

**Migrating Faiths or Transgenic Danger?:
Pentecostal Growth in Oaxacalifornia**

Daniel Ramírez
Ph.D. Candidate, Graduate Program in Religion
Duke University

Guest Scholar
Center for U.S.-Mexican Studies/Center for Comparative Immigration Studies
University of California San Diego
dr8@duke.edu

Prepared for delivery at the 2003 meeting of the
Latin American Studies Association
Dallas, Texas, March 27-29, 2003

After a considerable time spent in singing and worship, the congregation of about three hundred souls crammed into the church sanctuary remains standing to hear the minister's introductory remarks. The sloping floors and well-padded seats seem to gently incline their ears and bodies toward the raised platform and pulpit. The decades-old structure has been retrofitted and expanded from within, its interior walls gutted to accommodate a growing community. The Thursday evening service serves the linguistic needs of the church's Spanish-speaking constituency. Much larger in number than the English-speaking group, this largely immigrant host fills the sanctuary, spilling over against the back and side walls, the entryway, and out onto the church steps. Rodolfo González (not his real name) steps to the pulpit. The pastor stands approvingly behind. González, a seasoned migrant from Oaxaca, now comfortably settled in this north San Diego County town, welcomes the members and visitors, and then queries to see how many have brought their *Reina y Valera* Holy Bible with them. His soft, subdued tone does not promise an exercise in dazzling homiletics, but rather an earnest engagement with the text at hand. His selection of a Proverb about the dangers of movement and migration seems ironic, given his earlier life trajectory.

GONZÁLEZ

...Si no traen la Biblia, yo les pido que compartan su Biblia con ellos. Vamos a estar leyendo algunas escrituras en esta tarde. Capítulo veintisiete de Proverbios, versículo ocho. Proverbios veintisiete, versículo ocho. Ahí vamos a estar leyendo, Hermanos. Cuando todos lo tengan pueden decir, "Amén."

(...If they don't have a Bible, I ask you to share your Bible with them. We will be reading some scriptures this evening. Chapter twenty-seven of Proverbs, verse eight. Proverbs twenty-seven, verse eight. That's where we'll be reading, Brothers. When everybody has it, you can say "Amen")

CONGREGATION

Amén

GONZÁLEZ

Dice la palabra de Dios: "Cual ave que se va de su nido, tal es el hombre que se va de su lugar." Porque no lo leemos todos juntos?

(The word of God says; "As the bird that flees its nest, so is the man who leaves his place." Why don't we all read it together?)

CONGREGATION

"Cual ave que se va de su nido, tal es el hombre que se va de su lugar."

GONZÁLEZ

Vamos a orar, Hermanos. Yo voy a pedir a nuestro pastor que ore por mí. Yo quiero que el Señor me use en esta tarde.

(Let us pray, Brothers. I am going to ask our pastor to pray for me. I want the Lord to use me this evening.)

Rev. Zaldivar (not his real name) glides alongside his protégé, wraps his arms around González's shoulders, and in stentorian tones leads the congregation in a prayer about two kingdoms, about anointing and unction for lips, hands, hearts, and ears. His rolling cadences—firmly accentuating selected syllables—punctuate the air with an air of spiritual certainty. He quotes a Psalm about the Bible being a light unto one's path, and thanks Heaven for the message that is about to be delivered.

PASTOR

Señor, nosotros sabemos que existen dos *reinos*, el reino del enemigo y el reino *tuyo*. Ahora venimos ante tu reino *santo* y poderoso. Tu palabra dice, “Venga tu *reino*. Sea hecha *tu* voluntad en el cielo, en la tierra, y debajo de la tierra.” Padre, te pedimos que ungas los *labios* de tu hijo, unge sus *manos*, su *corazón*. También te pido por el pueblo, que ungas nuestros *oídos* para escuchar tu palabra. Este libro que se lee es el libro, no los libros, es el *libro* de Dios. “*Lámpara* es a mis pies tu *palabra*! Tu *palabra* el *lumbre* a mi camino.” Gracias por tu palabra, Señor. El mundo *entero* necesita oír este mensaje. Gracias, Cristo.

GONZÁLEZ

Gracias, Hermano. Pueden sentarse, Hermanos, dando un fuerte “Gloria a Dios.” (Thank you, Brother. You may take your seats, Brothers, with a strong “Glory to God!”)

CONGREGATION

Gloria a Dios!

The sermon begins.

Introduction

This study examines the growth and evolution of a popular religious movement, namely Pentecostalism, in the borderlands of *Oaxacalifornia*. However, instead of appending an ethnic or regional story to the established corpus of national religious and denominational histories, this study takes stock of the impact of the migration experience on religious cultural identity, using the transnational and intra-national migration—of people and symbolic goods—as a frame to describe religious history and life in the region. Building on the seminal work of anthropologist Manuel Gamio on Mexican migration¹ and of folklorist Américo Paredes on border ballads and borderlands culture,² and on more contemporary theorizing by Michel de Certeau on quotidian

¹Manuel Gamio, *Mexican Immigration to the United States: A Study of Human Migration and Adjustment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1930); and *The Mexican Immigrant: His Life Story* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1931).

² Américo Paredes, *With a Pistol in His Hand* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1958); and *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border* (Austin: Center for Mexican American Studies, 1993).

practice,³ the study historicizes the evolution of transnational religious networks in the borderlands (following the ebb and flow of migration circuits), expands the academic study of migration to encompass religious cultural variables,⁴ and deepens the ethnographic inquiry into religious musical culture, into the ways that borderlands folk express themselves and connect to one another in the world.

This study posits that standard religious historiography does not suffice to capture borderlanders' creativity; neither do strictly economic analyses of migratory movement. An approach that complements earlier ones is needed, one that captures texture, complexity, change, movement, and social and geographic location as these play out upon the field of religion and religious cultural practice.

The project tests four related hypotheses: 1) that much of the newly documented religious pluralism⁵ in the traditional and newer migrant-sending regions of Mexico⁶ can be traced to migrants who have brought or sent back religious and symbolic remittances, *remesas religiosas*, in addition to material goods (e.g., appliances, vehicles, and money) and that such remittances have circulated as long as migrants have; 2) that the religious cartography of the borderlands (broadly and creatively defined) is largely a product of migration and migrating people; 3) that the Roman Catholic (and mainline Protestant) response to migration has been defensive; and 4) as a result, pentecostal-like practices have proved to be among the prime carriers of borderlands culture and that religious sensibility has proved to be among the most important organizing principles/nets of subaltern peoples.

Put differently, this study sets forth and engages the following specific principles, which seem to characterize the religious cartography of the twentieth century U.S.-Mexico borderlands: 1) migration created and expanded religious expressions and cultural options; 2) religious conversion often played a catalytic role in migration, prompting return movement for proselytism purposes and provoking outward movement in response to community intolerance; 3) the migration of people and symbolic goods transformed popular musical forms, and as a result: 4) transformed musical forms shaped evolving cultural identities and practices. These transformed

³Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984)

⁴Take, for example, the Mexican Migration Project's (<http://lexis.pop.upenn.edu/mexmig/>) ethno-survey of migration culture. See notes 26-30.

⁵Except for the northern border states of Baja California and Chihuahua (9%), the highest Protestant growth rates have registered in the indigenous south, whose proximity to Guatemala bears theoretical and explicative consideration. "Población de 5 años y más por entidad federativa, sexo y religión, y su distribución según grupos quinquenales de edad," Instituto Nacional de Información Estadística y Geográfica de México, 2000, www.inegi.gob.mx. The 2000 Census (using very conservative and problematic methodology) placed Oaxaca as eighth highest among states in terms of Protestant religious affiliation.

⁶This project expands upon earlier surveys/studies of religious change in several regions in Mexico: northern border zone; Zamora, Michoacán; Guadalajara; Los Altos de Jalisco; Chiapas; and Oaxaca. See Alberto Hernández Hernández, "Sociedades religiosas protestantes en la frontera norte: estudio sociográfico en tres localidades urbanas," *Frontera Norte* 8, vol. 15 (enero-junio 1996): 107-132; Danú A. Fabre Platas, "Conversión e identidad: el pentecostalismo protestante zamorano," *Estudios Jaliscienses* 26 (noviembre 1996): 32-47; Patricia Fortuny Loret de Mola, coord., *Creyentes y creencias en Guadalajara* (Mexico, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1999) and Lourdes Celina Vázquez, *Identidad, cultura y religión en el sur de Jalisco* (Zapopan: El Colegio de Jalisco, 1993); Eliseo López Cortés, *Ultimo cielo en la cruz: cambio sociocultural y estructuras de poder en Los Altos de Jalisco* (Zapopan: El Colegio de Jalisco, 1999); Rosalva Aída Hernández Castillo, *La otra frontera: identidades múltiples en el Chiapas poscolonial* (Mexico, D.F.: Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores de Antropología Social, 2001); and Olga Montes García, "Movimientos religiosos en Oaxaca: sus características," *Religiones y Sociedad* 1 (octubre-diciembre 1997): 35-42. See also José Luis Molina Hernández, "Los marcos urbano-regionales del campo religioso en Mexico," *Frontera Norte* 8, vol. 15 (enero-junio 1996): 7-37.

identities and practices equipped religious practitioners in their struggle as religious cultural dissidents in one territory (e.g., Oaxaca), as subaltern cultural minorities in another (e.g., California), and as a combination of both in places in between (e.g., Mexico City, Sinaloa, and Baja California).

