New Mexico Historical Review

Volume 49 | Number 3 Article 3

7-1-1974

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DURANGO AND THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION

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In 1927 Lyford P. Edwards, an early student of revolution cogently argued that revolutions do not produce social change, but rather that they are an indication that vast changes have already occurred within a society.[1] It is sixty-four years since the outbreak of the Mexican Revolution, one of the first social revolutions of the twentieth century. Since then a vast amount of scholarly work has focused on the Revolution, but it is only within the last six or seven years that a new generation of Mexicanists has begun to examine in minute detail its internal mechanisms. The revolutionary movement was highly eclectic, and lacked a coherent ideology on the national level, but many historians of the Revolution have treated it as if there were such an ideology. The so-called "custodians of the Revolution" have consistently maintained that the primary impetus for the Revolution was political oppression by the regime of Porfirio Díaz. In general, this has been widely accepted until recently when revisionist students of Mexican history have become increasingly critical of this outlook. New interest in the Porfiriato indicates that "the Díaz dictatorship is properly the formative era of modern Mexico."[2] Nevertheless, our understanding of the dynamics of the "Age of Díaz" is far from satisfying. As Anthony Byran notes:

> the sophistication of mid-twentieth century historical investigation notwithstanding, many serious gaps exist in our knowledge of the Díaz era—yet it is on this tenuous basis that many have chosen to erect their arguments about the origins and progress of the Revolution.[3]

In order to remedy this situation, a rewarding approach would be to examine the origins of the Revolution on the local and state level. We need to know much more about the workings of the Díaz political system in this regard. What rôle did the governor play in the political system? How effective was he? Was he simply a "yes man" who carried out Don Porfirio's instructions from Mexico City or was he permitted some degree of autonomy? What were his relationships with the local *jefes políticos?* Were they appointed or elected, and how much influence did the governor exercise over them? What rôles did the *rurales* and the regular army play in local politics?

We also need to know a great deal more about the process of socioeconomic development at the state level. What effect did the arrival of the railroads have on local economy? How did foreign and native capital affect the development of regional economies? What was the rôle of the mining sector; what the effect of the division of the agricultural sector into traditional and commercial, entrepreneurial haciendas, upon tenure patterns? Were the peasants being driven off their lands, and to what extent were communal Indian ejidos alienated? How do we explain the tremendous growth of the ranchero class, and what accelerated or retarded the development of this new social group in the various states? Much further research is required about the development of local groups in opposition to Díaz' modernization policies and their part in the disintegration of Porfirian Mexico.

The Mexican Revolution, after all, was not a revolution, but rather a series of mini-revolutions directed at local and regional grievances. While many of the grievances were national in scope, they often assumed peculiar local characteristics. Few Mexicanists, I think, would dispute that the local conditions which sparked the Zapatista uprising in the south and the Villista rebellion in the north were similar in some aspects. Nevertheless they can best be comprehended when one studies their dissimilarities.

Most students of modernization would agree that a successful revolution is highly dependent upon the disintegration of the traditional social order—a rotting corpse being much easier to

destroy than a healthy body.[4] In Durango, the traditional social order, based on an hacendado-controlled cattle grazing economy, was seriously undermined by the onset of modernization which resulted from the impingement of exogenous economic forces, primarily North American, on the Durangueño economy. The Díaz policy of encouraging and abetting the investment of foreign capital in the Mexican economy accelerated the process.

With the return of stable political conditions that marked the rise of Porfirio Díaz, U. S. capital began to pour into Durango. By 1880 North American interests had replaced British in controlling Durango's mining sector. When the railroads reached the Laguna region of Durango in the 1880's and 1890's, North American capital began to be invested in the rapidly expanding commercial agricultural sector. The entrance of massive amounts of U. S. capital had serious repercussions for the old order. American control of the mining industry tied the state's economy to an increasingly erratic world silver market, and the fall in the price of silver after 1890 led to widespread unemployment. In commercial agriculture, the growth of capital-intensive joint-stock-company haciendas eventually destroyed the old hacendado-client relationship when rapacious, entrepreneurial hacendados began pushing the peasants off the land, and taking over crucial water rights in the very dry Laguna region. They deliberately abolished the old debt-peonage labor system in favor of a more mobile wage-labor force. This, coupled with the avaricious land policies of the hacendados, rent the fabric of the old rural social order.

