

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[97] Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 21, Obregón-Calles, Noviembre y Diciembre, 1924, original land restituion f. 112, 10 April 1922.
[98] Ibid, 113.
[99] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 28, f. 3-4, 1 October 1925.

indigenous people, like that of Obregón before him, was paternalistic. The government, Calles wrote, "would educate the indigenous *vecinos*" on all matters concerning augmenting agricultural productivity for the pueblo's material benefit. Moreover, like Obregón before him, Calles did not discuss why the peasants fought during the Revolution, nor explain for whom they had fought.[100] The Revolution, for these post-revolutionary statesmen, had become a sanitized event, devoid of class and ethnic conflict, and the *campesino* was now a beneficiary of the nation-state's largesse.

Claiming that they had been pushed by the hacendados and ranchers to the roughest terrain in Puebla's central highlands, on 11 May 1916 indigenous peasants led by the Arenista general Mariano Rayón invaded and expropriated lands from the Rancho Cuauhtémoc in Huejotzingo, Puebla. The peasants renamed the expropriated lands, Pueblo de San Luis Cuauhtémoc, and on 25 May 1917 Domingo Arenas wrote a formal request to Puebla's Comisión Agraria secretary asking for the people's provisional military possession over the expropriated territories. Obregón had granted such status to the people on 25 May 1921, but they continued to complain about outsiders encroaching upon their lands, forcing them to resettle into the sierras' tougher hillsides where they struggled with the "spontaneous vegetation," as they described it, which gave poor yields of maize and beans.[101] Evidenced by this case, the *ejido*, Calles noted, was failing in its promise to redeem the peasantry. The President had learned that even indigenous children had to work for a wage, and the adults fared no better earning 50 to 62 cents working in

[100] Calles, 1 October 1925.
[101] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 34, Julio, f. 126-127, 26 July 1926.

local haciendas. On 26 July 1916, Calles decided to grant the people from San Luis Cuauhtémoc the 2,050 hectare land grant given to them by Arenas.[102]

As opposed to Carranza, Calles did not care about illegal usurpations of land nor of communities created by military authority. He expressed this to the Comisión of Puebla with his handling of the indigenous peasants from Otlatla y Santa Cruz, Puebla. On 4 May 1916, Domingo Arenas had granted the people provisional military possession over portions of the Hacienda de Guadalupe. The peasants claimed that the hacienda's owner, Marcelino Presno, had fled the property since the rebel army of Arenas first invaded the territory in late 1914. By 1921, the people's spokesperson, Patricio Luna, a former Arenista, claimed that the local hacienda owners had pushed them higher into the sierras, at altitudes higher than 2,850 meters above sea level. The people, Luna contended, could not subsist in a territory replete with rocky precipices, an extremely cold climate, and "sparse vegetation."[103] Luna contended that since Presno had left, and arrivistes now attempted to claim the pueblo's lands, the government should grant his settlers the land grant they had for long requested. Calles responded by recommending to the Comisión of Puebla that each head of family in Otlatla y Santa Cruz receive 13 hectares and instructions on improving harvesting techniques and on environmental conservation.[104]

The post-revolutionary government noted that Arenas had responded to the people's needs by granting pueblos provisional military authority, which allowed the

[102] Calles, 26 July 1926, f. 128.
[103] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 35, Agosto, f. 16-17, 5 August 1926.
[104] Ibid, 18.

people to buy time and benefit briefly from the sudden land tenure.[105] When the Brigada Arenas had reoccupied Huejotzingo in April 1917, agrarian representatives from San Juan Pancoac told Domingo Arenas that "the scarcity of lands obligate them to put their children to work in agriculture, negating them the opportunity to attend school. After consulting with the people, Arenas gave them full possession of lands recently expropriated from the Rancho de Tomalintla. Because other pueblos protested, Arenas only gave 83 hectares of good land to the people; however, in 1924 their complaint echoed those of others. Large estates, the people claimed, had "pushed them into the higher sierras" and they wanted "land on flatter terrain for the successful planting and harvesting of maize, beans, peas," where they could also "plant pear, apple, peach, and vulgar trees." The people also wanted to be closer to Huejotzingo to have easier access to the railroads and to seek work in the factories.[106] Calles recommended the expropriation of 129 hectares from Rancho Ixquitlán and 183 hectares from Rancho Tomalintla to add to the 83 hectares given to the indigenous *pobladores* by Arenas in 1917. The land claim of San Juan Pancoac received full federal government authentication on 5 August 1917.[107]

With Arenas' 1917 occupation of Huejotzingo also came the creation of the Pueblo de Ignacio M. Altamirano. The Brigada Arenas under Mariano Rayón had taken 741 hectares of fertile lands from the Hacienda de Guadalupe, a megafundio, and citing their great material need, Calles ratified the people's occupation of the territory on 12

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[105] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 35, Agosto, f. 26, 5 August 1926.
[106] Calles, San Juan Pancoac, 5 August 1917, f. 26-27.
[107] Calles, 5 August 1927, 28-29.

August 1926.[108] The presence of Arenismo was so strong in the Los Volcanes of Puebla, the townsfolk from San Antonio Chiautla, in Huejotzingo renamed their pueblo San Antonio Chiautla de Arenas. Sometime in 1916, as Zapatistas, the Brigada Arenas under Santos Hernández destroyed the Hacienda de Chiautla, giving the expropriated lands back to the region's indigenous peasants.[109] The people from San Antonio had received from Arenas a land grant of 500 hectares, which came from the expropriation of a total of 3,162 hectares taken from Ignacio Kasuski. Calles argued that despite the Arenas land grant, which really numbered at 504 hectares, living at an altitude of 2,450 meters above sea level on mostly rocky hillsides with little flat land, the people from Chiautla de Arenas could not meet their dietary needs without working additionally in neighboring estates. For that reason, on 3 March 1927, he gave the people an extension of 528 hectares of land closer to San Martín Texmelucan, which lying in the middle of the Guillow and Tlaloc railroads, had become a major commercial center by that year.[110]

The Calles administration noted that even under Obregón land tenure issues in the Los Volcanes of Puebla remained unresolved. Such was the case with the Pueblo de Guadalupe Zaragoza, which had been formed on May 1916 when the Brigada Arenas general Santos Hernández expropriated hundreds of lands from the Hacienda Apapasco and from other neighboring estates to form new pueblos. Although the land had been expropriated in an extralegal fashion from the Hacienda Apapasco, which was owned by the brothers Alejando and Gregorio Encinas, the Calles government decided to grant the pueblo de Guadalupe partial possession of 839 hectares on grounds that the local people

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[108] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 35, Agosto, f. 145-150, 12 August 1926.
[109] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 42, Marzo, f. 18, 3 March 1927.
[110] Calles, 3 March 1927, f. 19-21.

had been impoverished due to past dispossessions.[111] On 12 August 1926, however, Calles declared that the people from Guadalupe were obligated to cede 78 hectares of land to the Pueblo de San Martinito.[112]

San Martinito had also been formed as a product of an Arenista expropriation of the Hacienda Apapasco on 2 May 1916. The town's representatives, Francisco Román, Florencio López, and the brothers Melitón, Nemesio, and Florentino Hernández, had been granted an extension on their provisional military occupation by Domingo Arenas on 18 March 1917.[113] On 31 March 1927 Calles instructed the Comisión of Puebla to give the people from San Martinito 228 hectares of land closer to Huejotzingo and Tlahuapan, an area with rich soils. President Calles also noted that since the people from San Martinito were interested in exploiting the region's woodlands they would have to receive instructions from the Comisión Agraria on teaching on the importance of preserving the area's ecological balance and on sharing wood and pasturelands with other neighbors. Previously, a pueblo's encroachment upon another's *ejido* lands had left some populations landless, engendering intense and deadly conflicts.[114]

Calles averted such a conflict when he made a compromise between parties involved in a heated land dispute, and respected the original land possessions claimed by the people from San Bernardino Contla and its neighboring pueblos in the La Malintzin region. Contla's indigenous neighbors had occupied the Tecolotla property owned by Roberto Xochiteotzi during the Revolution; however, the proprietor had also stated that

[111] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 35, Agosto, f. 145-149, 12 August 1926.
[112] Ibid, f. 150.
[113] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 42, Marzo, f. 260-263, 31 March 1927.
[114] Calles, 31 March 1927, f. 268-270.

his lands were invaded by the ranchos De la Concepción and San José Teupulzingo. Contla's townsfolk had also requested land from the aforementioned ranchos, providing the breeding ground for an intense land tenure conflict.[115] Colonial records consulted by the Comisión of Tlaxcala showed that in 1535 the people from Contla had actually purchased 14,245 *varas* (roughly a walking stick measurement or yard) running from east to west and 9,058 *varas* from north to south. Although Contla "enjoyed" the category of a pueblo since 1500, as the documents stated, the pueblo had lost lands continuously since before 1856. A "royal proclamation" from King Phillip V was brought forth by the local people in 1732 showing San Bernardino Contla's communal ownership of the disputed lands in a land defense case that ensued on that year. The people had also gone to court to defend their lands in 1675. In 1892 the pueblo also feuded with its neighbors from San Bartolomé Cuauhimaxtla over some of the same territories.[116] Calles did not allow the people from Contla to claim the lands it requested in 1915 and 1916, which had probably came as a *dotación* from Domingo Arenas. The records, Calles noted, showed that "San Bernardino Contla had feuded over lands with Huamantla, San José Teacalco, Belem, San Pablo Apetitlán, Santa Anna Chiautempan, San Bartolomé Cuauhimaxtla, and San Francisco Telanocha" and these conflicts intensified in 1923.[117] According to Calles all the aforementioned pueblos should benefit from the fertile land adjacent to the lower cordilleras of the volcano "Matlacueye" (Malintzin).[118] The pueblos in question, Calles had learned from the reports prepared by the Comisión, possessed legitimate land titles to

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[115] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 39, Diciembre, f. 279, 30 December 1926.
[116] Calles, 30 December 1926, 279-280.
[117] Ibid, 281.
[118] Ibid 281-283.

adjacent lands; therefore, he called upon a clear demarcation of the disputed lands and decided not to grant any additional land to the pueblo of Contla, "which counted with a considerable extension (based on the pueblo's own claim) of 13,000 hectares." The people were only entitled to their original claim, which meant that neither rival pueblos nor neighboring haciendas or ranchos could not encroach upon those 13,000 hectares. The pueblo of Contla, for its part, could not claim additional adjacent lands. The Calles regime showed that the post-revolutionary politicians, despite their insistence upon pushing forward the notion that indigenous peasants had become *campesinos* who began forming associations of *agraristas*, (land reform supporters) would not dare lump diverse populations of indigenous peasants together in disputed territories. The regime was aware of the peasantry's social differentiation.[119]

Conclusion: The Benefits of Revolutionary-era Effective Land Reform

Domingo Arenas claimed that his army had liberated pueblos through their occupations of haciendas and ranchos. What he mean by liberated was related to the lands he gave back to the indigenous peasants in the zone he controlled militarily, and these land redistributions were more intense in Puebla than they were in Tlaxcala. If Arenas could have it his way, he would have disentailed most, if not all, large agrarian estates in Tlaxcala and given it back to the indigenous people, but his army was never able to enjoy considerable military control over districts in Tlaxcala. Much of this was due to the fact that Tlaxcala was governed by strong Constitutionalist governors such as Máximo Rojas, Porfirio del Castillo, and Daniel Ríos Zertuche.[120] In the larger terrain of the Puebla Texmelucan-Tlahuapan Valley, which involved Huejotzingo and Cholula as

[119] Ibid, 286.
[120] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. II*, 123-126.

well, Arenas had greater room to maneuver and could encourage the local peasants to either invade or help his army storm large agrarian estates as it happened with the people from Santiago Coaltzingo when on 8 May 1916 they took 12 horse steads from the Hacienda de Guadalupe, owned by Marcelino G. Presno.[121] Out of the seized horse steads the people formed the pueblo Santiago Coaltzingo, "which had not existed prior to the formation of the military colony." By 1926, the pueblo's population had grown to 889 inhabitants. There were two main problems with the pueblo, however; Presno held legal title to the Hacienda de Guadalupe, a large agricultural estate which measured 13,862 hectares, and the Coaltzingo residents lived within the hacienda itself.[122] Another pueblo, La Preciosita, had also sprang up from within the hacienda. The people from La Preciosita had also encroached upon the neighboring Hacienda San Lorenzo de la Rosa to claim more lands.[123]

Since the population of *pobladores* (settlers) had grown substantially, the federal government decided to expropriate at total of 1,986 lands from the Hacienda Guadalupe, but did not touch the San Lorenzo property, which had already been fractioned into smaller properties. Out of the expropriated lands 176 hectares went to the La Preciosita "settlement." Calles and the Comisión claimed that, despite the illegal land seizure resulting in the formation of the pueblos in 1916, in 1927 the federal government could not leave a total of 266 families landless; therefore, it was decided on 19 May 1927 that Mr. Presno would be paid in full for the expropriated lands. The government realized that

[121] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 44, f. 141, 19 May 1927.
[122] Ibid, 142-143.
[123] Ibid, 143-144.

the effective land reform by Arenas during the Revolution itself had benefitted the indigenous peasants for posterity.[124]

The Calles administration took into consideration the fact that the peasants who had received lands from the Arenistas remained in possession of it, and the government, which boasted of its agrarianism as the gem of revolutionary redemption, could not leave peasants throughout the Puebla Valley landless. This fact informed the rulings of Calles and the Comisión Nacional Agraria when they decided to allow peasants to retain expropriated lands in the final reassessment of the land restitution cases of San Martinito and San Francisco Tlaloc. Domingo Arenas had ordered General Antonio Mora to spearhead the local peasantry's exploitation of expropriated lands from the Hacienda de Chiautla.[125] The Arenista occupation had been violent, but the federal government had to honor the military occupation made by the Arenistas because it "could not leave the *vecinos* without benefit."[126] Calles then validated the people's petition for official recognition on 16 July 1927. The proprietor from the Hacienda Apapasaco, for his part, had complained vigorously to the government of Puebla that the Arenistas had left him property less.[127] When the Zapatista División del Oriente commanded by Arenas stormed Huejotzingo in the summer of 1916, on 3 September Domingo Arenas created the Rancho de San Ignacio, also known locally as El Gavillero. As a Constitutionalist general, on 20 July 1917 Arenas went before the Comisión of Puebla to submit the paperwork for San Ignacio's recognition as a pueblo because "without the [recognition] the pueblo was unable to satisfy its agricultural necessities." On 23 August 1927,

[124] Calles, 19 May 1927, 146-150.
[125] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 45, f. 142, 16 July 1927.
[126] Ibid, 148.
[127] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 45, f. 236, 23 June 1927.

recognizing the pueblo's and the former hacienda proprietor's plight, Calles decreed that the federal government should reimburse the hacendado, and grant the people the status of a pueblo.[128]

The Calles government also noted that the Arenistas' effective land redistributions had benefitted neighboring pueblos. In 1916, the División del Oriente also helped local *vecinos* form San Cristóbal Tepatlaxco from its expropriation of the Hacienda de San Antonio Chiautla. Arenas had designated those lands as propitious for the cultivation of a wide variety of beans; however, the pueblos of San Lucas el Grande, Tlalancaleca, and Tlanalapan also received lands for bean cultivation from the hacienda's expropriation. Despite the original "violent and extra-legal nature of the land seizure," because several pueblos had benefitted from the formation of the original military colony, Calles ratified the *ejido* on 18 August 1927.[129]

In the summer of 1916, Domingo Arenas had also redistributed a massive amount of lands throughout the small pueblos surrounding San Andrés Calpan. At that time, the Arenas army controlled most of Cholula, and from the expropriation of the Hacienda de Chahuac Arenas gave back lands to the smaller pueblos of Tepalcatepec, Tlale, Oculco, and Tlaltizic. Pueblos near the Iztaccíhuatl such as Atexcac and San Lucas Atzala also received lands better suited for the cultivation of maize, beans, and wheat. In 1927, the populations of Calpan and its adjacent pueblos had grown, and the people asked the federal government for more lands. Calpan requested 1,153 hectares of good land, but the lands were dangerously close to Huejotzingo, Xalitzintla, Yancuitlapan, and Zacatepec; therefore, the federal government ordered new land demarcations throughout the

[128] Calles, 23 June 1927, f. 230-240.
[129] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 47, f. 167-170.

valley.[130] The people from San Andrés Calpan, which had functioned as the Arenista provisional headquarters from 1917 to 1919, in 1925 had given some of the military colony's lands to poorer neighbors to plant fruit trees.[131] The people from Calpan, it is clear, had become *agraristas* due to their interactions with the Arenistas and they also bought into the idea of the post-revolutionary state's promotion of the *ejido*. Calpan contained a population of 721 *vecinos*, and although the pueblo counted with some fairly good lands, Calles and the Comisión of Puebla decided that 649 neighbors remained eligible for *ejido* redistributions. On 18 August 1927, the Comisión of Puebla approved for the 1,153 hectare extension and gave Calpan additional water for irrigation. The neighbors were granted smaller land grants, but not a full *ejido*.[132]

The Arenista annexations of hacienda lands also gave indigenous *vecinos* the opportunity to acquire lands through purchase. On 15 August 1916, the Arenistas had expropriated 100 hectares of good lands from the Hacienda San Benito, in Atlixco. Cirilo Arenas then galvanized "the otherwise calm townsfolk" to create an agricultural colony, Colonia Guadalupe Hidalgo. The problem with Cirilo's expropriation and subsequent land redistribution was that the hacienda was too small.[133] The Constitutional 5 January Agrarian Law stated that only latifundios were subject to expropriation. Moreover, the Guadalupe Hidalgo *colonia* counted only with 32 citizens. Acknowledging their difficult situation the *vecinos* hired an attorney, and upon his counsel purchased the properties from the original proprietor, at an elevated price. On 1 September 1927 the Comisión of

[130] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 47, f. 184-185, 18 August 1927.
[131] Ibid, 187.
[132] Ibid, 188.
[133] Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, AGN, ACNARP, Libro Número 48, f. 131, 1 September 1927.

Puebla declared that Guadalupe Hidalgo could not be recognized as a pueblo. The *vecinos*, however, retained their lands as individual proprietors.[134]

The Arenista land reform, therefore, had given the indigenous peasants from Puebla's central valley the opportunity to pursue the acquisition of lands through different avenues. Domingo Arenas had paved the way for them from 1914, or perhaps before according to anecdotal records, to 1917 with his effective land redistributions through the creation of agrarian military colonies. Under the tenure of Governor Gonzalo Bautista, the Constitutional Congress of the State of Puebla honored the zealous agrarianism of Domingo Arenas on 12 May 1942 by renaming the pueblos of San Simón Tlanicontla and Santiago Xaltepatla in the Municipality of Huejotzingo, "Domingo Arenas." The document also declared that the government would set up a pension for "*señora* Margarita Pérez, mother of the generals Domingo, Emeterio, and Cirilo Arenas."[135] Despite the recognition, the indigenous peasantry continues to languish in poverty. It must not be forgotten that in Arenas' Santa Inés Zacatelco his descendants continue to struggle to retain the little land they have. Mr. Jesús Arenas still describes the government's land reform as a glaring failure, a betrayal of the Revolution.

[134] Calles, 1 September 1927, f. 132-134.
[135] H. XXXIV Congreso Constitucional del Estado de Puebla, "Sección de Leyes del Estado," 12 May 1942, p. 113.

Chapter 5:

The Rebel with a cause? Cirilo Arenas and the Revolution in Central High-Sierra México, 1917-1920

Prologue

"I inform you, with the greatest joy, that I have incorporated myself to the División del Oriente, Arenas, which is led by General Domingo Arenas, and which now grants the greatest guarantees to civilians, and is where, as I have observed, all the revolutionary ideals are being carried forth; these are the principles for which we have fought so hard: Throughout the domains of the División Arenas the redistribution of lands is a hard fact, as is the formation of agrarian colonies to establish small-scale property ownership and the erection of learning institutions."[1] With such words, on 10 June 1917, General Vicente Rojas informed Zapatista Colonel Andrés Rufino about the virtues of the División Arenas.

The letter, co-signed by General Cirilo Arenas, added that Arenistas stood for what people needed most; "land and primary instruction," and therefore avoided the petty rivalries and personal ambitions that weakened other movements. Rojas informed Rufino that "he had not abandoned the principles of the Liberating Army" because "the decorated Domingo Arenas had fought, and continued, to fight for them." He therefore invited Rufino to join him in the struggle "for the people's liberation." Rojas added a manifesto to the people of Morelos offering ample guarantees, and reminded Rufino that the "true" "Revolution" fought for "the pueblos' betterment"—that was, he stated, the

[1] Vicente Rojas and Cirilo Arenas to Andrés Rufino, Tepetlixpa, Estado de México, 10 June 1917, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 51, f. 29.

"patriotic duty" of the revolutionary. Cirilo Arenas, for his part, stated that he welcomed all conscious "revolutionaries" and "patriots" into his ranks.[2]

The letter written by Rojas and Arenas to Rufino is instructive in many ways. In June 1917, the Arenistas were campaigning on behalf of the Constitutionalists in Morelos, not solely to conquer Zapata's terrain, but, more importantly, the people's hearts. The Arenistas and Zapatistas had competing and shared visions of agrarianism; they had both vowed to restore lands to peasants; however, the Arenistas had been forging their own utopias in the volcanic sierras and desired to share the actualization of their revolutionary dream with other agrarian people. Rojas believed that Arenismo had succeeded where Zapatismo had failed. While the Arenistas reconstructed agrarian military communities, the Zapatistas insisted upon nationalizing the Plan de Ayala, and Zapata insisted that in order to receive land, all communities had to support Zapatismo. Zapata was rather intractable in his position since 1914 with his revisions to the Plan de Ayala: rebels, he wrote, either supported the South's Revolution or the forces of "conservatism and reaction." And, in his view, only Zapatismo stood for true land reform, one that would give the nation's Indians their lands back. The Zapatistas believed that the Plan de Ayala took precedence over all peasant concerns, and declared that the Plan was "the national banner" of all agrarian people.[3]

In attempting to nationalize the Plan de Ayala, the Zapatistas had resorted to extreme measures to become the dominant rebel faction in the center-south region. When the Zapatistas conducted military campaigns in the wider Oriente Central in late

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[2] Rojas and Arenas to Rufino, AGM, f. 29.
[3] Editorial, "Un gran documento para la historia: El Plan de Ayala, Ratificado, 1914," *La Patria*, 6 August 1914, p. 1 & 2; Editorial, "Sobre los problemas nacionales," *La Patria*,

November 1914, the chieftains Higinio Aguilar, Juan Andreu Almazán, and Ignacio Bonilla from the Puebla highlands helped the Zapatistas campaign in central Puebla and in the Mixtec Sierras of Oaxaca. At the Hacienda de Jaltepec, located between Chietla and Atencingo, Puebla, the Zapatistas "executed the Carrancista general Lauro Amor Anzurez, and nine others," to show the locals their willingness to rid the area of Constitutionalism's influence. The Conventionist general Benjamin Argumedo campaigned in the sierras of Oaxaca, where he and Eufemio Zapata "gave new official ranks in the name of the Convention" only to local leaders who "recognized" the authority "of the Plan de Ayala." By adding local chieftains from highland zones, by November 1914 the Zapatistas had picked up an additional 15,000 rebels.[4]

Introduction

On 23 September 1917, 24 days after the Zapatista generals killed Domingo Arenas, Emiliano Zapata received an urgent letter from Gildardo Magaña who commanded the Tochimilco headquarters. [5] The letter pertained to a matter of great importance for Zapata. Magaña observed that Arenismo had "been orphaned," and, in the wake of the Arenista leader's demise, the movement was in a state of disarray. Magaña added that Alberto L. Paniagua, the presumed new Arenista chieftain, had proven ineffective at leading the rebel group. The Zapatista general observed that Paniagua could not discipline his forces, "which wanting basic provisions" had taken to widespread

[4] Eufemio Zapata to Emiliano Zapata, Cuautla, Morelos, 5 November 1914, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 51, f. 3.

[5] Alberto L. Paniagua to Jesús Agustín Castro, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, 3 September 1917, Expediente Domingo Arenas, XI/III/1-19, Cancelados AHDN, f. 157-156; Corresponsal Especial, "Sucumbió asesinado el Gral. Domingo Arenas," *El Pueblo*, 2 September 1917, p. 1, 3, 5. Military dispatches to the press stated that Fortino Ayaquica had betrayed Arenas because he had promised the Tlaxcallan chieftain that he would surrender a squadron of his men and cache of arms to the Brigada Arenas, and instead attacked an unguarded Arenas.

"looting and to committing other outrageous criminal acts" against the local peasantry of San Martín Texmelucan, the town where the Arenistas had set up their main headquarters since seizing control of the territory from Victoriano Huerta's military in 1914. The Zapatista general observed the situation carefully and stated that "lacking any guarantees… [Arenismo] would fall quickly to the command of Cesáreo Castro."[6] Clearly, what Magaña referred to in his letter were guarantees to Arenistas coming from the Zapatistas, who encountered great difficulty entering what had been Arenas' zone of operation for two major reasons; the Arenistas wanted to avenge their fallen leader, and the area was now rife with Constitutionalist soldiers led by General Castro, to whom Carranza had assigned the supreme command of the war theatre in Tlaxcala and Puebla, an area that the Constitutionalists sorely needed to pacify. The Arenistas and Zapatistas were also competing for the loyalties of the Oriente Central's indigenous peasants since the Zapatista-Arenista rupture of 30 December 1916. But it was Cirilo who had armed hundreds of his fighters coming from Puebla's Los Volcanes and had made incursions into the state of Morelos to hunt for Emiliano Zapata hoping to bring swift, lethal justice to his brother's slayers.[7] This turn of events worried Magaña, but given the history of violence between the Arenistas and Zapatistas during the past year, he expected the Arenista defection to Constitutionalism.

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[6] Gildardo Magaña to Emiliano Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 23 September 1917, AGN, AZ, Caja, 14, Exp., 9, f. 3.

[7] J. Cervantes to Cesáreo Castro, Mexico City, 1 September 1917, Expediente Cesáreo Castro, Cancelados AHDN, f. X/III-2/35, f. 152; Nombramiento del General Cesáreo Castro, Jefe de Operaciones Militares, Tlaxcala y Puebla, 7 September 1917, X/III-2/35, Cancelados AHDN, f. 156-157. General Castro had already enjoyed great success in Tlaxcala and Puebla. In mid-1915 he had halted the advance of Domingo Arenas in San Martín Texmelúcan and had disarmed a squad of Zapatistas at the Hacienda Buenaventura. In June-July 1915, despite the successes of the Brigada Arenas, Castro drove Zapatistas out of Tlaxcala City, Apizaco, and Santa Anna Chiautempam, and with this, Tlaxcala itself, save for the border area that had been controlled by Domingo Arenas, would remain one of the Revolution's most contested territories.

A day after Magaña wrote the urgent letter to Zapata addressing the Arenista problem, Cirilo Arenas sent a telegram to the *subsecretario de Guerra*-Sub-Secretary of War in Mexico City, detailing the terms of his official surrender and adhesion of his Brigada Arenas to the Constitutionalist army. Cirilo Arenas first surrendered and then reincorporated all rebels under his command to General Cesáreo Castro.[8] On that same day, Cirilo also informed the Secretary of War in Mexico City that his forces would cooperate with the federal army "in matters pertaining to the economy and political administration" of Puebla, and also vowed to follow all the orders "given by General Cesáreo Castro, the Chief of Operations in this state [Puebla]."[9]

Emiliano Zapata, for his part, believed that the indigenous people of the Oriente had been deceived by Domingo Arenas and that this explained why the serrano indigenous people had followed the Arenas brothers into the Constitutionalist ranks since December 1916. Zapata added that the Arenas brothers were also responsible for "betraying Zapatismo and the Plan de Ayala."[10] Zapata stated the Arenistas were easily manipulated Indians, and had been "deceived by the words and bad acts of that man [Arenas], astute and clever to seduce with false promises of mentioned reforms…" The reforms Zapata alluded to were the land redistributions and local political autonomy for

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[8] Cirilo Arenas to the Sub-secretary of War, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, AHDN, Expediente Cirilo Arenas (ECA), X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 23. The page numbers in the Expediente Cirilo Arenas are inconsistent. Several members of the military staff who have worked in the archive renumbered the pages in the file; therefore, since much of this chapter relies on the Cirilo Arenas papers, (ECA), I have renumbered the pages according to the order through which I photographed the document.
[9] Cirilo Arenas to the Secretary of War, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, 24 September 1917, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados AHDN, f. 4-5.
[10] Emiliano Zapata, "A los Jefes, Oficiales y Soldados que hayan militado bajo las órdenes de Domingo Arenas," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 27 September 1917, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 46, f. 6.

the indigenous people. Zapata also branded Domingo Arenas as "a sanguinary and cruel" fellow, who forced his followers to obey "by threats and by force."[11]

The Zapatista chieftain believed that since he had freed local Indians from Arenas' "yoke," they could return to "the ranks of the Southern Revolution and be reincorporated to the Liberating Army…where they would be treated as brothers and compatriots in ideals." The manifesto of Zapata written to the Indian people of the Oriente Central told the Arenistas that only through "the Plan de Ayala" would they be able to fulfill the "promises of freedom, land, and bread for the needy class." Like the fallen Domingo Arenas, Zapata had promised to free Indians from the clutch of the latifundistas. To Zapata, the Arenistas were the brothers of Zapatismo and he therefore gave them an "opportunity to return to their noble obligation," and "collaborate [with Zapatismo] for the good of the Republic."[12]

When Domingo Arenas departed from the Zapatista ranks on 30 December 1916, the conflict between the Arenas and Zapata families had become a blood feud. Hot on Emiliano Zapata's trail, Domingo sent Cirilo and his brigade to Morelos in June 1917 to combat the forces of Eufemio Zapata. Cirilo was in Morelos when the Zapatista General Sidronio "Loco" Camacho killed Eufemio Zapata. Camacho buried Eufemio's decapitated head in an anthill to avenge his father, whom Eufemio had beaten senselessly. Cirilo wrote to the newspaper *El Universal* detailing Camacho's feud with the Zapata brothers, and of his forces' aid to el "Loco," who sealed his ultimate betrayal of Emiliano Zapata when he surrendered with other Zapatistas to the Constitutionalists stationed in Morelos. Cirilo had invited Camacho to join the army, which may have

[11] Zapata, "A los Jefes, Oficiales y Soldados que hayan militado bajo las órdenes de Domingo Arenas," f. 6.
[12] Zapata, "A los jefes," 6.

provoked Eufemio's beating of Camacho's father.[13] What is more, the División Arenas had defeated Zapatistas in Morelos in the pueblos of Santa Maria, Achichipilco, Puente Colorado, Yecapixtla, Tepetlixpa, and Cuautla. During the Morelos campaign, Cirilo Arenas had reported to the Mexico City headquarters that villagers in Morelos lived in extreme poverty. Arenas wrote the situation was so pitiful, ragtag Zapatista soldiers could take nothing from peasants who only possessed enough seeds for daily survival.[14]

In the Magaña letter we alluded to earlier, he also alerted Zapata of the commotion shaking the nation in the summer of 1917. The Zapatistas, he wrote, had disarmed a large unit commanded by General Pablo González in Mexico City and now operated in the state of México and threatened to retake the Ajusco Mountains, which could have allowed the southerners a sweep into Mexico City. The southern forces had also reached deep into Chiapas and Tabasco. With this move the Zapatistas had established vital communication with hitherto autonomous rebels in the Mayan heartland. However, as related by Magaña, for the Zapatistas there was much to be concerned about: "Carrancismo would soon invade Morelos to take massive quantities of maize because they had lost all supplies in the north" fighting against the guerrillas of Pancho Villa. Magaña therefore urged Zapata to "heighten their propaganda" and gain new adherents in the central-south zone.[15]

As informed by General Trinidad Corioriles, Emiliano Zapata had instructed his men to halt the advance of the Arenistas stationed in the southwestern communities of the

[13] Cirilo Arenas and Vicente Rojas to Jesús Agustín Castro, Tepetlixpa, Estado de México, 29 June 1917, *El Universal*, p. 6.
[14] Cirilo Arenas, "Un viaje de inspección por la Zona Zapatista," printed in *Excélsior*, 21 July 1917, p. 5.
[15] Magaña to Zapata, Tochimilco, 23 September, Tochimilco, Puebla, f. 3.

volcano Popocatepétl, in Yecapixtla, Morelos.[16] The remaining units of the Brigada Arenas attempted to reestablish the control of Domingo Arenas in Morelos' volcanic communities. However, without Domingo the movement had degenerated to general disorder. In Yecapixtla the local municipal president reported to the Zapatista command that forty mounted "Arenistas" had stormed into homes demanding money and clothing, and were taking whatever else they could and ride off with. The Arenistas also took off with their cattle, increasing the people's poverty even further.[17]

Worse for the Zapatistas, on 29 September Magaña learned from Salvador Boere, an Arab friend and spy in Atlixco, that the Constitutionalist federal army would invade Morelos in the coming days. The spy reported that "the advance to Morelos will be made from the south [of Puebla], and Cirilo Arenas will depart from Tepeji de la Seda [in the state's southernmost point] and Carrancista troops are already leaving Puebla [City] and are on way to Acatlán from where they will reach Huehuetlán [el Chico] to invade Morelos. Afterwards, Cirilo Arenas is planning to return to his old position in Tepetlixpa and from there proceed to Cuautla."[18] Cirilo and his forces, therefore, had become a major obstacle in General Zapata's attempt to retain his forces' control of Morelos.