In other parts of this study I examine the networks of transborder solidarity set in place by early Chicano and Mexican Pentecostals, networks that have allowed these communities to withstand the vicissitudes of political and religious persecution and economic dislocation.⁷ Also elsewhere I examine several transgressive narratives, *testimonios indocumentados*, of “illegal” border crossers and residents. Much like Jorge Durand and Douglas Massey’s catalogue of ex-voto *retablos* commissioned by Catholic migrants (small paintings on sheets of tin, which, in this case, attest to miraculous healings, interventions against border-crossing dangers, and salvation from calamities in the United States),⁸ these Pentecostal oral texts herald decidedly different notions of nationhood and legality.⁹ In this paper, I shift the interrogation in the direction of religious musical cultural practice, attempting to historicize the persistent refusal of subaltern people to accept the lot assigned to them by hegemonic institutions and agents.

The contemporary surge of pentecostalism and other evangelical streams in southern Mexico and Central and South America has attracted considerable recent scholarly attention, especially among anthropologists and sociologists. Too often, however, such treatments reflect the chronological constraints of their disciplines. This study, therefore, seeks to introduce a historian’s concern for linkages and flows by tying contemporary Oaxacan pentecostalism to its direct antecedents among other Mexicans and Chicanos in other venues.

Contemporary southern Mexico offers another vantage point. The canonization of Juan Diego on July 31, 2002, provided the Americas their first indigenous saint in an era when indigenous peoples throughout the hemisphere have amplified their dissent against exclusionary projects of national identity and economic consolidation. With the August 1 (ironic) beatification of the Oaxacan Zapoteco Cajonos martyrs, the Mexican church sought to bring to closure almost five centuries of religious *mestizaje*, in which, to use Roman Catholic terms, Christianity has been enculturated, or taken root in seedbeds of indigenous belief and practice. Guadalupe has finally outgrown Tonantzin, the Aztec goddess on whose pre-Hispanic devotional site, Tepeyac in northern Mexico City, now sit Guadalupe and Juan Diego’s shrines.

The long-delayed cultural revindication may have arrived too late, however. For if the 2000 Census figures are to be believed, an increasing percentage of subaltern indigenous actors in the Mexican South are opting, like their Guatemalan cousins, for new religious and cultural arrangements, and creating, among other things, new religious sonic spheres. *Evangélicos* were reported to comprise 22% of Chiapas’s population, 19% of Tabasco’s, 18% of Campeche’s, 16% of Quintana Roo’s, 11% of Yucatan’s, and 10% of Oaxaca’s and Morelos’s: rates as high as quadruple the national figure, and matched only by Baja California and Chihuahua states. Clearly, geographical proximity to the country’s Protestant northern neighbor cannot explain the surge in the south. Indeed, Mexico’s other northern border states (Sonora, Chihuahua, Tamaulipas, Nuevo León) rank closer to the national average. Accordingly, demographer Olga

⁷ Daniel Ramírez, “Borderlands Praxis: The Immigrant Experience in Latino Pentecostal Churches,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* (September 1999), 67/3:573-596

⁸ Jorge Durand and Douglas S. Massey, *Miracles on the Border: Retablos of Mexican Migrants to the United States* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1995).

⁹ Daniel Ramírez, “Public Lives in American Hispanic Churches: Expanding the Paradigm,” in Gaston Espinosa, ed., *The Hispanic Church in American Public Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming)

Odgers Ortiz has argued for more regional and historical particularities in explaining Mexico's complex religious diversity¹⁰. Among those particularities worth examining, I argue, are complex migrations and the back-and-forth flow of *remesas religiosas*, religious remittances.

DEFINITIONS

Borderlands

Standard surveys of religious history in North America have given short shrift to Latino Protestantism (even shorter shrift to Latino Pentecostalism) and have forced most Latino religious history into the flow of events westward from Plymouth Rock or northward from New Spain.¹¹ While Thomas Tweed and others have called for a *re-telling* of U.S. religious history based on such factors as gender, body and region, their summons have yet to find transnational echo in the religion academy of both the United States and Mexico.¹² This study's approach seeks to expand upon the directions noted by Tweed et al. Its vantage point at the interstices of two countries will allow for new mappings and soundings of a *religious cartography* that reflects folks' experience and movement through spaces both real and *imagined*. The *borderlands* under consideration entail dimensions that are at once geographic, religious, cultural, and epistemic, and, thus, stretch much further than proffered in Gloria Anzaldúa's seminal description of a "1,950 mile-long open wound dividing a pueblo, a culture..."¹³ The term does not refer necessarily to geographically adjacent places. These broadly defined borderlands encompass the back-and-forth migration or movement of people and material and symbolic goods (especially religious remittances). This movement, in turn, creates and transforms the migrants' notion of themselves (*identities*) as individuals belonging to communities in flux, and as *practitioners* of religious culture. The (tentative) reading of the cluster (or web) of those *practices* and identities will allow for a (tentative) description and analysis of that religious culture.¹⁴

I use the Oaxacan migrants' term, "*Oaxacalifornia*", to refer to that geographic expanse that runs from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to Baja and U.S. California. The very process of geopolitical coinage entails, of course, as much a state of mind and soul as an elastic description of geography traversed. As in the Eagle's song, Hotel Oaxacalifornia invites the sojourner in for an extended stay.

Remesas Religiosas

Finally, Douglas Massey and Emilio Parrado's interesting study of *migradollars* and the impact of monetary remittances in the micro-economies of communities of origin prompted me to think in terms of *religious remittances* and of the need to explore their catalytic and supportive role in expanding religious pluralism in Mexico. I understand *remesas religiosas* to mean those

¹⁰ Olga Odgers Ortiz, "Dinámica y distribución del cambio religioso en la region fronteriza México-Estados Unidos," (unpublished paper, delivered to Tercer Congreso Internacional de Latinoamericanistas en Europa, Amsterdam, July 6, 2002).

¹¹ Sidney E. Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972).

¹² Thomas A. Tweed, ed., *Re-Telling U.S. Religious History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

¹³ Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1991) 3rd ed.

¹⁴ "The concept of culture I espouse...is essentially a semiotic one. Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of a law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. It is explication I am after, construing social expressions on their surface enigmatical." Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 5; and "Cultural analysis is (or should be) guessing at meaning, assessing the guesses, and drawing explanatory conclusions from the better guesses....", *ibid*, 20.

symbolic goods sent or brought home by migrants to leverage or maintain their relatives' and friends' conversion and new religious identity. Here, financial resources sent to shore up ministries and congregations or to pay for religious events (e.g., a *quinceñera* [fifteen-year-old girl's rite of passage] celebration) clearly fall within both the categories explored by Massey and Parrado and this study;¹⁵ conversely, so, too, do migrants' proscriptions against certain expenditures of financial remittances (e.g., financing patron saint festivals).

ANTECEDENTS

Clearly, Rodolfo González speaks and sings from within a religious tradition. There is lineage here. Its tracing will require flexible instruments. Here the historian can borrow from the toolkit of seasoned anthropologists. I have in mind something akin to the kinship chart. The current ethnographic study of diasporic religion, however, entails a recalibration of such tools. Indeed, most contemporary ethnographic studies must adapt to the disappearance or transformation of previously isolated societies in distant rain forests. The gods in their craziness have flung Coke bottles to the uttermost ends of the earth. Thus, anthropologists are adapting methodologies to fit the contours of globalizing diasporas.

The following religious genealogy attempts to trace in miniature the development and growth of a stream of popular religiosity that flowed in the late twentieth century. For argument's sake, it highlights northern San Diego County, California, as a key node in the flow of religious culture between northern Mexican and Chicano practitioners in Southern and Baja California and practitioners in Mexico's indigenous south.

This choice, of course, presents its share of difficulties. It compresses the broader story of migration and religious cultural change into a limited space frame. It also fractures the historian's standard linear approach to history, seemingly mimicking the magic realism of Latin American narratives of the 20th century and their play with time. This compromise offers in the bargain a sense of other-than-chronological relationships, of non-institutional actors and variables, of multivocality and multi-sidedness. The instances of transnational movement surrounding the case of Rodolfo González may be sketched initially in the following manner:

The ties between a largely Mexican American and Mexican immigrant congregation in northern San Diego County and largely indigenous communities in southern Mexico developed through the initiative of González, an immigrant from Salina Cruz, Oaxaca, who embraced evangelicalism in 1990 in his adopted city, first in a Baptist and then in a pentecostal church. During a six-year return sojourn (1994-2000) in southern Mexico González established or connected with eight congregations—Mestizo, Huave, Chontal, and Zapoteco—in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, as well as with ten Mayan Tzotzil ones in the Los Altos region of Chiapas.

This particular congregational genealogy stretches further back, however, to the founding of the Escondido, California, congregation in 1957 at the hands of two Mexican American evangelists from a Del Mar (now Solana Beach) Apostolic congregation, which, in turn, was founded in 1934 by Mexican immigrant evangelists based out of Otay-San Diego.