Almost inevitably economic power seeks political power. The new hacendados proceeded to do just that. In the Laguna region most municipalities were controlled either directly or indirectly by the commercial agricultural elite. At the state level the dominance of American capital was aided and protected by the Díaz governors, who had close ties to both the mining and commercial agriculture sectors. This led to increasing unrest among the miners and the new rural agricultural proletariat, not to mention the middle-sector groups of Ciudad Durango who saw themselves bypassed when the economic focus of the state shifted to the

Laguna. Side effects of these changes were the development of middle-sector opposition parties in the state capital, the rise of highly vocal anti-American sentiment, increasing rural violence, and finally, revolution.

Any study of Durango must include a survey of the land, for the land question is of paramount importance in comprehending the course of the Revolution. Situated just south of Chihuahua and east of Sinaloa, Durango encompasses 123,520 square kilometers, but only 25,000 to 30,000 square kilometers are arable. The Sierra Madre and the lack of adequate rainfall help account for the shortage of agriculturally fertile land. The most important area is the Oriente, or Arid Zone (Laguna), in the east. Prior to 1876 these factors, particularly the absence of sufficient rainfall, led to the development of an hacienda-based cattle economy. Shortage of water was a handicap that could only be surmounted by an extensive irrigation system necessitating large amounts of capital.[5]

Efforts to alleviate the water shortage in the Laguna began in the late 1840's, when three hacendados commenced the damming of the Nazas River. In time this led to the creation of an extensive irrigation system. With the introduction of cotton an important plantation economy began to evolve. The development of the Laguna from an arid wasteland to a highly profitable plantation economy triggered precipitous escalation in land values and population. At the outset of the Porfiriato, land in the Laguna could be purchased for one peso per hectare. By 1910 first-class land was commanding 202 pesos per hectare. In fact, land in the Laguna became so valuable that many hacendados preferred to rent out their land rather than cultivate it, simply because it brought a higher return.[6]

During the Porfiriato, Durango's population grew rapidly, but unlike the majority of Mexican states, whose population increases were greatest during the initial years of the Díaz regime, Durango's population increased more in the later period. Ciudad Durango, however, remained stagnant, while the Laguna experienced a tremendous rise in population. Lerdo, for example,

tripled its population between 1882 and 1910, and nearby Mapimí increased a hundredfold.[7] The principal factor in slowing population growth during the early period is usually thought to be the effect of Indian raids, which lasted into the 1880's. Other factors were the wars of the Reforma, numerous epidemics, and lack of an adequate transportation network in northern Mexico.[8] After 1884 the establishment of peace and the development of a transportation network stimulated Durango's population increase. The building of the Mexican Central and Mexican International Railroads between 1882 and 1892 linked Durango with the rest of Mexico for the first time. At the same time the growth of commercial agriculture and the mining industry lured thousands of immigrants to the state.[9] Nevertheless, Durango retained its rural character and, unlike some states, never developed an urban complex.[10]

The absence of adequate transportation was a major factor in hindering economic development. Before 1870 Durango was virtually cut off from Mexico City. Pack mules were the principal method of transportation and more than 60,000 of these animals were used in the Durango-Chihuahua trade. At the end of the French intervention, the state slowly began to build the economic foundation so vital for development.[11]

The Mexican Central Railroad laid track through Torreón in 1882; within ten years the Mexican International followed suit. Basically, railroad construction followed an economic rationale. More than any other single factor, the growth of commercial agriculture in the Laguna determined the course of the railroads. It was hardly accidental that both railroads converged in Torreón, in the heart of the prosperous Laguna, which was rapidly becoming the most dynamic part of the Durangueño economy. The construction of ancillary lines was designed chiefly to cater to the needs of the burgeoning mining industry.[12] The railroads served Durango's major economic interests well. Production increased dramatically in the mining industry when the mines could ship out lower grade ores for processing, which prohibitive transportation costs had earlier prevented.[13] The decision of both major railroads

to lay track through the Laguna brought the region to the economic take-off stage and the final phase in the shift of the state's economic center from Ciudad Durango to the Laguna.