Magaña and Zapata acknowledged how much Domingo Arenas had influenced the Arenistas' every decision, but believed that the common people's need to recover land mattered more than their allegiances to a fallen leader. Magaña specifically urged Zapata to write and distribute more circulars to the soldiers, officials, and chiefs "that had

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[16] Trinidad Carioriles to Emiliano Zapata, Yecapixtla, Morelos, 25 September 1917, AGN, AZ, Caja, 14, Exp., 19, f. 7.
[17] Nestor Mendoza to Emiliano Zapata, Cuautla, Morelos, 26 September 1917, AGN, AZ, Caja, 14, Exp., 19, f. 8.
[18] Gildardo Magaña to Emiliano Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 30 September 1917, AGN, AZ, Caja, 14, Exp., 19, f. 11.

served under the orders of “el Manco” --“the one-armed,” Domingo Arenas. Magaña wrote that although Arenas was dead, “the school he founded,” was not; therefore, propaganda efforts were to be heightened to reach the Arenistas because “all previous efforts have [had] failed.”[19]

Magaña made reference to the zealous agrarianism for which Domingo Arenas had been known. In pointing out to indigenous peasants that their oppression was due to the landed gentry’s enrichment, the Arenista leader proposed that the poor’s misfortune had a clear point of origin—their loss of land to the local oligarchs. Arenas and Paniagua argued that the Indians’ heart-wrenching misery would end when, conscious of their oppression, indigenous people would turn against their oppressors and destroy the system. To Magaña, revamping the Zapatistas’ prestige not only through propaganda, but through the honoring of guarantees made in the past—to revive local power in the pueblos as Carlos Barreto had suggested to Emiliano Zapata, through the division of power between the pueblos’ judiciaries and the Zapatista municipal councils—was necessary if the Zapatistas would reconquer the hearts of the peasants. Nevertheless, although the local leaders wanted to improve their towns’ economies, the Zapatista leaders intensified their purpose to centralize most of the power in Tlaltizapán, Morelos.[20]

The attempt to concentrate power before, and the Zapatista high-command’s inability to placate their unruly elements, had played definitive roles in precipitating the violent rifts that had erupted between the Zapatistas and Arenistas since 1916. The goal of the Arenistas had involved forming agrarian colonies and granting autonomy to

[19] Magaña to Zapata, Tochimilco, Puebla, 30 September 1917, f. 11.
[20] Carlos Barreto to Emiliano Zapata, Zacualpan de Amilpas, Morelos, 4 September 1917, AGN, AZ, Caja, 14, Exp., 19, f. 13-14;

pueblos directly. The major goals of Domingo Arenas, it has been established, involved: the return of lands and the subsequent formation of agrarian colonies; the reestablishment of local village autonomy; and the promotion of indigenous identity and unity. Domingo Arenas believed that the ultimate form of redemption would come with the indigenous people's incorporation into the Mexican body politic. Arenas observed that neither the government nor the Zapatistas could continue to ignore the Indians' contributions to the making and development of the Revolution.[21]

In the leadership realm, Cirilo possessed the qualities that made his older brother Domingo a beloved, revered, and feared chieftain in the zone of the Los Volcanes. Chief among the aims of Cirilo was keeping true to the Arenista tradition of reforming agrarian communities. This work contends, however, that the Carrancista military active in the Los Volcanes of Puebla under the generals Jesús Agustín Castro, Cesáreo Castro, and Pablo González viewed the Arenistas as only a tool to exterminate Zapatismo in the Oriente Central. The military's use of the Arenistas precluded an effective program of land reform effectuated first by Domingo Arenas. As will be discussed in detail bellow, by early 1918 Cirilo Arenas would exhibit a regional zealotry that displeased the Constitutionalist generals, who, like Carranza, were mostly northerners who disdained plebeian rule. Local governors with long records of service in the Constitutionalist army such as Pedro M. Morales had been forced by General Pablo González to allow outsiders

[21] Domingo Arenas to Porfirio del Castillo, "Se trata de impulsar los trabajos para restitución de tierra en pro de la raza indígena," letter printed in *El Demócrata*, 20 March 1917, p. 3; Juan Felipe Leal and Margarita Menegus Bornemann, "La violencia armada y su impacto en la economía agrícola del estado de Tlaxcala, 1915-1920," *Historia Mexicana* 36, 4 (1987): 601-604.

to exercise military command in Tlaxcala, Hidalgo, and the Sierras of Puebla.[22] González had considered the pacification of the Oriente Central a main priority, and he believed that Zapatismo was a scourge he had to eliminate from the region piece by bloody piece.[23]

From April 1918, when the Constitutionalist army ordered the Arenistas to demobilize, to the execution of Cirilo Arenas in March 1920, the Arenistas and all other Indians became targets of the federal army's counterinsurgies; however, although the army nearly killed off all the Arenista leadership, the movement survived the Revolution. What greatly inspired the writing of this chapter, therefore, is a critical reading of "The Zapatistas Inherit Morelos," from *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution* by John Womack, Jr., which highlights how the Zapatistas in Morelos weathered the storms of unremitting federal army campaigns, political infighting, and the betrayal and murder of their leader, but survived as Zapatistas before surrendering to, and forming an alliance with, the northern revolutionary faction led by the Sonoran Generals Álvaro Obregón and Plutarco Elías Calles, the initial architects of post-revolutionary single-party rule.[24]

During the Revolution Cirilo Arenas was a local leader of tremendous importance, but his revolutionary career is unknown simply because historians have written little about him. In the immense Anglophone writing concerning the Mexican Revolution, Cirilo is absent. What little we know about Cirilo Arenas comes from a few

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[22] Pablo González to Álvaro Obregón, Queretaro, México, April 1916, Archivo Pablo González (APG), AHDN, Cancelados, XI/III/1-53, f. 41; Pablo González to Álvaro Obregón, Mexico City, 8 April 1916, APG, AHDN, Cancelados, XI/III/1-53, f. 46-47.
[23] José Godinez to Venustiano Carranza, Mexico City, 8 May 1916, APG, AHDN, Cancelados, XI/III/1-53, f. 68; See also, Godinez to Carranza, 25 May 1916, f. 71; Pablo González to Venustiano Carranza, Cuernavaca, Morelos, 1 June 1916, APG, AHDN, Cancelados, XI/III/1-53, f. 76-77.
[24] Womack, Jr., *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*, 332-334.

sources in Spanish. Mario Ramírez Rancaño argues that Cirilo Arenas did not simply inherit the leadership of the División Arenas, but posits that like his deceased brother, and their closest comrade, Alberto L. Paniagua, Cirilo possessed his own clear vision of agrarian reform. Cirilo Arenas, the author observes, remained loyal to Carranza in August 1917 because siding with the Constitutionalists provided Arenas with the best opportunity to avenge his brother's murder, retain a general's rank in the army's División Oriente, and, chiefly, to continue the redistribution lands in the Los Volcanes unopposed by the local governors of Puebla and Tlaxcala.[25]

Ramírez Rancaño contends that after April 1918 Cirilo Arenas "was pushed to rebellion," but also observes that Arenas expressed great dissatisfaction with Carranza's unwillingness to restore lands immediately. Cirilo Arenas also joined reactionary opponents of Carranza such Higinio Aguilar, Félix Díaz, and Marcelo Caraveo in backing an alternative government led by former Interim President Francisco León de la Barra. Arenas also excoriated Emiliano Zapata, whom he characterized as an opportunist, thief, and a treacherous bourgeois enemy of the people.[26] Masae Sugawara, for his part, has written that despite his many military triumphs, Cirilo Arenas was always in the shadow of his brother Domingo. In Sugawara's view, Cirilo Arenas joined Carranza only to avenge Domingo's murder. According to Sugawara, Cirilo was misled by conservative elements within his own rebellion and his movement rapidly declined in importance falling to a state of permanent brigandage by early 1919.[27]

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[25] Ramírez Rancaño, *La Revolución en los Volcanes*, 161-167.
[26] Ibid, 219-221.
[27] Masae Sugarawa, "Bosquejo Histórico de Tlaxcala," in *Diccionario Histórico y Biográfico de la Revolución Mexicana, Tomo VII: Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Yucatán, Zacatecas* (México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1992), 250

Lastly, Candido Portillo Cirio explains that Cirilo Arenas was a local caudillo and military reformer. Cirilo Arenas, the author posits, was an excellent administrator, who created agrarian and military colonies, and founded schools. What is more, he also credits Cirilo Arenas with the erection of municipal buildings in Santurom and Oxtutocan in Puebla, and for setting up telephone lines throughout the Los Volcanes of Puebla, even in pueblos as remote as El Verde and Tlalancaleca. Under the tenure of Cirilo, on 21 January 1918 the Arenistas also handed back 1,358 hectares to indigenous peasants in Tepeaca, Puebla.[28] Portillo Cirio observes that when Cirilo finally defected from the Constitutionalist ranks in the spring of 1918 no other rebel general handed the federal military more defeats between mid-1918 and 1920. Moreover, the National Committee for the Defense of the Indigenous Race (CNDRI) named Cirilo Arenas its "Honorary President" shortly before the general's death.[29] Unfortunately, Portillo Cirio provides little citations, making it difficult to conduct research based on his claims.

All authors, including myself, assert that Cirilo Arenas and his followers resorted to guerrilla warfare to survive the government's incessant counterinsurgency campaigns. The Arenista retreat to unconventional warfare was precipitated by the seek-and-destroy campaigns of General Castro, and the military's counterinsurgencies embarked many Arenista rebels into a life of disorder and social brigandage. Jean Meyer's third volume of *La Cristiada* helps us understand the dynamics of rural insurgency in rural Mexico through the framework of guerrilla warfare. As explained by Meyer, scattered Cristero units in the sierras of Los Altos de Jalisco, Michoacán, and Guanajuato resorted to guerrilla warfare to fight and defeat the better-equipped and highly-organized federal

[28] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Hermanos*, 17-18.
[29] Ibid, 21.

military. The Cristero guerrillas' disorganization actually proved its strength. Despite the professionalization of the Cristeros under General Enrique Gorostieta, only violent hit-and-run tactics allowed the Catholic rebels to survive against successive federal military onslaughts. Cristero commanders found it difficult to discipline their own guerrillas and more so of preventing dispersed guerilla factions from turning to organized brigandage to reap the spoils of war.[30] Eventually the highly-decorated Gorostieta would welcome the turn to guerrilla warfare, famously declaring that the guerrillas were the people's armies. He followed his open endorsement of unconventional war by forming specialized guerrilla units comprised of 25,000 combatants, personally supervising the people's army until his death in 1929.[31]

In a similar vein, Cirilo Arenas and Alberto L. Paniagua attempted to discipline their forces by creating distinct regional units, but were unable to halt the military's swift counterinsurgent forays into the Los Volcanes of Puebla in October and November 1918. Rebel groups far removed in the lower cordilleras of the volcano La Malintzin, however, revived the guerrilla formations, which had frustrated the government by December, and, albeit begrudgingly at first, Arenas and Paniagua eventually adopted guerrilla warfare as their main method of opposing the federal military. For the Arenistas the justification to exercise extreme and unconventional violence from below was dictated by survival. Their use of guerrilla warfare also allowed them to keep the military permanently out of their territory. However, the government's response to their form of indigenous guerrillero autonomy was murderous.

[30] Jean Meyer, *La Cristiada, Volumen 3* (México: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 2008), 236-240.
[31] Meyer, *La Cristiada*, 241-242.

Friedrich Katz is one of the few prominent historians to have observed that between 1910 and 1920 the federal Mexican military exercised "lethal, inhumane terror" when dealing with rebellious "indigenous populations." The military's application of terror from 1910 to 1920 and the wholesale indiscriminate extermination of people in indigenous regions was nothing new. As noted by Katz, during the nineteenth century "even just a suspicion of an indigenous uprising could provoke a deadly government response."[32] To the Carrancista army indigenous rebellion represented an appalling form of revolution from below. Moreover, though many countryside combatants were not ethnically indigenous, the government likened all agrarian rebels to Zapatista Indians, and the scorched-earth counterinsurgent terror the military applied to extinguish Zapatismo in Morelos and Puebla's southwest, which included mass murders of civilians, and the forceful transfer of entire populations to other zones, was applied elsewhere in the Mexican countryside.[33] Since 1857 the Mexican military leaders had conceptualized the volcanic zone of the Oriente Central as an internal frontier and the volcano La Malintzin as an unknown Indian terrain, giving its soldiers a carte blanche to eradicate comprehensively the region's indigenous people.

In the logic of the Mexican military, in rebellion, the Indian reverted to savagery and therefore became the "other," non-Mexican and non-citizen, hence, non-human and therefore fit for extermination. This, of course, occurred throughout the entire Americas. In the late nineteenth century, to Theodore Roosevelt in the United States, and to General Julio Argentino Roca in Argentina, Indians stood in the way of white resettlement of the

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[32] Friedrich Katz, "Terror in the Russian and Mexican Revolutions," in *A Century of Revolution: Insurgent and Counterinsurgent Violence during Latin America's Long Cold War*, Gilbert M. Joseph and Greg Grandin, eds. (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2010), 47-48.
[33] Katz, "Terror in the Russian and Mexican," 48.

land. These leaders decided that the annihilation of the "savage" Indian cleared the way for civilization, industry, capitalism, progress, and white rule. The Mexican military also considered the Arenistas, once they were no longer useful in its aim to eradicate Zapatismo, "as savages who ought to make way for civilization."[34]

In Mexico, however, the mass murdering of Indian undesirables was not one-sided. Mexican indigenous rebels retaliated with an equal level of shocking horror, which involved the sacking and razing of estates, and the executions of army volunteers, hacienda owners, managers, and loyal workers in cold blood. In 1912, a horrified Francisco Bulnes noted that under Zapatismo, "the landowners are to be killed like vipers, smashing their heads with a stone." But the writer, once a prominent Porfirian, did note that hacienda owners had drawn first blood.[35] The agrarian rebels' methodology of terror, however, was different; they unleashed their deadly wrath on individuals who supported the government or who had murdered the innocent.[36]

Cirilo Arenas and the Mexican Revolution

Cirilo Arenas was born on 9 July 1894 in Santa Inés Zacatelco. Unlike most high-sierra Indians, Cirilo was literate. He attended Zacatelco's "Ignacio Zaragoza" school until his early teenage years when, needing to help out his family, he learned the trade of carpentry. Being the youngest of three sons lessened his responsibilities. The letters he wrote to the Constitutionalist superiors and to his subordinates while he was a federal

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[34] David Maybury-Lewis, "Genocide Against Indigenous Peoples," in Alexander Laban Hinton, Ed., *Annihilating Difference: The Anthropology of Genocide* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 44-45.
[35] Adam Jones, "On the Genocidal Aspects of Certain Subaltern Uprisings: A Research Note," in Nicholas A. Robins and Adam Jones, Eds., *Genocide of the Oppressed: Subaltern Genocide in Theory and Practice* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009), 51-52.
[36] Katz, "Terror in the Russian and Mexican Revolutions," 49-50.

army general were highly legible and hand-written in good cursive. In 1910, at the age of sixteen, Cirilo quit carpentry, worked in factories, and became a member of Tlaxcala's Antireelection Party, a party that Governor Cahuantzi qualified as ultra-radical. The governor had targeted party members since 1908. Cirilo entered the Mexican Revolution at age seventeen when his brothers Emeterio and Domingo organized an assault against the federal garrison in the city of Tlaxcala on 15 January 1912. The assault resulted in the rebel forces' occupation of Tlaxcala's capital. Agrarian rebels also seized upon the opportunity to expel or kill many of the remaining Porfirians. Cirilo was only eighteen when he was given command over a large faction of the rebellious Tlaxcallan forces in the Valley of Nativitas in 1913. Lying in the southern highland intersection of Tlaxcala and Puebla, Nativitas was a training ground of peasant indigenous insurgents from the wider Oriente Central. In August of 1914, at the age of nineteen, Cirilo became a captain under the rebel army of Tlaxcala. When the leaders of the rebel army splntered in the winter of 1914 Cirilo followed his brother Domingo, who formed the División Arenas, a mobilization known for its intense agrarianism. In 1915 Cirilo became a colonel under the División Arenas, and on 1 January 1916 Domingo Arenas awarded him the rank of Brigadier General. The Zapatistas referred to the División Arenas as the Ejército Libertador del Oriente; therefore, Cirilo was a general in the Ejército Libertador del Sur of Emiliano Zapata. As a Zapatista operating in the Los Volcanes, Cirilo also led the "Mariano Matamoros Brigade," and in the volcanic war theater he commanded a total of 950 fighters.[37] Cirilo had joined Madero buoyantly when commanded by Felipe Villegas

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[37] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Arenas*, 17; Masae Sugawara, "Diccionario Histórico y Biográfico de la Revolución Mexicana en el Estado de Tlaxcala," in *Diccionario Histórico y Biográfico de la Revolución*

and his brother Emeterio. With Madero dead in 1914 he had joined Emiliano Zapata with equal excitement. But his zealous "autonomous agrarianism" made him rebel against both Zapata and Carranza.[38]

In the summer of 1915 Cirilo Arenas had aided Eufemio Zapata's forces in Emiliano Zapata's attempt to retake Puebla, and throughout 1916 the Brigada Arenas under Cirilo managed to keep the army out of most of the Los Volcanes region, where the Arenistas had regained ground and had honored the the Plan de Ayala when they converted haciendas into new pueblos and into plots of cultivable land for peasants, which had been a high moment in Emiliano Zapata's campaign to redistribute lands to peasants. As we have learned, many of those plots were at times granted official recognition once Domingo Arenas had assumed the "patriotic invitation" to join Carranza.[39]

After murdering Domingo Arenas the Zapatista high command declared that all the Arenista high-ranking officers were also traitors. Cirilo's army, in turn, campaigned against the Zapatistas in Morelos, the state of Mexico, Hidalgo, Tlaxcala, Puebla, and Veracruz. Cirilo's forces established agrarian colonies after their invasion of estates, the most notable being what became the Colonia Domingo Arenas located near Río Frío in the state of Mexico; however, this form of radical agrarianism displeased President Carranza. The president had decreed that all land restitution cases had to follow the letter of the law and discouraged redistributing any land expeditiously, more so Carranza disavowed many land redistributions that came at the expense of dispossessing those

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Mexicana, Tomo VII: Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz, Yucatán, Zacatecas (México: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, Secretaría de Gobernación, 1992), 250.

[38] Masae, "Diccionario Histórico," 250.

[39] Womack, *Zapata*, 273, 280-281.

whom he believed were the "rightful" owners, the hacendados. Carranza considered this land reform part of Zapatismo's radical and "barbaric" revanchist impulse. On 10 February 1917 President Carranza himself had settled an intense land feud between the villagers of San Cosme Xalostoc in the Cuauhtémoc District of Tlaxcala and the town's local elite. Through the National Agrarian Commission, however, Carranza allowed for the formation of an agrarian colony since the villagers "had proven they owned the disputed lands, and had been dispossessed by illegal means."[40]

Carrancismo espoused its own form of agrarianism and the regime won the loyalties of many Indians. A pro-Carranza writer, Heriberto Barrón, stated that under Constitutionalism "Indians are witnessing the return of their previously usurped lands," and added; "the iron hand of the law now grips the necks of the landed barons, telling them: "those beings who work to enrich you, are your equals, they are citizens of a free patria, they possess, like you, guarantees and rights you must respect.""[41] Even without Carranza's authorization, Cirilo's army began repairing all telephone lines in the Los Volcanes region, and founded a technical school in San Martín Texmelúcan in 1918, "for both the learned and illiterate." The school's indigenous teachers imparted arithmetic, mathematics, geography, and topography as mainstays in the curricula.[42] Cirilo Arenas, like Domingo, was a modernizer, but his retreat into guerrilla warfare in the spring of 1918 would preclude the implementation of his reformism.

Considered by the press both a revolutionary hero and able general, but also a thief, criminal, murderer, extortionist, and bandit at different junctures, Cirilo was a

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[40] Decreto de Venustiano Carranza, Comisión Nacional Agraria, printed in *El Pueblo*, 10 February 1917, p. 1.
[41] Heriberto Barron, "Hoy," *El Pueblo*, 10 February 1917, page number missing from text.
[42] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Arenas*, 18.

maligned and misunderstood figure throughout most of his participation in the Mexican Revolution. A document found in his personal military archive, however, reveals that he formally led the federal army's División Oriente Arenas. The División Oriente Arenas was comprised of ten large brigades, most of which operated from within Tlaxcala. With the passing of Domingo, Cirilo became the de facto leader of the División, known also as the Arenistas or as the Brigada Arenas (the military documents go back and forth in their description of Cirilo's forces), and generals of renown, who had at different junctures served both the Zapatistas and Constitutionalists such as Isabel Guerrero, Enrique Landeros, Adolfo Bonilla, and Trinidad Corona, led brigades in the Oriente army. Landeros, Guerrero, and Bonilla had emerged during Mexico's revolutionary era as powerful local leaders able to mobilize large grassroots contingents in a stunningly rapid fashion. Guerrero had ascended the ranks of Tlaxcala's rebel military, which reorganized in the wake of Felipe Villegas's fall. With the coming of the Mexican Revolution, by sheer blood and guts, local caudillos such as Guerrero became federal military leaders.[43] Knowing Tlaxcala was a hotbed of popular insurrection, army generals operated under the logic that they could discipline and normalize the tough serrano leaders.

The fact that Cirilo Arenas was a general of high standing first in the Zapatista, and later in the Constitutionalist ranks would influence the military high command's justification to execute him on grounds of "treason" and for the "crime of rebellion."[44] While the "crime of rebellion" was not always punished by death, the crime of treason was punishable by the individual's execution according to Article 313 of the Penal

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[43] Cirilo Arenas, Ozolco, Puebla, 2 July 1918, Expediente Cirilo Arenas (ECA), XI/III/3-83, Cancelados AHDN, f. 8. Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Arenas*, 15.
[44] Mateo Flores to The Superior Military Judge, Puebla, Puebla, 1 March 1920, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados AHDN, f. 1;

Military Law.[45] Cirilo's execution would come with Carranza's explicit order on 2 March 1920.[46]

Arenismo Versus Zapatismo in the Los Volcanes Region

A couple of months after the fall of Domingo Arenas bands of marauding bandits sacked numerous properties in Cholula and other points in Puebla's center.[47] General Máximo Rojas, who in the autumn of 1917 vied for the governorship of Tlaxcala, and whom Carranza viewed as the ideal candidate to replace the more progressive Daniel Ríos Zertuche, was ordered by Carranza to stamp out banditry and insurrections. Carranza thought Ríos Zertuche was adept at following orders and implementing federal reforms in the state, but the president also considered Ríos Zertuche a radical for demanding greater local authority in Tlaxcala. In Rojas, however, Carranza had found a stern ally against Zapatismo and Rojas also favored strong central authority. Moreover, both men believed the Zapatistas were a scourge and that spillovers of Zapatista violence from Puebla had contaminated Tlaxcala.[48]

With Rojas in charge of Tlaxcala the Constitutionalists turned to Cirilo Arenas to bleed-out Zapatismo in Puebla. The Arenistas' knowledge of the regional geography played a pivotal role in Carranza's decision. While his brother Domingo lived, on 28 July 1917 Cirilo Arenas had been commissioned by Jesús Agustín Castro to stamp out Zapatismo in Tepetlixpa, in Mexico State. On 1 August Cirilo reported from San Martín

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[45] Mateo Flores to The High Military Tribunal, Puebla de Zaragoza, 1 March 1920, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados AHDN, f. 2.
[46] F.L. Urquizo to the War Secretariat, Puebla, Puebla, 1 March 1920, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, AHDN, f. 3.
[47] Dispatch, "Puebla: Cerca de Cholula se presentó una partida de bandoleros," *El Pueblo*, 22 October 1917, p. 2.
[48] Dispatch, "El General Rojas pide pasar a Puebla," *El Pueblo*, 26 October 1917, p. 1.

Texmelúcan that he had dispatched a column led by Colonel Tomás Sánchez at the head of 75 men to survey the region of Cuijingo. The military explorers then met a large contingent of Zapatistas handing them a severe defeat, taking captive Colonel Hipólito Castillo, Captain Concepción Aguirre, and numerous subordinates. Cirilo Arenas' fighters also confiscated horses, carbines, machine guns and 25 packs of ammunition. In the aftermath of the Cuijingo battle Arenas wrote that "these men militated under the order of Everardo González and Cayetano Sotero." He then asked his superiors about, "how to proceed with the prisoners of war."[49] General Jesús Agustín Castro had been impressed by Cirilo's command of Indian rebels and his willingness to execute orders. The Arenistas also operated in Nepantla, Atlitlahuaca, and Telencingo in the state of Mexico and in Yecapixtla in Morelos, all hitherto Zapatista bastions.[50]

In the late summer of 1917 General Jesús Agustín Castro wrote that Cirilo Arenas was a major tool in the pacification of the Oriente Central. Cirilo counted with more than 2,000 fighters and with the blessing and support of Puebla's Governor Dr. Alfonso Cabrera he invaded vital strategic points to combat the Zapatistas. The Secretary of War declared "General Cirilo Arenas in charge" of the "punitive" pacification of Puebla. It was then that the Secretary of War also made Alberto L. Paniagua a Constitutional general.[51] On 18 September 1917 Arenas solidified his standing as a general in the Constitutionalist army when he met with General Castro to discuss the Puebla campaign's logistics. At the meeting Arenas learned of Castro's scorched-earth design to bleed out Zapatismo. The Constitutionalists gained great confidence in Cirilo when the

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[49] Corresponsal de Cirilo Arenas to the Secretary of War, *El Pueblo*, 2 August 1917, p. 2.
[50] Corresponsal, "Derrota de surianos en Tepetlixpa; el Gral. Domingo Arenas hizo la defensa de la Plaza, bravamente," *El Pueblo*, 16 August 1917, p. 1.
[51] Cuellar Abaroa, *La Revolución, Vol. II*, 125-126.

Arenistas defeated the Zapatistas in mid-September in Morelos and seized Emiliano Zapata's favorite horse, "La Barragana." Zapata had named his horse in honor of Juana Guadalupe Barragán, a local of Cuautla who in 1811 joined the rebellion of Father Morelos to avenge family members slain by loyalist soldiers. Known in rebel circles as "La Barragana," Juana Guadalupe became a colonel in the south's rebel ranks and was killed in 1820. After meeting with General Castro, Arenas requested that Castro offer the prized mare to Carranza. What mattered to the federal military was the symbolic gesture. "The Attila of the South," they believed, would soon fall because he had lost control of his favorite beast, and they believed he had also lost his grip of Zapatismo as a movement. The Mexican Revolution was also a conflict of machismo. Although many women participated in the war, the Revolution represented an extension of the masculinities of the men who fought, particularly of leaders. Zapata's loss of the mare, therefore, was synonymous to the loss of his manhood, honor, and prestige, things that made men manly in rural Mexico. In addition to handing the southern caudillo a defeat on the battlefields of Morelos, Cirilo Arenas had taken one of Zapata's prized possessions. Newspapers even boasted Cirilo Arenas would take Cuautla and capture Zapata.[52]

During the army's Puebla campaign, the Mexico City press wrote that Zapata commanded a "rabble" and that Castro would invade Morelos and rid the state of its ubiquitous Zapatista "brigandage."[53] Castro commissioned the Arenistas to travel far south into the sierras of Chietla, Puebla a zone that according to the local *vecinos*-neighbors "was [now] infested with bandits." Strangers to the terrain of the Mixtec sierras

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[52] Corresponsal, ""La Barragana" fue llevada a Puebla," *El Pueblo*, 10 September 1917, p. 1; Dispatch, "Llego el General Cirilo Arenas," *Excélsior*, 19 September 1917, p. 2.
[53] Corresponsal, "Va a ser reforzada la guarnición militar del estado de Puebla," *El Pueblo*, 14 September 1917, p. 7.

of southern Puebla, the Arenistas did their best to establish a strong Constitutionalist presence in Puebla's southwest. Cirilo's forces set up patrol units in the estates of Chietla, Izúcar de Matamoros, and ordered his subordinates to seize all the cattle from traders that did not provide proof of ownership. In this region, the army asserted, bands of thieves habitually stole cattle from local ranchers and traded animals for money, weapons, and ammunition, which they then used to supply the Zapatistas.[54]

In the view of the Constitutionalists, as expressed through the newspaper *El Demócrata*, the federal government's main media organ from 1916 to 1919, Cirilo Arenas and his División had reinvigorated President Carranza's war against the Zapatistas. At the full service of Carrancismo, Arenas' indigenous soldiers became the agents of a punitive counterinsurgency. Arenismo, a movement which under Domingo Arenas fought for land reform, redemption, dignity, and for regional political autonomy, became a tool of counterinsurgent terror under Cirilo's stewardship. Given the history of violence between the Zapatistas and Arenistas, Cirilo gladly obliged to Carranza's orders. The press wrote that Cirilo had paved the way for the military' pacification of Puebla by "finally exterminating Zapatismo."[55]

Whereas the press hailed Cirilo and Paniagua as the successors of Domingo Arenas' "purity of principles and resolve to defend the rights of the pueblo," it depicted Zapata as a cold-blooded murderer, evidenced by the Zapatista execution of his own closest confidant, Otilio Montaño. The press described Zapatismo as a program that had fallen prey to chaos from the infighting and reckless string of murders from within the

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[54] Corresponsal, "Decomisación de ganado y mercancías en Puebla," *El Pueblo*, 16 September 1917, p. 7.
[55] Correo Militar, "Puebla: Las fuerzas leales de la División "Arenas" se lanzan impetuosas contra los Vándalos del Sur," *El Pueblo*, 5 October 1917, p. 5.

movement.[56] Villagers informing the government and press of the Zapatistas' movements in Tlaltizapán stated that Zapata had set up a camp in the town's outskirts in a place called Huajotlaco where the corpses of Zapata's victims, of people from within the movement whom Zapata had branded as traitors, hung rotting from trees. Prominent among these decomposed cadavers was that of Montaño. Members of the Mexican press argued that Montaño had been willing to surrender to the Constitutionalists during the May 1917 campaign in the state of Guerrero. The media attributed the capitulation of powerful Zapatista cabecillas such as Herminio Álvarez from the Los Volcanes of Puebla to the Constitutionalists not to the government's guarantees, but to Zapata's ruthlessness. The press stated that Álvarez had grown sick of Zapatismo's disorder, impulsivity, and of the ignominious and nefarious daily crimes of Zapata's subordinates.[57]

Paniagua and Arenas wrote that following the Tochimilco campaigns of early November 1917 surviving Zapatistas had "fled" to the Indian pueblos of Huitzihuacán, Huilango, and Tochimizolco leaving behind "numerous dead and wounded in the fields, which were picked up by loyal elements [to the Constitutionalists]." The División Arenas was then able to take Acalzingo, Tocomacoco, and Tetela. After establishing a stronger presence in the Puebla-Morelos volcanic zone, Arenistas penetrated the state of Mexico battering the Zapatistas in Río Frío and San Agustín Atzompa. This offensive was described by the government as a "new and definitive campaign…against the rebellious southerners." The Mexican military used indigenous fighters, "who knew the area like the

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[56] "Puebla: Las fuerzas leales," p. 5; Corresponsal, "Fueron asesinados los cabecillas Zapatistas Otilio Montaño y Lorenzo Vázquez, por orden del Atila," *El Pueblo*, 8 October 1917, p. 1 & 9.
[57] "Fueron Asesinados los cabecillas Zapatistas," p. 9; Corresponsal, "Rindesé en Atlixco crecido grupo Zapatista," *El Pueblo*, 12 October 1917, p. 1; Correo Militar, "Puebla: Fructosa batida a los Zapatistas," *El Pueblo*, 15 Oct 1917, p. 4.

palm of their hands" and "were perfectly acclimated" to the high volcanic terrain. The military commanders considered Indian fighters brave, but merciless as well.[58]

Another series of struggles between the Zapatistas and the Arenistas underscored the effectiveness of Cirilo's forces. In mid-December 1917 the area of the Los Volcanes and Cerros Las Mesas in Puebla became sites of intense combat. General Cesáreo Castro provided the Arenistas much of the weaponry and with the military aid General Alfredo Youtzchinas exacted a horrid revenge on the Zapatistas in Las Mesas, executing capitulating rebels at his whim. More cold-blooded executions followed when the Arenista army penetrated the Hacienda de Huexocoapan in Atlixco.[59] For the government the Arenistas were helping them get rid of the Zapatista menace in central Puebla, but for Cirilo their military involvement allowed them to reclaim Domingo's former San Martín Texmelúcan headquarters. It is likely that Cirilo Arenas imagined his army could renew the local agrarianism to which they were committed, but the Arenistas' renewed push for territorial control, local autonomy, and immediate land redistributions, important grassroots demands that even Madero had denied to popular rebels, would pave the way for a greater conflict between the indigenous peasantry and government. Into early 1918 the marriage of Arenismo and Constitutionalism had borne good fruit, it had been a period of sweet victories engendered by the army's murderously punitive forays into the central highlands. And the government would celebrate Cirilo Arenas as one of its prized elements, a powerful grassroots leader committed to the government's agrarian aims and to Zapatismo's obliteration.