¹⁵ Douglas S. Massey and E. Parrado, "Migradollars: The Remittances and Savings of Mexican Migrants to the United States," *Population Research and Policy Review* 13 (1994): 3-30. Similarly, Peggy Levitt's study of "social remittances" and "cultural diffusion" within Dominican migration led Helen Ebaugh and Janet Chafetz to coin the term, "religiously relevant resources," to describe the flow of resources between Houston immigrant congregations and congregations in their home countries. See note 33. Peggy Levitt, "Social Remittances: Migration Driven, Local-Level Forms of Cultural Diffusion," *International Migration Review* 32:926-48; Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz, eds., *Religion Across Borders: Transnational Immigrant Networks* (Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press, 2002)

The border community of Otay-San Diego, in turn, served previously as an early site of pentecostal expansion, one of several pioneered by evangelists sallying forth from Los Angeles in the aftermath of the historic Azusa Street Revival (1906-09) in Los Angeles. During the height of the revival (September 1906), evangelists Brigido Perez and Abundio and Rosa Lopez had established an outpost in San Diego proper. The Apostolic stream of Latino Pentecostalism traces its roots to the 1909 baptism (in Jesus' name) of Luis Lopez, a later layman in the Otay-San Diego church, probably at the hands of evangelist Juan Navarro, and to Navarro's baptism of Francisco Llorente, a San Diego resident and Acapulco native. Otay-San Diego proved a key node in the revival's transmission. Within a decade-and-a-half of the Revival's beginning, Azusa's Mexican participants had carried revival embers from San Diego and Los Angeles to Riverside, California, to Yuma, Arizona, to the Imperial Valley sister border towns of Calexico and Mexicali, and to the San Joaquin, Ventura, and Salinas Valleys, and from Los Angeles to Villa Aldama, Chihuahua, in northern Mexico (1914).¹⁶

The decade of the 1920s saw expansion from Otay-San Diego to Tijuana, and from the northern Mexican states of Chihuahua, Coahuila, and Nuevo Leon to Texas' Rio Grande Valley. Also, as their progeny would do decades later, early Apostolics initiated purposeful contact with each other across national borders, especially between northern Mexico and southern California.

Macro-economic and political events played decisive roles in the pushing and pulling of migrants back and forth across the border. The economic debacle of 1929 precipitated the massive repatriation of Mexicans and Mexican Americans, as federal, state, county and municipal authorities colluded in the scapegoating of this vulnerable population.¹⁷ Several believers rode the crest of the repatriation wave, beaching themselves purposefully in key locales in the land of their birth, this time with a singular focus: the evangelization of their kin and countrymen. The phenomenon would repeat itself again, this time in a back-and-forth flow, under the unwitting auspices of the *Bracero* program (1942-1964) and deportation programs such as Operation Wetback in 1954.¹⁸

By mid-century, Apostolic Pentecostalism had arrived in the southern Mexican states of Oaxaca and Chiapas via the flagship denomination in that country, the *Iglesia Apostólica de la Fe en Cristo Jesús*. Thus several of the ministers and congregations encountered by González in the late 1990s had been touched previously, albeit in slight measure, by this sister denomination of his own U.S.-based, and largely Mexican American denomination, the Apostolic Assembly.

Finally, we must take into account the broader historical context within which contemporary Oaxacans have encountered expanded religious options, namely the prior efforts of mainline Protestant churches. Again, further north, in the case of Solana Beach, the pioneer members of the Apostolic congregation were, in fact, first attracted away from Catholicism through the efforts of J.L. Rodríguez, an evangelist based out of San Diego's First Presbyterian Church.¹⁹ Rodríguez's years of effort came to naught for his denomination, however, when Otay-based Pentecostal evangelists appeared with more attractive religious goods (strumming guitars beneath trees in the *colonia's* main intersection). Similarly, in the decades of the 1940s

¹⁶ Daniel Ramírez, "Borderlands Praxis," *op. cit.*

¹⁷ Francisco E. Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, *Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1995).

¹⁸ See Ernesto Galarza, *Farm Workers and Agri-Business in California, 1947-1960* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1977); and Julian Samora, *Los Mojados: The Wetback Story* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1971).

¹⁹ Gordon B. Shupe, *Our Heritage: A History of the First Presbyterian Church of San Diego, California, 1869-1994* (San Diego: First Presbyterian Church, 1994), 28.

and 50s, several of the leaders attracted to Apostolicism in the Tehuantepec Isthmus and Chiapas's Los Altos region spent significant, formative years with Nazarene and Presbyterian communions, respectively. After interim periods with the *Iglesia Pentecostés*, they opted to embrace the heterodox oneness teachings carried southward by González, and connected themselves to a new ecclesiastical patron, Ortega's home denomination, the Apostolic Assembly. The congregational genealogy sketched above acquires even greater complexity when we take into account the trajectories of several key actors, the migrants themselves, a point I will return to later.

The recent attention to (and alarm over) exploding evangelical growth in Latin America and among U.S. Latinos often reflects the ahistorical lens of social science. (Pentecostals, too, seem afflicted by a similar myopia in their insistence that church history brackets the centuries from the death of the Apostles to modern American revivalism.) Late twentieth century Latin American evangelicalism, then, represents far more than an Anglo-American incubation project timed for late hatching or a tardy response to the anomie of late capitalism. Its lineage stretches further back. The evolution and diversification of religious options from these moments and points of origin display has been as much a process of organicity as of appropriation.

PRIOR PARADIGMS

Sociology's *Huelga Social* and Political Science's *Low Utility*

This study interrogates the decades-old meta-narrative on Pentecostalism that spoke of social and economic deprivation, psycho-social stress, and stunted liberation. Swiss sociologist Lalive d'Epinay set the template in place with his description of Chilean Pentecostal churches as urban, religious replicas of rural *hacienda* society, on "social strike" and uselessly disengaged, in apolitical enclaves, from meaningful societal and political participation.²⁰ Juxtaposed to the heady possibilities of socialism, pentecostalism's opiate threatened to stymie proletarian projects of economic and political liberation throughout the hemisphere. Subsequent events in Chile, especially the co-optation of Protestant church leadership by Augusto Pinochet in the wake of his 1973 overthrow of the democratically elected regime of Salvador Allende, seemed to confirm d'Epinay's dire warning.

Over two decades later, the pessimism resurfaced in Lesley Gill's study of Aymara female domestic workers in La Paz, Bolivia, whom she found to be politically alienated and, thus, especially susceptible to the escapist and moralistic rhetoric heard in pentecostal pulpits.²¹ For Gill, pentecostalism had inserted itself into Bolivian working class society at a strategic moment of economic and political frustration. Instead of heading to the union hall on Sunday afternoon to bone up on Marx, Aymara women could be found speaking in tongues, banging tambourines, and ejaculating antiphonal *aleluyas* to Bible-thumping, *machista* harangues. Paradoxically, for Gill, they also spent the hours that could have been dedicated to labor conscientization spying and snaring reformed (from machismo) men in the *templos* they (the

²⁰Lalive d'Epinay, *Haven of the Masses: A Study of the Pentecostal Movement in Chile* (London: Lutterworth P., 1969). D'Epinay's theory of "social strike" followed in the tradition of Max Weber's "relative deprivation," which, in turn, was developed by other sociologists to encompass economic, social and psychic dimensions. See Max Weber, "The Social Psychology of the World Religions," in H. Gerth and C.W. Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Social Theory* (London: Routledge, 1970), and Charles Y. Glock, *The Role of Deprivation in the Origins and Evolution of Religious Groups* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1958). See also Emile Durkheim, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology* (London: Routledge, 1970).

²¹Lesley Gill, *Precarious Dependencies: Gender, Class and Domestic Service in Bolivia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

women) had occupied for much of the day instead. Opiate light, with some improved marital possibilities.

Further to the north, sociologist Abelino Martínez concluded that Nicaraguan pentecostalism's otherworldly discourse ("salvation offer-and-demand") and conservative social practice, being eminently religious in nature, did not "stimulate the politicization of its members, but rather perpetuated their [political] indifference."²² Costa Rican sociologist Jaime Valverde was less forgiving of pentecostal *sectas* in his country. For Valverde, pentecostalism's sharp dichotomy between spirit/spiritual life and body/politics engendered a false consciousness among the proletariat. The resultant theological discourse coincided with the given social order and its imposed rules of the game, thereby maintaining both. Rather than joining the class struggle, adherents viewed the reigning economic and social crisis as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, and, hence, adopted submissive attitudes toward their economic oppression, thereby, guaranteeing its continuance.²³

The extrapolation to U.S. Latino Pentecostals of findings drawn from the several studies of Latin American pentecostalism owes as much to the lack of similar studies in the United States as it does to the absence of religious variables (especially those related to pentecostal faith and practice) in political and other social scientific studies of U.S. Latinos. Even minimal attention to these seems additive; religious variables have been folded in to survey instruments designed to capture more traditional dimensions of Latino political and social behavior (e.g., party affiliation, voting record, religious affiliation, etc.).²⁴ The studies' focus on the political behaviors and attitudes of U.S. citizens has glossed over, of course, the complex web of relationships that tie many of these to permanent, temporary and undocumented immigrants.²⁵

NEW APPROACHES

Ethnography's Agency

The last quarter-century's frustration and disenchantment with liberation projects— theological and political—prompted a re-framing of the questions (and answers) posited by d'Epinay et al. Several new anthropological studies sited themselves in different and specific locales, and, from these points of particularity, challenged the sociologists' universalizing description by offering, in line with their sub-disciplinary ethnographic method, more in-depth analyses of conversion dynamics at the ground level of gender, race and indigenous identity. To name three, Elizabeth Brusco described Colombian women's promotion of conversion as "female collective action" aimed at the "reformation of machismo,"²⁶ John Burdick found that Black pentecostal women had implicitly and explicitly up-ended the oppressive racial aesthetic hierarchy of Brazilian society by means of a counter-cultural re-definition of female beauty,²⁷

²² Abelino Martínez, *Las sectas en Nicaragua: oferta y demanda de salvación* (San Jose, Costa Rica: Editorial Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones, 1989), 112.