In spite of the mining boom and accelerated growth of the commercial cotton plantations in the 1890's, there was little improvement in commerce between 1896 and 1911. Durango attained its commercial apogee in 1896 when the volume of trade reached 5.7 million pesos; by 1904 it had declined to 3.5 million pesos, and remained more or less static for the remainder of the Porfiriato.[14]

There are various reasons for this economic lag. First, the state continued to rely heavily on the *alcabala* for revenue. Efforts to abolish it had been initiated as early as 1866, but the resulting loss of revenue threw the state's finances into such confusion that after four years the alcabala was reintroduced. In addition, a number of internal taxes on the importation of foreign goods severely restricted trade because they brought about an artificial rise in prices. The mining industry entered into a period of marked decline after 1895 as a result of the downward trend of prices on the world silver market. Now, with the railroads and most of the major mines and industries, as well as commercial agriculture, concentrated in the Laguna, it is highly probable that most of the goods were shipped in and out of Torreón. If this is true, the state's commercial decline was artificial rather than actual.[15]

Durango's mining industry was concentrated in American hands. Prior to 1880 the industry had been dominated by British capital. Soon after the rise of Díaz, U. S. capital had poured into the state. The pattern of development involved denouncing old claims and then reworking them with modern technology. By far the most important mineral was silver, which far outdistanced other minerals in terms of total value. In 1902, for example, silver production reached nearly 13 million pesos; while gold, its nearest competitor, accounted for only 1.7 million pesos. The importance of the domination of silver cannot be overestimated since it linked the Durango mines to the erratic world silver market.[16]

In part, Durango's one-sided economic development can be attributed to overreliance on silver production. Between 1870 and 1910, Mexico poured more than $40,000,000 worth of silver into the world market. While silver production continued to rise, demand began to decrease as one European country after another renounced bimetalism and adopted the gold standard. In addition, beginning in 1893, when business panic and depression rocked the United States, Mexican silver reeled under a series of telling blows. To make the situation even worse, the United States Congress repealed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act and the British announced that their Indian mints would stop coining silver. Furthermore, the Mexican peso, which had long been the standard currency in the Far East, began to lose its monopoly when the Chinese decided to mint their own silver dollar. Finally, during this same period the price of silver began a steady decline in the United States, the major purchaser of Mexican silver.[17]

The ramifications of the world silver crisis reached Durango in the first decade of the twentieth century, forcing the shutdown of a number of mines. Just prior to the Revolution, the Velardeña mines in the Laguna suspended operations, throwing over five thousand miners out of work. In Parrilla, near Nombre de Dios, the population rose and fell with the boom-and-bust cycle of the local mines. In Topia, Indé, and San Luis Ocampo, a number of mines were closed and unemployment rose steadily. These and numerous other closures dislocated many mineworkers, who were now forced to roam the state in search of work.[18]

Undoubtedly, the most significant cause determining the course of the Revolution in Durango was the land problem. The emergence of the commercial agricultural plantation in the Laguna exacerbated and accelerated the disruption of the traditional social order which previously had rested upon a cattle-grazing economy.

In Durango, the population increase during the Porfiriato was directly related to the increase in the number of ranchos. In 1893, there were 571 ranchos in Durango, but by 1910 there were 2,458. There was a definite geographical pattern in their development.

