Seen and Heard in Mexico: Children and Revolutionary Cultural Nationalism by Elena Jackson Albarrán (review)

Stephanie Mitchell

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states of Sonora and Sinaloa. Chantal Cramausell challenges the historiographical notion that northern Mexican mines attracted voluntary workers, arguing that natives in Nueva Vizcaya and Sinaloa were forced to relocate. Alan Taylor compares and contrasts the legacies of US immigrants to Upper Canada, Spanish Louisiana, and Texas after Mexican independence. Brian DeLay's provocative essay casts the violence between Navajo and New Mexicans (the allied Spanish, Pueblo, and mixed peoples described by Hämäläinen) as mutually understood "blood talk" that worked to limit conflict. Violence and enslavement escalated when this understanding collapsed after Mexican Independence.

An emphasis on visual representations of space as historical narrative also surfaces. Elizabeth Fenn frames her essay about the ravages of disease among the Mandans, as well as their recovery, by considering a small section of a 1906–07 Mandan map. Ned Blackhawk explores the historical context of the Segesser hide paintings from early colonial New Mexico. Although the paintings are visually more suggestive of tapestry scenes than maps, each depicts a historical event in a particular landscape. Birgit Brander Rasmussen analyzes the sketchbook of a Kiowa, depicting the story of his captivity and journey to his 1875 imprisonment in Florida, as "literary practice." This reader wished for a closer reading of visual evidence, especially the ghost image of an additional figure on horseback and the atypical style in Plate 3, titled "Young Kiowas dressed for a ceremonial visit." In the final essay, Samuel Truett returns to the vestiges of ancient civilizations, showing how Anglo-Americans appropriated them during western expansion.

As a whole, the volume demonstrates that borderlands are central to understanding the American past—a fitting testimony to David Weber's legacy.

Gettysburg College BARBARA A. SOMMER
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania

MODERN PERIOD

Elena Jackson Albarrán, *Seen and Heard in Mexico: Children and Revolutionary Cultural Nationalism*. University of Nebraska Press, 2015. Pp. 414. Notes. Bibliography. Index. $75.00 cloth; $35.00 paper.
doi:10.1017/tam.2016.88

Jackson Albarrán undertakes an ambitious project to take seriously the idea of age as a category of analysis, setting out to view the postwar period through the eyes of children. She refers to the period from 1920 to 1940 as "two child-centered decades." This was true both nationally and internationally, in the wake of the 1924 Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the advent of pan-American child conferences. Ambitious educators drove both the rapid expansion of public education and unwieldy shifts in the

national curriculum under the direction of the Rational School, the Action School, and then the Socialist School.

State-sponsored schools, periodicals, radio programs, and participation in boys and girls clubs created for probably the first time the notion of an age-segregated imagined community that was both national and international. For example, the government-sponsored monthly children's magazine called *Pulgarcito* was filled with artwork submitted by the children themselves, creating a sense of community with unseen children elsewhere. Similarly, official radio programs offered prizes to students who submitted entries in response to questions based on program content. Winners of both print and radio contests became famous among their peers, a distinction to which all young readers and listeners could aspire.

As the subtitle suggests, this book helps us visualize the development of Mexican nationalism as that process was experienced by children. For example, the artwork submitted to *Pulgarcito* both emerged from and was judged by the standards of a national art curriculum pioneered in the 1920s, which is the origin of a visual shorthand for Mexicanness that is still recognizable today. Nationalism and internationalism reinforced one another. As schoolchildren corresponded with pen pals or traded gifts with peers in other countries, they were encouraged to think about what activities, images, or objects were "typically Mexican." From these exercises, emerged clichéd symbols like the *charro* and *china poblana*, which came to represent the nation both at home and abroad.

Jackson Albarrán also exposes the way children, like their parents, engaged in a dialectical process of nation-building, in partnership and also in tension with the state. Government-produced puppet shows proved wildly popular among their young audiences, but the intended didactic messages behind the stories were not always interpreted as intended. For example, the writers of the play *Comino Defeats the Devil* intended children to absorb a message about how a united proletariat could unmask and overcome deceitful, greedy landowners. Many children were impressed instead only by the part of the story in which Comino gets to hit the bad guy with a stick, while others were too frightened of the figure wearing a devil mask to sit through the performance. Administrators, however, solicited and took seriously feedback from instructors who reported on how well their students responded to the pedagogical aims of the puppet program. They also adapted future puppet shows in response to the feedback they received.

To view revolutionary programs through the eyes of children is a challenge, in which Jackson Albarrán is aided by her own especially strong skills in visual literacy. For example, she is able to use children's drawings as information-rich texts. Detailed analysis of children's art can reveal how girls and boys responded differently to programming about streetcar safety, or what impressed them most in a puppet show. The same skills parse out from photographs the difference between adult observers at a national children's conference and child participants: the adults expressed a hyper-awareness of gender difference and tended to conflate gender and ethnicity, while the children did neither. However, even this resourceful approach to sources could

not overcome the bias in the source materials themselves—their over-representation of middle-class urban children, and their neglect of rural, poorer, and indigenous children who did not have the time or means to mail in answers to radio quizzes, submit their drawings for possible publication, or attend gatherings in the capital that reinforced the sense of children's community.

Carthage College
Kenosha, Wisconsin

STEPHANIE MITCHELL

Samuel Steinberg, *Photopoetics at Tlatelolco: Afterimages of Mexico, 1968*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016. Pp. 266. $80.00 cloth; $27.95 paper.
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Samuel Steinberg examines the artistic commemorations of the Tlatelolco Massacre, a government-led slaughter of student protesters on October 2, 1968. Against the recent specter of the 2014 assassination of 43 students from Ayotzinapa the publication of Steinberg's monograph feels especially urgent. Today, at nearly 50 years' distance, the Tlatelolco Massacre is a singular trauma in Mexico's history even as the issues raised by the event—Mexico's stifling civil society, a press bolstered by payola, and state-sanctioned violence—remain salient.

Steinberg's nuanced, theoretically rigorous, and historically astute readings of artists' creative responses to Tlatelolco will interest cultural historians, literary scholars, and media specialists of Mexico. His study provides a fruitful dialogue with Gareth Williams's *The Mexican Exception* and Bruno Bosteels's *Marx and Freud in Latin America*: it is most suited to those concerned with the interplay between photographic memory, political subjectivization, and literature. This sharp analysis is indebted to Roger Bartra's crusade against the enduring shibboleths of "Mexicanism"—defined by Steinberg as "the philosophical and aesthetic counterpart to the logic of the Mexican state" (182).

Steinberg attempts to wrest the visual and narrative archive of 1968 from the sycophantic behemoth of the Mexican state and its phalanx of intellectuals. Read against current understandings of canonical texts inspired by the Tlatelolco Massacre—Carlos Monsiváis's *Días de guardar* (1970), Elena Poniatowska's *La noche de Tlatelolco: testimonios de historia oral* (1971), and director Jorge Fons's film *Rojo amanecer* (1990), among others—Steinberg's work overturns many "high pieties in Latin Americanism and beyond, among them, the maudlin and Christological affair called La noche de Tlatelolco" (84). His incisive readings subvert top-down, state-endorsed interpretations of the mass killing, which melodramatically cast the perished student protesters as sacrificial lambs whose death regenerated the social contract between state and citizenry. Concerned with how the complex historical and political processes surrounding 1968