²³ Jaime Valverde, *Las sectas en Costa Rica: pentecostalismo y conflicto social* (San Jose, Costa Rica: Editorial Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones, 1990), 80-81.

²⁴ Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Louis DeSipio, F. Chris Garcia, John Garcia, and Angelo Falcon, *Latino Voices: Mexican, Puerto Rican, & Cuban Perspectives on American Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1992).

²⁵ Rodolfo O. de la Garza and Louis DeSipio, "Overview: The Link Between Individuals and Electoral Institutions in Five Latino Neighborhoods," in Rodolfo O. de la Garza, Martha Menchaca, and Louis DeSipio, eds., *Barrio Ballots: Latino Politics in the 1990 Elections* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

²⁶ Elizabeth Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion in Colombia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1995).

²⁷ John Burdick, *Blessed Anastacia: Women, Race and Popular Christianity in Brazil* (New York: Routledge, 1998).

and Rosalva Hernández uncovered multiple identities among the borderlands (Chiapas-Guatemala) Mayan Mam, many of whom credited Presbyterian churches with providing linguistic and cultural sanctuaries during earlier times of governmental cultural oppression.²⁸

The sum of these and other findings represented an ethnographic challenge to the d'Épinay thesis on alienation, and invited continued open-ended inquiry into the process of religious conversion, cultural practice and identity, and societal engagement. Importantly, given their methodological strategies (in-depth interviews, participant-observer status, etc.) the studies evidenced a disposition to hear carefully their consultants' side of the story and to accord them greater dimensions of agency and self-representation.

Migration as Social Process and *Cambio Religioso*

The longstanding (since 1982) binational Mexican Migration Project (MMP) based at the University of Pennsylvania and the Universidad de Guadalajara, may now be poised for important collaboration with religion scholarship. For several years now, MMP researchers, employing both sociological and ethnographic methods, have honed in on the complex social processes (e.g., networks, identity formation, border crossing lore, use of remittances, etc.) of the migration phenomenon and the knitting of ties between “sending” communities in western Mexico and “receiving” communities in the United States. Rather than viewing Mexican migration to the United States in terms of old tropes (e.g., “escape valve,” “melting pot” acculturation, etc.), researchers have been interested in the assimilation of the very phenomenon of migration itself into communities' ways of life during many decades.²⁹ Researchers conduct interviews with returned migrants during the winter season in the former communities, and complement these with surveys of settled (non-returning) migrants in the latter.³⁰ The scholarly output has been considerable.³¹ Still, explicitly religious questions were not posed to respondents until 1999, when the MMP initial questionnaire was adjusted to query, “In your trips to the United States, have you belonged to a social/religious association?” Previously, researchers had asked, “In your last trip to the United States, did you belong to any social associations?”³² While the open-ended questions about networks, contacts, and solidarity may yield data about the role of congregations, the project has yet to present substantive findings on the role of religious networks, especially Protestant ones. Not that the variable is unimportant to the researchers. Jorge Durand and Douglas Massey's catalogue of migrant ex-voto *retablos* (attesting to miraculous healings, interventions against border-crossing dangers, and salvation from calamities in the United States), collected from shrines throughout Mexico, augurs hopefully for a long-overdue thematic shift in this valuable research enterprise.³³

²⁸ Rosalva Hernández, *op. cit.*

²⁹ Jorge Durand, *Más allá de la línea: patrones migratorios entre México y Estados Unidos* (Mexico, D.F.: Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes, 1994). See especially chapter 7, “Patrones culturales y migración.”

³⁰ Douglas S. Massey, Rafael Alarcón, Jorge Durand, and Humberto González, *Return to Aztlan: The Social Process of International Migration from Western Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

³¹ Jorge Durand, *Más allá de la línea, op. cit.*; Massey and Parrado, *op. cit.*; Douglas S. Massey and Audrey Singer, “The Social Process of Undocumented Border Crossing Among Mexican Migrants,” *International Migration Review* 32, vol. 3 (Fall 1998): 561-592. For a valuable thick ethnography of transnational (Los Angeles and San José de la Laja, Jalisco) identity at the nuclear family level, see (MMP researcher) Victor M. Espinosa, *El dilema del retorno: migración, género y pertenencia en un contexto transnacional* (Zamora, Michoacán: El Colegio de Michoacán, 1998).

³² (<http://lexis.pop.upenn.edu/mexmig/>)

³³ Jorge Durand and Douglas S. Massey, *Miracles on the Border: Retablos of Mexican Migrants to the United States* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1995).

Several obvious candidates for MMP collaboration can be found within the growing corpus of localized studies of *cambio religioso* (religious change and pluralism) in Mexico, especially *cambio religioso* ushered in by returned migrants. The several CIESAS (Centro de Investigación y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social) regional research units, along with the several regional Colegios (de Michoacán, de Jalisco, de la Frontera Norte, and de Mexico), the Universidad de Guadalajara, and the Universidad Autónoma de Mexico-Iztapalapa, have proved fecund sites for research in this latter field in Mexico.³⁴ However, the lacuna between the two discrete fields is striking in its width, and most acute in the case of southern Mexico and the Oaxacan diaspora. For example, a title and subject search under the rubrics of “religion” and “migration” in the Welte Institute’s library, Oaxaca’s foremost anthropological collection, yielded approximately two hundred entries in both categories, but not a single cross-reference.

The scholarship on religious change also awaits comparative work among Latinos in the U.S., which would allow scholars in both countries to overlay and mesh the religious cartographies of transnational religious life. Among these, Alberto Hernández’ 1987 inventory of 983 Protestant congregations in the three border municipalities of Tijuana, Ciudad Juarez, and Matamoros,³⁵ begs comparative study in the adjoining border cities/zones of San Diego-San Ysidro, Juarez, and Rio Grande Valley. The same need obtains in the case of transnationally tied congregations in further-flung diasporas. Finally, given this study’s primary disciplinary concerns, all the above would seem to benefit from a historical contextualization.³⁶

Religious Musical Cultural Practice

Porque somos los mojados
siempre nos busca la ley.
Porque somos ilegales
y no hablamos el inglés,
El gringo terco a sacarnos
Y nosotros a volver

Because we are wetbacks
the law is always after us
Because we are illegal
and don’t speak English
The gringo stubbornly seeks to kick us out
And we (stubbornly) seek to return

“Los Mojados,” Los Tigres del Norte (recorded c. 1972)

Why religious musical cultural practice? Along with providing a common space for celebration, music and liturgy also represent a contact zone, a symbolic “field” for the

³⁴ See Note 6. See also Luis R. Moran Quiroz, *Alternativa religiosa en Guadalajara: una aproximación al estudio de las iglesias evangélicas* (Guadalajara: Universidad de Guadalajara, 1990); Miguel J. Hernández Madrid, “Los movimientos religiosos poscristianos en perspectiva global y regional,” *Relaciones: estudios de historia y sociedad* 18, vol. 72 (otoño 1997): 157-178; and Aída Hernández Castillo, “Identidades colectivas en los márgenes de la nación: etnicidad y cambio religioso entre los mames de Chiapas,” *Nueva Antropología* 13, vol. 45 (abril 1994): 83-106.

³⁵ Alberto Hernández Hernández, “Sociedades religiosas protestantes...,” *op. cit.*

³⁶ The otherwise splendid ethnographies of transnationally tied congregations in Houston compiled in Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz’s second anthology emerging out of the Religion, Ethnicity and New Immigration Research (RENIR) Project suffer from the lack of a broader historical context beyond the narrow confessional boundaries of the congregations. For the editors, religious flows between congregational networks have their point of origin in the immigrants’ countries of origin, and reverse their direction over time and generations. The flow of Latin American and Latino Protestantism and Pentecostalism would seem more variegated in its origins (see Chapter Two). Ebaugh and Chafetz, *op. cit.*

contestation over old and new identities. They function as symbolic markers of sameness, difference, flux and dynamic “communitas” (“community of feeling”).³⁷

The proposed methodological expansion takes its cue from recent innovative studies: among these, political scientist Jesús Martínez’s on the *Tigres del Norte*. In his analysis of the discography and performance of the *Tigres del Norte*, arguably the most popular *norteño* musical group in both the U.S. and Mexico, Martínez argued that these troubadours of the immigrant experience (who have lived in the San Jose, California area since the late 1960s) have given public voice to millions of compatriots in their celebration of transgressive movement (“*Que Vivan los Mojados*” – “Long Live the Wetbacks”), trickster tales (“*Contrabando y Traición*” – “Contraband and Betrayal”), pined-for villages and lost loves (“*Plaza Garibaldi*”), Mexican topography (“*Bajo el Cielo de Morelia*” – “Beneath Morelia’s Sky”), and even Chicano activism (“*Cuando Gime la Raza*” – “When the Race Shudders”).³⁸ Martínez fleshed out his analysis with a thick ethnographic description of a concert/dance in the new, cavernous San Jose Convention Center. The *Tigres*’ power of convocation summoned seven thousand attendees, many drawn from the janitorial work force of the Silicon Valley (and many probably involved later in successful labor organizing³⁹). Viewed through this prism, the *Tigres*’ concert amounted to a public event, especially in the looming shadow of Proposition 187. Culture as politics.