The areas outside the Laguna witnessed the largest increase. A partial explanation for this pattern is that in the areas which had the largest number of rural property holders, the land tended to be of inferior quality, and thus of little interest to the more commercially minded hacendados. Another important consideration was the relative availability of unoccupied lands, owing to the decline in population during the Indian raids. Finally, the majority of the large commercial haciendas were concentrated in the Laguna, which left a sizeable portion of the state open to the development of medium-sized ranchos. In fact, the districts which contained the largest number of ranchos were also the districts with the fewest number of haciendas.[19]

Without question, the large commercial plantation-hacienda monopolized the land. Although there were 155 haciendas in 1810, and a century later the number had declined to 143, the increasing tendency of the haciendas to consolidate accounts for this decline. Together, these haciendas controlled over 4,500,000 hectares of land in the Laguna alone. The majority were under 50,000 hectares, but the most important were in excess of 100,000 hectares. Furthermore, the average size of the Durango haciendas was 51,725 hectares, well above the national average of 5,632 hectares.[20]

Most of the large haciendas were situated in the Laguna; in fact, of the ten largest haciendas in the state in 1910, all were located there.[21] Essentially, there were three types of haciendas operating in the Laguna: the traditional hacienda, haciendas administered by companies to which the owners had rented the land, and the joint-stock-company hacienda. Clearly, the most important of these three was the foreign controlled joint-stock company. In many respects these operations were quite distinct from their traditional counterparts. On joint-stock-company haciendas labor was paid a daily cash wage and each worker was provided with a house and a few animals. Unlike their compadres who labored on the traditional haciendas, the workers were not given subsistence agricultural plots, but neither were they attached to the soil

through debt. The nature of the commercial cotton hacienda demanded a highly mobile labor force, not one tied to the soil. Nearly all supplies, including staples, were purchased outside the hacienda. The laborer was paid a cash wage, not company store script. These corporations felt that cash wages would stimulate the development of labor specialization, which they considered more efficient than the old debt peonage system. Thus the old paternalistic relationship between the hacendado and his peones was replaced by a capitalistic and impersonal system of wage labor. The commercial hacienda, unlike its more traditional predecessor, was not an independent political unit. Nevertheless, the commercial haciendas did wield tremendous political influence in the local municipios, which for the most part, they managed to control outright. In the Laguna, the commercial haciendas created a new class of owners, with a few mayordomos and a large rootless rural proletariat. There was virtually no middle sector, and little interchange between the owners and their workers. Moreover, the increasing demand for labor brought a large number of immigrants who were no longer tied to the old system into the state. This, coupled with the fluctuating water supply and the nonresident wage-labor system which these entrepreneurial hacendados introduced, produced a continous flow of internal and external migration and further hastened the decline of the old order.[22]

The introduction of commercial agriculture created a constant demand for more land and labor. Indeed, more than any other single factor, the land encroachment and labor policies of the commercial haciendas were responsible for the mounting tension within the social structure. Throughout the Porfiriato, the haciendas were constantly faced with labor shortages. To solve this problem, the hacendados adopted various tactics. Land encroachment policies were designed not only to secure more land, but more labor. The loss of village lands forced many landless peasants to look to the commercial haciendas for employment. To meet their labor needs the hacendados encouraged immigration. In the Cuencamé district alone, over five thousand immigrants tended

the fields of the district's four major haciendas. Finally, a number of hacendados, particularly in the northern Laguna, resorted to various sharecropping schemes.[23]

The continual expansion of the commercial haciendas at the expense of the pueblos exacerbated existing social tensions. As early as 1884 the pueblos of the Laguna marshaled protests against the indiscriminate application of the 1884 Díaz land law, maintaining that the surveying companies were displacing legitimate landholders in favor of the hacendados. Perhaps the best example of this occurred in the district of Cuencamé. On the eve of the Revolution the population of the district was 41,000; yet Cuencamé's free pueblos were all but defunct. Over one million hectares of land were in the domain of the district's twelve haciendas. Much of this land had been acquired illegally with the aid of sympathetic government officials like Governor Esteban Fernández, who was instrumental in the expansion of the Hacienda de Santa Clara. In fact, the situation in Cuencamé had deteriorated to such a degree that Governor Fernández, fearing peasant uprisings, thought it wise to garrison troops in the district to preserve order.[24]