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[58] Cirilo Arenas and Alberto L. Paniagua to *El Demócrata*, Texmelúcan, Puebla, 6 November 1917, p. 6.
[59] Cirilo Arenas to Cesáreo Castro, Texmelúcan, Puebla, 11 December 1917, reprinted in *El Demócrata*, 16 December 1917, p. missing.

Zapata, for his part, would remain intent on recruiting the Arenistas and other non-Zapatista rebel factions into his ranks; his rebellion, Zapata stated, fought for what was good—national land reform, security, the promise of individual guarantees, and local autonomy. Zapata believed all agrarians yearned for all Zapatismo stood for. Zapata vowed the peasant's redemption would come with the united rebels' removal of the "tyrannical" Carranza.[60] In Zapata's view President Carranza was loyal to the caciques, hacienda owners, and foreign exploiters and therefore stood opposed to the true agrarian character of the Revolution. Zapata added that the "South's Revolution" "came from the pueblos"; however, at the end of 1917 the prospect of a Zapatista reunification with the Arenistas was bleak. Zapata worried that not many agrarian rebels, which included Arenistas, Aguilaristas, Felicistas, and the ruggedly autonomist Indian people of the Sierra Norte, would answer his call to "rejoin the true Revolution" of the South.[61]

The Apogee of Constitutionalist Arenismo under Cirilo

In February 1918, *El Demócrata* interviewed Constitutionalist generals that were considered the most loyal to President Carranza. Prominent among these celebrated generals were Cirilo Arenas and Alberto L. Paniagua. Nicolás Romano, a reporter, praised Cirilo Arenas for stimulating agrarian production in the states of Hidalgo, Mexico, Morelos, Puebla, and Tlaxcala. Also noteworthy to Romano were the daily

[60] Emiliano Zapata, 27 December 1917, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, "Al Pueblo," AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 5, f. missing.
[61] Emiliano Zapata, 27 December 1917, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, "A los Revolucionarios de la República," AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 40. Zapata had made a clear distinction as to who was a "real" rebel. He conceptualized as "real" rebels all those whom stood against the "pseudo-revolutionaries" and "reactionaries," the Carrancistas. Zapata expressed that if they were all against Carranza they could all stand together, yet this was all contingent on the agrarian rebels' willingness to submit to the authority of the Plan de Ayala and acknowledge that Emiliano Zapata was the leader of Mexico's true agrarian revolution, one Zapata described as "la Revolución" and el "Sur."

combats the División Arenas had with "the rebel Zapatistas." Romano also wrote that General Arenas gave war captives an opportunity to work in the fields of "the indigenous natives and neighbors from that zone." Cirilo Arenas had made sure that the surrendered Zapatistas were treated with dignity, ate well, and were paid. The capitulating Zapatistas, in turn, had to promise in writing they would not return to rebellion. Under the Arenistas (and here the writer made mention of the land redistributions of Domingo Arenas) "the redistribution of lands has become a reality…each Indian has received their parcel of land, and their pair of mules" to work their fields.[62] Knowing Cirilo Arenas would not kill them if they surrendered many "Zapatista" "bandits," Romano wrote, capitulated to the Brigada Arenas at the Texmelúcan headquarters on a daily basis.[63]

In early 1918 the federal government considered Cirilo Arenas its agrarian champion. As noted by Romano, who traveled by train from Mexico City to the San Martín Texmelúcan station from where he was taken by horse to the headquarters of the Brigada Arenas, the wider region of the Los Volcanes had been "pacified" and "restored" by Arenas and was undergoing an intense "modernizing" phase. Romano wrote that Arenas had assumed the "patriotic duty" of reconstructing a war-ravaged area, providing the local indigenous people with "guarantees and security."[64] *El Demócrata* recalled Domingo Arenas was the first "agrarian" caudillo who "redistributed land on a large

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[62]Nicolás Romano, "Los ideales justicieros de la Revolución, han sido llevados a la práctica en el estado de Puebla; El Gral. Arenas y sus subordinados, son leales al Gobierno Constituido." *El Demócrata*, 14 February 1918, p. 3.
[63] Ibid, 3.
[64] Romano, "Los ideales justicieros," 3.

scale," and argued that Cirilo not only followed in his brother's footsteps, but fought zealously for the autonomy of the indigenous people.[65]

Aside from protecting the local political rights of people, Cirilo Arenas remained in arms because, as he said in his own words, he "supported the honest politics of the Constitutional Government, presided by Mr. Carranza." President Carranza and Puebla's governor, Dr. Cabrera, had given Cirilo the opportunity to restore Indian pueblos in Huejotzingo such as San Gregorio Aztotocan, Tlacotepec de José Maria, and San Juan Tetla. As noted by Arenas the people from these pueblos had been dispossessed "by the avarice of the local hacienda owners." Under Carranza and the National Agrarian Commission the villagers now enjoyed their ejido parcels. Cirilo Arenas assured Romano that President Carranza had allowed the Arenistas to form agrarian ejidos in San Felipe Teotlazingo in Huejotzingo, and in San Lucas Nextetelco in the District of Cholula.[66] Allowing for the formation of agrarian communities was important for President Carranza. This was a critical juncture in the Revolution. Gone were the huge battles; the army now battled scores of guerrilla units, and, as related by Governor Cabrera, the military was aware of "the great discontent that existed among the people of the Sierras."[67] The government knew immediate land reform could sway many impoverished villagers to its side.

Though talented himself, in large measure Cirilo Arenas owed much of his successes to the military and administrative efforts of Domingo. Cirilo had inherited a large army from Domingo, and had also inherited Alberto L. Paniagua, the celebrated

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[65] Ibid, 3.
[66] Ibid, 3.
[67] Alfonso Cabrera to Venustiano Carranza, Puebla, Puebla, 26 February 1918, *El Demócrata*, p. 1.

second-in-command of the Brigada Arenas who provided both of the Arenas brothers with ample guidance. Paniagua, who had followed Domingo Arenas since the Arenista assault on the city of Tlaxcala in mid-1911, was described by the press as Arenas' "main counselor" and as "a man of clear intelligence and of a broad and deep culture." Romano credited much of the success of Arenismo vis-à-vis land redistributions and the gradual transformation of the agrarian sector to the ideology and effective organizational practices of Paniagua. Another of Cirilo Arenas' noteworthy collaborators was Colonel Francisco Bermúdez Landa from Orizaba, Veracruz, who possessed a law degree. A man of letters, it was written that Bermúdez Landa was driven to rebellion because the Porfirian government persecuted him for writing scathing poetry against the regime. Their Arenista comrades, who were mostly illiterate, revered the two men for their humane treatment of people, for writing political pamphlets and manifestos, and for their undying loyalty to agrarian reform.[68]

Every rebel and revolutionary movement has its intellectuals, disaffected political ideologues who find their place in the armed struggles of the countryside. These organic intellectuals come from within the community or left the community to become intellectuals and then returned to the communities. Among the intellectuals were also eleventh-hour revolutionaries from middle-class urban backgrounds who joined popular struggles for personal benefit. The intellectuals, however, were very useful to the agrarian rebels as they read, organized, fought, bled, and died for the cause. They also adopted the garb and gab of their peasant comrades-in-arms, but also spoke a discourse of national liberation; of destroying the *latifundio* and all other remaining bastions of conservatism,

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[68] Romano, "Los ideales justicieros," 3.

squalor, vice, and ignorance. They vowed to lift up the peasants from both ignorance and misery.[69]

The incorporation of intellectuals into the Arenista ranks enhanced the movement's prestige. Paniagua, for his part, having become the Chief General of the war theatre in Puebla's Los Volcanes reported to the Constitutionalists about his forces' effective wipeout of Zapatismo. The Arenistas targeted rebels and killed in a selective manner; as stated by Paniagua their job was to "pacify" the "wider area" and not annihilate innocent people. Arenas and Paniagua gave their men strict orders to respect capitulators who had agreed to work in the fields of newly-formed agrarian communes.[70] Paniagua tempered Cirilo's ire who had been ruthless, such as when the Arenistas killed 100 Zapatistas in battles in Atlixco. As the army was preparing to move into Tochimilco, Cirilo ordered his men to execute four Zapatista jefes, considered leaders of the "vandal mob," in summary fashion. Cirilo had followed his superior's orders.[71] This would be the final federal army order Cirilo ever followed.

The government's celebration of Cirilo Arenas as a heroic patriot, modernizer, and champion of agrarian reform, did not last long. When the Arenistas demanded greater regional autonomy in April 1918, Jesús Agustín Castro decided to exercise his own control over the Los Volcanes of Puebla. Castro ordered his soldiers, not Cirilo's, to occupy the zone stretching from the volcano Iztaccíhuatl to Tlaxcala. Cirilo Arenas responded to the maneuvers of Castro by reinforcing the Tlaxcala-Puebla border with

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[69] Arnaldo Córdova, *La Revolución y el Estado en México* (Mexico City: ERA, 1989), 104-108; John Mason Hart, *Anarchism & The Mexican*, 103; Brunk, *¡Emiliano Zapata!* 101-105.
[70] Corresponsal, "Nuevo descalabro sufrido por los Zapatistas en el estado de Puebla," *El* Pueblo, 7 November 1917, p. 1; Alberto L. Paniagua to the Secretary of War, "Los Bandoleros son batidos con energía en el estado de Puebla," *El Pueblo*, 16 December 1917, p. 7.
[71] Military Dispatch to *El Universal*, "Puebla: Cien Muertos en el combate de Atlixco, 11 April 1918, p. 2.

even more of his fighters. With this sudden maneuvering, on 27 April Castro ordered the permanent disarmament and dismantling of the División del Oriente, which he believed had been influenced greatly by the Arenistas. Once the Constitutionalist high command decreed the disarmament measure, the army moved swiftly in its effort to demobilize the Brigada Arenas, occupying permanently Atlixco on 30 April.[72] General Sidornio Méndez, however, marched quickly to Nanacamilpa, reporting to Castro that the Arenistas had assumed a belligerent stance against the federal government. Refusing to capitulate, Arenas ordered the Brigada Arenas to flee to the volcanic highlands of the Iztaccíhuatl. The Arenistas would now stand on their own and would fully display their fervent regional autonomism by warring against both the Zapatistas and the Constitutionalists.[73] After the dispatch of Méndez, the people members of the Brigada Arenas were no longer part of the federal army; they became Arenista rebels.

Emiliano Zapata and the Náhuatl Manifestoes

The Gildardo Magaña Archive is replete with documents revealing the plight of the common people of the Los Volcanes of Puebla. The impulsivity of some Zapatista chieftains in previous months had engendered animosity between the villagers of the Los Volcanes area in Puebla and Zapata's Liberating Army. On 31 January 1918, the Zapatista Colonel Pascual Reynoso and his escort traveled by foot to the outskirts of Tochimilco looking for a local named Francisco Matamoros, a notorious outlaw. In

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[72] Corresponsal, "Abandonó su línea la División Arenas," *El Demócrata*, 27 April 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Fueron desarmadas algunas fuerzas de la División Arenas, en Atlixco, Puebla," *El Universal*, 28 April 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "El general Méndez desarmó a los arenistas," *El Universal*, 30 April 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Fueron desarmadas las tropas que guarnicionaban Atlixco y San Martín Texmelúcan," *El Demócrata*, 30 April 1918, p. 6; Corresponsal, "Puebla: Sobre la Pretendida sublevación de Arenas," *El Universal*, 30 April 1918, p. 8.

[73] Sidornio Méndez to Francisco Cosío Robelo, Nanacamilpa, Tlaxcala, 28 April 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 124-127.

looking for Matamoros in a home where he supposedly hid, they were greeted by Mrs. Juana Torres, who treated them cigars. The Zapatistas were suddenly startled by a man lying on the home's patio covered in a blanket, who upon recognizing them shouted; "Viva Arenas and death to Zapata!" The man, identified as Tomás Romero, was asked by the Zapatistas to explain his outburst. Romero responded that the "Zapatistas [are] a bunch of bandits…ever since Ayaquica has taken over these parts of Puebla you have done nothing but exploit the people with all of your unreasonable demands." Moreover, Romero scolded the men for failing to protect their homes from marauding Carrancistas.[74] The Zapatista major accompanying Reynoso struck Romero's face, and when Romero, "feigned an inability to rise from the blow," the Zapatista "picked up a fallen branch, threatening to further beat him." Romero then picked himself up and ran home. The Zapatista Major later checked up on Romero promising that he would inflict no further punishment, but warned him of the danger of further defaming the Zapatistas.[75] The interaction between Romero and the Zapatista *jefes* shows the tenous relationship between the townsfolk of the Los Volcanes and the Zapatistas.

Cipriano Rojas, the *principal* of Huauquechula, wrote to Fortino Ayaquica on 8 February detailing the abuses to which Zapatista soldiers submitted the local villagers. Rojas wrote that parties of armed men had beaten the locals on numerous occasions. Rojas reminded Ayaquica that his people owned little and that by robbing them, abusive Zapatista leaders had exacerbated their poverty. Rojas also explained that, in attempting

[74] Zapatista Major to Fortino Ayaquica, Tochimilco, Puebla, 1 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 58, f. 47-48.
[75] Ibid.

to flee from the reckless rebels, other locals had run to the hills.[76] The townsfolk were upset, so Rojas urged Ayaquica to discipline his men. Rojas added that only fighters firmly committed to the protection of the people could prevent abusive ruffians, which included some Zapatistas, from ransacking homes.

Patricio Puebla from the town of Tejupa in Atlixco also wrote a letter to Ayaquica on 20 March. Mr. Puebla was scared; he feared a possible retaliation, but had to inform Ayaquica of "the great unruliness plaguing the area." Gumersindo Luna, a Zapatista, had raped the young daughter of Maria Trinidad Flores. A local villager had retaliated against Luna and shot him, but the people now feared for their safety because Luna had been close to Ayaquica. Moreover, Mr. Puebla informed Ayaquica that soldiers under his command had since fired shots in the dead of night to scare the local villagers.[77]

Since the passing of Domingo Arenas, hoping to ameliorate their suffering many villagers had reiterated their oaths of loyalty to the Plan de Ayala.[78] On 18 March, Santiago Hernández from Yancuitlalpan wrote to the Tochimilco headquarters stating that his people had received lands through both the Constitutionalist 1915 Agrarian Law and Zapata's 3 February 1917 Decree. The villagers were working the land for their communal benefit and revolutionaries had helped them reclaim rancho lands that had run from their town to the hillsides of the volcano Popocatépetl. The local ranchers had claimed ownership of the land in question, but the local villagers had for long used those

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[76] Cipriano Rojas to Fortino Ayaquica, Huaquechula, Puebla, 3 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 58, f. 42-44; Cipriano Rojas to Fortino Ayaquica, Huaquechula, Puebla, 8 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 58, f. 41.

[77] Patricio Puebla to Fortino Ayaquica, Atlixco, Puebla, 20 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 58, f. 48.

[78] Juanito Hernández to Fortino Ayaquica, Huaquechula, Puebla, 13 March 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 58, f. 70-71.

lands for the growing of their crops. Their new landholdings, however, were now threatened by outsiders again. Hernández called upon Ayaquica to uphold the promise of protecting the villagers and to allow the local people to govern themselves.[79]

In Huaquechula, Puebla another incident also highlighted the fragile relations between the Zapatistas and the locals. On 16 February, armed men led by Cipriano Acevedo, who had previously enjoyed good relations with the Zapatistas, stormed the home of Antonia Silva. The men of Acevedo, all drunk, launched themselves at the Zapatistas shouting; "Long live Cipriano Acevedo, death to the Zapatistas…! Acevedo's men chased the Zapatistas into the town's plaza, took to the rooftops, and shot at the fleeing Zapatistas. Cipriano Acevedo was a "citizen commander" of the town's civil defense unit, which had formed to stem the rising tide of banditry, and his men took advantage of the situation to attack the Zapatistas stationed in the town.[80] What must have been distressing to the Tochimilco headquarters is that the makeshift Zapatistas, who were part of the citizen's defense units, had attacked the official Zapatista forces. Zapata knew that the villagers were desperate. The Morelian leader needed to reassert control over the area and also reestablish confidence in his own forces. He felt he needed to restore the villager's confidence in his chieftains; and, more importantly, in his movement and in the Plan de Ayala, which Zapata still believed was a great mobilizing force.[81]

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[79] Santiago Hernández to Fortino Ayaquica, Yancuitlalpan, Puebla, 18 March 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., f. 78-79.
[80] Luis Blanco to Fortino Ayaquica, Huaquechula, Puebla, 17 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 77, Exp., 58, f. 46.
[81] Emiliano Zapata, "Circular: A los Jefes y Oficiales del Ejército Libertador, 8 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 44, f. 1.

Zapatista leaders acknowledged that the disorder engendered by the many squabbles and rivalries hurt the movement, but the brunt of the blame, the leadership asserted, lay in Carrancismo's repression of the peasantry. The Zapatistas wrote that President Carranza feigned being "a friend of the pueblo." To Zapata and his cadres "pueblo" and common folk were synonymous. The Zapatistas argued, rather, that Carrancismo was the pueblo's "tormentor." Zapata and Magaña co-wrote a circular stating that the Carrancistas had "destroyed sown lands," "sacked pueblos tirelessly," "stole cattle," and thus "devastated the pueblos." And the circular contended that in the Carrancistas' "vandalic expeditions" federal soldiers took the opportunity to "rob" and "loot homes." Aside from committing these nefarious crimes in the countryside, the Zapatistas noted that in the cities of Puebla and Veracruz the Carrancistas had "kidnapped women in the streets to later rape them in the military barracks." The circular reminded the pueblos that high federal military chiefs had been implicated in "ransoms, forceful entries [presumably of homes], sackings, and murders." The Zapatistas wrote to the people that the military was dishonorable and murderous, warning that the pueblos should not trust in a regime that left "families in misery and dishonor." The circular concluded that at the Revolution's end the Carrancista "brute force would prove impotent in subduing the great southern revolution."[82] Zapata and his generals believed the pueblos were the life-blood of the southern revolution and should in no form support the government.

Upon learning of the Arenista-Constitutionalist split Zapata attempted to reincorporate the Arenistas through the writing of two circulars issued in both Spanish

[82] Signed Gildardo Magaña and Emiliano Zapata, "Circular," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 23 February 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 7.

and in Náhuatl, known as the Zapatistas' Náhuatl Manifestos.[83] The Zapatistas directed the two manifestos at people who better communicated in Náhuat, and Miguel León Portillo, a foremost *nahuatlato*, argues Zapata himself wrote portions of the documents.[84] Zapata, it appears, was a man fully aware of the indigenous peoples' way of thinking. The Morelos chieftain felt that a renewed promise of land, water, and regional autonomy would sway local leaders to rejoin Zapatismo. We can argue that Zapata thought the issuing of the documents would revive sentiments that had once motivated the Oriente Central Indians to initially join Zapatismo. What is more, the drafting of the two documents show the Zapatistas knew that many Indians from Arenas' patria chica were monolingual Náhuatl speakers. The Náhuatl manifestos also alert us to Zapata's knowledge of the zealous agrarian reformism of Domingo Arenas. The Morelian leader promised the indigenous people that his army was committed to the "struggle to divide the land." "Divide the land" implied breaking up the landed estates, which the Arenistas had done in the Los Volcanes since 1915 to benefit local indigenous peasants. The Zapatistas also stated that Carrancismo had dishonored the people and therefore the Zapatistas and Arenistas had to fight together for, "their mother, *la tierra*"-land.[85] The reference to the land as a mother is not a Hispanic belief. Local native people believed the land was akin to a mother who provides her children with their daily sustenance.

Zapata's effort to rejoin forces with the Arenistas alerts us to the chieftain's desperate state in the spring of 1918. Zapata's fortunes had taken a turn for the worse

[83] Miguel León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl de Emiliano Zapata* (Mexico City, Cuernavaca: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/Gobierno del Estado de Morelos, 1996 edition), Introduction.
[84] León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos*, 7.
[85] Miguel León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos e Náhuatl de Emiliano Zapata* (Mexico City, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1978 edition), 8-10, 51-52.

since the summer of 1916 when the Zapatistas were being obliterated by the forces of General Pablo González, who had declared that in Morelos the army's "work of destruction [was] not yet completed"[86] and the Morelian Chieftain attempted to make more desperate alliances with Higinio Aguilar, Benigno Zenteno, and the Felicistas, groups he considered reactionary.[87] Womack has described Zapata's attempted reintegration of the Arenistas through the Náhuatl manifestos as a quirky moment in Zapatismo's history, as the sole "Indian episode" in the entire Zapatista rebellion.[88] In the Náhuatl documents Zapata informed the Arenistas that he had anticipated their violent rupture with the Constitutionalists. Zapata displayed a stern willingness to give the Arenistas another chance. The language of the documents, however, also incriminates the Arenistas. To Zapata, by serving in the federal army, they had betrayed the agrarian Revolution.[89]

In issuing the documents in the indigenous language, nevertheless, Zapata showed he was sincere and stern in wanting to reincorporate the indigenous people under Cirilo Arenas into the Liberating Army. What is more, Miguel León Portilla has noted that speakers of indigenous languages appreciate being addressed formally in their native tongues, and Zapata and the other cadres were privy to this cultural knowledge. Even if many of the Zapatista leaders were not ethnic Indians, they had grown up in indigenized

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[86] Womack, *Zapata*, 257. John Womack, Jr., writes that General González actually "barked" these words back to Mrs. Rosa King, who had complained to the general she had lost all she had worked for as the result of the government's destruction of Cuernavaca.
[87] Brunk, *¡Emiliano Zapata!* 204-208, 214-219.
[88] Womack, *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*, 302. To imply that the Zapatista rebellion had but a single "Indian episode" ignores that the Zapatista rebellion emerged out of a peasant indigenous experience, and was not a rebellion waged only in the domain of the dominant Hispanic and mestizo societies; therefore, the rebellion of Zapata was itself also a peasant-Indian mobilization, and the Liberating Army of the South was also the standing army of Mexico's indigenous and peasantry.
[89] Brunk, *¡Emiliano Zapata!* 211.

social milieus in Morelos, Puebla, Guerrero, Hidalgo, and Oaxaca. In Circular One, which began with the words, *Tlanahuatil-panoloani* "message that is transmitted," Zapata told the people of Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte de Puebla that President Carranza had; "*tlalilihque miac necah-cayahualiztle huan miac nexicoaliztle ica non coali nan quitaque de que amo nan mech*" (created mistrust and animosity between the two people.)[90] Zapata expressed in this statement a belief that the Arenistas had been manipulated by Carranza, whom Zapata likened to a clever fox. León Portilla argues that whoever wrote and then translated the documents from Spanish to Náhuatl communicated concepts that did not translate to Náhuatl such as "revolution, servitude, patria, swearing allegiance, justice, guarantees, zone of operations, defense of rights, agrarianism, ideals, and personalism," in idioms and conventions familiar to Náhuatl speakers. Moreover, Náhuatl metaphors and customary language uses, which are only spoken by native elites, are also present in the Náhuatl manifestos. The degree to which Zapata spoke Náhuatl, or if he spoke the language at all, is debatable. Zapata has been conceptualized as a mestizo caudillo, but people who knew him recalled him speaking "El Mexicano," which in many zones is synonymous with Náhuatl.[91]

Circular One urged the Arenistas, now fully under the control of Cirilo Arenas, to remember that: "*Non neiz-cuepaloni ipan amocuali tlahtoani, nan mahuizotia huan qui tlilpoloa neca ilnamiquiliztle de nan mo tlahtlacol*." This translates as, "For you to turn away [your face] from a bad governor is honorable, and it erases the memory from the fact that you had erred." Here, the document made reference to Domingo Arenas' betrayal of Zapatismo in December 1916, stressing that the indigenous people of Tlaxcala

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[90] León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl* (1996), 72.
[91] León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl* (1978), 8-9.

and the Sierra Norte had followed Arenas, an unprincipled leader, but that now that Arenas was gone they could seek redemption and regain their honor dignity by rejoining Zapatismo. Zapata reminded the Nahua Indians that by following Arenas they were also stained by their leader's treason. Zapata felt that Cirilo Arenas was not a strong leader and would not command the indigenous peasant army as his brother Doming had previously. Zapata had assumed a patronizing position. In surrendering, indigenous rebels would have to acknowledge that, through his bad actions, Domingo Arenas had precipitated his own demise. Circular One, which is worth quoting at length, continues with:

> Huan ihcon mo-hueichichuaz non neyolo-cetiliztle, tlen aic quitlanizque nonques tecamacayahque huan nochtin quin micahuia non qui tlacachihuan carrancismo; tehuanti ica nochi to yolo tic mati ilcahuazque nan yehuehca nexicoaliztle tan mech-yolehua nan mo nochtin ihuan aquí qui nequiz de namehua, nan mo poazque itlampa to bandera, ca huel yehua ihuaxca in altepetl ihuan to nahuac nan tequitizque ipampa nezetil-netehuialoni, yehuan nan axcan y huan axcan in cachi huei tequitl tlen ticchihuazque ixpan to tlalticpac-nantzi, mihtoa Patria. Man tic tehuica neca, amo coali oquichtli, Carranza, to nochtin huel yehuatl, to tecococayo. The message translates to: [We hope (or expect- *icxi-chia*) that you will join us, through the principles that unite us in action, those of us that embrace the flag [here Zapata made clear reference to the Plan de Ayala], and the people will unite in concordance to form a great union that will put an end to those who mislead the people and thus end all those

> animosities engendered by Carrancismo; with all of our hearts we forgive our past envies; we invite your people and all of those that wish to follow you, to join us under the banner of our flag, which is property of our nation and to work with us toward promoting the necessary unity through the collective struggle that we have embraced. We have to join in a great fight and find a way to work for our motherland, that which we call our *patria*. Let us, together, combat the bad man Carranza, let us all unite, in struggle, against our great tormentor.][92]

Circular Two, which was directed at people who had served Domingo and Cirilo Arenas in the wider high-sierra central region, congratulated some of the *serrano* revolutionaries for having already broken from Carranza, which translates in Nahuátl as, "*quin celia, axcan cuac huitze to nahuac ihuan mo ixcuepan den tlahtlanahuatiani Carranza*."[93] The statement delegitimized Carranza as a national ruler, and the news of the recent Arenista-Carrancista split gave Zapata great joy. Zapata hoped that: "*Nochtin nonque altepeme, nochtin nonques tlaltequipanohque, ti quin yolehua, man mocetilica to nahuac, ihuan tic yolihuitizque zan ze netehuiliztle, man ti nehnemica ica nepalehuiliztle de namehuanti, ihuan tehuanti, ixpan tecamocayahque ihuan qui mahca yo*," which translates to: "all the people, (pueblos-*altepeme*) all the people who work the land, we invite all of those people to join us (to come to us/with us), and together we will give life to one great struggle, we will help one and other, and combat all of those who continue to deceive the people."[94]

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[92] Leon Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl* (1996), 74-75.
[93] Ibid. (1996), 82.
[94] León Portilla, *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl*, 82.

Again, Zapata reminded the indigenous high-sierra people that, aside from being fooled by the Carrancistas, whom he accused of being reactionaries and great deceivers, they had been victimized by their own fickleness and ignorance. Zapata believed that, much like Domingo Arenas, the rebellious people of the Oriente Central had acted in unpredictable ways. Zapata wrote that the Arenistas had once joined Zapatismo with great elation and that they had recognized the great promise of Zapatismo vis-à-vis agrarian reform, but Zapata also stated that the Arenistas had allowed their fates to be determined by Domingo Arenas, whom Zapata branded as a deceiver and butcherer of Zapatistas and of common townsfolk.[95]

Believing that the Arenistas were ignorant and had been fooled by Domingo Arenas and Carranza, Zapata excused their past transgressions. Zapata's headquarters in Tlatizapán, Morelos issued a circular in February 1918 Zapata calling upon all revolutionaries to renew their loyalties to the "South's Revolution." All revolutionaries from the countryside, however, had to recognize the Plan de Ayala as the supreme law. Zapata believed the Revolution's end was nearing, and the "South" needed "patriots" "willing to reconstruct Mexico." Zapata vowed to "do away with all past rancor." As he explained, "the aspiration of the South is well known; [our duty] is to emancipate the Indian, to give the campesino land needed for subsistence, and emancipate the pueblos…" To Zapata "the pueblo," "the Revolution," "the patria," and "the South" were

[95] Zapata, "A los Jefes, Oficiales y Soldados que hayan militado bajo las órdenes de Domingo Arenas," AGM, f. 4.

the same. Zapata reckoned the "the peon in the fields, the slave in the hacienda and workshop, [would] become free men and conscious Mexican citizens...."[96]

Zapata hoped the Revolution would create new citizens through the revitalization of the nation's Indians. In his manifesto, "Al Pueblo," written on 25 April 1918 he reiterated the point of indigenous redemption. "The Revolution," Zapata wrote, would redeem the indigenous race, giving them back their lands, and by extension, their liberties," and the Revolution would also free the Mexican workers from the "capitalists' exploitation."[97] Zapata also contended "the program of the Revolution must be one, and must also satisfy all local demands."[98] To Zapata "agrarian reform, the reorganization of labor, the advancement of the nation's administration of justice, and the constitution of municipal liberties [would] form the backbone and soul of the revolutionary program." The Zapatistas vowed they "would listen to the voice of the people" because the new revolutionary councils should be "represented by its sons risen in arms."[99] Zapata envisioned an organic relationship between the pueblos and chieftains. In his manifesto "Al Pueblo" Zapata provided further rationale for his willingness to reincorporate the Arenistas, and his language bespeaks a great confidence in his ideals and his movement's ties to the rural people: "In spearheading our unifying labor, we cannot, and should not forget our wayward comrades...victims of Carranza's deceit."[100]

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[96] Emiliano Zapata, "A los revolucionarios de la República," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 15 March 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 6, f. 8.
[97] Emiliano Zapata, "Al Pueblo," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 25 April 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 6, f. 28.
[98] Zapata, "Al Pueblo," f. 28.
[99] Zapata, "Al Pueblo," f. 29.
[100] Zapata, "Al Pueblo," f. 29.