Martínez’ creative appraisal of the *Tigres* proved prescient. In 2000, the Grammy Award-winning group established the *Tigres del Norte* Foundation at the University of California at Los Angeles, endowing that university’s Chicano Studies Research Center with generous resources for “the study, preservation and dissemination of folk music in Spanish.” The remarkable recovery of public voice began with the transfer into digital form of the Arhoolie Frontera collection, consisting of 15,000 phonograph discs produced (mostly) in the United States between 1910 and 1950.⁴⁰

Martínez’ approach also paralleled foundational analyses of borderlands musical culture undertaken elsewhere in the Southwest. Américo Paredes’ seminal folklore study of border *corridos* (ballads) and Manuel Peña’s more explicitly ethnomusicological treatment of *tejano conjunto* music pointed to alternative ways of discussing subordinated communities, their public articulation of power, and (internal and external) contestations over identity through musical cultural practice and aesthetics.⁴¹

PENTECOSTAL BORDERLANDS RELIGIOUS MUSICAL CULTURE

In the study of the religious musical cultural practice of early and contemporary Chicano and Mexican Pentecostals we encounter folks who were more than merely restive Methodists or

³⁷ Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969).

³⁸ Jesús Martínez, “Los Tigres de Norte en Silicon Valley,” *Nexos*, año 16, vol. XVI, núm. 191, (11/93).

³⁹ Christian Zolniski, “Reestructuración industrial y mano de obra inmigrante: el caso de los trabajadores mexicanos en la industria de la limpieza de edificios en el Silicon Valley, California,” in Alfredo Lattes, Jorge Santibáñez, Manuel Ángel Castillo, eds., *Migración y fronteras* (Tijuana: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte, 1998), 51-78.

⁴⁰ <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/csrc/tigres1.html>

⁴¹ Américo Paredes, *With His Pistol in His Hand*, *op. cit.*, and *Folklore and Culture on the Texas-Mexican Border*, *op. cit.*; Manuel Peña, *The Texas-Mexican Conjunto: History of a Working-Class Music* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985). For a parallel ethnomusicological study in an altogether different subaltern setting (apartheid), see Veit Erlmann, *Nightsong: Performance, Power, and Practice in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). For a literary analysis of border *corridos*, see María Herrera-Sobek, *Northward Bound: The Mexican Immigrant Experience in Ballad and Song* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993).

prodigal Catholics. Rather, these historical agents seem to have been busily carving out a unique identity in the margins between two societies: Protestant U.S. and Catholic Mexico (these are not meant as monolithic ascriptions). For them that periphery has served as a center, a zone in which they move about, usually oblivious to the hegemonic centers. In the case of such religious borderlanders, robust agency is especially evident when they are left to their own devices, either by design or neglect from their would-be sponsors.

Elsewhere I have dealt with the aesthetic contestations between mainline and Pentecostal Protestant musics, between missionaries and the missionized.⁴² In the movement from popular Catholicism through mainline Protestantism to Pentecostalism, the mobile religious proletariat seems to have been voting with its ears as well as its feet, as much enchanted by the cultural musical repertoire as the charisma of tongues-speaking evangelists and healers.

As noted above, the onset of the Great Depression initially wreaked havoc upon young Latino Pentecostal churches in the Borderlands. Political scapegoating compounded the already dire economic straits. Federal, state, and local authorities conspired to push nearly about a million Mexicans and Chicanos south of the border.⁴³ The persecution tore at the vulnerable fabric of *barrio* life. Ultimately, however, that fabric proved resilient, and in the case of Pentecostal communities, stretched to encompass a broad swath of territory far beyond the movement's original locus in southern California. Scarcity and persecution evoked responses of solidarity. Also, the retreat of sponsor denominations under financial duress left wider margins for innovation. Scarcity also bred fecundity. Like Thomas Dorsey and other Black Gospel composers of the Depression era, Latino Pentecostals made do with what they had.

Pentecostal hymn writers matched perennial Mexican poetic themes (e.g., pilgrimage) with popular musical genres (e.g., *polka*) to produce a sonic and corporeal experience that resonated in their listeners' ears, hearts, and bodies. They composed songs for every ritual occasion: births/child dedications, water and Spirit baptisms, initiations, birthdays, communion services, marriages, partings, welcomings, offerings, and death. Thus, borderlands composers reunited popular music and religious ritual in a stronger bond than even Mexican/Chicano Catholicism enjoyed at the time and in a vein similar to that of Nahuatl and other ancient Mesoamerican cultures. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, Mexican Catholicism had experienced a revival of high art and cathedral choral music. This development once again pushed folk music and instruments out of that country's principal sanctuaries and relegated them to village churches and the external performance spaces of pilgrimages and *fiestas*.⁴⁴ The situation for Mexican American Catholics under the tutelage of a Baltimore-based hierarchy bent on "Americanizing" the culturally and theologically recalcitrant southwestern flock seemed even bleaker.⁴⁵

Form mattered as much as content. Composers appropriated most of the contemporary popular Mexican musical idioms and instruments: from *polka* to *ranchera* to *corrido* to *vals* to

⁴² Daniel Ramírez, "Alabaré a mi Señor: Culture and Ideology in Latin American and Latino/a Protestant Hymnody," in Edith Blumhofer, ed., *Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land: American Protestant Hymnody* (University of Alabama Press, forthcoming, 2003).

⁴³ Balderrama and Rodríguez, *op. cit.*, 120-122.

⁴⁴ Rubén Campos, *El folkllore y la música mexicana: investigación acerca de la cultura musical en Mexico, 1525-1925* (Mexico, D.F.: Secretaría de Educación Pública, 1928), 191-196.

⁴⁵ See Jay P. Dolan and Allan Figueroa Deck, eds., *Hispanic Catholic Culture in the U.S.: Issues and Concerns* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994) and Jay P. Dolan and Gilberto M. Hinojosa, eds., *Mexican Americans and the Catholic Church, 1900-1965* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

huapango to *marcial* to *canción romántica* to *bolero*—all, apparently, except *cha-cha-cha* and *danzón*, which were probably considered too irredeemably wedded to the carnal dance floor.

Borderlands Pentecostal composers drew liberally from mundane agricultural metaphors ("*Vamos Todos A La Siembra*"—"Let's All Go to the Sowing" and "*El Sembrador*"—"The Sower"), from landscapes ("*Rosa de Saron*"—"Rose of Sharon" and "*Como La Primavera*"—"As the Springtime"), and even from railroads and trains ("*El Tren Del Evangelio*"—"The Gospel Train"). The sweet emotive wells of matriarchy and maternity inspired numerous elegies ("*Mi Madre Oraba Por Mi*"—"My Mother Prayed for Me"). The bitter fruit of poverty fed scathing prophetic and social commentary ("*Tu Eres Refugio Del Pobre*"—"You are the Refuge of the Poor") ("*Profecia de Habacuc*"—"Prophecy of Habakuk"). Composers wrapped entire biblical passages in *corrido* and *décima* forms, something essential for improved biblical literacy. Songwriters also applied the practice to traditional Christian hagiography. One ten-stanza-long, graphic *corrido* about martyrs in the Roman Coliseum opens with the troubador's obligatory announcement ("*Hermanos, voy a contarles . . . allá en el siglo primero*"—"Brethren, I am going to tell you . . . way back in the first century") and respects metric (e.g., octosyllabic lines), lyric, and other conventions of that popular genre.

The photographic record of early Pentecostal musicians features the ubiquitous guitar, previously disdained as profane—and erotic—by mainline missionaries and their converts. According to pioneer evangelist Antonio Nava the guitar was often the *only* instrument available to the working-class church: "*La guitarra . . . p'al pobre . . . la guitarra*" ("The guitar . . . for the poor . . . the guitar").⁴⁶ The guitar and banjo could wind up in any possible ensemble of wind, string and percussive instruments, e.g., the *bajo sexto* and the *tololoche*—two favorites in *tejano conjunto* style. The mainline-pentecostal oppositions seem analogous to the dialectical tensions between *tejano orchestra* and *conjunto* musics (think Little Joe y la Familia vs. the Conjunto Bernal). As explicated by ethnomusicologist Manuel Peña in his study of the latter genre, these boiled down to a class-informed preference: "*música pa' high society*" versus "*música pa' los pobres*" ("music for high society" versus "music for the poor").⁴⁷

Migrating Faith: Los Hermanos Alvarado

The guitar as contested marker suggests other contestations over culture, ideology, and theology. In a sense, Pentecostals led the way toward a Latino Protestant re-encounter with culture. The emergence of a majority Pentecostal movement within Latino and Latin American Protestantism at a time when the new (Latino/Latin American) Reform was still in its adolescence presents an interesting case of the pentecostalization of the mainline, especially in terms of liturgy and music. Pentecostals' marginal social position also led to assertions of social solidarity with fellow sojourners. Pilgrims sang Zion's song to other wanderers. The study of Borderlands religious musical culture also reveals interesting continuities between the region's two most popular religiosities: Pentecostal and Catholic. The agents of this transformation remain generally anonymous; such is the nature of social movements. However, several interesting cases present themselves for study. Among these, the family biography of the *Hermanos Alvarado*, a guitar-strumming trio whose musical career spanned three decades, could stand in as a template for the broader story under discussion (as well as for twentieth century Mexican American history), especially given its Oaxacan twist at the end.