Along with the struggle for control of the land there was a battle for control of the precious waters of the Río Nazas. In addition to fomenting commercial agriculture, the numerous dams on the Nazas brought about the establishment of a number of pueblos along the river. Assured of a plentiful water supply, these pueblos prospered until construction of a new dam in 1880 threatened to cut off their water. The pueblos made numerous protests to the Federal government calling for a halt to dam construction. The Secretaría de Gobernación ordered a halt to construction of new dams on the Nazas. The hacendados, however, were not to be denied. Ignoring the suspension order, they continued construction of the new dam, which was completed in 1889. The question of who controlled the water rights to the Nazas was so important to the economy of the Laguna that the state of Durango and neighboring Coahuila became embroiled in a legal battle over the issue which dragged through the Federal

courts for years until Díaz nationalized the waters of Mexico in 1888.[25]

The states of Durango and Coahuila clashed over water rights on numerous other occasions. Neither party was pleased by the increased damming of the Nazas by the Durangueño hacendados, and a rift within the ruling elite ensued. The principal losers were the pueblos of the Laguna whose efforts to obtain a just settlement of the water question proved futile. Finally, the struggle of the pueblos provided the vecinos with a bitter education in the inefficacy of peaceful protest. Its failure undoubtedly served to radicalize the orientation of their future efforts.

The creation of a rural proletariat proved crucial during the Revolution, and was another source of tension within Durangueño society. Although some of the rural working class were employed in industry and mining, the majority were agricultural laborers. Wages in the mining industry were the highest in the state, even though in the Durango mines they were slightly below the national average. They were generally lower in the cotton textile industry than in the mines. In other industries they sank even lower. The lowest wages in the state were paid to agricultural laborers. Low pay was responsible in part for the creation of a highly mobile work force, for many workers took to the road in search of better employment.[26] When the time came, a good many of these displaced peasants joined the rebel armies.

Increased tension between the rural work force and their employers was sparked by three factors: low wages; the dominance of Americans in the mining industry; and the *tienda de raya* of the mining industry. Moreover, in the mines an American machinist received from five to ten pesos per day while his Mexican counterpart was paid only one to three pesos for equal work.[27]

The development of an embryonic labor movement had begun in 1882 with the formation of the Sociedad de Obreros Católicos in Ciudad Durango. Although little is known about this organization, there is some evidence indicating that the union was involved in a strike against the Cerro del Mercado mine in 1884. Two major strikes in 1907 involved local workers in the strike

demands of the nation's railroad and textile workers. It is hard to assess the rôle of local workers in these strikes, but the fact that they did participate would suggest that they were cognizant of the nationwide labor movement. The most important local strike occurred on April 7, 1909, at the Velardeña mines. A large spontaneous demonstration by the workers to protest low wages and the influence of Americans in the mines was violently suppressed by Federal troops at the command of Governor Fernández. This nascent union movement could have provided the workers with invaluable organizational experiences. Probably the repressive fashion in which the local government dealt with the challenge served to further politicize the workers.[28]

A strong anti-American sentiment among the mine workers was demonstrably growing during the fading years of the Porfiriato. As an aftermath of the 1890's silver boom the number of Americans in Durango greatly increased. Clashes were inevitable when the peasants who were pushed off the land found their way into the mines. Throughout the 1890's and the first decade of the twentieth century, American consular officials in Durango continued to report more anti-Americanism and clashes between American and Mexican workers within the state. The Velardeña mines were often singled out by American officials as the strongest source of anti-Americanism. It is little wonder, then, that when the Revolution erupted, the mines quickly became a frequent target of the rebel bands.