In Zapata's view the promises of Arenismo under Constitutionalist rule, which included the agrarian communes that had been formed by Domingo Arenas, were meaningless. He reckoned that that land reform was chimerical, a fool's vision. To Zapata only the Plan de Ayala offered "true" land reform that benefitted the pueblos and not the latifundistas.[101] To negotiate a peaceful surrender of the Arenistas and other indigenous rebels the Zapatistas made reference to the Indians' historical plight. Another manifesto likely written by Gildardo Magaña stated Indians were the Revolution's backbone and Zapatismo would "end an oppression of indigenous people that began in 1521." In the Zapatistas' teleological view of history the Plan de Ayala was imagined as the voice and consciousness of Indians; its fulfillment would end 400 years of Hispanic oppression replicated by the "despots," Santa Anna, Díaz, Madero, Huerta, and Carranza.[102] The Zapatistas disseminated the idea that Emiliano Zapata was the archetype of justice and redemption. The intellectuals of Zapatismo were casting Zapata as a living icon leading indigenous masses to their salvation. Additionally, written on 5 May 1918, the proclamation entitled, "La Revolución y sus Fines" (The Revolution and its Ends) reckoned Zapatismo would rescue Indians from the ashes of history. They would rejuvenate a race of people who were descendants of "Cuitlahuac, Cuauhtémoc, Netzahualcoyotl, Xicotencatl"—the great Nahua lords, rivals in life, and lumped together by the Zapatista ideologues in an imagined glorious indigenous Mexican past.[103]

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[101] Eutimio Figueroa, "Mexicanos," Cuartel General en El Tigre, 1 May 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 6, f. 36.
[102] Unknown author, "La Revolución y sus Fines," Tochimizolco, Puebla, 5 May 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 6, f. 37.
[103] Unknown author, "La Revolución" Tochimizolco, Puebla, 5 May 1918, f. 37.

In their own words, the Zapatista leaders felt they "led the great Revolution" that would free the nation's Indians "not only from the economic domination of foreigners," but also from Carrancismo, which to Zapata was imperative for the flourishing of national industry. Zapatismo stood against, "the latifundistas, those merciless exploiters of human labor who prohibit the Indian race to come out of its lethargy…" The thinking informing this quote shows Zapatistas believed systematic oppression had made indigenous people indolent, and that only the Plan de Ayala's recognition as national law could uproot a system that replicated a form of colonialism that enslaved Indians in their own soil.[104] The Unifying Junta of the Revolution formed by the Zapatista cadres assumed an "intransigent posture only because the motive for this intransigence lies in fulfilling what has been outlined in the Plan de Ayala." Pueblos could be governed locally, but no local political program could compete with, or attempt to supersede the tenets of the Plan de Ayala. The Junta promised guarantees and amnesties to rebels once groups showed a commitment to apply the Plan de Ayala locally.[105]

"The principal objective of the Revolution is," Zapata contended, "above anything else, to liberate the campesino, give lands back to the pueblos to make each citizen a landowner, and endow each individual with land. On 11 August, Zapata wrote to Felipe Ángeles stating that the South's Revolution had begun to move forward "when the forces of Silvestre Mariscal joined the Revolution, and another sizable contingent headed by General Cirilo Arenas" had reunified. In addition, Zapata informed Ángeles that rebel factions from Veracruz had joined the Zapatistas, and that Indians had rebelled against

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[104] Emiliano Zapata, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 20 April 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 5, f. 24.

[105] B.P. Salinas, "Al Pueblo de México: Constitución del 57," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 1 May 1918, document found in, Ramón Martínez Escamilla ed., *Escritos de Emiliano Zapata* (Mexico City: Editores Mexicanos Unidos, 1980), 364-365.

Carranza in San Andrés Chalchicomula, Otumba, San Juan Teotihuacán, Tlaxcala, and in the Sierra Norte de Puebla. Zapata invited Ángeles to mobilize a strong rebel faction in the north against Carrancismo.[106] Zapata wanted to reach Villa through Ángeles. Zapata wrote to Miguel Díaz Lombardo that he had "attempted to reach out to Villa." Zapata had sent letters asking all rebel leaders to sign the unification requests; scattered factions in Oaxaca had signed, and so had Cedillo in San Luis Potosí, but missing was Villa's signature.[107]

In attempting to begin nationalizing the South's Revolution Zapata reached out to "all the inhabitants of districts which up to now have assumed a belligerent stance towards the Revolution," and promised local rule. Zapata cited the reapplication of his 31 May 1916 Law, allowing municipalities "to arm, and organize to defend against all evildoers and bad revolutionaries."[108] What Zapata needed in return from the pueblos was their loyalty and material help. "This was no onerous demand," Zapata estimated, "given that in return pueblos would enjoy full guarantees…and exemption from paying rent on their planting grounds." The pueblos offered protection by Zapatistas should give the Liberating Army its daily subsistence as an equal exchange for security.[109]

The language in these documents echoes earlier discourses calling for the "South's" "unification" since December of 1917. In Zapata's view the "Plan de Ayala was the Revolution's banner," and believed that only the "Revolution" of the "South"

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[106] Emiliano Zapata to Felipe Ángeles, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 11 August 1918, in *Escritos de Emiliano Zapata*, 368-370.
[107] Emiliano Zapata to Miguel Díaz Lombardo, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 11 August 1918, in *Escritos de Emiliano Zapata*, 370-372.
[108] Emiliano Zapata, "Llamamiento Patriótico a todos los Pueblos engañados por el llamado Gobierno de Carranza," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 22 August 1918, in *Escritos de Emiliano Zapata*, 372-373.
[109] Zapata, "Llamamiento Patriótico," *Escritos*, 375-376.

was an "authentic" grassroots mobilization, a "revolution from the fields," and a national "campesino" struggle.[110] "El Sur"-the "South," more than a concept, to Zapata, was a living entity, it had an essence, a soul; the idea of "the South" was trapped in tradition keeping indigenous campesinos tied to the land, the patria chica. "The Revolution," spelled in all Zapatista documents after 1917 with a capital "R," to be authentically liberating, had to emanate from the indigenous-peasant community, so the use of the term "campesino" was tied explicitly by Zapata to the national agrarian struggle.

Knowing that the agrarian revolution had splintered in many directions, Zapata wrote a letter to General Obregón in August 1918 imploring the Sonoran leader to leave the forces of "reaction," and the "Constitutionalist Liberalism" led by the "dictator Carranza."[111] Zapata stated he anticipated the general's withdrawal from the federal military and invited him to join: "The radical agrarianism," "the campesino rebellion," "the South," the "fighter for the emancipation of the field worker and therefore in favor of the redemption of the indigenous race, which has been singularly forgotten in our internecine conflicts." Zapata believed Obregón controlled the army and would become the ultimate ally in unifying a "true Revolution."[112]

Zapata was looking for allies desperately and therefore had reached out to the Arenistas, but he must have sensed that he had left a gashing, festering wound in Tlaxcala's agrarian people. A *corrido* (popular folk song) retelling the murder of Domingo Arenas portrays Zapata and his generals as the Revolution's real traitors. The

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[110] Emiliano Zapata, "A los Revolucionarios de la República," Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 27 December 1917, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 69, Exp., 5, f. 40-41.
[111] Emiliano Zapata to Álvaro Obregón, Tlaltizapán, Morelos, 24 August 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 52, f. 52.
[112] Obregón to Zapata, f. 52.

song states that the Zapatistas bore the dishonor of "killing a true agrarian warrior and hero to the indigenous people." Zapata, the song relates, ordered his henchmen to "attack Domingo like rabid dogs." Moreover, the ballad states that Zapata was "making the Mexica suffer." Therefore, some Indians viewed Zapata as another tormentor. The song's author promised the Arenistas would not rest until Zapata paid for his heinous crime.[113] The ethnic identity of the Tlaxcallans as a people belonging to the "Mexica" shows that in the early twentieth century people from the high sierras viewed themselves as Mexica Tlaxcallans, an ethnic group apart from mestizo and creole Mexicans.

A War Against all Comers

The rupture between the Arenistas and Constitutionalists had come because the high military command decided that Cirilo was not fit to command such a large force in the Oriente Central. The main federal generals, Castro, Obregón, and González, had determined Cirilo was not as trustworthy as Domingo had been; therefore, upon calling for the disarmament of all Arenistas, the President demanded that the demobilized rebels surrender in Mexico City. By early May the Arenistas and Constitutionalists were at war, and the government did its best to demonize Cirilo Arenas, even publishing a false report on 5 May stating Arenas had killed Paniagua for attempting to seek peace with the government.[114] Another report written a day later, however, stated that Paniagua himself had instigated the Arenistas' violent response. Paniagua was pegged a socialist, communist mastermind, and an agitator, and, paradoxically, the media had also accused

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[113] León Portilla, "Asesinato del Valiente General Domingo Arenas," in *Los Manifiestos en Náhuatl* (1996), 27.
[114] Corresponsal, "El General Cirilo Arenas mató a su colega Alberto L. Paniagua," *El Universal*, 5 May 1918, p. 1.

him of linking the Arenistas with reactionary forces such as those of Félix Díaz and Higinio Aguilar that operated in Veracruz and Oaxaca since 1915.[115]

With the military's spring forays into the Tlaxcala-Puebla Valley, and with Rojas' aid to the military, Paniagua and Arenas withdrew to the mountains of the state of Mexico, north of Tlaxcala, to recruit fighters. With their departure Constitutionalist General Juan Barragán wrote to Carranza: "There aren't any important enemies that merit serious consideration."[116] The Arenistas, however, regrouped, and did so quickly, and attacked military garrisons and left Huejotzingo and other nearby towns isolated.

Arenas' rebels first concentrated on destroying vital communication lines, attacking trains to procure money, food, and weaponry from passengers and soldiers, would commit acts of extreme violence against civilians, and would attack the military in unorthodox formations. Then, in the midst of battle, Arenistas would disperse into the hills, sierras, and cordilleras luring the enemy into ambushes. The intricate topography of the Los Volcanes region became the Arenistas' greatest ally, and the government responded with scorched-earth warfare. The military high-command did not know how to deal with guerrilla insurrections in the high sierras of the Oriente Central. General Laveaga in Atlixco, stated after a battle of 17 May: "The enemy took to the hills and it is difficult to force them to engage in combat." The general also commented that: "Almost all of the men [Arenistas] have deserted…I am confident we will accomplish pacification

[115] Corresponsal, "Se ha resuelto en conflicto militar de 'los arenistas,'" *El Universal*, 6 May 1918, p. 3.
[116] Juan Barragán to Venustiano Carranza, "No hay enemigo de importancia que pueda tomarse en consideración," reprinted in *El Universal*, 8 May 1918, p. 1.

in a month." Laveaga informed Carranza that General Castro was preparing to march to Tlaxcala on a definitive "campaign against Arenismo and other rebels."[117]

General Cesáreo Castro had hoped Cirilo would surrender; however, by the middle of May there was no turning back. Various Indian vecinos from the pueblo of San Andrés Calpan who travelled to Puebla's capital to meet Governor Dr. Alfonso Cabrera to petition for lands told Cabrera that Cirilo had spoken to them stating: "If I surrender they will execute me."[118] General Jesús Agustín Castro's men were "combing" the norther Mixtec sierras in Oaxaca, and larger formations were doing the same with the Arenista rebellion.[119] The use of the term "combing"—*peinar*--to describe the military's activities in the high sierras was a euphemism for extermination.

President Carranza had entrusted the duty of "pacifying" (another softer term for annihilation) Indian communities in the Oriente Central to Jesús Agustín Castro, who issued a manifesto in May to the "inhabitants of Puebla, Veracruz, Oaxaca, and Tlaxcala" insisting he "would reduce rebels to order." His would be a punitive expedition, but he would also exercise mercy. His manifesto reads: "the task that has been conferred to me is essentially of a military nature, I will not partake in the political contests of the states…with the patriotism, valor and competence of the generals, officials, and soldiers who operate under my command the banditry [in this zone] will be completely annihilated." General Castro added that he would forgive, "all the rebels of good faith,

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[117] Miguel Laveaga to Venustiano Carranza, Atlixco, Puebla, 18 May 1918, despatch printed in *El Universal*, p. 5.
[118] Especial para *El Universal*, "Puebla: Desea rendirse al Gobierno el Gral. Arenas," 15 May 1918, p. 6.
[119] Telegrama Especial para *El Demócrata*, "El Gobernador de Oaxaca conferenció con el General Jesús Agustín Castro, acerca de la campaña en contra de los Serranos: Próxima a extinguirse la Rebelión "Arenista,"" *El Demócrata*, 20 May 1918, p. 5. Casto vowed to the Oaxaca's Governor he would utterly extinguish the Arenista rebellion.

those who are in arms [against the government] because they have been injured by soldiers…or because they have misinterpreted political events. I will subdue these unfortunate rebels by peaceful means…" However, he also vowed to pursue and punish the "bandits without respite or quarter…" Castro would "met out just punishment for their unspeakable crimes…"[120] Referring to any rebel as a "bandit," and considering any male Indian could be targeted as such, was dangerous for any person living in the Oriente Central.

President Carranza trusted Castro's judgement, but in doing so replicated mistakes made by Madero when he instructed Juvencio Robles and Victoriano Huerta to pacify Morelos and Puebla in 1911 and 1912. Castro reckoned he would "concede ample guarantees to all rebels who surrender unconditionally to the government…" adding that, "the inhabitants of places under military occupation will enjoy the protection of their lives and interests…my desire is not only to recuperate terrain through force, but [also] to conquer the will of the people through the highest respect for their rights…" Castro promised he would leave no stone unturned to restore peace.[121] Despite Castro's conciliatory discourse, to villagers this was a military occupation.

On 25 May 1918, by order of Carranza, General Sidornio Méndez, the butcherer of rebels in Chalco and the Ajusco mountains, declared that he had wiped out all Arenista bastions in central Puebla. Carranza had sent Méndez to Puebla to "exterminate" Arenistas. Unlike Castro, Méndez would employ not bother with writing. In Puebla he submitted indigenous villagers and rebels alike to his campaign's murderous terror.

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[120] Jesús Agustín Castro to Venustiano Carranza, included is the text: "Manifiesto a los habitantes de Puebla, Veracruz, Oaxaca y Tlaxcala," Puebla, Puebla, 12 May 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 146-147; Portions of Castro's Manifesto are also found in, *El Universal*, 18 May 1918, p. 2.
[121] Castro, "Manifiesto a los habitantes…"

Méndez reported that his forces had executed numerous malcontents. However, much to his chagrin, Arenista groups retreated to the sierras.[122] The Leales de Tlaxcala of Máximo Rojas joined in the persecutions. Rojas wanted to punish the Arenistas for assaulting haciendas, ranchos, and factories, which he claimed had paralyzed commerce in Tlaxcala.[123] Moreover, the war in May had resulted in murderous repressions in Hujotzingo, Cholula, and Atlixtco. The military also applied scorched-earth tactics to subdue Zapatistas led by Gil, Ayaquica, and Magaña in Tochimilco.[124] The military now had occupied Tochimilco, exacerbating Cirilo's problems.[125] The Arenistas, however, met the advancing military in San Martín Texmelúcan with the fiercest resistance.[126]

In the middle of June 1918 the military halted the Arenista advance into Necaxa and the government's counterattacks in Tlaxcala and Puebla sent the Arenistas back to the hills and into the La Malintzin and Iztaccíhuatl volcanoes to reform as guerrillas.[127] Some Oriente Indians, like the 100 Arenistas who "lacking ammunition and all other necessities" had surrendered to Castro at Calpulalpan had completely lost the will to fight. And these capitulations made Jesús Agustín Castro confident of even greater capitulations of "Arenistas and other rebels" in the coming weeks.[128]

Notwithstanding the federal army's campaigns, the Arenistas had regrouped, and Cirilo ordered his men to reestablish a popular following among the local peasantry in the

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[122] Entrevista con Sidornio Méndez, "Ha concluido la campaña contra los "Arenistas,"" *El Demócrata*, 25 May 1918, p. 1.
[123] Leovigildo Ávila to Cesáreo Castro, Puebla, Puebla, 16 May 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 132-133.
[124] Miguel Laveaga to the Secretary of War, Chietla, Puebla, 15 May 1819, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 153.
[125] Jesús M. Guajardo to Benjamín G. Gil, Atlixco, Puebla, 10 July 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 169-170.
[126] José Morales to José Amarillas, Atlixco, Puebla, 16 July 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 172.
[127] Corresponsal, "Los Arenistas han sido dados de baja," *El Universal*, 8 June 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "En rincón de Guadalupe fue derrotado Cirilo Arenas," *El Universal*, 11 June 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Los "Arenistas" intentaron apoderarse de Necaxa," *El Universal*, 23 Universal, 23 Junio 1915, p. 1.
[128] Corresonsal, "Ofrece Rendirse un Partida de "Arenistas," and "Llego el Sr. Jesús Agustín Castro," *El Demócrata*, 20 June 1918, p. 1.

Los Volcanes of Puebla. To distance his people from Zapatismo and Constitutionalism and give his movement an identity, Cirilo began signing his documents with the statement “Revindicación y Libertad”—“Restitution and Liberty” in all official documents. Arenas also referred to himself as a “General de División,” demanding his subordinates to follow all his dictates, as when he issued a Circular regulating the trading and buying of all horses to prevent theft. Not even his most trusted generals would be able to buy and sell horses without his permission.[129]

By 11 July 1918, the Arenistas guerrillas had made it clear to the federal army that they were as serious of a threat as the Zapatistas. Generals Jesús Agustín Castro, and Cesáreo Castro both stated that ending the Arenista threat would come at a high price.[130] Cesáreo Castro noted that the Arenistas were elusive and in retreat flowed like water from sierra to sierra.

Trained and disciplined by Paniagua and led directly by Cirilo, the Arenistas made the military pay for any error, miscalculation or carelessness, and federal soldiers learned not to chase the rebels into the volcano’s cordilleras, sierras, and hills. These were the topographies of peasant-Indian rebellion; the rebels knew the high-sierra terrain of the Oriente Central intimately, while the soldiers, on the other hand, saw the sierras as a daunting, impenetrable, and dangerous frontier. For the military, subduing a fully-remobilized version of Arenismo would require a reshuffling of its military personnel. General Paz Faz Riza was made military commander of Puebla; the jurisdiction over the Los Volcanes was given to Daniel Sánchez (Huejotzingo) and to Nicanor Piña (Atlixco);

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[129] Cirilo Arenas to Santos Hernández, No place mentioned, 7 July 1918, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 9; Cirilo Arenas, “Circular,” Calpan, Puebla, 12 November 1918, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados AHDN, f. 10.
[130] Corresponsal, “Arenas y Paniagua en Puebla,” *Excélsior*, 11 July 1918, p. 7.

F. Morales Carranza assumed dominion over the Sierra Norte de Puebla; Leopoldo Aguila was assigned to Chalchicomula; and Margarito Puente was given command in Tlaxcala. While the military still considered Zapatismo a problem, the principle aim of the military restructuring in the Oriente was exterminating Arenismo.[131]

Reorganized, the Arenistas fought like a poor people's army through acts of sabotage. Assaulting trains became their modus vivendi. On 23 July they attacked three trains in the Los Frailes area of central Puebla; one of these trains, filled with soldiers, was blown up in the hilly lower Frailes area. Enrique Flores, the train's conductor, escaped, and so did Gregorio León and Lino Rosas, the train's brakemen. They informed the military that because many on board were soldiers the Arenista leaders ordered their men to execute captives swiftly. The military reported falsely, however, that Ayaquica and Caraveo had joined Arenas in the attacks.[132]

Rumors of a Zapatista-Arenista coalition, and news that Arenas himself had defected, were proven false when Zapata ordered his men in Puebla to attack local Arenista garrisons. After the Zapatista attacks, the Arenistas fled to the Iztaccíhuatl and the Popocatéptl communities in Morelos.[133] Furthermore, an *El Demócrata* interview with army Major J. Arévalo on 17 August dispelled all rumors of an Arenista-Zapatista reunification. Arévalo, who had been warring against both Arenistas and Zapatistas in Atlixco, told the press the Arenistas had not turned to Zapatismo, but were "operating on their own." In Atlixco, Arévalo and General Macario Hernández repelled an Arenista

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[131] "Arenas y Paniagua," *Excélsior*, p. 7.
[132] Especial, "Fue volado un tren en la barranca de "Los Frailes" el día 23," *Excélsior*, 25 July 1918, p. 1 & 2; Especial, "Como $50,000 fueron robados a los pagadores que iban en el tren que fue asaltado cerca de "Los Frailes,"" *Excélsior*, 26 July 1918, p. 5.
[133] Corresponsal, "Los Arenistas fueron batidos por Zapata," 22 August 1918, p. 3.

force numbering a few hundred. In the aftermath of the battle, which "had lasted hours," "close to two-hundred "Arenistas" died."[134] All the while the Zapatistas fought the Arenistas in intense campaigns. Zapata had even set up an encampment in "El Gilguero" to prevent the entry of Marcelo Caraveo's Arenistas into Morelos.[135] Caraveo, therefore, fought the Zapatistas and the army at the same time, and the Arenista human toll was terrible. General Macario M. Hernández communicated to *El Universal* that the Huejotzingo conflict had resulted in 400 dead, wounded, and captured Arenistas.[136] Major Arévalo, moreover, stated captured Arenistas cursed the Zapatistas. One of the captives stated that the Zapatistas had promised amnesties, but that Zapata would have killed Cirilo if he had returned to Zapatismo adding that General Caraveo was "a personal enemy of Emiliano Zapata." A federal soldier told *El Demócrata* that an Arenista emissary he captured had declared that Caraveo and Arenas would "surrender unconditionally…only to General Cesáreo Castro…and even contribute to the pacification" of the region if the government ceased the persecution of Indian peasants in Arenista-held areas.[137]

The Arenistas, therefore, had read Zapata's circulars, but the leaders rejected Zapata. They had been approached by envoys coming from Coahuila representing Eulalio Gutiérrez, who backed Zapata's aim of unifying all rebels against the federal army. The Arenistas, however, dismissed the Zapatista overtures. The Arenista captives stated that Domingo Arenas had negotiated successfully with Castro in the past, and the generals

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[134] Corresponsal, "M. Caraveo y Arenas no se han unido con Zapata; operan por su cuenta, sin tener ligas con el Atila del Sur," *El Demócrata,* 18 August 1918, p. 6;
[135] Corresponsal, "Zapata y Caraveo se encuentran en pugna hoy," *El Universal*, 18 August 1918, p. 1.
[136] Macario M. Hernández to *El Universal*, 18 August 1918, p. 1.
[137] *El Demócrata*, "M. Caraveo y Arenas," p. 6.

had secured the Arenista-Constitutionalist unification in December 1917. They believed Cirilo Arenas and Cesáreo Castro could do the same.[138] The Arenistas' testimonies prompted Castro to travel from Mexico City to Puebla to confer with Cirilo Arenas.

Upon arriving in Puebla on 19 August, General Castro asked the Constitutionalist Colonel Rafael Cánovas, who he had sent to negotiate with the Arenistas, if Cirilo Arenas had arrived at his headquarters as he had requested. Cánovas informed Castro that Cirilo's men had instead launched "unsuccessful" assaults against federal soldiers in Puebla's capital. Irate, and feeling betrayed and that his honor was stained by Cirilo Arenas, Castro vowed he would no longer seek nor accept an Arenista capitulation. Castro would now launch a definitive campaign against Arenismo in Puebla and Tlaxcala.[139] Castro stated that Arenas and his generals would be tried as traitors.[140]

Amidst the great losses, Cirilo Arenas had to reorganize his army, but had other concerns as well, chief among them securing the loyalty of the pueblos that had been approached by both Carrancistas and Zapata, but had chosen to join neither. Another major concern involved Arenas' dealings with the forces of General Everardo González and Higinio Aguilar. Paniagua secured the support of the troubled town of Huaquechula, incorporating local leaders Jacinto Cadena and Sixto Soriano into the Arenistas. Paniagua was a gifted negotiator. He promised the Huaquechulenses local autonomy, food, and security. And to preclude hostilites with other rebel leaders, Paniagua had conferred with emissaries from the camps of González and Aguilar in Huexocoapan in late June. Arenas knew González cooperated with the Zapatistas in Morelos, and by allowing Paniagua to

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[138] Hernández to *El Universal*, 18 August, p. 1.
[139] Corresponsal, "Oficialmente no ha solicitado Arenas su amnistía," *El Universal*, 20 August 1918, p. 3.
[140] Corresponsal, "Desean rendirse al Gobierno varios generales "Zapatistas," *El Universal*, 3 June 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Los "Arenistas" han sido dados de baja," *El Universal*, 8 June 1918, p. 1.

confer with González he had hoped to avert a protracted war with Zapata while his forces warred with the federal army.[141]

For everyday people in the Oriente Central the war between the factions worsened their woes. In August the military declared that entire populations in towns such as Huejotzingo, which were replete with "bandit Arenistas," were going to be relocated elsewhere to facilitate the purging of rebels. Vecinos *pacificos* (peaceful neighbors) unaligned to contending factions, desperate to find a means to survive without having to leave their communities, sorely needed guarantees. This was evident when, accompanied by numerous villagers, Mr. Ramiro Manzanos, the spokesperson for the town of Huejotzingo, declared before President Carranza in Mexico City that the incessant violence had reduced them to the most pitiful poverty. Manzanos claimed that with the forced relocations by General Jesús Agustín Castro families were torn apart and that local people continued to suffer because the government had labeled Huejotzingo and nearby towns as "dens of Zapatistas and Arenistas."[142]

After designating the Los Volcanes of Puebla as a seedbed of insurgency, General Jesús Agustín Castro made San Martín Texmelúcan his personal headquarters, vowing not to leave the Los Volcanes zone until his forces had cleansed it of the Arenistas. Castro created a special counterinsurgency unit of 600 men called the Brigada "14," supervised directly by Colonel Antonio Ríos Zertuche, the son of Tlaxcala's Constitutionalist governor. Antonio Ríos Zertuche was seen by the federal army as an able commander for defeating the Arenistas in small campaigns throughout the month of

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[141] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, Ozolco, Puebla, 30 June 1918, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 65.
[142] Especial, "Piden que no sean arrasados lo pueblos," *El Demócrata*, 14 August 1918, p. 6.

September in Santa Rita Tlahuapan, El Verde, San Salvador, and at Pela Gallinas.[143] The Arenistas, for their part, largely in response to the increased military presence, turned into an even more desperate and dangerous guerrilla group that assaulted most of the trains travelling the Los Volcanes zone.[144]

Amidst all the carnage in August and September, Jesús Agustín Castro communicated through the press that he was willing to negotiate a peaceful surrender with Arenista envoys; however, even if the government did pursue a cease fire earnestly, the Arenistas would not accept any of the terms of surrender dictated by Castro. What the Arenista leaders wanted, Arenas and Paniagua stated, was a promise that the military would not kill them, and allow them to retire to private life and work on haciendas or even contribute to the ongoing pacification of Puebla.[145] Although Castro had been willing to negotiate a truce, President Carranza would only accept the surrender of Arenista subordinates, but would not provide amnesties for any major Arenista leader. Carranza argued that the Arenista generals and commanders had betrayed the federal military under his orders, so he precluded Castro's efforts to seek peace with the Arenista leaders.[146]

An interview with a survivor of an Arenista train attack in late September in Orizaba Oriental provided readers with an in-depth view into the inner world of the Arenistas located in the sierras of the La Malintzin volcano. The man, whose identity

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[143] Corresponsal, "Los Arenistas han sido batidos con entero éxito," *El Universal*, 7 September 1918, p. 3.
[144] Corresponsal, "El tren de Puebla ha sido tiroteado," *El Universal*, 7 September 1918, p. 3.
[145] Especial, "Es ya un hecho la rendición del General infidente C. Arenas," *Excélsior*, 17 August 1918, p. 5; Corresponsal, "El General Cesáreo Castro pacificara el Estado de Puebla," *Excélsior*, 20 September 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Se cree que los Arenistas se someterán," *Excélsior*, 23 September 1918, p. 1.
[146] Corresponsal, "Hay probabilidad de que los arenistas se sometan en breve," *Excélsior*, 3 October 1918, p. 5.

Excélsior protected, had been held captive by the Arenistas for several days, and escaped the rebels' encampment on a horse that he stole from his captors while they slept in the thick of night. The assault on the Orizaba Oriental train had taken place on 30 September, and was perpetrated by the Arenista chieftain Benito Zamora, a leader whose sadism had earned him ill-repute. The captive stated that the "Arenistas attacked [passengers] like wild beasts," and that the rebels also beheaded "several young men from very distinguished families."[147] *El Universal* too reported that the Arenistas had attacked the train shortly after it departed from the Orizaba Oriental station on its way to Puebla. While the Arenistas looted, however, the train's crewmembers fought back and the rebels responded by killing the train's conductor.[148]

The escapee told *Excélsior* that the "furious" Arenistas led by Zamora hacked their hapless prey to pieces with machetes and that Zamora himself mercilessly drove his blade down into the victims' bodies. The Arenistas then forced their captives to follow them barefooted into the sierras for two days. The detainees were under the direct custody of Carmen Zamora, the chieftain's brother, whose mere appearance "frightened" the captives. The Zamora brothers also stripped the captives of their pants and shirts, who after walking discalced and semi-naked for days in the hot sands the lower sierras of the La Malintzin, had developed huge blisters "that tore open into live wounds." As the days passed, Zamora gave them old shoes taken from deceased victims to continue the march. The contents of the interview revealed the rebels' brutality, but also their stupidity and

[147] Corresponsal, "Algo de intimidad de la vida de los Arenistas," *Excélsior*, 15 October 1918, p. 1.
[148] Corresponsal, "Los Arenistas dieron muerte a tres personas cerca de Orizaba," 3 October 1918, p. 4.

lunacy. The Arenistas wanted to keep the interviewee alive so he could become "their special emissary once they took over Mexico City."[149]

The escapee stressed to *Excélsior* that the Arenistas were barbaric resorted to using the infamous *ley fuga*. The Arenistas allowed individuals they wanted to kill to run about 100 meters forward and then shot them in the back while the fugitives attempted to escape. The use of the *ley fuga* kept the frightened captives submissive.[150] With their use of the *ley fuga* the Arenistas were inverting power: The military had executed many Indians rebels by applying the *ley fuga*.