⁴⁶Interview with Antonio Nava, September 13, 1994.

⁴⁷Manuel Peña, *op. cit.* 139.

Pascual and Dolores Alvarado immigrated from northern Mexico early on during that country's decade-long Revolution. Pascual had fought on the side of Francisco Villa and then of Venustiano Carranza. The couple's seven children were born in Texas, Arizona, and California. The parents and maternal grandparents belonged to the first generation of Apostolic converts in Bakersfield, California (baptized in 1916). A tight-knit, sectarian Pentecostal community provided the only religious formation that the Alvarado children knew.⁴⁸

In 1932, in spite of her children's U.S. citizenship, Dolores was ordered repatriated to Mexico (see discussion of Repatriation in Chapter 2). In order to keep the family intact, the parents decided to return there with their children. After arriving by rail to Torreón, Coahuila, they slowly made their way, following the railway northward, back to the border. Pascual took welding jobs and Dolores sold tortillas to finance the seven-month trek. An infant son, Juan, was kept alive by the milk of a donated she-goat. Adolescent daughters Luz and Guadalupe did not survive the experience, and died from malnourishment soon after their arrival in Ciudad Juárez, a stone's throw away from the country of their birth. Upon arrival in Juárez, the Alvarado parents set about two tasks: securing housing and a livelihood, and reconnecting with the Apostolic church, which had begun consolidating its presence in the northern border city.

The transborder networks set in place through the preceding decade by Apostolic leaders and laity served to keep the Alvarado and many other families connected during a period of persecution and dislocation. Such solidarity was lacking in other Protestant church movements, even Pentecostal ones, especially those led by *gringos*, as was the case with Aimee Semple McPherson's Foursquare Church, whose Latino ministerial ranks were decimated by repatriation. That denomination's roster of Mexican American pastors and congregations completely disappeared in the wake of the political persecution.

As they entered their teen years, the Alvarado sons took up guitar playing, soon becoming proficient in their craft. As has been the case with African American Gospel and Blues musicians, the venue for performance and the choice of musical genre became sites of struggle for the artists' souls. Elder brother Román decided early on to dedicate his talents "*al Señor*" ("to the Lord"), while Rosario and Juan opted to play in *cantinas*. When pressed by Román, the two prodigals would agree to accompany him in performance in religious services. The trio's virtuosity soon won them a following in the Apostolic churches of Juárez. The brothers experienced an initial presentiment of things to come when they were invited in to perform on a local radio station program. Within a few years, Rosario unequivocally joined Román and the church, leaving behind, in classic conversion mode, a womanizing and drinking past. (Juan, the Rosseta Tharpe of the group, would wait two decades to make his conversion move.)

Interestingly, after conversion, Rosario and Román exchanged Rosario's smaller *requinto* guitar for Román's larger, standard one, reasoning that the aesthetic move to the simpler strumming instrument would help Rosario resist the tempting *cantina* memories evoked by the *requinto*'s fancy riffs. The Alvarado's repertoire consisted chiefly of music composed by Román and other Apostolic songwriters in the U.S. and Mexico. Popular Mexican musical genres provided the musical forms adapted—and sacralized—by the Alvarados. The thematic emphases on pilgrimage and endurance represented as much a defiance against majority intolerance as a re-working of ancient Mesoamerican and medieval Catholic motifs. The singers

⁴⁸ Information on the family biography and trio's career was gathered in a series of oral history interviews with Rosario, Juan and Román Alvarado in San Jose and Whittier, California, from August 5, 1999 to December 29, 2000.

intertwined sweet melancholy with joyful encounter and sheer doggedness in order to articulate a poetic vision not unlike that of Aztec pilgrim hymns or medieval Iberian Catholic ones. A closer ethnomusicological analysis of the Alvarado discography would explore interesting issues of performance, marketing, technology, class, and aesthetics, among others. While the following song was not composed by Román Alvarado (the first edition of the *Himnos de Consolación* attributes it to L. Vega), its incorporation into the Alvarado repertoire guaranteed its subsequent broad dissemination.

<p>Musical Sample: “Seguiré a mi Jesús” (I Will Follow My Jesus) Los Hermanos Alvarado, rec. 1959 <i>(translation mine)</i></p>

Verse 1

<p>Soy bautizado como manda el Salvador Que grande gozo siento yo en mi corazón Ya mis pecados los borró mi Salvador Quiero llegar puro y limpio a su mansión</p>	<p>I am now baptized as the Savior commands What a great joy I feel in my heart My Savior has already erased my sins I want to arrive pure and clean to his mansion</p>
--	--

Chorus

<p>Seguiré a mi Jesús Pues para mi todo el mundo se acabo Y ayudado de su luz Proseguir en su camino quiero yo</p>	<p>I will follow my Jesus Well for me the world is finished And guided by his light I want to continue forward in his path</p>
---	---

Verse 2

<p>Adiós mundo, que hasta ayer estuve en ti Donde el pecado destruía mi vivir Me siento gozo desde que me bautizé Y de volver a pecar; mejor morir!</p>	<p>Farewell, world, where til yesterday I was bound Where sin was destroying my life I feel joy since I was baptized To return to sin, better death!</p>
--	---

Verse 3

<p>No miro mas que el camino de la fé Donde muy pocos han querido caminar Le pido a Dios que me guarde en el amor Quiero llegar puro y limpio a su mansión</p>	<p>I see nothing but the way of faith Where so few have wished to trod I ask God to keep me in love I want to arrive pure and clean to his mansion</p>
---	---

After nearly two decades in Juárez, the Alvarado family made their way back to Los Angeles. This locus exposed their musical talents to an ever-widening circle of Latino Protestant churches, a development which discomfited the Apostolic leadership. A fortuitous encounter with Dale Evans and Laura Harper, wives of famous Hollywood musical cowboys, would push along and broaden the Alvarado's artistic trajectory in ways the singers had never imagined. The 1959 episode and long relationship bear recounting here.

After assisting two Anglo matrons with their shopping bags at the downtown Broadway market, Pascual Alvarado agreed to accompany them home to Hollywood Hills to repeat the favor. While standing in their driveway, he heard music drifting from a rear window (probably the music of the Sons of the Pioneers). When confronted by Harper, the Good Samaritan boasted that his progeny could sing much better. Intrigued, she took him up on his claim. After an audition the trio was invited in to record in a state-of-the-art studio. The resulting five-volume LP project, managed by Harper, ushered in a long period of expanding fame as the hemisphere's mostly widely heard *evangélico* musical group. The period lasted until their disbanding in 1973.

While *gringa* savvy and capital may have provided important initial impetus to the Alvarados' career, *gringo* imagination and gaze also crippled them at home. Harper's decision to photograph the *tejano* singers in *jarocho* costume (from Veracruz!) for the LP covers confirmed their coreligionists's suspicions that the group had become "*mundano*" (worldly). Yet, as doors to sectarian Apostolic churches in Los Angeles closed, others opened in the wider Latino *evangélico* community.

The hemispheric appeal of the Alvarado's music in that era seems to have been matched only by that of Guatemala's Alfredo Colom, whose compositions were broadcast through HCJB, the Voice of the Andes, a powerful missionary radio station in Quito, Ecuador. The broad dissemination of the Alvarados' music occurred by means of the LP project, several tours sponsored by Harper and the Christian Faith organization, and myriad pirating projects (the latter persist to this day). That the musical influence of these *tejano* troubadours extended far has been borne out by recent research in Oaxaca. A veteran Nazarene pastor in that state credits three factors with keeping the first generation of *evangélicos* in southern Mexico "*fiel*" (faithful) in the face of great intolerance in the 1950s and 1960s: 1) *la Biblia* (the Bible), 2) *la oración* (prayer), and 3) "*la música de los Hnos. Alvarado*" ("the music of the Alvarado Brothers").⁴⁹

The Hermanos Alvarado never visited Oaxaca, but their music certainly arrived early on, possibly in the luggage of the first returning *braceros* or of immigrants caught up in the *migra* raids of Operation Wetback or of converted female migrants returning from domestic work in Mexico City. As early converts to Protestantism in southern Mexico set about constructing an alternative sonic universe out of new and old cultural elements, they brought home (from Mexico City or the United States or elsewhere) religious remittances—*remesas religiosas*—of great symbolic value, including, especially, music. (The historicization of that process remains a promising task for scholars.) One consultant from Mexico City recalls her purchase of an Hnos. Alvarado LP in a bookstore in the capital, which her brothers matched with a purchase of a record player and sound system. These she set up in their hometown of San Juan Yaée in the Sierra Juárez to call the *hermanos* to services. Needless to say, the sonic transgression of the *Hermanos Alvarado* singing Chicana songwriter Nellie Rangel's provocative summons, "*Tu serás responsable de tu alma, si desde hoy no le das tu corazón,*" provoked traditional communal sensibilities in this Zapotec village.⁵⁰

That the music of the *Hnos. Alvarado* carried weighty symbolic value can be seen from its endurance throughout the subsequent decades. The following video fragment of a 2002 Easter morning baptismal service in the mountains above Oaxaca City demonstrates the historical continuity and mobility of such remittances. "*Seguiré a Mi Jesús,*" the baptismal anthem sung by the assembled congregation on the riverbank was recorded decades earlier by the Alvarados, and remains a favorite among *evangélicos* in Mexico:

⁴⁹ Interview with José Hernández, May 20, 2002, Oaxaca de Juárez, Oaxaca.

⁵⁰ Interview with Imelda Yescas, Mexico City, December 12, 2002.

**Video Fragment: Oaxaca Apostolic Baptismal
Service/ Bus Ride**

Note also the second chorus sung by the *hermanos* as they return to Oaxaca city in a rented bus:

Dios está aquí

Anonymous

//Dios está aquí, qué precioso es
El nos prometió donde están dos o tres//

///Quédate, Señor/// en cada corazón
///Quédate, Señor/// en mí

El espíritu de Dios se mueve

Anonymous

El Espíritu de Dios ///se mueve///
El Espíritu de Dios se mueve
Se mueve en mi corazón

O, Hermano, deja que ///se mueva///
O, hermano, deja que se mueva
Se mueva en tu corazón

O, Cristo mío haz de mi alma un altar
Para adorarte con devoción
Para beber del agua de la vida
Y entregarme con todo el corazón

God is Here

(translation mine)

God is here, how precious that is
He has promised us “where 2 or 3 are
gathered

Stay, Lord, in each heart
Stay, Lord, in me

The Spirit of God is moving

The Spirit of God is moving
The Spirit of God is moving
Moving in my heart

Oh, Brother, let it move
Oh, Brother, let it move
Let it move in your heart

Oh, my Christ, make an altar of my heart
So that I can adore you with devotion
So I can drink the water of life
And give myself with all my heart

Contemporary Popular Catholic Music

Of the borderlands under study, those of confessional identity often seem the most porous, as discomfiting as this might prove to ecclesiastical authorities whom insist on orthodox practice. The following sound fragment from a May 2000 overnight pilgrimage to Cuquío in Jalisco’s Los Altos region demonstrates the ways in which popular Catholics perform their own type of bricolage, combining readily recognizable Marian prayers with . . . pentecostal music. While a world away the Vatican was finally recognizing locals’ longstanding veneration of priests martyred during Mexico’s *cristero* wars of the 1920s and 30s, the subaltern *alteño* pilgrims were borrowing from their *aleluya* cousins’ musical culture—forged decades earlier—to give deeper meaning to the arduous mountain trek.

**Sound Fragment:
Pilgrim Prayers and Songs on the Road to Cuquío**

Note that the Oaxacan pentecostal bus riders sang the very same chorus as the *alteño* Catholic pilgrims. Clearly, someone is not minding orthodoxy's store. The sound of pentecostal *coritos* now reverberates in the Oaxaca and Jalisco mountains, as well as in urban spaces such as Mexico City's Basilica of the Virgin of Guadalupe. By the time Vatican II opened the doors and windows of the mass to vernacular languages and sounds, the *aleluya* siblings and cousins of Catholics had prepared an engaging repertoire for the ready borrowing, probably via the Charismatic Renewal. Once again, folks inhabiting borderlands of religious belief and practice proved themselves adept and creative agents. The difficulty in tracing precisely the origin and dissemination of most Latino pentecostal hymns and choruses (how, for example, did "*Alabaré a mi Señor*" ["I Will Praise My Lord"], "*No hay Dios tan grande como Tú*" ["There Is No God Greater than You"], and "*Mas allá del Sol*" ["Beyond the Sun"] travel from pentecostal to mainline Protestant and popular Catholic hymnody?⁵¹) suggests that these ride in the luggage and in the hearts of a very mobile religious proletariat that often does not bother to check in with civil (immigration), ecclesiastical, and academic authorities. In the end, in the U.S.-Mexico Borderlands, popular pentecostalism and popular Catholicism may have more in common than commonly assumed. The continuities seem as important as the discontinuities.

Transgression and Transformation

The *Tigres del Norte* are not the only exponents of transgressive identity, however. Similar tropes of border-crossing, border-transcending loyalties, homesickness and head-to-the-wind doggedness ring out in the compositions of religious composers who hail from the same socio-economic population and who traverse much of the same territory, motivated as much by religious factors as by economic ones. These tropes carry significant explanatory weight and demand attention from students of migratory flow and borderlands identity. Otherwise, the transgressive lyrics of this *corrido* by Coahuila-based mariachi composer, Ramón "El Solitario" González (with at least sixteen recording projects to his credit) would remain inscrutable indeed:

⁵¹The 1989 Spanish-language Catholic hymnal, *Flor y Canto*, includes, among others, old Pentecostal standards such as "*Una Mirada de Fe*" ("A Glimpse of Faith"), "*Alabaré*" ("I Will Praise"), and "*La Mañana Gloriosa*" ("The Glorious Morning"), the latter an anonymous *evangélico* hymn from Colombia. Owen Alstott, ed., *Flor y Canto* (Portland: Oregon Catholic Press, 1989). Edwin Aponte's discussion of *coritos* as "religious symbols in Hispanic Protestant popular religion" can, thus, be expanded to include their resonance in popular Latino Catholic religiosity. Edwin Aponte, "Coritos as Active Symbol in Latino Protestant Popular Religion," *Journal of Hispanic/Latino Theology*, Vol. 2:3 (1995), 57-66.

Los Indocumentados
by Ramón González

Dejé mi patria esperando encontrarme
 Con una vida diferente a mi pasado
 Y me introduje aquí en la union Americana
 Sin pasaporte llegué bien indocumentado

Con ambición de conseguir ciudadanía
 Traté de inmediato de que me dieran trabajo
 Y como estaba ya a las puertas la amnistía
 Conseguí cartas aunque todo fuera falso

Me habían dicho que en este país no hay hambre
 Y que el dinero se conseguía en abundancia
 Por esta causa abandoné yo a mis padres
 Para acabar con la pobreza en que yo estaba

Y ahora me encuentro solo en un país extraño
 Y les confieso que hasta veces he llorado
 Cuando me acuerdo de mis seres tan queridos
 Nomás mi Dios por puro amor me ha consolado

A tí, Señor, que cuidas del desamparado
 Pido que nunca de tu gracia me abandones
 Si en otro tiempo te ofendía en mi arrogancia
 Arrepentido hoy te pido que me perdones

Al otro día por la noche yo buscaba
 Una persona que de Dios me diera razón
 Frente a una esquina una iglesia se encontraba
 Pasar adentro me invitó mi corazón

Oí el mensaje que el ministro mencionaba
 De una nación que Cristo había preparado
 Donde no hay hambres ni dolores ni tristezas
 Ese nación es la que siempre había soñado

Me convertí yo ilusionado al evangelio
 Y espero un día compartirlo a mis padres
 Cuando regrese yo a mi tierra espero verlos
 De Jesucristo y de su amor yo quiero hablarles

Si a este país llegamos a buscar dinero
 Y el evangelio de Jesús nos ha salvado
 Salí ganando y de esto nunca me averguenzo
 Nos ha pasado a muchos indocumentados

The Undocumented Ones
(translation mine)

I left my country hoping to find
 A life different from my past one
 And I slipped into the American Union (U.S.)
 Without a passport I arrived quite undocumented

Eager to obtain citizenship
 I looked immediately for work
 And since amnesty was just around the corner
 I obtained documents, though they were all false

I'd been told there was no hunger in this land
 And that money could be had in abundance
 For this reason I abandoned my parents
 To end the poverty in which I lived

And now I find myself alone in a strange land
 And I confess to you that sometimes I have cried
 When I remember my very dear loved ones
 Only my God out of pure love has consoled me

To you, Lord, who keeps the abandoned one
 I ask that your grace never leave me
 If in other times I offended you in my arrogance
 Repentant, today I ask for your pardon

The other day at nighttime I went searching
 For someone to tell me about God
 Across from the corner there was a church
 My heart invited me to step inside

I heard the message where the preacher spoke
 Of a country that Christ had prepared
 Where there are no hungers, pains nor sadnesses
 That was the land which I had always dreamed

Hopeful, I converted to the gospel
 And I hope to share it one day with my parents
 When I return to my land I hope to see them
 And to tell them about Jesus Christ and his love

Although we come to this land seeking money
 The gospel of Jesus has saved us
 I came out ahead, and I'll never be ashamed
 Of this, the story of many undocumented ones

The purposeful return of one such convert reminds us of the narrative of Rodolfo González, who, at the time of this writing, is preparing to move his Chicana wife and U.S.-born children to Oaxaca once again in order to better attend to his spiritual progeny there.