The editors of *Excélsior* excoriated the local villagers for aiding rebels. However, as Adolfo Gilly has noted in his analysis of the communal basis of Zapatismo in his chapter "The Morelos Commune," the power of a rebel army waging a guerrilla "peasant war" in Morelos depended entirely on the villagers' aid. As Gilly has noted, for the local peasants of central Mexico the guerrillas were the village's first line of defense, and in turn, the survival of a rebel group was also largely due to the peasantry's active support vis-à-vis providing food, clothing, shelter, and weaponry.[151] Andrés Reséndez, moreover, has shown that women from pueblos served rebel forces as spies and arms smugglers.[152]

The escapee stated that to remedy the problem of Arenista "banditry" in the sierras, the military should relocate entire populations because the "force of the bandits" "lay in the sympathies of the serrano pueblos…" The local villagers, in turn, bought and exchanged much of what the Arenistas looted. Such was the case when the villagers of

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[149] "Algo de intimidad," *Excélsior*, 15 October, p. 3.
[150] "Algo de intimidad," *Excélsior*, 15 October, p. 3.
[151] Gilly, *The Mexican Revolution*, 261-267, 285-290.
[152] Andrés Reséndez "Battleground Women: Soldaderas and Female Soldiers in the Mexican Revolution," *The Americas* 51, 4 (1995): 545-546.

Calpulalpan purchased 150 cows that the Arenistas had taken from haciendas they raided in early January in the Valley of Apam.[153] The escapee also stated that the Arenista had two important documents in their possession. One was a letter from Zapata himself, in which the chieftain promised that if the Arenistas rejoined Zapatismo he would either make Arenas or Marcelo Caraveo "the generalissimo" of "the Southern forces" in case he died.[154] The other document contained the signatures of Generals "Villa, Higinio Aguilar, Cirilo Arenas, Gabay, Félix Díaz and other jefes, in which they referred to themselves as the organizers of the National Army." At that time, given the amount of documents that the Tlaltizapán headquarters produced in the form of propaganda, which included the Náhuatl Manifestos directed at the high-sierra Indians, it is likely that the Arenistas in the La Malintzin volcano did receive circulars and other writings coming from the Zapatista emissaries.

The Zapatistas had reach Cirilo Arenas through Marcelo Caraveo. General Higinio Aguilar stated that since March 1918 Caraveo had mobilized people in the Oriente Central from Veracruz to Puebla, providing many "pueblos" with "food rations."[155] On 9 October 1918, Gildardo Magaña in the Tochimilco headquarters received a letter from Cirilo Arenas written to Emiliano Zapata. Arenas informed Zapata that Caraveo had interviewed him, proposing a surrender. Arenas then asked Zapata if his men could "pick up the remains" of his "deceased brother General Domingo" so he "could transfer the body to this region [Calpan]." Arenas signed "affectionate regards" at

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[153] Jesús Agustín Castro to Secretario Mayor, Mexico City, 12 January 1918, AHDN, XI/III/3/83, Expediente Cirilo Arenas-Documentos Alternos, Caja 8, f. 12.
[154] "Algo de intimidad," *Excélsior*, 15 October, p. 3.
[155] Higinio Aguilar to Gildardo Magaña, Santo Domingo, Puebla, 12 March 1918, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 51, f. 28.

the end of his message.[156] Unless the response by Zapata was lost or burned as was common during the Revolution, Arenas received no reply from Zapata. The documentation does not show evidence of a reunified Zapatista-Arenista rebel force in the south, but of continued mutual contempt and intense violence between members of the group.

The Remobilization and Decline of Arenismo

Cirilo did his best to professionalize his forces and reinvigorate both the División Arenas and the Brigada Arenas to counter both the Zapatista and federal army threat. The protracted counterinsurgency campaigns waged by the forces of Constitutional Generals Benjamin Hill, Sidornio Méndez, and Antonio Ríos Zertuche, and the endemic banditry, insecurity, betrayals, turf wars, broken dreams, famine, and pestilence, undermined the movement.[157] Epidemics also took a heavy toll on the rebel forces. In towns in Puebla's southwest the arrival of the Spanish flu in 1918 wiped out more rebels than the military ever could. In Matamoros alone, the jefe Juan Herrera lost 39 out of 45 men he commanded with the outbreak of flu in late October.[158] As to the internecine struggles in San Juan Tianguismanalco, Puebla, for example, the Arenista cause weakened due to infighting between bosses Valentín García and José Terreros. The animosity began when García reprimanded men led by Terreros. The rebel leader Terreros took offense at this and exchanged harsh words with García, and a shootout soon ensued between the jefes

[156] Cirilo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Calpan, Puebla, 9 October 1918, AGM, UNAM, f. 53.
[157] Jesús M. Novoa to Pablo González, Mexico City, 5 September 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/184, f. 55-56; Jefe de Operaciones en Veracruz, Veracruz, Veracruz, 14 September 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/184, f. 178; José Amarillas to Benjamín Hill, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, 9, 16, and 25 September 1918; 15, 26 November, AHDN, XI/481.5/184, f. 200-201, 223-224.
[158] Corresponsal, "La Campaña contra los Arenistas ha sido muy fructífera," *El Universal*, 14 September 1918, p. 3; Especial, "Enfermos de Influenza han muerto en México antes de 24 horas," *El Universal*, 24 October 1918, p. 1 & 6.

that resulted in García's death. García's followers then avenged their leader's death by killing people from the Terreros camp.[159]

To compound problems engendered by the vicious infighting between Arenistas, the federal army battered them throughout the Los Volcanes from October to December. This time, the army targeted many unarmed civilians as well as rebels. The army generals claimed that the villagers had also rebelled. In the estimation of the army generals the Arenistas were nearly finished. But the bulk of the Arenistas had withdrawn from their bases in Texmelúcan and Huejotzingo, retreating to higher points in the La Malintzin, the Iztaccíhuatl, and the Popocatépetl volcanoes. The federal army's principal focus was now capturing Arenas.[160]

On 21 October, General Cesáreo Castro ordered that Puebla's military command would remit Arenas, upon his capture, to the 2nd Judge of the District of Puebla.[161] On 26 November 1918, the magistrate of Puebla asked the military for official files pertaining to the "Arenista Generals Cirilo Arenas, Alberto Paniagua, and Isabel Guerrero." The Military Judge of the state of Puebla then remitted an extensive list of the crimes committed by the Arenista leaders. And Puebla's military judges devoted special attention to the crimes of Cirilo Arenas, especially those perpetrated prior to the army's demobilization of the Arenistas in April.[162]

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[159] Corresponsal, "Puebla, Pue." *El Universal*, 31 October 1918, p. 6.

[160] Informe de Jesús Agustín Castro sobre Veracruz, Puebla, Oaxaca, Tlaxcala, Puebla, Puebla, 6 November 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 217; Jesús Agustín Castro to Juan José Ríos, 8 November 1918, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 247-248; Cesáreo Castro to Secretaria de Guerra, 28 November 1918, Puebla, Puebla, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 219-220; Exclusivo para *Excelsiór*, "De Puebla," 23 December 1918, p. 7.

[161] Cesáreo Castro, Cita al ex –Gral. Cirilo Arenas, Número 142674, Puebla, Puebla, 21 October 1918, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 44.

[162] Magistrado del 7º Tribunal del Distrito de Puebla, Puebla, 26 November 1918, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 45; Nicanor Piña to the Secretaria de Guerra y Marina, Puebla, Puebla, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 46.

On 6 January 1919, General Ramón Frausto in Mexico City wrote that his own staff had done a poor job of listing the crimes of Cirilo Arenas since 1917, but he also added that there were enough pieces of evidence incriminating the Arenista leader. Frausto revealed that Cirilo Arenas and one of his ex-commanders, Manuel García, had stormed through the pueblos of Tejupa and Atzitzihuacan in the district of Atlixco and had attacked and "robbed the neighbors." Frausto also claimed that Arenas had silenced potential witnesses by intimidation and death.[163] Frausto also discovered that local Puebla authorities conveniently turned a blind eye to these crimes when Arenas joined the federal military.[164] The generals in Mexico City also sent urgent correspondences to the regional military leaders in Tlaxcala asking them for all evidence implicating Arenas for the crime of rebellion against the state.[165] Castro was more interested in gathering information of the *atropellos*-abuses that Cirilo and his subordinates had committed while they served in the Constitutionalist army to punish the men through the Military Procedural Law.[166]

At the start of 1919, the federal military under Castro defeated the Arenistas in Tlahuapan, Texmelúcan, and Atzompa.[167] Castro ordered the formation of a military cordon around the Indian pueblos to preclude the Arenistas' reentry into the Los Volcanes of Puebla, which forced the rebels to flee south into Zapatista-held territory.

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[163] Ramón Frausto, Asunto: Averiguación previa contra Fuerzas del ex –Gral. Cirilo Arenas, Mexico City, 6 January 1919, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 47 a, 47 b.
[164] Juan José Ríos, Averiguación sobre Cirilo Arenas, Devuelta, Mexico City, 8 January 1919, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 48.
[165] Oficial 2ndo al Juez de Distrito de Tlaxcala, Mexico City, 25 January 1919, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 49.
[166] J. Barrera to Juan José Ríos, Puebla, Puebla, 17 April 1919, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 50; Ramón Frausto to Al Jefe de la Guarnición de Puebla, Puebla, Mexico City, 7 May 1920, AHDN, ECA, X/III-3/83, Caja, 8, f. 51.
[167] Corresponsal, "Se han verificado algunos combates con los Zapatistas," *El Demócrata*, 1 February 1919, p. 8.

Cesáreo Castro dispatched the 48th Regiment to Texmelucan by order of Jesús Agustín Castro to occupy permanently the former Arenista headquarters.[168] With the defeats, Arenas and Paniagua needed to exercise tighter control over their forces, but the Arenistas' dispersal beyond the core of the Los Volcanes, engendering a resurgence of chaos, disorder, and insubordination within the ranks. Evidenced by the massacre of villagers in San Juan Epatlán Matamoros, in Puebla, the Arenistas committed heinous crimes, such as swift executions, against the local villagers in what remained Zapata's core region. Cirilo Arenas and Alberto Paniagua simply could not control everyone.[169] In February, Zapata had written about the Arenistas' *atropellos* (outrages) and encouraged the leadership to disavow reactionary tendencies, but Paniagua challenged Zapata to proffer him full evidence of his forces' crimes. Paniagua retorted to the Morelian chieftain that, in fact, the "people under his [Zapata's] command" had "perpetrated numerous outrages," and urged Zapata to act in "good faith" if he desired to "conserve an indispensable harmony amongst the revolutionary elements."[170] Paniagua rejected Zapata's authority to pass judgement upon his troops without acknowledging that his own movement was also plagued by internal problems, over which Zapata, like Arenas, had little control.

Zapata had called for a truce because the Arenistas had invaded Morelos, and in Totolapan Cirilo Arenas had ordered General Enrique Landeros to execute Aureliano

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[168] José Amarillas to Benjamín Gill, 23 January 1919, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 34; Rafael Hernández to Pablo González, 11-17 March 1919, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, AHDN, XI/481.5/224, f. 25-31.

[169] Especial, "Puebla: Los Arenistas asaltan el pueblo de San Juan Epatlán, Matamoros, *El Universal*, 10 February 1919, p. 7.

[170] Alberto L. Paniagua to Emiliano Zapata, Calpan, Puebla, 27 February 1919, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 51, f. 56.

Martínez, a local Zapatista-cum-Arenista, for flirting with the idea of surrendering to the Constitutionalists in the region. Martínez, however, escaped when the soldiers Landeros sent to kill him chose to drink too much pulque at a local cantina while he still held him captive. *Excélsior* published a long article relating that Martínez had escaped with his wife and children to Mexico City to surrender to the army. *Excelsiór* stated that most of the people who followed Arenas were now "demoralized," by war's hell and wished to surrender and return to private life, but that Arenas kept them enlisted by the threat of death.[171] With so much dissent within the Arenista ranks it became increasingly difficult for Cirilo to regain momentum. And, by the late spring of 1919, the movement further degraded into banditry and lawlessness. Many uncontrollable Arenistas simply got into the more lucrative business of banditry.

The Oriente Central forces now went through a process of radical readjustment. To combat the wanton criminal acts, Arenas and Paniagua once more attempted to clean the Arenistas' image, and they established a new headquarters in Calpan, Puebla, which they had occupied in the past few months, and also lies in the Los Volcanes area. In a communiqué, Cirilo informed the nation that his forces operated independently of the Zapatistas and the federal army, signing the document as the "leader to the Brigada del Oriente."[172] The fact that many of his men had taken to murder and disorder embarrassed Arenas, however, who wanted to revive his brother's glories. Domingo Arenas had worked hard to restore the village commons in 1917, and in 1919 Cirilo now worked diligently to restore the agrarian communes and keep the existing pueblos in the Los

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[171] Especial, "No quieren pelear los "Arenistas,"" *Excélsior*, 10 February 1919, p. 1 & 5; Corresponsal, "Dos ex-Arenistas capturados en esta capital," *El Universal*, 10 February 1919, p. 8.
[172] Cirilo Arenas, Calpan, Puebla, 18 April 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 22.

Volcanes of Puebla and the La Malintzin region intact. Into 1919, Cirilo Arenas recognized that war's vicissitudes had weakened his forces to the point that many took to crime, but his desire to restore the indigenous communities underscores that he adhered to the ideology of zealous agrarianism. But fulfilling these aims became exceedingly difficult. The Constitutionalist army stormed into the agrarian communities in March and April 1919, but more problematic for Arenas and Paniagua was the resistance now coming from the Indian pueblos themselves. In the town of Huatlatauca, Puebla, where the locals had also resisted Zapatista central command, the townsfolk excoriated the Arenistas for setting ablaze parts of the town after they engaged in a shootout with the local patrols and the village defense units on 18 March 1919. As had happened with their experience with Zapatismo, the pueblo was now at odds with the Arenistas, a rebel group it once fervently supported.[173]

A similar thing had occurred in Zapata's Morelos. As noted by Adolfo Gilly, in Morelos during 1916 and 1917: "Experience showed that military organization was not enough to maintain popular cohesion, and that the traditional village structures had been completely overturned or eroded by deportations, massacres and population transfers."[174] Cirilo believed that his forces should convey strength, discipline, and order. This, he reasoned, would compel peasants to trust in the promise of Arenismo, so he informed General Enrique Landeros on 4 April 1919 that all generals and commanders should meet with him in the Arenista headquarters in Calpan to take pictures of their military ranks and their military exploits. These pictures would be included with revolutionary

[173] Exclusivo para *El Universal*, "Los Arenistas principian a incendiar un pueblo," 21 March 1919, p. 2.
[174] Adolfo Gilly, *The Mexican Revolution* Trans. Patrick Camiller (New York: Verso, 1983), 262-263.

propaganda distributed by Arenistas who had penetrated "enemy territory."[175] Cirilo Arenas wanted to show people in hostile territories the unity, order, and strength of his forces. The propaganda was accompanied by documents in which Cirilo instructed Landeros to attack trains and garrisons in Puebla's center. Many federal contingents, Cirilo wrote, had been dispatched to the north to fight scattered Villista forces, and the time was ripe to attack watered-down federal military stations in Huejotzingo and destroy all trains coming in and out of the Los Volcanes. Cirilo believed the sabotaging of trains would boost the morale of their men, indicating to the villagers that "victory was in their sights."[176]

To his generals, Cirilo's acts of sabotage highlighted his guile and mastery of guerrilla warfare. On 24 May he instructed General Landeros to attack Calpulalpan in the thick of night and destroy all telegraphic lines and bridges, and if "possible to carry away all the cable" so the military could not repair the damage. Cirilo believed that by destroying the communication lines the Arenistas would render the government unable to mount effective counterattacks in the sierras. "Let us not forget," Cirilo reckoned, "that the trains and wires constitute the Revolution's greatest enemy." Cirilo's letters to Landeros show that the Arenistas had regathered momentum in Tlaxcala. In mid-May, following the orders of Cirilo Arenas, Colonel Isabel Guerrero wrote he had "wiped out all volunteers in San Pedro Tlaltenango and other nearby pueblos," and the División of Paniagua had purged federal volunteers and soldiers in three successive combats in

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[175] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landero, San Andrés Calpan, Puebla, 4 April 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 33.
[176] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Andrés Calpan, 16 May 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 30.

Tlaxcala's capital in April, helping Arenas take over Calpan in early April.[177] Cirilo was serious about the destruction of railroads; he had ordered his generals not only to destroy all railroad lines in the Mexicano and Interoceanico, but to collect all the iron tracks as well. Arenas believed the trains and telegraphic lines gave the military greater organizational power; therefore, with the destruction of railroads the rebels could keep the army out of the Indian communities. Arenas believed sabotage and guerrilla attacks were turning the tide of the conflict to the "Revolution." As he noted in one of his manifestos on 19 May, thanks to the guerrilla campaigns "Generals Villa and Ángeles have taken Chihuahua, General Martín López has taken command of Zacatecas and Durango…and Meixueiro has attacked Oaxaca's capital…"[178]

Although Cirilo made no specific mention of it, the murder of Emiliano Zapata at the hands of Colonel Jesús Guajardo and his troops at the Hacienda de Chinameca in Morelos on 10 April 1919 had clearly redefined the meaning of the "Revolution" from below, which now included most armed rebels opposing President Carranza. General Juan Barragán declared the murder of Zapata a triumph and congratulated President Carranza for one of the army's greatest victories. Zapata, Barragán wrote, "had escaped numerous and torturous" campaigns, but had finally succumbed to the army. Barragán and González sent Carranza pictures of the deceased Zapatista leader to underscore the army's "great" "victory."[179]

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[177] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Nicolás de los Ranchos, Cholula, Puebla, 24 May 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 31; Alberto Paniagua to Cirilo Arenas, Calpulalpan, Tlaxcala, 31 March 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 33; Alberto Paniagua to Enrique Laneros, 2 April 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 34.
[178] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Nicolás de los Ranchos, Cholula, Puebla, 19 May 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 37.
[179] Juan Barragán to Venustiano Carranza, México D.F., 11 April 1919, AHDN, PGA, XI/III/1-53, Cancelados, 1er Tomo, f. 64.

The media reports from *El Universal* included congratulatory letters from the president to his generals, and to prove to the nation that the "Attila of the South," who had "troubled" the nation for nine years was dead, newspaper reports included pictures of a gruesomely swollen cadaver of Zapata.[180] Part of the public spectacle of Zapata's murder involved General González putting the agrarian leader's body on public display for 24 hours. Some of the perplexed villagers that came down from the nearby sierras to see the corpse denied that it was the chieftain's remains; the body, they had said, lacked a mole that characterized Zapata since his infancy; but others, such as on older woman who knew Zapata since he was a child, cried inconsolably upon seeing the corpse. The press even printed Zapata's letter to Guajardo to exculpate the military's manner of murdering Zapata, and in larger part to highlight that Zapata had been victimized by his inability to discern Guajardo's disingenuousness. Believing Guajardo "had recent troubles with Pablo González," Zapata made "a frank" invitation to the Carrancista colonel to join the southern ranks. Another of Zapata's letters to Guajardo underscored his belief that Guajardo's surrender was good "for the great Mexican family." One of Zapata's letters shows that Zapata believed Guajardo to be "honest and sincere, and…a man of his word,

[180] Juan Barragán to Venustiano Carranza, Cuautla, Morelos, 10 April 1919, letter printed in *El Universal*, 11 April 1919, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Murio Emiliano Zapata, el Zapatismo ha muerto," *Excélsior*, 11 April 1918, p. 1; Corresponsal, "El cadáver de Zapata descansara en el mausoleo levantado para el que firmaron El Plan de Ayala," *El Universal*, 12 April 1919, p. 1; Venustiano Carranza to Pablo González, Mexico City, 12 April 1919, letter printed in *El Universal*, p. 1 & 10.

and a gentleman."[181] President Carranza declared that Zapata had fallen after "a battle," not an ambush and betrayal. He also promoted Guajardo to the rank of army general.[182]

With Zapata's death there took place a reshuffling of the popular agrarian rebellion; after much jockeying and bickering for control of the movement, Genovevo de la O and Manuel Palafox fell out of popular favor, and although Gildardo Magaña openly admitted that Zapata was irreplaceable and that in no way could he measure up to the fallen leader, the Zapatista council appointed him as Zapata's successor on 4 September 1919. Many Zapatistas protested Magaña's appointment and resisted the Carranza government on their own.[183] Zapata's death had wide resonances, and revolutionaries helpful to the cause, still faithful to the Plan de Ayala, but also considered rogues, such as Higinio Aguilar, made new alliances to carry forward the "South's" banner. Aguilar formed a pact with General Everardo González after Zapata's fall, as did Paniagua and Arenas, to create a new mobilization against the Constitutionalists. Aguilar praised the Arenistas' ability to blow up the trains of the Interoceanico, which "greatly weakened" "the Constitutionalist enemy."[184] Aguilar abstained from voting in favor of the ascension of Gildardo Magaña as Supreme Commander of the South, and wrote to Magaña saying

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[181] José González, "El Epílogo de Emiliano Zapata," *El Universal*, 14 April 1919, p. 5; J.A. Luna, "Fue muerto Emiliano Zapata: Simulando una sublevación de tropas, el Coronel Guajardo logro acabar con el terrible Atila Suriano," *El Informador*, 12 April 1919, p. 1; Emiliano Zapata to Jesús Guajardo, printed in *El Universal*, 14 April 1919, p. 5; Jesús Guajardo to Emiliano Zapata, 2, 3 April 1919, Chinameca, Morelos, printed in *El Universal*, p. 5.

[182] Venustiano Carranza, Declaration on Zapata's Death, 11 April 1919, AHDN, PGA, XI/III/1-53, Cancelados, 1er Tomo, f. 61.

[183] Brunk, *¡Emiliano Zapata!* 227-229.

[184] Higinio Aguilar to Everardo González, Puebla, Campamento 1º, 31 June 1919, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 51, f. 57.

that “he would wait for the opinions of leaders of other revolutionary groups,” before deciding whom he would recognize as leaders over the nation’s agrarian banner.[185]

By the early spring, the military had believed it had also finally terminated the Arenista rebellion. All the federal commanders operating in the Los Volcanes were shocked, however, when on 31 May the Arenistas, which were now composed of a diverse array of rebels, derailed a train coming from Tehuacán in Puebla’s south at the Hacienda Chachapa only a few miles away from the state’s capital. The military blockade that Jesús Agustín Castro had established from Tlahuapan to Tochimilco had stopped the derailing of trains for months. However, the assault on the Tehuacán train showed the strength of the Arenista guerrillas. Arenas, Paniagua, and Landeros had reincorporated hitherto disorganized and scattered Arenistas by forgiving their past crimes.[186] Some of Cirilo’s fighters also stormed ranchos in Tlaxcala’s outskirts by the Atoyac River bank.[187] On June 11, the Arenistas paralyzed all commerce in Tlaxcala and Puebla when they derailed a train in Barranca Honda and ransomed close to 100 passengers. Cirilo ordered the release of 82 in Zacatepec “because they were people of modest origins whose families could not afford the ransom.”[188]

In Zacatepec Cirilo’s army attacked the town’s wealthier citizens. The rebels’ class warfare was clearly manifested when Benito Zamora stormed the Hacienda de San Matías Atzala in early June. Zamora’s men murdered Carlos Arizmendi, the property

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[185] Higinio Aguilar to Gildardo Magaña, Puebla, Campamento 1º, 21 June 1919, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 51, f. 58.
[186] Alberto Paniagua to Enrique Landeros, Puebla, Puebla, 5 May 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 38.
[187] Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, “Del Estado de Puebla,” 8 June 1919, p. 9.
[188] Corresponsal, “La mayor parte de los pasajeros asaltados ha llegado a Puebla,” *Excélsior*, 12 June 1919, p. 1.

owner, and the hacienda managers. Arenas also praised General Alfredo Youshimatz's attack on a train traveling the area from Atlixco on July 11. The forces of Youshimatz used dynamite and the detonations were so violent that the attack forced an accompanying train of Constitutionalist soldiers to retreat to Puebla. That same day, at Atexcac the Arenistas launched executed thirty Carrancistas after taking the town. The attacks on trains show that the aim of Cirilo was to leave society in a state of chaos and shock by destroying all communications and also attain money from the lootings and ransoming of wealthy people.[189]

Aside from ordering his forces to blow up all communication lines in Puebla and Tlaxcala, Cirilo took other measures to tighten his control over the Calpan headquarters. To prevent spies from infiltrating the ranks, Arenas declared null all *salvoconductos* (safe conduct) not issued by the headquarters at Calpan and officially stamped after 15 June. New *salvoconductos* were offered exclusively at Calpan headquarters, and all Arenistas were instructed to protect all people possessing these passes. Failure to provide guarantees to those carrying valid documents entailed grave punishment, such as permanent expulsion from the region, and the new measure was applied to high-ranking Arenistas also.[190]

By the end of July 1919, Cirilo had encouraged the local villagers to defend themselves and had also promised he would punish any rebel who hurt the people's interests. Gone were the days, he vowed, when the Revolution's soldiers acted like

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[189] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Andrés Calpan, Puebla, 13 June 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 27.

[190] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Nicolás de los Ranchos, Cholula, Puebla, 11 June 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 44. Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Andrés Calpan, Puebla, 13 June 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 28; Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Andrés Calpan, Puebla 21 July 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 41.

reckless criminals. To protect the villagers from the military, Cirilo had his forces secure the higher sierras, reclaiming control of the roads, which allowed General Landeros to fend off the federal soldiers. The Arenistas had remobilized in the higher sierras by the early summer of 1919. They established a strong presence first in Huamantla, and then in Zacapoaxtla and Tlatlauquitepec in the "Montaña" of the Sierra Norte de Puebla. The indigenous following of Arenas did not recognize state borders, but moved freely from one mountain range to the other. The recovery of territory involved setting up a permanent headquarters in the neighboring state of Hidalgo as well. For Cirilo, alerting villagers to the inexorable triumph of the "Revolution" was vital. He believed the peasantry's support was vital to Arenismo's success.[191] With the gradual Arenista expansion, what Cirilo desired was victory over the hearts and minds of the villagers.[192] Cirilo knew he had to honor the guarantees made to the villagers, and he recognized that failing to fulfill past promises had led to vicious infighting and disorder.

Despite the promises, Cirilo had to tolerate and lead men of a most violent predisposition. In July, Arenistas squads under Isabel "El Chacharrón" Guerrero stormed haciendas and ranchos in the Los Volcanes to settle old scores. When his forces invaded Rancho San Miguel Ixquitlán in the outskirts of Huejotzingo to avenge a fallen comrade, "El Chacharrón" killed the ranch owner, Juan Oroza, shot his family, and rode off with Oroza's wife. Upon leaving, "El Chacharrón" ordered his men to raze the estate. "El Chacharrón" dealt multiple cards; he exercised swift and lethal vengeance, but he was loyal to Cirilo and his subordinates assaulted most of the trains in the Tlaxcala-Puebla

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[191] Enrique Landeros to Alberto Paniagua and Cirilo Arenas, Apipilhuasco, Hidalgo, 26 July 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 42.

[192] Cirilo Arenas, "Circular al Ejército Revolucionario División Oriente Arenas, San Mateo Ozolco, Puebla, 30 July 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83.

border area.[193] But Cirilo Arenas cringed at the thought of having to deal with rebel factions that he considered reactionary and murderous. But as Cirilo dealt with these vexations he also began writing about the "Revolution," as a concept, as a force from below, from central Mexico's Indian peasant basis. It was slowly destroying Constitutionalism, which had already lost "much ground in its base in Veracruz and Tabasco." On 2 August, Cirilo also observed that the Carranza Government was pressured by the U.S., Great Britain, France, and Italy to leave the presidency. Cirilo wrote that problems in México would cease when Carranza succumbed to outside pressure, abdicating the presidency and ceding a temporary transfer of power to former Interim President Francisco León de la Barra.[194]

Cirilo ordered Landeros to launch a three-pronged attack on the cities of Tlaxcala and Puebla. Isabel Guerrero's forces would attack federal garrisons stationed near the La Malintzin volcano, and other Arenistas under him would attack points in El Verde and Huejotzingo to retake the Los Volcanes permanently, which were now "lightly-garrisoned" because the Constitutionalist high command had dispatched soldiers previously stationed there to fight Villistas in the north. Cirilo ordered his generals to attack "without respite" and "paralyze all communications" by ruining all telegraphic lines and railroad tracks. Arenas instruced Landeros to, "provide ample guarantees to people of the pueblos, ranches, and cities their forces might invade, to earn their

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[193] Corresponsal, "Puebla: Los Arenistas cometieron repugnantes crímenes en la Hacienda de San Miguel Ixquitlán," *El Demócrata*, 6 July 1919, p. 7; Corresponsal, "Siete "Boys-Scouts" perecieron asesinados en manos de los desalmados "Aguilaristas,"" *El Demócrata*, 21 July 1919, p. 1 & 6.
[194] Cirilo Arenas to Enrique Landeros, San Andrés Calpan, Puebla, 2 August 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 29.

loyalty."[195] What Cirilo clearly suggested was a softer occupation, offering guarantees that all widows and orphans living in occupied pueblos would receive generous lifetime pensions.[196]

After Cirilo Arenas ordered some of his men to invade Santa Ana Chiautempam on 24 August 1919, the army of Máximo Rojas, the Leales de Tlaxcala and General Jesús Guajardo attacked communities in the volcano La Malintzin. Aware of Guajardo's maneuverings, Arenas ordered a number of Arenistas to remain in the volcano's lower sierras and halt the military advance. The men of Guajardo reported that they had eliminated a small contingent of "bandits," but a larger force of Arenistas attacked the Santa Anna train station at 5:00 a.m. The Arenistas sacked stores near the station, riding off with supplies. When the Arenistas raided Chalchicomula, Puebla, on that same day the military vowed to "exterminate" every Arenista.[197]

The Crimes and Execution of Cirilo Arenas

Although Cirilo had wanted to revitalize the indigenous communities, some of which he and his deceased brother Domingo had founded, the federal military's protracted counterinsurgency strategy, had precluded his dream of recovering local autonomy for the pueblos. Moreover, he could not launch a definitive attack against the city of Tlaxcala as Paniagua had planned.[198] The military's involvement in the Arenista region intensified when news circulated that on 29 October the Arenista rebels kidnapped

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[195] "Circular al Ejército Revolucionario División Oriente Arenas, San Mateo Ozolco, Puebla, 30 July 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. missing.
[196] Cirilo Arenas, Circular, Calpan, Puebla, 14 August 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, Cancelados, f. 57.
[197] Corresponsal, únicamente para *El Universal*, "Puebla: Los arenistas atacaron Santa Ana Chiautempam," 27 August 1919, p. 8.
[198] Decreto del Gobierno del Estado, Puebla, Puebla, Archivo Pablo González Garza (PGG), AHDN, Cancelados, XI/III/1-53, Tomo, I, f. 202.

William O. Jenkins, a Tennessee native who had ventured into Mexico pursuing adventure and wealth and in the process became a vice-consular official in Puebla. Known for his greed, and a man whom Rosalie Evans had once lambasted as an "awful character," Jenkins arrived in Mexico in 1904, financially broke. He made good connections, however, chiefly with Diego Kennedy, Tlaxcala's main landed scion, and by 1910 he owned factories, a bullring, shops, and a railroad shop in Puebla.[199]

Described in newspapers as one of "Puebla's main capitalists," Jenkins hired hundreds of women in his factories, and with the outbreak of the conflict became even wealthier when he lent money at very high interest to desperate landowners. Authorities wondered how in a time "of great monetary crisis" Jenkins had 60,000 pesos in silver coins on the day rebels assaulted and seized him in his "Santa Lucía" estate. Locals, however, knew the consul regularly lost large sums of money gambling.[200] Jenkins had for long complained of the popular fury the Revolution had unleashed in México.

Jenkins informed Veracruz Consul Arnold Shanklin that only U.S. armed intervention could restore order in México. In Jenkins's view, the Mexican Revolution had strayed from its noble principles—land reform, equality, rule of law—and had "degenerated now into a war of pillage and destruction…"[201] In late October, the news of his abduction became a *cause célebré*. The capital's newspapers *Excélsior* and *El Monitor* sent their top reporters to scour Puebla's sierras in hope of finding the consul.[202] *El Universal* identified a bandit from Huejotzingo, Federico Córdoba, a criminal of "terrible fame," as the culprit. Córdoba demanded a sum of 150,000 dollars from the U.S.

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[199] Henderson, *The worm in the wheat*, 88.
[200] El Corresponsal, "¿El caso "W. Jenkins" es un ardid?" *El Demócrata*, 24 October 1919, p. 1 & 10.
[201] Jenkins, "Mexico has been turned," 362.
[202] Corresponsal, "En busca de Mr. Jenkins," *Excélsior*, 24 October 1919, p. 1 & 10.

government in return for Jenkins. Henry L. Myers, the Democratic Senator from Montana, scoffed at the idea of succumbing to the demands of "Mexican bandits" and suggested instead that the U.S. military invade Puebla's sierras.[203]

As reported in *El Universal*, the U.S. newspaper entitled the *Sun* also recommended sending a "punitive" foray into the volcano Popocatépetl, a main Arenista zone, to free Jenkins.[204] Senator Myers argued that the U.S. should flex its muscle and teach the Mexicans a lesson.[205] In its commentary about the Jenkins case *Excélsior* wrote that the Arenista rebels openly defied both México and the U.S., which further proved that Cirilo Arenas was a lunatic.[206] One media correspondent from *Excélsior* who interviewed the Arenistas wrote that the Arenista leaders were willing to return Jenkins in exchange for the removal of Governor Cabrera.[207] The reporter wrote that Arenas and Paniagua had planned the consul's abduction, and that Federico Córdova assured him that Jenkins was in the lower cordilleras of the volcano Popocatépetl, a place teeming with armed bandits led by the Indian chieftain Juan Ubera, whose followers regularly assaulted the local pueblos. [208]

Outside of the country, *El Demócrata* reported, the Jenkins affair painted an image of a nation ruled by gunmen and bandits. Accompanied by six armed men,

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[203] Associated Press, "Demands were made for William O. Jenkins release," *El Universal (English Section)*, 26 October 1919. The Arenista rebel, or bandit, as he is described sometimes, Federico Córdoba, also appears in some of the press documentation as Córdova as well. To avoid the confusion, I have kept the names as they appear in the documents, therefore, "Córdoba," which is the correct Spanish spelling name, and "Córdova," which is used in many of the press reports, will be used interchangeably.
[204] Corresponsal, "El Plagio de Mr. Jenkins en Puebla," *El Universal*, 24 October 1919, p. 1.
[205] Corresponsal, "El Plagio de Jenkins hace que un senador americano pida que, para rescatarlo, se manden todas las fuerzas de mar y tierra," *El Universal*, 26 October 1919, p. 1.
[206] Corresponsal, "El Senador Mr. Henry L. Myers pide que las fuerzas de E.U. busquen al cónsul Jenkins," *Excélsior*, 26 October 199, p. 1.
[207] "El Senador Mr. Henry L. Myers," p. 1 & 10.
[208] "El Senador Mr. Henry L. Myers," p. 1.

Córdoba had allegedly forced Mexican authorities to pay 300,000 pesos for the consul's release.[209] Though Córdoba physically collected the ransom money, *Excélsior* informed its readers that Paniagua and Arenas were the crime's perpetrators.[210] In fact, the newspaper *El Universal* published a story stating that in the city of Puebla the police had captured two men from Cholula, Damián Lozada Daniel and Antonio Cinto, carrying a letter from Cirilo Arenas directed to Mrs. Jenkins. The letter, the press report stated, proved that "the rebel Arenas" had indeed captured Jenkins[211]. However, some members of Puebla's government declared the U.S. consul could have colluded with "the bandits" to "extort the money" from the U.S. government. They accused Jenkins of having prior dealings with Arenistas.[212]

Jenkins's associates had collected money to set up a team of defenders who claimed that their client was innocent. Puebla's police had found the consul sick, feeble, frightened, and troubled by bouts of anxiety but, Puebla's officials still worked to prove Jenkins's disingenuousness.[213] The U.S. Embassy in Mexico City had released 150,000 U.S. Dollars to Eduardo Mestre, a close associate of Jenkins, to pay for Jenkins's freedom.[214] However, Mestre claimed to have used some of the money to pay for his for his own bail.[215] The Jenkins matter ignited the ire of Virginia's Republican Senator Miles

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[209] Corresponsal, "Esta ya a salvo en Puebla, Mr. Jenkins," *El Demócrata*, 27 October 1919, p. 1 & 11.
[210] Corresponsal, "Fue rescatado el cónsul Mr. W. O. Jenkins," *Excélsior*, 27 October 1919, p. 1.
[211] Únicamente para *El Universal*, "Dos emisarios de Cirilo Arenas fueron detenidos," 30 October 1919, p. 12.
[212] Corresponsal, "Día a día, minuto a minuto, se robustece más la opinión pública, la hipótesis de que la desaparición de Jenkins fue un auto plagió," *El Demócrata*, 28 October 1919, p. 1 & 8.
[213] Corresponsal, "Los funcionarios del Gobierno del E. de Puebla asevera que no hubo tal plagio del cónsul Jenkins," 28 October 1919, p. 1 & 8.
[214] Associated Press, "The release of William O. Jenkins," *El Universal (English Section)*, 28 October 1919.
[215] Corresponsal, "El licenciado Mestre se encuentra en libertad bajo caución, después de haber depositado diez mil pesos como fianza," *El Demócrata*, 29 October 1919, p. 1.

Poindexter, who urged the U.S. government to tighten its control of Mexican affairs and "ensure the full protection of the lives and legal rights of American citizens residing in Mexico."[216]

News coming from the volcano Popocatépetl camp of Cirilo Arenas further complicated the case. José Ayluardo, a special agent, entered the volcano's communities and interviewed Cirilo Arenas. Ayluardo wrote that Arenas denied any involvement in the abduction and declared that the Arenistas had "high principles" and had "fought against the Constitutional government, but did not desire to trouble their *patria*." Furthermore, alluding to the threat of a North American invasion, Cirilo Arenas promised he did not "act to hurt the Mexican people."[217]

The U.S. Mexican Embassy insisted bandits had victimized Jenkins.[218] The U.S. Embassy insisted that Puebla's government was responsible for protecting the lives, properties, and economic interests of U.S. citizens residing in the state.[219] The government of Puebla sent an urgent dispatch to *El Universal* showing that on 24 October Governor Cabrera had written to the Secretary of War asking for military supplies to comb the sierras of the Popocatepétl and rescue Jenkins.[220] Norman J. Gould, New York's Republican Congressman, however, claimed Mexico's government had violated a

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[216] Corresponsal, "La Doctrina Monroe, dice un senador que se aplique a México," *El Universal*, 28 October 1919, p. 8.
[217] Corresponsal, "Cirilo Arenas desmiente que el cónsul Jenkins haya estado prisionero en los campamentos rebeldes," *El Demócrata*, 29 October 1919, p. 1.
[218] Prensa asociada, "Se comprueba el plagio de Mr. W. Jenkins: La embajada americana hace importantes declaraciones y pone en claro muchos puntos interesantes," *El Demócrata*, 2 November 1919, p. 1.
[219] Únicamente para *El Universal*, "El gobierno de México no pagara el "rescate" de Mr. Jenkins," 4 November 1919, p. 1.
[220] Alfonso Cabrera, Informe del 24 de octubre de 1919, reprinted in *El Universal*, 4 November 1919, p. 1.

"sacred" obligation to protect "its own citizens" and "Americans" from lowly "rebels and bandits."[221]

Gould accused Carranza of controlling the people through the "rule of a small armed force over an unarmed citizenry,"[222] and likened Carranza's land reform to an act of armed robbery by which "generals and civilian officials" amassed great riches while allowing for "the illegal appropriation of estates among native squatters."[223] Gould added that "due to a state of lawlessness," and "regardless of claims of ownership," "natives" and "peons" invaded and squatted on private lands.[224] The senator believed Carranza had helped indigenous peasants at the expense of dispossessing U.S. citizens. Gould also alluded to the 251 U.S. citizens who had been killed in Mexico since Díaz's May 1911 abdication as proof of Mexico's lawlessness. [225]

Excélsior and *El Demócrata* reported that Puebla's police had detained eighteen workers from Jenkins's "Santa Lucia" estate, finding out that one man indeed worked for Cirilo Arenas and Córdova.[226] When the police searched the worker they discovered he possessed a manifesto written by Arenas and other rebel leaders.[227] Jenkins's father, however, accused the Carrancistas of fabricating his son's purported links with rebel

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[221] Prensa asociada, "El caso Jenkins en las cámaras de los EE.UU," *El Universal*, 9 November 1919, p. 1.
[222] Committee on Rules, House of Representatives, Tuesday, July 29, 1919. *Appointment of a Committee for Investigation of the Mexican Situation. Congressional Hearings/66th Congress 1st Session/Rules* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1919), 130.
[223] *Appointment of a Committee*, 130.
[224] Ibid, 133.
[225] *Appointment*, 132, 134.
[226] Correspondent, "Eighteen workmen of Santa Lucia Ranch held for investigation," *Excélsior (English Section)*, 11 November 1919; Corresponsal, "Fueron detenidos dieciocho sospechosos en una finca de Mr. Jenkins," *El Demócrata*, 13 November 1919, p. 9.
[227] Exclusivamente para *Excélsior*, "Los peones del Cónsul Jenkins fueron detenidos," 12 November 1919, p. 1.

leaders to "cover up [their] failure to provide protection." [228] *El Universal* validated Jenkins's innocence, observing that the police had "beaten a confession" out of an Indian named Florentino Anaya. Puebla's authorities, therefore, possessed no legal grounds for keeping Jenkins detained.[229]

Three weeks after his release, Jenkins traveled to Mexico City and declared that "the rebel bosses" of Puebla, Arenas and Paniagua, had held him captive. On the other hand, the Indian rebel leaders, he stated, had allowed Mestre to enter the sierras of the Popocatépetl and negotiate his release.[230] For Mexico's government, the Jenkins affair became a diplomatic fiasco. A string of people, ranging from reporters to local peasants, came to Jenkins's defense, citing the consul's "affection for Mexicans."[231] Despite the outpouring of support, on 18 November Puebla's police chief ordered secret agents to arrest Jenkins. The agents found and remitted him to the state's penitentiary for "falsifying information to federal and state authorities" and, more shockingly, for "colluding with rebels" to "orchestrate" his own capture. Authorities suggested an *auto-plagio* had taken place. News of Jenkins's detention caused great commotion, and on 20 November, *El Universal* ran dual headlines: authorities in Chihuahua had imprisoned General Felipe Ángeles; of equal importance was news of Jenkins's arrest.[232]

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[228] Associated Press, "State Department does not believe Jenkins to be guilty," & "A letter from Jenkins to his father," *El Universal (English Section)*, 18 November 1919.
[229] Corresponsal, "¿Hubo presión para obtener algunas declaraciones contradictorias al cónsul? *El Universal*, 18 November 1919, p. 1.
[230] Corresponsal, "Otra grave amenaza: El senado norteamericano interviene directamente en el caso Jenkins," *El Demócrata*, 12 November 1919, p. 1 & 2; Corresponsal, "El cónsul Jenkins llego ayer a la capital," *El Universal*, 12 November 1919, p. 1.
[231] Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, "¿Se amnistía el plagiario de Mr. Wm. O. Jenkins? 18 November 1918, p. 1 & 10.
[232] "El Ex-General Felipe Ángeles fue capturado," "Mr. Jenkins fue reducido a prisión," *El Universal*, 20 November 1919, p. 1;

Washington's diplomatic pressure was not long in materializing. A group from the U.S. Consul office traveled to Puebla to "demand" Jenkins's release. They warned that failure to free the vice consul would "seriously affect relations between the United States and Mexico, and that Mexico would be the only nation to assume full responsibility."[233] The fact that a U.S. consul "had been captured by bandits" "reflected poorly" on Mexico's government.[234] Radical voices in the U.S. press suggested that the U.S. make the Constitutionalists pay through displays of U.S. naval force in the Pacific Ocean's Mexican ports. Their anger heightened when a district judge in Puebla added the "crime of rebellion" to Jenkins's formal criminal charges. That judge ordered the release of sixteen "Indians" from the Atlixco jail who had worked on the "Santa Lucía" estate to take their testimony, hoping to find holes in Jenkins's defense. However, the press revealed that eleven days prior to his recapture, Jenkins wrote to his son stating that Carrancistas pressured his workers to declare he had connived with local bandits.[235] The Mexican government, for its part, reported that the rebel Córdova had promised to surrender and reveal all he knew about Jenkins. He would do this in exchange for an official pardon and for a formal federal military rank.[236]

More incriminating for Jenkins was the release of a letter from Córdova, who it was now clear was an Arenista, deemed "authentic" by officials. Córdova declared to

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[233] El Corresponsal, "El Gobierno Americano exige la libertad de Mr. Jenkins," *El Demócrata*, 21 November 1919, p. 1.
[234] El Corresponsal, "El Caso Jenkins a punto de provocar un conflicto internacional," *El Universal*, 21 November 1919, p. 1.
[235] Corresponsal, "No se pondrá en libertad a Jenkins hasta no saber el fallo de la justicia," *El Demócrata*, 21 November 1919, p. 1; Corresponsal, "Se recibió la nota del gobierno de Washington," *El Universal*, 22 November 1919; Corresponsal, "Se anuncia él envió de una nueva nota diplomática del gobierno de los Estados Unidos al de México," *El Demócrata*, 23 November 1919, p. 1.
[236] El Corresponsal, Exclusivamente para *El Universal*, "Por qué no se rindió el cabecilla Córdova," 26 November 1919, p. 5.

"the Mexican nation" that he belonged to the "National Army, Division of the South," and had agreed to kidnap Jenkins. Córdova, however, did not intend to "collect money," but had only returned Jenkins to demonstrate that "the current government was unable to guarantee the lives and interests of foreigners, even in cities of high political importance." Córdova was "not a bandit." His purpose was to "show the weakness of his enemies."[237] Governor Cabrera wrote a letter declaring that U.S. officials clamoring for armed intervention failed to acknowledge that the military had since 20 November engaged rebels in three seek-and-destroy missions in Atlixco, Malacatepec, and Coatzingo in Puebla to eliminate the forces of Córdoba and Ubera.[238]

Governor Cabrera believed the Jenkins case threatened Mexico's sovereignty. Therefore, the Mexican press wrote enthusiastically about the 'ABC' nations' (Argentina, Brazil, Chile) pledge to assist México in seeking a peaceful solution to the Jenkins affair. As communicated by a Chilean press report, the 'ABC' governments sought to prevent another "landing of U.S. troops on the port of Veracruz."[239] While Mexican Senator Juan Barrón Vázquez asserted that the Jenkins affair would "not result in hostilities," the media reported that the U.S. Navy was prepared to move warships out of New Orleans to the Gulf of México in case Puebla's government refused to free the consul.[240] Some in Washington stated that Mexican authorities had persecuted Jenkins, "the victim, instead

[237] Federico Córdova to the Senior Editor of *El Demócrata*, Malacatepec, Puebla, 20 November 1919, reprinted in the paper on 27 November 1919, p. 2.
[238] Alfonso Cabrera to *El Demócrata*, 27 November 1919, p. 2 & 10.
[239] Associated Press, "El "ABC" intervendrá en favor de México," *El Demócrata*, 30 November 1919, p. 1 & 8; Associated Press, "Intervendrá el A.B.C en nuestras dificultades con E. Unidos:" *Excélsior*, 30 November 1919, p. 1.
[240] Associated Press, "De un momento a otro saldrán hacia aguas mexicanas buques de guerra americanos," *El Demócrata*, 3 December 1919, p. 1 & 2.

of the captors," and failed, on repeated occasions, to protect other U.S. interests in Mexican tribunals.[241]

Arizona's Democratic Senator Henry Ashurst presented the U.S. Senate with a proposal to authorize Newton D. Baker, the Secretary of War, to employ the military force necessary "to protect all the North Americans north of the Río Bravo who are endangered by the activities of Mexican bandits and other belligerents." Washington's more extreme voices stated that the "pacification" of Mexico would be a three-year campaign involving an invading force of 450,000 American soldiers.[242] While these senators had no faith in Carranza, in prior years the William H. Taft and Wilson administrations had deposited their confidence in the "nationalistic" Constitutionalist president because he had "…respected private property," and "offered a degree of safety for the tens of thousands Americans living in his country,"[243]

Despite the hysteria, members of the Mexican press observed that the divisions between the Democratic and Republican parties would preclude armed action against Mexico. Senator Albert Fall had been hypercritical of Wilson's foreign policy.[244] As soon as Wilson recovered from an illness, Fall visited and alerted the president of "the Mexican situation." Fall stated that "the Mexican ambassador and Mexican consuls had

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241 Associated Press, "El pueblo de los E.U. no quiere una nueva guerra," *Excélsior*, 3 December 1919, p. 1 & 10.
242 "Inmediata ruptura," *El Demócrata*, p. 1.
243 John Mason Hart, *Empire and Revolution: The Americans in Mexico since the Civil War* (London: University of California Press, 2002), 306.
244 Associated Press Dispatch from *The World* to *El Universal*, "Wilson ignora el conflict actual con México," 5 December 1919, p. 1.

distributed "red" propaganda in the United States," and advised Wilson to order the repatriation of all U.S. citizens in México.[245]

As Fall met with Wilson, at 12:10 a.m. on 5 December, Rufino Zavala cabled the Mexican press announcing that Puebla's highest judge had ordered Jenkins's release.[246] Governor Cabrera communicated through *El Universal* that Salter Hansen, an independent banker, had paid a bail of 1,000 pesos for the consul's conditional release.[247] As stated by Wilson's physician, upon learning of Jenkins's release, Fall, a "rabid enemy of México," stood agape momentarily, but retorted that the Jenkins affair was but "one incident" in "the Mexican situation."[248] The Jenkins affair was filled with as much reality as hyperbole. Wilson certainly did not want a full war with México. Moreover, to the Department of State it did not matter if the Carranza government had succumbed to external pressure; Jenkins was freed. With the U.S.'s renewed confidence in México even the Mexican stock market rose a day after the consul's release.[249]

While many in the United States had dismissed Fall's "Machiavellianism," and Wilson's party argued that the U.S. should spend its energies in repairing Europe, Henry Ford contended that North American capital penetration, in the form of the expansion of Standard Oil and the American Steel Co., were necessary to reinvigorate the Mexican economy. To Ford, "…the Mexican lands could not remain uncultivated. It [was] urgent

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[245] Associated Press, "President Wilson did not express his opinion about the Mexican situation during the conference with Senator Fall," *El Universal (English Section)*, 6 December 1919.
[246] Únicamente para *El Universal*, "Mr. Jenkins en libertad; a las doce de la noche salió de la prisión por orden del juez," 5 December 1919, p. 1.
[247] Corresponsal, "W. Jenkins goza de libertad caucional," *El Universal*, 6 December 1919, p. 1.
[248] Associated Press, "Los funcionarios del departamento de estado dicen que el caso Jenkins es solamente un incidente," *El Universal*, p. 1.
[249] Associated Press, "El Presidente Wilson continuara su política de no-intervención en México," *El Universal*, 7 December 1919, p. 1.

to make them productive."[250] Despite some hawkish discourses, the U.S. army would not march south into México as it had in 1916 during the Punitive Expedition against Pancho Villa in the north.

Some within the Republican Party believed Senator Fall had gone too far in pushing for war and observed that the U.S. army was "shattered," and should be used only "in handling industrial disturbances." Unemployed workers were expected to riot in U.S. cities. Moreover, they found it unlikely that Wilson would order an invasion of México since the president was, and they clearly stated this in an embellished tone, "the outspoken champion of weak nations."[251] Several days after his conditional release, Jenkins first traveled to Mexico City's U.S. Embassy and returned a day later to Puebla to appeal for absolute liberty and to clear his name.[252]

General Juan Barragán had tracked down the Arenista Córdova, and informed his superiors that "the bandit leader" had left Puebla for the Veracruz coast and intended to cross the U.S. border. Colonel Primitivo Ramírez, a subordinate of Barragán, reported that Jenkins had been spotted, while supposedly in captivity, safely in Córdova's lair. Ramírez also alleged that Córdova had helped Jenkins exploit local coal workers.[253] The U.S. press became increasingly interested in the case, and when reporters asked Jenkins why he had not traveled to his native country, he responded that Córdoba's extortions had left him virtually penniless. In fact, Jenkins sent the press a letter showing Córdoba's final demand of two thousand pesos. Governor Cabrera, however, insisted Jenkins had

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[250] Associated Press, "El Presidente;" p. 10.
[251] Associated Press Special, "President Wilson will not involve the United States in any more wars," *El Universal (English Section)*, 12 December 1919, p. 3.
[252] Washington News, "Sigue comentándose en los Estados Unidos el caso "Jenkins": La Embajada Americana atribuye su libertad a las urgentes representaciones," *El Demócrata*, 11 December 1919, p. 1.
[253] Corresponsal, "El rebelde Córdova trata de salir del país," *El Universal*, 20 December 1919, p. 1 & 9.

lied and now counted with the counsel of Julio Mitchel, a chief Jenkins prosecutor, who was "half Saxon, half Latino." Mitchel, the prosecution team alleged, knew Jenkins well. Mitchel argued that although locals in Puebla liked Jenkins, he was connected to both the Arenistas and Zapatistas, and "refused to cooperate with local authorities."[254]

At times Jenkins proved to be his own worst enemy. In early January 1920 he petitioned to have his "bail voided" by Puebla's state court, but the court denied his petition on grounds that "neither Jenkins nor his counselor were present at the proceedings, which were attended by Julio Mitchel, the state prosecutor, and a number of Indians who testified against Jenkins."[255] In light of Mitchel's work, and awaiting a grand trial, Cabrera revoked Jenkins's consular license.[256]

Eventually, Jenkins gained the upper hand in his quarrel with Puebla's government. Backed by Secretary Robert Lansing, Jenkins had the temerity to publicly lambast Chief Judge González Franco, while prosecutor Michel proved powerless in the local courts.[257] In March 1920, Jenkins expressed a willingness to renounce his U.S. citizenship, as Article 27 of the Mexican Constitution stipulated, to obtain a generous concession of the waters from the Tequesquiatl River in Tlaxcala. The Tequesquital flowed into the larger Zahuapán River, which could greatly enhance the productivity of

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[254] Corresponsal, "Habla el licenciado Mitchel sobre el asunto Jenkins," *El Universal*, 1 January 1920, p. 9; Corresponsal, "En quince días se dictará sentencia en el caso Jenkins," *Excélsior*, 29 December 1919, p. 3.
[255] Correspondent, "Jenkins to have bail voided," *El Universal (English Section)*, 6 January 1920.
[256] Corresponsal, "Se retira la licencia consular al Señor Jenkins," *Excélsior*, 5 February 1920, p. 12; International Correspondent, "Verdict in Jenkins case will be pronounced by the Supreme Court," *El Universal (English Section)*, 5 February 1920.
[257] Guadalupe Rivera Marín, Coord., *Diccionario Histórico y Biográfico de la Revolución Mexicana: Tomo VIII; Sección Internacional* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Estudios Históricos de la Revolución Mexicana, 1994), 198.

Jenkins's "Santa Elena," and "La Estrella" factories, which were located near San Bernabé, Tlaxcala, a hotbed of Arenista rebellion.[258]

Jenkins began constructing a financial empire in Mexico when in 1921 he bought the Atencingo sugar refinery in Chietla, Puebla. With the purchase of the Atencingo complex, Jenkins secured "the greatest concentration of land under a single owner in the history of Puebla."[259] David Ronsfeldt argues that Jenkins used the ransom's money to begin "to amass his fortune, for he is said to have engineered the kidnapping, splitting the ransom with his captors." This implies that Cirilo Arenas had received money from Jenkins.[260] John Womack, Jr., for his part, argued that the Jenkins affair placed Mexicans in great peril: "Rigged or not, the Jenkins case was a perfect pretext for a new American intervention. In the crisis Mexican leaders had various roles to play—official, outlaw, and exile." Womack notes that the Jenkins case, and the diplomatic pressure it brought with it, conflated with a string of surrenders that enfeebled the Zapatista resistance that had remained strong in south-central Mexico following Zapata's death.[261]

Unlike the rebel leader Cirilo Arenas, William Oscar Jenkins emerged as one of the success stories of the Mexican Revolution. Jenkins became involved in the political dealings of the Ávila Camacho clan, which in Puebla were replete with graft, corruption, and the repression of workers, and his fortune soared under the tenure of Governor Maximinio Ávila Camacho (1937-1941). In 1937, Jenkins willingly gave away agricultural lands during the land reforms of Lázaro Cárdenas, mostly to avoid conflict

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[258] Corresponsal, "Mr. W.O. Jenkins renuncia su nacionalidad," *Excélsior*, 12 March 1920, p. 1 & 9.
[259] David Ronfeldt, *Atencingo: The Politics of Agrarian Struggle in a Mexican Ejio* (Stanford, Cal: Stanford University Press, 1973), 10.
[260] Ibid, 9.
[261] Womack, *Zapata*, 346-347.

with the president, and to placate former followers of Rubén Jaramillo, the *Jaramillistas* in Puebla and Morelos.[262] He then sold his sugar estate, and bought the National Cinematographic Bank, a company that constructed many movie theaters in México and founded Estudio Churubusco, the nation's largest movie producer. In 1954, the year his wife died, Jenkins created the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation in her honor, which counted with a sum of 90 million U.S. Dollars. At the time of the consul's death in 1963, the foundation was worth over 500 million, and money from the fortune has since been used since for national public beneficences.[263]

In the days prior to Jenkins's 5 December 1910 release, Washington's pressure had emboldened the Mexican federal military's determination to exterminate the Arenista threat in the Los Volcanes of Puebla. Cirilo Arenas and Alberto L. Paniagua had denied any involvement in the Jenkins affair, however, the Carranza regime felt its prestige had been stained by the actions of the Arenista rebels. The Carranza regime had known that Córdova, Jenkins's real tormentor, had worked with both the Zapatistas and now belonged to the camp of the Arenistas. In the last months of 1919, Cirilo Arenas had ordered his forces to commit numerous acts of sabotage. The Arenista summer victories in the La Malintzin volcano had been pyrrhic ones.[264] In late October, the Arenistas had seized Julio Saldívar, the young son of Alejandro Saldívar, a rich hacienda owner, as the young man rode his horse on way to his estate in Tlenayapam, Hidaldo. Upon paying an amount of 10 thousand pesos for his son's release, Julio Saldívar overheard, "from the lips of the *bandoleros*," "a gang of Arenistas" operated "exclusively to abduct rich men."

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[262] Ronfeldt, *Atencingo*, 40-45.
[263] Rivera Marín, *Diccionario Histórico*, 199.
[264] Corresponsal, Llegaron a las goteras de Puebla, Los Arenistas," *El Demócrata*, 16 October 1919, p. 1.

As informed by Saldívar, to avert becoming the "victims of the brigands," dozens of hacienda owners had fled their estates.[265]

In November 1919, war raged in the Oriente Central. The Arenistas were preparing for the harsh winter campaigns in the volcano La Malintzin and in the sierras of the Popocatépetl, and they also took much livestock to help out the local populations with food. While the Arenistas had lost some popular sympathy, the Constitutionalists fared worse. In the small communities in between San Martín Texmelúcan and El Verde in the Los Volcanes the local people had formed defense units and attacked the headquarters of Captain José Montoya.[266]

Occupied by both Arenistas and Zapatistas, the Los Volcanes of Puebla, and Atlixco in particular, had been a hotbed of agrarian insurrection. The military blamed many of the *atropellos* (abuses) on the rebels.[267] The military began to gain the upper hand in the struggle for Atlixco when on 5 December a dispatch from the office of General Pablo González to the press stated that Fortino Ayaquica, and a bevy of other Zapatista chieftains, including Encarnación Vega Gil and Angel Barrios, had surrendered in the general's headquarters. While the government qualified all the *jefes* as Zapatistas, among the capitulators stood out the name of the Arenista indigenous "general" (as emphasized disparagingly in the press), Juan Ubera.[268]

With the surrenders, by early December the military had effectively reoccupied the Los Volcanes of Puebla. The Arenistas, however, remained on the fringes of the

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[265] Corresponsal, "Plagian los "Arenistas" al hijo de un rico hacendado," *El Demócrata*, 28 October 1919, p. 5.
[266] "Puebla," p. 12.
[267] Leonardo Álvarez de la Cuadra to Pablo González, Puebla, Puebla, 12 November 1919, APG, AHDN, XI/III/1-53, Cancelados, 1er Tomo, f. 128-129.
[268] Corresponsal, "La pacificación del Estado de Puebla es un hecho," *El Universal*, 5 December 1919, p. 1.

Popocatépetl volcano and in the La Malintzin sierras. On 22 December the Arenistas attempted to recover San Martín Texmelúcan, but were intercepted by the military two kilometers away from the Nanacamilpa Interoceanico railway station. The soldiers seized great quantities of petroleum, dynamite, and bombs. The Arenistas, presumably, had planned to blow up the railway stop.[269] Moreover, Cirilo made a bold move when, on Christmas Eve, he and 100 members of "his banditti" attacked a military garrison stationed in the town of Topila and then invaded the town, "making prisoners" of the people who had vigorously defended the pueblo. The military communicated to the national press that the Arenistas were responsible for perpetrating "numerous outrages" against the civilians.[270]

Soldiers of Federico Berlanga rushed to Topila to "whip" the Arenistas, but Cirilo's forces left numerous enemy combatants dead in the fields, taking the rifles and provisions of the deceased. Cirilo then reinforced his defenses in the sierras near La Carolina and Guaxocota.[271] If we are to trust in the veracity of newspaper reports, many of which came directly from military correspondences to the press, we can infer that throughout much of the Jenkins ordeal, the Arenistas had gone into hiding. The spectacular 27 December 1919 victory of the Arenistas in Topila was the final Arenista success reported in the national media.

Cirilo Arenas had remained beyond the government's reach since he rebelled in April 1918, until police captured him in Puebla in late February 1920; but his fortunes

[269] Únicamente para *El Universal*, "Puebla: Los Arenistas fueron duramente escarmentados," 24 December 1919, p. 8.
[270] Especial para *Excelsior*, "Puebla: Cirilo Arenas al frente de sus hombres entro en Topila," 27 December 1919, p. 9.
[271] Ibid, "Puebla," 9.

had already begun to wane by late 1919. Prior to the capture, as written by Candido Portillo Cirio, Cirilo Arenas had effectively played cat-and-mouse with the military; however, in Chalchicomula, the military learned upon capturing and interrogating Casiano Méndez, a subordinate of Federico Córdova, that their leader Cirilo Arenas had become very ill with influenza in the early winter months and had instructed many *jefes* to surrender to the military.[272] Moreover, the Arenista cause had suffered an incalculably debilitating loss when in the middle of January 1920 the army stormed the Arenista headquarters of Río Frio, which was headed by Alberto L. Paniagua. Troops of the "Brigada 14" led by General Sidornio Méndez had battled the Arenistas in "Pinagua" and "Tres Palos," the rough sierras of Río Frio. Witnesses stated Méndez and Paniagua engaged in a personal shootout. Paniagua fought bravely and injured Méndez, but federal soldiers wounded Paniagua and then took him to the army headquarters near Mexico City, where they executed the Arenista general without a formal trial. With the demise of Paniagua the Arenistas had lost Mexico State and Veracruz.[273] Méndez and the military justified the prompt execution stating that with Cirilo Arenas, Paniagua "had sown the seeds of terror in all the pueblos they roamed." With the killing of General Paniagua many Arenistas surrendered to the government Constitutionalist General Francisco Murguía sent the capitulators to the state of Chihuahua where he "gave them lands and obligated them to work."[274]

[272] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Hermanos*, 23-24.
[273] International Correspondent, "Natives describe capture and execution of Alberto Paniagua notorious rebel leader," *Excelsior (English Section)*, 15 January 1920; Corresponsal, "Alberto L. Paniagua fue muerto en un combate en Río Frio," *El Universal*, 14 January 1920, p. 6.
[274] Corresponsal, "Alberto Paniagua fue fusilado por las fuerzas del gobierno," *La Patria*, 20 January 1920, p. 1.