Migrating Faiths or Transgenic Danger?: Cultural Flux in the Mesoamerican Borderlands

My research in Mixteco, Zapoteco, Huave, Chontal and Tzotzil communities in Oaxaca and Chiapas has had to face squarely anthropological concern over Protestant expansion in indigenous Latin America. At the risk of caricature, I will attempt to summarize this concern in the following manner. First, in their encounter with indigenous religions and societies, the hegemonic agents of Spanish crown and church, in the end, had to settle for a fusion of faith and culture. Second, the resulting hybrid cosmology of indigenous communities has forged traditional *tequio* and *cargo* practices upon whose completion the very welfare of the communities depends. For example, the careful custody of a saint's festive day will assure his/her continued favor and, importantly, abundant rain. Thus, individual compliance with collective expectations ensures communal harmony and life. Third, the maintenance of indigenous languages is central to the survival of indigenous identities. Fourth, the modernity of the last century, like its globalizing precursor of the 15th and 16th centuries, brought with it influences that can fracture the vulnerable ecosystem of indigenous culture. In the battle for the Mexican and indigenous soul, then, sectarian proselytism is of a piece with Coca Cola's predatory marketing practices and American agribusiness' nefarious transgenic food research. Even tongues-talking, miracle-wielding, pre-modern Pentecostals are implicated in the ripping of the sacred canopy.⁵² When threatened, communities will react, often violently, but understandably in defense of their *usos y costumbres*.

This defense of religious and cultural identity often mirrors or parallels the defense of communally held lands and natural resources. Small wonder, then, that in the study of conflicts in southern Mexico it remains difficult to sort out the religious from the economic threads. Furthermore, federal and state authorities have been hard pressed to balance constitutional rights of individual conscience with indigenous communities' rights, to quote Oaxaca's law, "to maintain and develop their own identities."⁵³ The gray legal zone is rendered grayer still by, on the one hand, appeals to international labor and human rights accords and, on the other, the persistent habit of migrating people to pick and choose from the smorgasbord of expanded religious and cultural options. Legally and politically, it is one thing to proscribe *gringo* missionary proselytism, but quite another to keep migrants, especially returning and circulating migrants, and their families in check.

⁵² "Lo significativo por destacar es que las nuevas ofertas religiosas atacan y muchas veces quiebran el principio de reciprocidad de las religiones étnicas, promoviendo el caos simbólico y en consecuencia el desequilibrio social, ya que el orden de la sociedad tiende a asociarse con el orden del universo y la ruptura de uno supone la del otro." Alicia M. Barabas, "Los protagonistas de las alternativas autonómicas," in Alicia M. Barabas and Miguel A. Bartolomé, coords., *Configuraciones étnicas en Oaxaca. Perspectivas etnográficas para las autonomías*, Vol. I (Mexico, D.F.: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1999), 25. See also Enrique Marroquín, "Los identidades religiosos: ¿Intolerancia o resistencia cultural?," in Enrique Marroquín, coord., *¿Persecución religiosa en Oaxaca?* (Oaxaca: Instituto Oaxaqueño de las Culturas, 1995), 71-122; and Toomas Gross, "Conformidad y Contestación: Un Estudio de Normas y Orden Sociocultural en Oaxaca," (Unpublished paper, Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores de Antropología Social-Oaxaca, 1999).

⁵³ Chapter IV of Oaxaca's 1998 *Ley de derechos de los pueblos y comunidades indígenas del Estado de Oaxaca* enshrines collective autonomy: "Artículo 15: Los pueblos y comunidades indígenas tienen derecho social a vivir dentro de sus tradiciones culturales en libertad, paz y seguridad como culturas distintas y a gozar de plenas garantías contra toda forma de discriminación."

The tension between legal regimes (individual vs. collective rights) deserves separate attention. For our purposes, the discursive aspects of that struggle in Oaxaca bears fleshing out. For this last year's discovery of transgenic corn strains in the Oaxacan countryside seems apropos. UC Berkeley researchers Ignacio Chapela and David Quist's controversial discovery set off a chorus of alarm. Frankenfoods, created in cold laboratories in the North, may be silently rampaging against vulnerable native strains in Oaxacan *milpas*. The mode of introduction baffles most researchers, though, especially given legal restraints against the transgenic grains. One hypothesis roughly parallels our discussion here: unwitting migrants may have carried the nefarious seed in their luggage and, thus, opened the breach into which modernity's bio-engineers and other fools are rushing. In the worst-case scenario, the transgenic strain will overwhelm the *criollo* ones. Monsanto and other globalizing giants, in whose labs the super-corn was created, will reap reach royalties once patents are ruled in their favor.

Compare this ascription of unwitting culpability to the discourse of the municipal authority of the Sierra Juárez community of San Juan Yaée, who in 1996 engineered the arrest and expulsion of 40 pentecostal believers and the destruction of their temple.⁵⁴ (The neighboring town of Santa María Yaviche, whose Apostolic congregation had sponsored the one in Yaée offered temporary homes to the refugees.) Yaée's president fended off state and federal scrutiny, and heaped scorn on the dissidents, portraying them as dupes of North American missionaries. In the end, it was his miscalculation to have picked a fight with two congregations of the Iglesia Apostólica, one of Mexico's oldest and most autochthonous Pentecostal churches. The denomination, founded by a returned female migrant from Chihuahua in 1914, and with, at the time of these events, over 50 years of history in Oaxaca and a strong congregation in Oaxaca City, leveraged considerable support in a struggle against religious intolerance and official caprice. Essentially, the Zapoteco Pentecostals of San Juan Yaée availed themselves of the resources of, to quote Benedict Anderson, an "imagined community"⁵⁵ much wider than that controlled by a capricious cacique, under whose custody the exercise of "*usos y costumbres*" had devolved, in the words of the Apostolic bishop of Oaxaca, into one of "*mañas*" as well.⁵⁶ The public relations battle was fought out mostly in the Oaxacan and national press. Press photos of 60-year-old Imelda Yescas (a returned migrant domestic worker from Mexico City who founded the congregation with another woman) languishing behind the *ayuntamiento*'s jail bars proved too strong even for detached observers, and made that battle an easier one for the dissidents to win. In the end, an unprecedented publicly signed agreement—witnessed by state officials and the state press—marked the Apostolics' successful return to San Juan Yaée in 1998. The community pledged tolerance and the Pentecostals compliance with communal *tequios* and *cargos*. The community later also assumed the *tequio* obligation to rebuild the Apostolic temple. Thus, Mexican national identity and citizenship prerogatives were balanced with collective and *reciprocal* obligations. The negotiation over new identities involved no *gringo* mischief. Instead, female agency had proved to be one of the most persistent elements in pushing the envelope of religious change.

While conspiracy theories about Protestant growth in Latin America have largely lost their currency, many researchers still harbor deep suspicions about the meaning of and reasons for *cambio religioso*. Still, until the last decade, few paused to query the practitioners

⁵⁴ "Interviene CEDH en caso religioso de San Juan Yaée," *Noticias*, May 7, 1996, A1.

⁵⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).

⁵⁶ Interview with Joel Lopez, March 4, 2002.

themselves; most researchers relied on official or elite or activist perspectives.⁵⁷ Happily, the question of gender has begun to present itself in recent anthropological studies in Columbia, Brazil, Peru, and Chiapas. Rosalva Hernández' recent study of Mam (Mayan) Jehovah's Witnesses and Presbyterians in Chiapas (*Stories From Chiapas*, University of Texas Press, 2002) augurs well for an overdue change in Mexican scholarship on the topic.

To take one example, the anthropological alarm over Protestant growth translates into a concern over whether *evangélico* converts will desist in playing for saints' days, *fiestas*, and other events where, in the eyes of the Protestant "idolatry" runs rampant and alcohol flows too freely. Increased conversion rates may sound the death knell of rich, longstanding musical traditions such as Oaxaca's wind orchestra, or *banda*. Most probably, though, the Oaxacan countryside will not fall silent. New and re-worked sounds will mix with older ones to create hybrid musics. After all, such was the case in the fusion of musics represented by the *banda* tradition, which built on instrumental elements brought to Oaxaca during the colonial period and adapted similarly imported martial and other European musical forms during the presidencies of native sons Benito Juárez and Porfirio Díaz.⁵⁸ Similarly, Oaxacan indigenous Pentecostals of the mid and late 20th century are busily refashioning a religious musical culture to call their own (Prior to the 1996 jailings in San Juan Yaée, that town's *banda* marched and played in the inauguration of neighboring Santa María Yaviche's Iglesia Apostólica temple.) What has remained constant in both cases is the element of flux. Researchers may err in insisting on freezing and essentializing the cultural flow.

Researchers also may err in postulating binary oppositions between individual and collective identities. A new research model should take into account overlapping and complex collectivities for folks who are at once both indigenous and other (*evangélico*, migrant, multi-occupational, female, gay, etc.). The various identities may represent relational complexities rather than a polarizing schizophrenia or a newly worked reciprocity rather than zero-sum cultural equations.

As researchers cast about for a more adequate theoretical model for religious change in Latin America (and North America), and puzzle over the relatively higher attraction of Pentecostalism among indigenous people, their analysis may benefit from new mappings that take into account migration flows and migrant agency. The new mappings will require careful soundings as much as careful sightings.

⁵⁷ Carlos Garma noted this imbalance in a 1988 review. Carlos Garma Navarro, "Los estudios antropológicos sobre el protestantismo en México," *Iztapalapa* (1988), No. 15, 53-66.

⁵⁸ Felipe Flores Dorantes and Rafael A. Ruiz Torres, "Las bandas de viento: una rica y ancestral tradición de Oaxaca," *Acervos* (verano 2001), No. 22, 33-57; Javier Castro Mantecón, *Efemerides de la banda de música del estado* (Oaxaca: Casa de la Cultura Oaxaqueña, 1983).