In December 1919 and January 1920, the military had already initiated the proceedings for a formal military tribunal in case the "*cabecilla* Cirilo Arenas" was captured alive. Arenas, as stipulated in Article 1895 of the Penal Code for Districts and Federal Territories, would be tried, in the Superior Military Court of Puebla for treason, and more specifically, for plotting the state's "dissolution."[275] On 2 March, Pilar Sánchez reported to the Sub-Secretary of War in Mexico City, with great gusto, that on 29 February the police had apprehended Cirilo Arenas in the city of Puebla while he visited his girlfriend Guadalupe Taboada. With the news, Sánchez communicated from Puebla that the trial of Arenas "for the crime of rebellion" should commence "expeditiously."[276]

Rufino Zavaleta, Puebla's Inspector General, and Rufino Muñoz, his secretary, who interrogated Arenas following his imprisonment, revealed the police identified Arenas, who had arrived in Puebla City since the 27th to see his girlfriend, Guadalupe, who had been ill. Arenas invited Guadalupe to the theatre, and the two were detained with Guadalupe's three siblings. Caught in the Calle de Tamaríz and then taken to custody, Arenas first identified himself as Eduardo Ramírez. Portillo Cirio writes the police had first taken notice of Cirilo Arenas due to his muscular built, broad, thick shoulders, and his dark sunglasses, which he wore at night. The dark shades, more than anything, had caught the eye of an agent. At first he thought they dealt with a common thief, so he took him to the local jail. Arenas offered no resistance, but only asked that they let go of his girlfriend Guadalupe and her siblings.[277]

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[275] F. Barba to Pablo González, México, D.F., 27 December 1919, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 253; Daniel V. Valencia to Venustiano Carranza, Puebla, Puebla, 26 January 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 255.
[276] Pilar Sánchez R. to the Sub-Secretary of War, México, D.F., 1 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 262-263.
[277] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Hermanos*, 27-28.

While in custody police grew more suspicious of their detainee, especially when Arenas removed an expensive watch from his left wrist and offered the item to the officers in exchange for his release.[278] Commissary Jesús Domínguez and Zavaleta then asked Casiano Méndez, a lieutenant of Córdoba, to identify the man in custody. Upon some guarantees that were extended to him, Méndez stated: "You know him well!" "It is my general, Cirilo Arenas!"[279] Excited, Zavaleta immediately dispatched the note to all his superiors and then interrogated Arenas. The news of the capture caused an uproar and President Carranza immediately cabled the police in Puebla to congratulate Zavaleta and his men.[280] News of the capture of Cirilo Arenas caught the press' attention and major newspapers ran headlines describing the capture of the "infamous" guerrilla leader and bandit *jefe* who had "terrorized" the Oriente Central.[281]

When asked by Zavala why he had rebelled intially, Cirilo Arenas confessed: "My aim is to see the fulfillment of the 1857 Constitution…." When asked why he had lifted arms against the government, Cirilo added; "I have offended no one, but only acted in self-defense. Cirilo declared he "was named chief of "the División Arenas when the *jefes* of the División named me as such after my brother died at the hands of Ayaquica," and contended; "all this happened while we still fought for the government." Cirilo Arenas declared the problems with the other army generals began when it was rumored he had once "sympathized with the cause of Villa." Arenas argued he found no

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[278] Zavaleta y Munnoz, AHDN, ECA;
[279] Portillo Cirio, *La Muerte de los Hermanos*, 32.
[280] Corresponsal, "Cirilo Arenas, capturado en la ciudad de Puebla," *El Dictamen*, 1 March 1920, p. 1.
[281] Informe de Rufino Zavaleta y Antonio Muñoz, Puebla, Puebla, 2 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 84-88; Especial, "Fue aprehendido en la ciudad de Puebla el peligroso cabecilla Cirilo Arenas, *Excélsior*, 1 March 1920, p. 1; Especial, "Cirilo Arenas fue capturado ayer: Estaba de incognito en la Angelopolis," *El Universal*, 1 March 1920, p. 1.

inspiration's in Villa's ideology, and insisted he had clarified that misunderstanding with both General Benjamin Hill and President Carranza, and had afterwards followed every order issued by his superiors.[282] Arenas told Zavala that when the Arenistas separated from the military the forces of General Jesús Agustín Castro had attacked first, and the Arenistas had felt the army's actions were unprovoked since they would have disbanded on their own accord.[283]

What followed after General Castro attacked, Arenas related, was a period of unrelenting warfare. Arenas argued "the army had attacked him five days before the intended surrender conference [with General Cesáreo Castro] in Texmelúcan," making the war inevitable. Arenas, therefore, believed he should not be charged with the deaths of officers in battles in Atlixco and Acamilpa, or that the army should interpret the actions of the Arenistas against the government as a "*levantamiento*"- an uprising. When Arenas realized the army's "persecution" would not cease, he "reorganized his people" and "remained at the head of the División." Arenas made it clear he had traveled to Puebla to surrender because "he intended to retire to a private life and never again hold a weapon." Arenas also manifested he would serve the government "if President Carranza spared his life and desired his services—either as a soldier, or on any special commission," since he "counted with enough elements" to be highly useful "in the pacification of this state [Puebla] and Tlaxcala." Arenas declared he would fight for the Constitutionalist cause "honorably" and "faithfully" and would "galvanize others" to do the same. Arenas declared he knew the region intimately and that people would follow him over anyone else. He concluded his testimony by stating that other rebel generals had

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[282] Zavaleta y Munnoz, AHDN, ECA.
[283] Ibid.

tarnished the Revolution and that he counted with enough men to pacify the Los Volcanes region.[284] Arenas felt he had lost direction when the army apprehended and executed General Paniagua and therefore desperately sought the counsel of General Rafael Rojas in Puebla, with whom Paniagua had attempted to negotiate a surrender, and whom Arenas had written to seeking amnesty prior to his capture.[285] Based on the rebel leader's capitulation, we are led to believe that Paniagua had indeed greatly influenced the actions of Cirilo Arenas, and that Arenas did not have time to adjust to Paniagua's loss.

El Universal wrote Paniagua's counsel had sealed the fates of the Arenas brothers. The newspaper wrote that Paniagua had advised Arenas against meeting with General Jesús Agustín Castro to surrender in the spring of 1918.[286] When the army began battering the Arenistas throughout Puebla and Tlaxcala in December 1919, Paniagua had negotiated a truce with the forces of Manuel Peláez, the Peleacistas, in Veracruz. Since the forces of Félix Díaz had attacked the Arenistas when they had made incursions into Orizaba and other points in Veracruz, the union with General Peláez benefitted Cirilo's forces. The Arenistas had suffered many loses in Jalapa at the hands of General Francisco R. Bertani, and Paniagua easily convinced Arenas to submit to the authority of Peláez.[287] When the military killed Paniagua the federals picked up many weapons and Paniagua's letters. The military released the contents to the press.

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[284] Zavaleta y Munnoz, AHDN, ECA.
[285] Cirilo Arenas to Rafael Rojas, Puebla, Puebla, 29 February 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 103.
[286] Corresponsal, "Alberto L. Paniagua fue muerto," *El Universal,* p.6.
[287] Corresponsal, "Cirilo Arenas se internó en Veracruz y está siendo atacando por los suyos," *El Universal*, 23 December 1919, p. 6.

Paniagua's letters revealed that Peláez and Arenas had agreed to lead their own rebellion and had proclaimed General Felipe Ángeles "The Supreme Leader of the Revolution." Following the army's execution of Ángeles, Arenas, Paniagua, Peláez and other leaders met again in the Cánton de Tantoyuca in Veracruz, and recognized Peláez as the rebellion's new leader. The Paniagua archive revealed Arenas had written extensively to Peláez. The rebel leaders exchanged information about their plans to win the war against the Constitutionalists, but they first intended to destroy the army of Félix Díaz in Veracruz.[288]

The federal army generals communicated through the press that Paniagua had controlled Cirilo Arenas at every turn in their rebellion. Paniagua had been the intellectual and mastermind, and Arenas his puppet. Such thinking is underscored in the novel, *La Sombra del Caudillo*. Martín Luis Guzmán illustrates this point in his description of General Jacinto López de la Garza, the "counselor and intellectual" whom "…belonged to the type of military revolutionists and politicians who years ago had left their Law books for the fields, making magnificent promises." Such generals made a career "…controlling the minds of illiterate generals…"[289] Unlike General López Garza, however, Paniagua did not ascend the political ladder by surviving the war nor was Cirilo Arenas the illiterate caudillo.

In examining the south's war theater, after the death of Zapata, General Pablo González boasted that the army's "raids" in the volcanic highlands had decimated the Arenistas and other agrarian rebels making them virtually "insignificant" by early 1920.

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[288] Corresponsal "Peláez habia reconocido como Jefe Supremo al extinto General Ángeles," *El Universal*, 17 January 1920, p. 6.
[289] Martín Luis Guzmán, *La Sombra del Caudillo* (Mexico City: Minerva, S.A., 1967), 37.

González wrote the South's rebels had been surrendering in droves and that desperate and brutalized *pacificos*-peaceful villagers had now supported the army's campaigns in Tlaxcala and Puebla. González observed that following Zapata's fall, agrarian rebel factions began falling in a domino-like fashion.[290] By early 1920 the Arenista guerrilla resistance had weakened leaving Arenas in a vulnerable state.

As the army had planned it, the trial of Cirilo Arenas commenced immediately, and held it not in the civil court, but in the federal military tribunal of Puebla. Arenas spoke to the press during his trial and declared that he felt relaxed and unworried about his sentencing. He added that he welcomed his execution, he did not fear dying, especially if his annihilation would be "beneficial to the health of the patria." The newspapers, particularly *Excélsior*, wrote that within military circles everyone commented that Arenas would be executed at the conclusion of his military tribunal; however, even enemies whom had excoriated Arenas for rebelling against the Constitutionalists acknowledged he had been dutiful to the nation when he stood with the federal military. The press wrote the major charges against Arenas involved two crimes punishable by death, "rebellion and train wrecking."[291]

On 1 March, Cirilo Arenas wrote a somber note to his girlfriend's father, which was also addressed to "Lupita," who "he loved most," asking for a photograph of hers and instructed the seventeen-year old to let his mother know he was incarcerated and that

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[290] Pablo González to the Editor of *El Universal*, "Rindió un informe el General Pablo González sobre el Ejército de Operaciones en el Sur," 3 January 1920, p. 3.
[291] Corresponsal, "Hoy principiara el consejo de guerra para juzgar al ex-Gral. Cirilo Arenas," *Excélsior*, 2 March 1920, p. 1 & 9; Especial, "Hoy será juzgado en Consejo de Guerra Extraordinario el cabecilla Cirilo Arenas, *El Universal*, 2 March 1920, p. 1; "Mexican News in Brief," *El Universal (English Section)*, 2 March 1920.

she should go see him.[292] At age twenty six, Cirilo Arenas was broken and defeated in a jail cell. On 2 March, at the request of the prosecution, Arenas gave a long declaration, and he took the opportunity to highlight his military achievements. At age sixteen, "he had followed his leader, Felipe Villegas," and his brothers, Domingo and Emeterio, into the Liberating army's ranks and his "participation was instrumental" in "deposing" the Próspero Cahuantzi regime and the dictatorship of Victoriano Huerta. Arenas professed loyalty to his brother Domingo, his fallen leader's ideals, and to the "Liberal Constitution," which guaranteed individual liberties for all Mexicans, and an undying loyalty to "the true Revolution's principles." Arenas described himself as an indefatigable revolutionary, but had wanted to "retire to the labors of the fields," which was, ultimately, a dream truncated "by the government's unrelenting persecution" of his people.[293]

Since the trial had acquired great notoriety thanks to the national media, (the newspapers reprinted almost every word Cirilo had uttered in his declarations), the military gathered enough people to render expert testimonies and show the trial was impartial. Chief among these expert witnesses were Pedro M. Morales and Manuel Rojas, two chief Constitutionalists from Tlaxcala and Puebla, respectively, and the military court appointed Zenón Cordero and Luis Quintana as Arenas' defenders.[294] *El Universal* declared the people of Puebla and Mexico City were enthralled with the Arenas case, which had acquired a tragic "romanticism" since the caudillo's "love for a woman had finally brought him to the arms of justice." The paper reprinted a letter from Arenas to

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[292] Cirilo Arenas to Pedrito and Guadalupe Taboada, Puebla, Puebla, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 104.
[293] Cirilo Arenas, Declaración, Puebla, Puebla, 2 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 104-109.
[294] Documentos variados, Cirilo Arenas, Puebla, Puebla, 2-3 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 110-115.

presidential candidate Félix F. Palavacini, which informs he "awaited justice in a most summary trial." Arenas implored Palavacini to intercede on his behalf and possibly avert a death sentence.[295] Cirilo insisted he had not rebelled, but assumed a defensive stance against the military. Moreover, the *vecinos* of San Martín Texmelúcan and Cirilo's mother, Margarita Arenas Pérez, immediately came to the defense of Cirilo Arenas and declared he "was always an honorable revolutionary." The people of Texmelúcan further declared: "We aver that he cooperated with the pacification of this zone, persecuting the enemies of the present government…He was never villainous; all he strove for was the unification of the pueblos and the implementation of the Revolution's ideals."[296] The people from the Los Volcanes had an idea of what the agrarian Revolution stood for—they had received ample lands from the Arenas brothers.

By 3 March 1920, despite the people's plea for a fair and longer trial, the military tribunal had charged Arenas with: a.) withdrawing from the government, b.) withdrawing from the military with his forces, c.) taking advantage of the people he led, d.) encouraging others to rebel against the government, and e.) galvanizing others to oppose to promulgation of the Federal Constitution. Taking all charges under maximum legal consideration, the Military Tribunal of the State of Puebla declared: "The accused Brigadier General Cirilo Arenas is guilty of the crime of rebellion." The sentencing of Cirilo Arenas was given legal sanction by generals Felipe González Salas, who was the chief prosecutor, José Cavazas, and Pedro J. Almada, all of whom President Carranza

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[295] Cirilo Arenas to Félix Palavacini, 2 March 1920, reprinted in *El Universal*, 3 March 1920, p. 1.
[296] Margarita Arenas Pérez and the *vecinos* of San Martín Texmelúcan in Defense of Cirilo Arenas, 2 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 154.

interviewed. Judge González Salas declared: "For the aforementioned crime the accused shall suffer the penalty of death."[297]

Counselor Zenón Cordero assumed the tough task of convincing a military court Cirilo Arenas had not betrayed the federal army he had served as a general in, and that he should not be executed. Cordero argued that the military rank of Arenas had not been granted to the rebel leader by the military, but by his own forces, the Arenistas whom Domingo Arenas had led. Cordero argued that Domingo Arenas had given his younger brother the military rank. Many were surprised that enemies of Arenas, Porfirio del Castillo, Governor Alfonso Cabrera, Pedro M. Morales, and Rafael Rojas advocated for the suspension of the trial. The generals did not want to exonerate Arenas, but to conduct another trial resulting in a punishment other than an execution. Morales, in particular, who had fought alongside with, and against the Arenas brothers, contended that Cirilo Arenas had possessed no formal military legitimacy. Those who came to the defense of Arenas also observed that Jesús Agustín Castro had forced the rebel leader to "fight a defensive war" from "the volcanoes." The generals must have been staunch opponents of the death penalty. They had even opposed Castro, one of the army's most decorated generals and their superior in Puebla. In the opinion of people writing for *Excélsior* the military should suspend the capital murder trial.[298] A newspaper whose writers had time and again vilified Arenas, pegging him as an agitator, murderer, traitor, and bandit now expressed extreme indignation with the summary trial and informed a national audience that hundreds gathered outside of Puebla's military court hoping to enter and hear the

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[297] Pedro Almada to the Supremo Tribunal Militar. Puebla, Puebla, 3 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/3-83, f. 154-156.
[298] Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, "Cirilo Arenas fue sentenciado a muerte en el consejo de Guerra que lo juzgo en la ciudad de Puebla," 4 March 1920, p. 1 & 9.

proceedings. The people, the newspaper declared, stood with Arenas. In addition, *Excélsior* reported that Chief Military Judge General González Salas "held a personal grudge" against Arenas, since he was one of the few military personnel who had survived the Interoceanico train attack orchestrated by Isabel Guerrero, "El Chacharrón," in Barranca Honda in Puebla.[299]

Governor Alfonso Cabrera, who had for two years insisted that Cirilo Arenas and his forces were a menace, declared before Judge González Salas that Arenas had approached him in the past attempting to demobilize his forces and surrender if the governor promised him an amnesty.[300] Following Governor Cabrera's declaration, members of the Mexican Associated Press and Puebla's Association of Journalists appealed for clemency on behalf of Cirilo Arenas. The reporters highlighted the outstanding military service of Arenas as a Constitutionalist, and one reporter quoted Counselor Zenón Cordero at length when the counselor declared: "Cirilo Arenas has been a victim of cruel abuse, military authorities have violated several [of his] Constitutional guarantees." Cordero continued, "…We are living under a full military dictatorship…The Revolution was made to restore the reign of justice; it is time now for the establishment of complete, impartial justice." It was reported that Cordero's statement was followed by cheers and applause.[301]

Prior to the final sentencing, Cordero called Arenas to testify one more time. When asked if he had violated the amnesty granted to him and his forces by the military generals, Cirilo Arenas stated that exoneration had been granted by the military to his

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[299] "Cirilo Arenas fue sentenciado a muerte," p. 1.
[300] Exclusivamente para *El Universal*, "Pena de muerte para Cirilo Arenas," 4 March 1920, p. 1 & 5.
[301] Exclusivamente para *El Universal*, "Los periodistas poblanos se interesan por la vida de Cirilo Arenas," 4 March 1920, p. 5.

brother Domingo Arenas in late 1916 when the División Arenas first surrendered to the government. Arenas told the court that under his brother Domingo he had dutifully served under General Máximo Rojas when they deposed the local Huerta regime led by Governor Manuel Cúellar. Moreover, Arenas declared that when the Arenistas joined the army in December 1916, the División Arenas numbered at more than 2,000, and was well-disciplined, equipped, armed, and trained. He added that when they launched attacks on Morelos, the División Arenas had not received much aid from the federal military. Despite the lack of aid, Arenas had marched with his soldiers into Morelos to hunt for Emiliano and Eufemio Zapata. Arenas and Cordero informed the court that when General Jesús Agustín Castro initiated the counterinsurgency against the Arenistas in April 1918, Cirilo Arenas twice wrote to President Carranza, once from San Martín Texmelúcan and once from Texcoco. Cordero asked for copies of those letters and added that when General Castro "first arrived in San Martín Texmelúcan [in April 1918] he had found everything in the most complete order," and had communicated this to President Carranza. Cordero asked that the court find the transcriptions of those messages. When Cirilo finished speaking, the audience rose in applause, prompting Judge González Salas to expel from the court much of the "mob" that was causing the ruckus.[302]

Military records would have also shown that General Plutarco Elias Calles sympathized with Cirilo Arenas, stating that he had been willing to lead the Arenistas in the country's north. The Sonoran general, however, declared on 11 December 1917 that if General Paniagua and Juan Banderas, who he considered lowly and vile individuals,

[302] Military Court Minutes, Puebla, Puebla, 4 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/XIII/8-83, f. 157-159.

came with Arenas he would have them shot.[303] Other military documents show Cirilo Arenas had dutifully followed the orders of Jesús Agustín Castro and Cesáreo Castro, both of whom had praised the Arenista military exploits in Puebla, Morelos, and Veracruz. Cirilo Arenas had conceded to Jesús Agustín Castro that Cesáreo Castro possessed full military control over the Los Volcanes region.[304] The release of the military records could have helped or hinder Arenas, but in the estimation of Counselor Cordero the court's reading and interpretation of the papers would have delayed the trial and placed his client in a better predicament.[305]

In his legal report, Counselor Cordero declared that Chief González Salas was correct in stating that military law provided no guarantees for "the insubordination of military personnel," but added that "the military shall never extend such jurisdiction over people who do not belong to the military," and that "the citizen Cirilo Arenas does not belong to the military."[306] Cordero observed that Arenas had "belonged to neither the permanent nor the auxiliary corps," and, "possessed no military patent nor appointment, in legal terms."[307] Zenón wrote that Article 921 of the Military Law declared that all military appointments should be signed by the Mexican President, the Secretary of War and Navy, or the Chief Army Officer controlling a region and therefore inquired as to who had given that legal sanction to the "formal" military appointment of Cirilo Arenas.

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[303] Plutarco Elias Calles to Guerra y Marina, Hermosillo, Sonora, 11 December 1917, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/8-83, f. 220.
[304] Cirilo Arenas to Jesús Agustín Castro, San Martín Texmelúcan, Puebla, 20 January 1918, AHDN, ECA, XI/XIII/8-83, f. 222; Jesús Agustín Castro to Cirilo Arenas, Mexico City, 21 January 1918, AHDN, ECA, XI/XIII/8-83, f. 223; Cirilo Arenas to Jesús Agustín Castro, San Martín Texmelúcan, 28 January 1918, AHDN, ECA, XI/XIII/8-83, f. 224.
[305]Exclusivamente para *El Universal*, "Pena de muerte para Cirilo Arenas," 4 March 1920, p. 1 & 5.
[306] Zenón Cordero and Luis Quintana, Defense of Cirilo Arenas, Puebla, Puebla, 3 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/XIII/8-83, f. 305-306.
[307] Zenón and Quintana, f. 307.

Moreover, Zenón cited Article 14 of the "Political Constitution of the United States of Mexico," which stated that: "No one shall be deprived of life, their properties, possessions or rights" without a rigorous legal examination and a thorough legal precedent.[308] Cordero was trying to declare that the military court would commit a grave legal infraction if it executed Cirilo Arenas in a summary fashion. Cordero wanted the court to prove if Arenas indeed possessed a formally appointed military rank.[309] Judge González Salas, however, had no time to waste on further inquiries.

Very early on 4 March, Zenón Cordero asked for the release of all military records related to Cirilo Arenas to the Superior Court of Puebla for further analysis, but, by order of Judge González Garza, Colonel Mateo Flores communicated to War Secretary Francisco Urquizo that at 4:35 a.m., federal soldiers had executed Cirilo Arenas in the patio of the Cuartel de San José in Puebla's military court.[310] The military's medical coroner described in detail how the torso of the corpse of Cirilo Arenas was laden with bullets and discussed how the perforations into Cirilo's heart valves had likely caused the victim's immediate death.[311] The military court in Puebla had indeed hastened the execution of Cirilo Arenas.

Judge Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla stated that the Superior Court should have granted an *amparo*—a legal protection for Cirilo Arenas. Cordero had been citing unconstitutional breaches in the case, but Judge Bonilla also argued that Articles 56, 103,

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[308] Zenón and Quintana, f. 308-310.
[309] Juan José Ríos and Ramón Frausto to Jesús Agustín Castro, Puebla, Puebla, 6 January 1919, f. 241-243; Juan José Rios to Jesús Agustín Castro, Puebla, Puebla, 8 January 1919, and 23 January 1919, f. 244-245; Ramón Frausto to Jesús Agustín Castro, Mexico City, 23 January 1919, f. 249, AHDN ECA, XI/XIII/8-83.
[310] Mateo Flores, Urgent Correspondence, Puebla, Puebla, 4 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/8-83, f. 313; Mateo Flores to Francisco L. Urquizo, 4 March 1920, f. 348; Exclusivamente para *Excélsior*, "Cirilo Arenas fue fusilado en el patio del Cuartel de S. José en la Ángelopolis," 5 March 1920, p. 1.
[311] Report from Medical Military Coroner, 6 March 1920, ADHN, ECA, XI/XIII/8-83, f. 178.

and 104 of the Constitution provided the legal framework for a legal protection, and that Article 56 in particular provided a minimum of 72 hours of protection for the accused. Bonilla reasoned the extension should be granted by the court to Arenas since he was safely under custody. Moreover, Judge Bonilla observed the Cirilo Arenas case presented the first opportunity to test out the application of additional protections added by the Supreme Court to Article 56.[312]

Colonel Mateo Flores, however, declared the defense team of Cirilo Arenas had not requested the *amparo* and therefore the court proceeded with the death sentence. The court argued Cirilo Arenas had belonged to the army, had attacked the towns in the Atlixco District as a federal Brigadier General, had rebelled against the government and was therefore guilty of the crime of rebellion.[313] The public had become enthralled by the trial, and the capital's media gave detailed accounts of the execution of Cirilo Arenas.

El Universal wrote that Arenas "maintained full control of his muscles," not once trembling when his execution verdict was read by the judge. Arenas kept a "stoic" look on his face after guards took him back to his cell, but even "told a joke" every now and then and stated that he was hungry and asked for something to eat. His mother Margarita Pérez de Arenas stood by Cirilo the entire time, but her face was marked by an immense suffering. Father Rosendo Márquez visited the cell of Arenas and heard the rebel's final confession. The priest told Arenas his soul would find redemption in the afterlife. At 4:30 a.m. soldiers entered the cell, escorting Arenas to the prison's patio for his *suplicio* (execution). At this point Cirilo's mother "cried inconsolably," and people attempted to

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[312] Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla to the Subsecretario de Guerra in Chapultepec, Puebla, Puebla, 3 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/XIII, 8-83, f. 334-338.
[313] Mateo Flores to Francisco Urquizo, Puebla, Puebla, 4 March 1920, AHDN, ECA, XI/III/8-83, f. 348.

shield her away from her son's last suffering, but the old lady had accepted her younger son's fate. She had even declared that "she could say no more about her son" "everyone knows his story…his adventure has come to an end." Mrs. Pérez de Arenas was about to see her son die, and with Cirilo's loss, all her male children would be devoured by the Revolution's fire. Cirilo Arenas positioned himself upon the firing wall, and the soldiers prepared their rifles, "but would not shoot." An army captain then attempted to cover the eyes of Arenas, but he refused the offer. Arenas then turned his attention to the soldiers and exclaimed: "Brave soldiers of the nation: Let this serve as an example, so you obey all military orders. My chest is open, and my sacrifice ensures that the nation has one less enemy!" Arenas then fell to volley of fire. All bullets, *El Universal* declared, had pierced his thorax. Arenas had met death with the greatest audacity. A day later soldiers delivered the rebel's corpse to his mother, Doña Margarita Pérez de Arenas. The natives of Santa Inés Zacatelco buried the body of their fallen hero in the local cemetery.[314]

The writer for *El Universal* acknowledged something the government never had. Domingo and Cirilo Arenas, the writer observed: "were revolutionaries that had fought for the cause of the pueblo." They had fought for a cause, one the government never acknowledged; native autonomy and the restoration of pueblos. The Arenas brothers were not enemies of capitalism, but wanted to revive pueblos lost to the greed of local capitalists. Luis Cabrera, the Secretary of Hacienda and Public Credit, and one of Mexico's foremost public intellectuals, had lamented the loss of Cirilo Arenas, whom he held in high esteem, but stated that the execution of his friend was perhaps a necessary evil. The execution, he said, would preclude "the rise of another Arenas," and added: "I

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[314] Exclusivamente para *El Universal*, "La ejecución de Cirilo Arenas en Puebla," 5 March 1929, p. 1 & 5.

assure you all that if we caught Villa and instead of executing we imprisoned him, the very next day ten Villas would rise in arms to replace the prisoner."[315] Cirilo's final plight had won the sympathies and hearts of those who witnessed the sordid affair. Cirilo Arenas, like his brothers, Madero and Zapata, was consumed by the Revolution he had helped create. His execution affirmed the notion that the Revolution devoured its progenitors.

Excélsior offered the best account of the execution of Arenas. The newspaper's writer observed that people with exemplary records of government service such as Porifiro del Castillo and Juan Crisóstomo Bonilla defended Cirilo Arenas to the last minute, but neither the Secretary of War and Navy nor President Carranza had ordered a delay or suspension of the trial. Many had hoped for at least a delay, but all were amazed by the cool reaction of Cirilo Arenas when the verdict was read. A resigned Arenas wrote final letters, mostly to his girlfriend, and then knelt before Doña Margarita, who had remained in her son's cell, asking for a final blessing.[316] When the "old lady embraced her son" all who witnessed the final interaction between a mother and a son were moved to tears.[317]

Unlike *El Universal*, *Excélsior* informed its readers that some of the last words Arenas uttered were, "*Viva Carranza*!" Moreover, the paper stated that Arenas had "instructed soldiers not to shoot his face," but that the "excited" soldiers did not even await a final order, and "horribly destroyed the face and chest of the ex-general

[315] "La ejecución," p. 5.
[316] "Cirilo Arenas fue fusilado," *Excélsior*, p. 1.
[317] Ibid, 12.

Arenas."[318] Cirilo Arenas then crumbled to the floor, but "stretched out his right arm," which prompted Captain Enrique N. Garduño to administer a mercy shot to the dying body. "The scene," the newspaper stated, "was horrific." "Nevertheless, the mother of the executed witnessed it all without fainting." The newspaper observed that many people in Puebla had liked Arenas and that multitudes lamented the rebel's execution. Counselor Cordero drove the remains of Arenas to his native Zacatelco so his kinsfolk could bury the corpse.[319] The newspaper attempted to heighten popular sympathy for the rebel leader, or, perhaps, simply wanted to sell a more seductive story.

When Cordero arrived with the body of Arenas to Zacatelco, the natives declared they would mourn their leader for nine days. The townsfolk awaited as many as 3,000 people from the "surrounding" pueblos to pay their final respects to Arenas. What is more, workers from the "La Tlaxcalteca," "Covadonga," "El Valor," and "Josefina" factories agreed to suspend their labors and be present at the funeral. Moreover, various "workers' commissions" in Puebla requested permission from Governor Cabrera to join the funerary processions of Arenas. At the time of the execution, Arenas still commanded more than 1,000 rebels. One of the final letters he wrote instructed his cousin Alberto Pérez to lead the Arenistas. Many of Arenas' lieutenants had been killed by, or had surrendered to the military. Cirilo's Arenistas had been awaiting the trial's conclusion in the sierras of El Carmen and La Magdalena, and upon learning of their leader's fate they withdrew to the La Malintzin Volcano.[320] On 7 March, Pérez surrendered to General Máximo Rojas in Tlaxcala. Rojas granted amnesty to the Arenista leader, and that same

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[318] Ibid, 12.
[319] "Cirilo Arenas fue fusilado," *Excélsior*, p. 1 & 12.
[320] "Cirilo Arenas fue fusilado," *Excélsior*, p. 12; Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, "Nueve días de duelo por la muerte de Cirilo Arenas," 6 March 1920, p. 6.

day the neighbors of Zacatelco buried Cirilo Arenas. *Excélsior* reported that "thousands of laborers and all of the *vecinos* from the nearby pueblos" attended the funeral.[321] That thousands paid a final respect to Cirilo Arenas, whom the government annihilated as a traitor, shows the Arenista leader was a popular hero. His burial was reminiscent of Zapata's fall in Morelos, where thousands of peasants and Indians descended from the sierras and mountains to see their fallen caudillo for a final moment. Cirilo Arenas, therefore, was a regional version of the southern Mexico's national icon.

While the government had believed the surrender of Pérez had ended the Arenista problem, a day later, Alfredo Youtzimatzi withdrew to Teziutlán in the Sierra Norte de Puebla.[322] On 11 March Judge Juan Bonilla, the Chief of the Federal Court of Puebla, declared he had issued an order to General González Salas to halt the execution of Cirilo Arenas. Judge Bonilla stated that Counselor Cordero had successfully filled an *amparo* for his client. González Garza, however, wrote to Bonilla stating he would not suspend the execution because he followed superior orders. An angered Bonilla demanded a thorough investigation.[323] Mexico's highest military command, it should be understood, would not allow Cirilo Arenas to live. Throughout the Jenkins ordeal and other episodes in the Arenista rebellion, Cirilo Arenas, an Indian rebel leader, had offended their honor.

The writer for *Excélsior* had made a remarkable observation: "Arenas died with bravery, and has shown us another example of the undeniable strength, of the legendary fortitude with which the Tlaxcaltecan race marches to death,"[324] With this statement the writer revealed how urban Mexicans imagined Indians. Cirilo Arenas marched bravely to

[321] Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, "La rendición de las fuerzas de Cirilo Arenas," 7 March 1920, p. 10.
[322] Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, "No se han rendido las fuerzas de Arenas," 10 March 1920, p. 10.
[323] Correspondent, "District Judge protests," *Excelsior (English Section)*, 12 March 1920.
[324] "Cirilo Arenas fue fusilado," *Excélsior*, p. 1.

his death and always remained stoic. Elites imagined indigenous rebels, and indigenous people in general, as fearless warriors. Rebellion, elite society believed, activated that fearlessness. Their innate savagery, they reasoned, their unrestrained violent compulsions, which were activated by caste warfare, could not be contained. The Indian rebels' will to resist could not be subdued, and the only thing ensuring the health of society was the annihilation of the Indian. Cirilo Arenas had become the face of that "indomitable" Indian.

Ms. Rosa King in Cuernavaca in 1916 once dreamed that Zapatista rebels had destroyed her hotel, Bellavista, and then erected a pyramid.[325] Elite society, perhaps, more than anything else, feared the inversion of power symbolized in Ms. King's dream. Members of the Mexican elite, the Revolution showed, from Madero to Huerta and to Carranza were not willing to share any of their power and influence with indigenous people. Not even at the expense of living more equally and harmoniously. That was one of Mexico's most enduring colonial inheritances. That was why the rebellious Indian could not live in modern México.

[325] Womack, *Zapata*, 256.

Epilogue:

The 1920s, the Enduring Legacy of Indian Peasant Rebellion in the Oriente Central

The Arenistas, particularly when Domingo Arenas led the movement, espoused a zealous agrarianism informed by the indigenous people's desire to redistribute lands amply throughout the wide zone they controlled in the Oriente Central. The Arenista leader had envisioned the formation of a Mexican countryside becoming progressively modern and free from the control of abusive hacienda owners who he believed were the enslavers of the indigenous peasantry.[1] Many factors, however, got in the way of Domingo Arenas' desire to fulfill his promise to the indigenous people of restoring their pueblos through a comprehensive land reform program that in many ways resembled the land reform vision of General Emiliano Zapata, which through the Plan de Ayala, became the backbone of Zapatismo. Like Zapatismo,[2] Arenismo was a program premised upon the redemption of a downtrodden indigenous peasantry. It stressed that with time the indigenous peasants would become modern, and members of a global proletariat.[3] However, during the Revolution's latter years (1917 to 1920) the federal army's brutal counterinsurgency campaigns in the Oriente Central drove both Arenismo and Zapatismo

[1] Arenas, "Se trata de impulsar," p. 3.
[2] Robert P. Millon, *Zapata: The Ideology of a Peasant Revolutionary* (New York: International Publishers, 1969), 44-48. Zapatismo, especially in the Revolution's latter phase (1916-1920), had become a more radical and politicized revolutionary movement. In the headquarters of Tochimilco, Puebla, and Tlaltizapán, Morelos, Zapatismo was a safe haven for intellectuals of the far political left. Late in the Revolution, Zapata began envisioning a peasantry free from the proverbial yoke of the latifundios, calling upon a México with "THE LAND FREE FOR ALL, LAND WITHOUT OVERSEERS AND MASTERS." Consult page 46 for the complete quote of Emiliano Zapata's 20 May 1917 manifesto. Zapatista intellectuals also reckoned that: "The people of the countryside WANT TO LIVE THE LIFE OF CIVILIZATION, THEY TRY TO BREATHE THE AIR OF ECONOMIC LIBERTY. Consult page 61 for complete context on the quote.
[3] Domingo Arenas to Emiliano Zapata, Chiautzingo, Puebla, 15 September 1916, AGM, UNAM, Caja, 76, Exp., 57, f. 11-15.

to desperation, truncating the land redistribution programs spearheaded by Zapata and Arenas.

Both Zapata and Arenas made ill-calculated alliances that resulted in their own deaths and halted the momentum of the movements they had led. In Tlaxcala the multiclass and multiethnic coalition formed under Domingo Arenas splintered in many directions after the leader's demise. When Domingo Arenas believed that the Zapatistas who operated in central Puebla were going to surrender to him at the Hacienda de Huexocoapan in late August, he walked into the meeting with the Zapatista Tochimilco leaders guarded by a small escort, and this false confidence resulted in his death. In the same way, a precipitous alliance with Colonel Jesús Guajardo cost Emiliano Zapata his life at the ill-fated Hacienda de Chinameca meeting. Both agrarian leaders succumbed to well-orchestrated betrayals by their respective foes. By 1920, Alberto L. Paniagua and Cirilo Arenas, the remaining main Arenista leaders, were seen by the Mexican military as scourges. When they were captured, the federal military promptly executed them in early 1920. Paniagua was defeated in the wilderness of the highlands of Río Frío, so his execution was a summary one. Cirilo, on the other hand, was captured near the Zocalo of Puebla City, so the military had to employ some theatrics and execute the young Indian leader after a very public but brief trial. The executions of Emiliano Zapata, Alberto L. Paniagua, and Domingo and Cirilo Arenas severely weakened the agrarian-based rebellion in the Oriente Central de México.

The Mexican military believed that to extinguish the agrarian rebellion it also had to destroy the pueblos from where the rebels came. The military killed rebels, especially

Indian revolutionists, the highly noxious subversives who threatened civilization, order, and capital, both in the fields and in the cradle. The behavior of the military regimes of Huerta and Carranza can best be described as murderous, and Indian and peasant communities arguably bore the gravest brunt of the violent waves of government counterinsurgency campaigns. With the execution of its main leaders, observers said that the Arenista movement was left in shambles.

Following the execution of Cirilo Arenas, and after Obregón's victory over Carranza in May 1920, however, Indian rebel groups remained armed in Huamantla, Cuauhtémoc, Nativitas, and Santa Inés Zacatelco. Tlaxcala's Indians, the newspaper *El Universal* stated, awaited yet another opportunity to attack the federal government, but days later the Arenistas laid down their weapons and went home. The remaining Arenista leaders were unwilling to continue fighting the stronger Obregón army, and the Sonoran general appeared willing to give them back their lands.[4] The rebellion of the former Arenista general Antonio Mora in 1921 was short-lived and the media dismissed it as a mobilization without importance because Mora lacked the prestige of the region's prior native leaders. Mora's group was content with storming some haciendas and killing a few soldiers.[5] It is clear that the people from the Oriente Central portion of the Tlaxcala-Puebla border were satisfied with the idea of receiving lands from the Obregón government, but what is difficult to discern is the extent to which they submitted politically to the post-revolutionary government.[6] Well into 1921, for the threat of "caste

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[4] Exclusivo para *Excélsior*, "No se han rendido las fuerzas de Arenas," 10 March 1920, p. 10.
[5] Corresponsal, "Se confirmó la rebelión del Gral. Mora en Tlaxcala," *Excélsior*, 20 April 1921, p. 1.
[6] Buve, "Años 20 en Tlaxcala: la consolidación de un cacicazgo," in *El Movimiento Revolucionario*, 484-487.

war" loomed in Tlaxcala and the Sierra Norte de Puebla. General Gabriel Barrios, who led many Indians in the zone, attempted to forge an alliance with Luis Cabrera, the ex-Carrancista intellectual from Zacatlán, in the Sierra Norte de Puebla to "…declare a war of Indians against Mexicans of Spanish blood." The *New York Times* stated that Barrios had more than one thousand armed Indians who were ready to reignite a "race war" to overthrow Obregón and "place a pure blooded Indian in charge of the Government." [7]

Prior to Carranza's death, some believed that Gabriel Barrios, considered after the death of Juan Francisco Lucas the new chieftain of the Sierra Norte region, had protected the president; however, Barrios had signed on to the Plan de Aguaprieta of Obregón and avoided any further problems by allowing the hitmen of the Sonoran generals to kill Carranza in Tlaxcalantongo in the Sierra Norte. Barrios became tied to the federal military up to 1940, but Brewster contends that he proved to be more concerned with home politics in his native Cuacuila.[8] In Tlaxcala the former Arenista intellectual Anastacio Meneses, who formed the Partido Liberal Arenista, became a proponent and vigorous defender of the land reforms of Obregón and Calles. The Sonoran leaders cajoled the Meneses group into their political sphere through the promise of land reform.[9]

In fact, after the passing of Cirilo Arenas, no major leader appeared in Tlaxcala or in the Puebla Nahua highlands willing to fight for the people's land rights or local village autonomies. But, if any leader possessed such an intention, none expressed it in writing. One could argue that from 1920 to 1924, due to the absence of grassroots rebellions of a

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[7] Special Cable, "Cabrera Stirs up Indians to Rebel," *The New York Times*, 14 March 1921, p.1.
[8] Keith Brewster, *Militarism, Ethnicity, and Politics in the Sierra Norte de Puebla, 1917-1930* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2003), 4-10.
[9] Buve, "Años 20," 490.

significant magnitude, the Sonoran political faction dominating national politics became hegemonic in the Oriente Central. It was reported in January 1925 that on one occasion "gangs" of "bandits" from the numerous Indian pueblos surrounding the volcano La Malintzin threatened to invade the local agricultural estates, but they ran at the first sight of federal army contingents stationed near the volcano in Huamantla.[10] In February 1925, the former Zapatista general Genovevo de la O, now a federal military commander under Calles, reported that in the pueblo of Michac in the Valle de Nativitas people had risen in arms under the command of the former federal army colonel Marcelo Portillo and an individual identified as General Montes. The people from Michac, Genovevo de la O wrote, had attacked a federal army garrison, and then retreated, presumably to the higher sierras outlying the Valle de Nativitas, and the federal infantry stationed at Santa Inés Zacatelco was called upon to pick up the corpses. That, however, was one of several sporadic acts of popular violence.[11] It is evident from the military dispatches that the Obregón-Calles government was better equipped to meet the challenges of the rebels, and that the rapid responses by the military precluded the growth of these uprisings. When the government retaliated, for example, the Nativitas rebels dispersed into the sierras.

In Tlaxcala, the significant challenge to the federal government came again from the highlands of the La Malintzin with the outbreak of the religious rebellion in October 1926. The rebellion of Catholics in the high sierras of Tlaxcala, which concentrated heavily around Huamantla, was part of the larger Cristero uprising sweeping the nation at

[10] Joaquín Amaro to Oscar Aguilar, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 20 January 1925, AGN, Fondo Obregón-Calles (FOC), Caja, 159, Exp., 3, f. dir. 355.
[11] Genovevo de la O to the Secretario de Guerra y Marina, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 24 February 1925, AGN, FOC, Caja, 159, Exp., 3, f. dir. 75.

the time. Federal military dispatches revealed that people from the local pueblos had armed themselves under the former Arenista general, Isabel "el Chacharron" Guerrero, who had allied himself with Pedro Moreno, a notorious gunman from Santa Inés Zacatelco. The "bandit" gangs, as the government described the rebels who were led by Guerrero and Moreno, were not numerous, but serious in their intent, threatening Tlaxcala's relative stability. Most worrisome was that they attacked haciendas, ranchos, and railroad stations chanting, "Long live religion!"[12]

On 10 October 1926, the group of religious insurrectionists assaulted the station of the Ferrocarril Interoceánico located in Nanacamilpa. These actions resembled the earlier acts of sabotage orchestrated by Isabel Guerrero as an Arenista general. Guerrero's group was observed by the government lurking in the outskirts of Calpulalpam. While "el Chacharron" had been a major Arenista general, he did not appear to have arisen again in 1926 for what Domingo Arenas had fougth.[13] The Cristero Rebellion (1926-1929), which was closely identified with political and social developments in the Mexican western-central states of Jalisco, Zacatecas, Michoacán, Colima, Guanajuato, and Nayarit, had reached the Oriente Central of Tlaxcala and Puebla only a few months after the federal government had threatened to implement the "Ley Calles" in Late July 1926. The so-called "Ley Calles" had aimed to implement anticlerical measures outlined in the 1917 Federal Constitution.[14] The Los Altos de

[12] I. Mendoza, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 9 October 1926, AGN, Secretaria de Gobernación, Investigaciones Políticas y Sociales (SEGIPS), 7/313.1, f. PA-152, 1-3.
[13] José Álvarez to Plutarco Elías Calles, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 12 October 1926, AGN, SEGIPS, 7/313.1, f. PA-175, 80.
[14] Ramón Jrade, "Inquiries into the Cristero Insurrection against the Mexican Revolution," *Latin American Research Review*, 20, 2 (1985): 53-54.

Jalisco region and eastern Michoacán, areas where the Mexican Revolution had arrived late in 1914, were the epicenters of the Cristero Rebellion, but the religious uprisings in Tlaxcala, Puebla, and Veracruz, where more than 1,000 people rebelled as Cristeros in a single regiment, shows that the religious uprising was a national insurrection and not exclusive to the Mexican central-western states. Moreover, religious rebels also challenged the Calles government in the Mixtec Sierra and in the Zapotec zone of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec.[15] On 14 October 1926, the federal military stationed in the La Malintzin reported that federal soldiers had assaulted a point in the La Malintzin known as Barranca. The Catholic rebels of "el Chacharron" invaded the Hacienda Zotoluca, taking horses. A federal military dispatch identified another "den of bandits" led by the former Arenista chieftain Sebastían Sánchez.[16] Another report depoliticized the group Sánchez led completely by stating that he commanded a bunch of criminals, who had raped one woman, and assaulted ranchos and haciendas in the lower volcanic communities.[17]

The menace of "el Chacharron" and Sánchez persisted despite a string of federal military forays and arrests made in the lower cordilleras of the La Malintzin around Huamantla. It was reported that Guerrero had stolen horses and enlisted about fifty men for "seditious" activities. One of the towns figuring prominently in this was San Bernardino Contla, the epicenter of popular violence in Tlaxcala's volcanic communities. Authorities in Tlaxcala believed the rebel leader hid along with his seditionists within the

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[15] Meyer, *La Cristiada-3*, 108-109.
[16] Oficialía del Estado Mayor, Mexico City, 14 October 1926, AGN, SEGIPS, 7/313.1, f. 792-793.
[17] I. Mendoza, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 14 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. PA-128, 1-2.

upper cordilleras of the La Malintzin. Another 150 religious "revolutionists," it was reported from Puebla, were seen in sierras close to Tlaxcala, as well.[18] The government had described the religious uprising in Tzicatlacoyan, Puebla in late October as a "rebel irruption" of significant magnitude.[19] Religious rebels had also threatened the government in the wider Guerrero, Oaxaca, and Puebla border region, which corresponds to the lower sierras of the Mixtec-speaking people, known as La Mixteca. The Calles government worried that these religious rebels could join "el Chacharron," who continued to mobilize people from within the rebellious communities near the La Malintzin. In Tlaxcala, the disturbances in the traditionally rebellious districts of Contla and Zacatelco, where large contingents of armed people were joining the religious rebels, reawakened the specter of caste warfare.[20]

To combat the rising tide of religious insurrection in the traditional hot-spots of rebellion the federal government began recruiting soldiers from within the peasant Indian pueblos themselves. The work on the Cristero Rebellion (1926-1929) by Jean Meyer, the religious conflict's most prominent historian, shows that the Calles government mobilized *agraristas*, peasants who had benefitted from the state's land reform in the 1920s, to fight against the Catholic rebels, the Cristeros, or soldiers of Christ, as they were known popularly. Meyer contends that the *agraristas* harbored a true hatred for the

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[18] I. Mendoza, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 16 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313. 1., f. PA-182, 5-6; I. Mendoza, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 18 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. PA-319, 257; Adalberto Tejada, Puebla, Puebla, 16 Octboer 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, PA-160, 199.
[19] Oficial Mayor-Urgente, Mexico City, 19 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 248.
[20] Oficial Mayor, Informe, a Guerra y Marina Mexico City, 19 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 248; Oficial Mayor to the Governor of Tlaxcala and Plutarco Elías Calles, 19 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 268; I. Mendoza, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 19 and 20 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. PA-155, 293; Correograma al Sec. De Guerra y a Plutarco Elías Calles, Mexico City, 20 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 322.

Cristero rebels.[21] The federal government's recruitment of the *agraristas*, Meyer contends, bespeaks the government's long tradition of using peasants as canon-fodder in national conflicts. The government armed *agraristas*, but these agrarian recipients, Meyer wrote, possessed no political consciousness.[22] It would be safe to assume that the former Arenistas, who had benefitted in some measure from land redistributions in the form of *ejidos*, would favor the Calles government; however, the former Arenistas who took up arms during the Mexican religious conflict became Cristero soldiers because they felt that the government had attempted to trample upon their religious liberties. This is explained by the fact that at the time of the Cristero Rebellion ninety percent of all Mexicans were Catholic. The postrevolutionary government's ardent anticlericalism galvanized discontented Catholics to become Cristero rebels.[23] Alan Knight has indicated that in 1920s México popular religious sensibilities were strong amongst the general populace and peasants rejected the "aggressive anticlericalism of urban leftists," choosing instead to defend the Church.[24] The former Arenisas who became Cristeros were Catholic, and given their long history of conflict with the state they were unwilling to serve a president who commanded his federal troops to assault religious villagers. As Jim Tuck has shown through his study of the Cristero Rebellion in the Los Altos de Jalisco, the region's religious revolutionists considered themselves Zapatistas and expressed a heartfelt

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[21] Jean Meyer, *La Cristiada, 2-el conflicto entre la iglesia y el estado, 1926-1929* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI Editores, 2005), 189-191.
[22] Meyer, *Cristiada, 2*, 173-174;
[23] J. Charlene Floyd, "A Theology of Insurrection? Religion and Politics in Mexico," *Journal of International Affairs*, 50, 1, (1996): 144-145.
[24] Alan Knight, "Las relaciones Iglesia-Estado en el México revolucionario (1910-1940)," in Francisco Javier Lorenzo Pinar (Ed.), *Tolerancia y Fundamentalismos en la Historia* (Salamanca: Ediciones Universidad, 2007), 225.

admiration for Emiliano Zapata, the national emblem of agrarianism. The Catholic rebels revered martyrs, and, killed and betrayed by the government, Zapata certainly fit the bill of the individual who gave his blood for a greater cause.[25] The *alteño* rebels also considered Zapata a zealous Catholic who would have fought on their side and not for the unjust government of Calles.[26] The point I am arguing here is that the Arenistas had fought for land reform; however, the fight for the land touched their hearts, but the fight for religion touched their souls. What is more, the former Arenistas had learned to mistrust, hate, and combat the government, and many probably resented how outsiders treated them for being Indians.

Federal soldiers treated the *agraristas* they had recruited with scorn. Jean Meyer views the land recipients who served the government against the Cristeros as victims of their own ignorance. Mayer wrote that the Cristeros had felt that their *agrarista* enemies had betrayed their mother, the Church.[27] Other academics have shown that these *agraristas* were not sacks of potatoes, however. *Agraristas* from Zacapu, Michoacán, to give an example, helped the government fight the Cristeros in exchange for their full land rights.[28] Other land recipients in Michoacán, however, believed that it was not worth risking all they had gained from their participation in the Revolution to defend a government which attacked their neighboring local communities. This was a sentiment that the former Arenistas-cum-Cristero soldiers probably shared with the Cristeros of

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[25] Jim Tuck, *The Holy War in Los Altos: A Regional Analysis of Mexico's Cristero Rebellion* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1982), 20-21.
[26] Ibid, 15.
[27] Meyer, *Cristiada, 1-la Guerra de los cristeros*, 160-162.
[28] Jennie Purnell, *Popular Movements and State Formation in Revolutionary Mexico: The Agraristas and Cristeros of Michoacán* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1999), 70-71.

Michoacán. Nevertheless, the *agraristas* and Cristeros did horrible things to each other in numerous battles throughout the central Mexican countryside.[29]

In Tlaxcala, not all of the former Arenistas and Zapatistas joined the Cristeros, and the outbreak of the religious war divided some of the indigenous peasant communities--even those that had been hotbeds of Arenismo. Case in point, in late October 1926, the former Conventionist general, and erstwhile Arenista ally, Adolfo Bonilla, who had signed on to the Plan de Agua Prieta of Obregón in 1920, and also promoted government-sponsored *ejidos* widely in the area of the Oriente Central, began gathering horses and weapons and recruiting and arming villagers in Ixtacuixtla to combat the religious insurrectionists belonging to neighboring communities.[30]

Bonilla had been a popular revolutionary; he became a defender of federal land reform and a stronger federal state. Although men like Bonilla were not staunch anticlericalists, they felt limiting clerical influence was beneficial to "the greater good."[31] The *agraristas* of Ixtacuixtla following Bonilla were not intellectuals of Bonilla's stripe; they had fought for land tenaciously and, in all likelihood, they simply did not want to cower before the federal military in the face of a growing schism between the Church and the post-revolutionary state. Despite the federal army's efforts to stamp out the religious uprising in Tlaxcala and the Sierra in Puebla, by late October 1926 the "religious rebels around the La Malintzin were very numerous."[32]

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[29] Boyer, *Becoming Campesinos*, 178-180.
[30] I. Mendoza, Tlaxcala, Tlaxcala, 21 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 333.
[31] Alicia Salmerón Castro, "Un general agrarista en la lucha contra los Cristeros: El Movimiento en Aguascalientes y las razones de Genovevo de la O." *Historia Mexicana*, 44, 4 (1995): 537-539.
[32] Correograma al Secretario de Guerra, Mexico City, 27 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 461.

The violence by the Catholics worsened in early November when the individual rebel bands stormed estates, operating from within the communities of the La Malintzin and numbering from 20 to 25 men each. Among the estates attacked by Tlaxcala's Cristeros was the Hacienda Teometitla y Tenexac in the agave-rich region in Huamantla.[33] These Catholic rebels, however, were different from the Arenistas of years past; they assaulted ranchos and haciendas and even injured landowners and overseers, but no reports stated that they ever expropriated hacienda lands or gave back land to peasants. With respect to their actions, it appears that the business of picking up arms to recover their lands was finished. They had been Arenistas, but had lost the fervent agrarianism motivating their rebellion of years past against the government. Their battle cry now was "Long live Christ King!"[34] Knowing where exactly they would acquire more resources, the Tlaxcallan Catholic insurrectionists attacked most of the estates in Tlaxco and in Huamantla. The assaults on Huamantla were to be expected; it was the prime area of agave production, and those estates were the richest in the entire La Malintzin region. The rebels stormed large estates in Huamantla exclusively to procure money, food, and horses. The hacienda owners of Huamantla, for their part, did not even know that a significant religious rebellion had erupted in their zone. They referred to the men who assaulted their properties as "bands of bandits," and as "pillagers."[35]

As shown by Jean Meyer, in late 1927 and early 1928 the Cristero rebellion had spread beyond Tlaxcala, and Cristero rebels operated throughout the Oriente Central in

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[33] Informe de Huamantla to José Álvarez, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 5 November 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 480.
[34] Informe de Huamantla to Plutarco Elías Calles, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 21 October 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. 321-323.
[35] I. Mendoza, Huamantla, Tlaxcala, 2 November 1926, AGN, SEGPIS, 7/313.1, f. PA-143, 653-654.

the wider area of Puebla. The religious insurrection also reached the Oriente into the communities of Orizaba, Veracruz. Fever-pitched battles between Cristeros and the federal military also occurred in Zacatlán in the Sierra Norte, and the rebellion intensified in the city of Tlaxcala itself in 1928. In San Miguel Canoa, in the La Malintzin, where Juan Cuamatzi had regrouped in his fight against the federal army in 1910 and in 1911, the locals showered the Cristero rebels with flowers, and in Santa Ana Chiutempan church bells made deafening sounds in honor of the Catholic rebels fighting a government bent on destroying their faith. Furthermore, in 1928 the religious rebellion grew alarmingly large in the wider former zone of Arenas in the Los Volcanes: religious uprisings were reported in Santa Inés Zacatelco, San Martin Texmelucan, Atlixco, and Huatlatlauca.[36]

The experience of Arenismo, I want to argue here, had readied the local indigenous people to rise in arms against what they perceived as a gross injustice; the government's attack on their faith. Despite the government line that the people fighting against it were ordinary bandits, and despite the rebels' desire to keep their *ejido* lands, the villagers of the Oriente Central rose for their honor, which was tied intimately to the defense of their religion. In July 1929, under Calles's successor and presidential appointee Emilio Portes Gil, without acknowledging formally that it had been defeated by the Catholic rebels, the government decided to rescind its application of the "Ley Calles," and put an end to the executions and persecutions of Catholic subversives (although the government continued to execute Catholic rebels after July 1929). The

[36] Meyer, *La Cristiada-1*, 209-211.

government of Portes Gil also promised to liberate rebellious priests to end a conflict that had, in its own view, brought shame to the country.[37] With the end of the Cristero Rebellion in the summer of 1929, the indigenous peasants of Tlaxcala laid down their weapons. Since then, no mass indigenous peasant uprisings have occurred in Tlaxcala.

The Sonoran post-revolutionary dominant political faction believed that their land reform had redeemed the indigenous peasantry. They had honored the military and agrarian colonies created by Domingo Arenas by allowing the local people to occupy those lands, and with these land grants they believed that they had brought the Oriente Central's peasantry into its nascent web of patronage. As Raymond Buve states, however, the shift of Obregón from the rifle to bureaucracy only bought the government a temporary peace, not hegemony. It would take another administration, a powerful nationalistic state under Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940)—independent and free, for the most part, of Calles's influence--to change fully the popular mentalities, identities, and political affections of the Mexican indigenous peasantry. In time, the nation's indigenous peasants became campesinos, contributing to the erasure of the pivotal role Indians played in the making of the Mexican Revolution.

This work has revealed why the people of the Oriente Central, particularly those from Tlaxcala and its border area with Puebla, went to war against regimes in power. Most of the people who became Arenistas were indigenous; an overwhelming majority were central Nahuas, who fought because they pursued the recovery of their lands, which they had lost since the Reform era of Benito Juárez and the Porfiriato. These Nahuas also

[37] Meyer, *La Cristiada-2*, 333-335.

rose up in arms to recuperate their own local political autonomy. These were the stated aims, at least, of leaders such as Juan Cuamatzi, Pedro M. Morales, and Domingo and Cirilo Arenas: We can infer, however, that the common indigenous people following them into battle shared those same goals. Envisioning the birth of a better México for indigenous people, Domingo Arenas became a significant Indian leader who took up arms to give back to the indigenous peasants. In the process, Domingo Arenas and his followers, the Brigada Arenas or Arenistas, created new pueblos. Domingo Arenas, Puebla, which is today a small city, is a testament of Arenas' zealous agrarianism.

Arenas' movement, Arenismo, was premised upon the redemption of the indigenous peasantry. Unfortunately, because he became a Constitutionalist general on 30 December 1916, Mexicans have pegged Domingo Arenas as a traitor to Zapatismo. While Domingo Arenas, to use Javier Garciadiego's analogy, bet on two different horses to achieve his aim of redeeming his region's dispossessed indigenous peasantry, he should not be dismissed simply as a traitor to the Plan de Ayala, the banner of the South's agrarian rebellion. Rather, Arenas should bee seen as a pragmatic, self-sacrificing leader who used everything at his disposal to achieve his goals. By studying the development of Arenismo we learn that indigenous Mexicans possessed their own motives for taking up arms against the Mexican state. The uprisings springing from Tlaxcala and Puebla's Indian pueblos are precursors of the Mexican Revolution itself, something Francisco Madero recognized when he toured through the region. Indians, the Juan Cuamatzi rebellion teaches us, possessed their own objectives in rebelling against their local governor, Próspero Cahuantzi, and native leaders knew that getting their lands back

necessitated the forceful removal of the system created by the autocrat Porfirio Díaz. The creation of a Liberal state, Indian leaders knew, had entailed the Indian peoples' loss of land and the erosion of their local political autonomies.

In light of this, it is imperative, therefore, to re-Indianize the Mexican Revolution, arguably the most pivotal moment in Mexican nation-state formation. The Revolution remains an event of great importance and a source of inspiration for Mexicans, Latin Americans, and Mexican-Americans. Many people, however, hold a romantic view of the Revolution, one that has given too much importance to the conflict's big men. In the process, critical elements of ethnic conflict were dropped out of scholarly discussions on the Revolution.

This dissertation showed that Indians played an enormous role in the coming and process of the tragic conflict. Juan Cuamatzi attempted to start the Mexican Revolution in May of 1910, showing that the Revolution had deep indigenous origins. The indigenous protests, which came primarily from unresolved land disputes, date back to the nineteenth century and explain why the Zapatista movement snowballed so rapidly in the region.

The impetus to remove Porfirio Díaz from power came from Madero's national challenge, and it came also from the Indian pueblos of Tlaxcala and Puebla that surrounded the La Malintzin volcano. Madero, Zapata, Carranza, and Obregón, who were not natives, all argued that the Revolution had to redeem Mexican Indians. At specific points in their lives they all claimed to fight for the Indian's freedom. Domingo Arenas, for his part, was a native who fought for Indians and he wrote that the Revolution would create a more just and equitable México for indigenous people. Arenas gave Tlaxcala's

agrarian-based mobilizations an identity. Before he rose to prominence in 1914, Tlaxcala's rural guerrilla movement, which was largely Indian, was weak and divided by the interests of local leaders. The Arenista movement, therefore, was largely personalist, but the peasants of the Oriente Central found a voice within a movement seeking the prompt return of their lands. The local people exhibited a greater willingness to follow one of their own, and favored Arenas, the local Indian caudillo, over Zapata, a mestizo charro from Morelos.

With the *indigenismo* (Indigenism) of the 1920s, which was promoted largely through the national education program implemented first by José Vasconcelos, the intellectual architect of the postrevolutionary state, and statesmen such as Obregón and Calles, Mexicans valorized and romanticized their great Indian past (Olmec, Toltec, Aztec, Maya) yet scorned the living Indians. With time, with the proliferation of a dominant mestizo identity, the Indian became an object of public scorn and mockery—a *pobrecito* (poor, ignorant, and infantilized are all appropriate translations). Central Mexican Indians, this study has shown, were progenitors of the Mexican Revolution, but through the promotion of the *ejido* and a federally-mandated socialist education in the 1930s that sought to de-Indianize the nation, members of the dominant political and ethnic culture relegated them to the postion of the Revolution's beneficiaries, government welfare recipients at best. My hope is that this work has begun to shift that discussion.

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