Curiously, the workers' anti-American sentiment appears to have been shared by local jefes políticos who resented the favoritism shown to American-owned mines and haciendas by the State's governors. Time and again, the governors overrode the decisions of the local authorities. In one notable incident, Governor Fernández impeached a member of the State supreme court, who was accused of attacking an American miner. There is also evidence of anti-American sentiment in the local press. In 1897, *La Evolución* bitterly denounced the United States for refusing to return an American citizen, who was sought in connection with the murder of a Mexican national, to Durango. It is hardly

surprising that less than three months after the outbreak of the Revolution, the U. S. consul reported that between fifty and seventy-five per cent of Durango's population was anti-American.[29]

The continued domination and intransigence of Durango's inflexible political elite greatly intensified the mounting social conflict. At the beginning of the Porfiriato, the state was plagued by political instability. General Juan Manuel Flores was the first Díaz governor to survive a full term in office, but in 1880 Díaz changed his mind and replaced Flores with a civilian, Francisco Gómez del Palacio. Within two years, Díaz, apparently disenchanted with Gómez del Palacio's performance, quietly began urging Flores to attack the efficiency of the Gómez del Palacio administration. Shortly afterwards Gómez del Palacio died, throwing the state into political confusion. The question of succession was resolved in 1884 when Díaz once again placed the governorship in the hands of Flores. With the assumption of power by Flores, the full impact of the Porfiriato reached Durango.[30]

Flores was reelected four times, making him one of the longest ruling of the Díaz governors. During his administration, Durango began to make economic progress, partly as a result of the tranquil political climate he managed to establish. His death in 1897 produced a temporary resurgence of political instability when Díaz once more had difficulty in selecting a successor. Between 1897 and 1904 a number of governors came and went. Finally, in 1904, Díaz decided upon Esteban Fernández, who remained in power until mid-1911.[31]

The principal preoccupation of the Díaz governors was the protection of foreign mining interests, primarily North American, and those of the commercial haciendas. According to American consular officials, the governors were quite willing to cooperate with American interests and in general displayed an extremely hospitable attitude. Furthermore, both Governors Flores and Fernández were closely linked to mining and commercial agricultural interests. Besides protecting these economic interest groups, the governors were constantly promoting the development of transportation facilities, which mainly benefited the state's economic

elites.[32] One instance of the governor's favoritism toward the haciendas took place in 1901. In that year, Governor Fernández came to the aid of the Hacienda de Sombretillos, near Cuencamé, in its efforts to obtain the land of nearby Indian pueblos. Ignoring the fact that the pueblos held legal titles to their lands dating back to the colonial era, Fernández appointed an arbiter in the case, who, as one might expect, ruled in favor of the Hacienda de Sombretillos.[33] As the tension in the Laguna mounted during the waning years of the Porfiriato, State officials sought to maximize their control over the rural populace. In 1905 General Bernardo Reyes recommended to Governor Fernández that troops be permanently stationed in the Laguna in order to reduce the possibility of an armed uprising, a suggestion which Fernández prudently followed.[34]

Organized political opposition to the Díaz regime in Durango centered in Ciudad Durango among the city's professional classes. A local chapter of the Liberal Party was organized in 1900. Almost immediately after the ill-fated Liberal Party Congress of 1901, the Durango chapter was suppressed during a nationwide crackdown on political opposition groups. Yet, it is evident that the Liberal Party did have some influence in stimulating political consciousness. In his study of the Liberal Party, James Cockcroft lists a number of Laguna revolutionaries, who, he contends, were affiliated with the Liberal Party, the most prominent being Calixto Contreras.[35]

Another opposition party which protested against the government was the Partido Democrático de México. The party was supported primarily by middle-income groups, as was the local chapter of the Anti-reelectionist Party, founded by Pastor Rouaix. In connection with his 1910 presidential campaign, Francisco Madero made two whistle-stop tours through the state, bringing with him a spirit of hope for this new generation of anti-Díaz political activists. In addition to political opposition in Ciudad Durango, there was much similar activity in Torreón, which, because of its proximity to the Laguna, was bound to influence the region. The fact that the Lerdo-Gómez Palacio-Torreón axis

witnessed the first onslaught of the Revolution suggests that pre-revolutionary political dissent was an important catalyst in educating and radicalizing potential revolutionaries.[36]

Perhaps the most common form of opposition in Durango was the long-standing tradition of banditry. Over the years the state produced a number of notable bandits, the most nationally famous being Pancho Villa, who was born on an hacienda in the heart of the Laguna, and Tomás Urbina, who later became one of Villa's most trusted generals. The most famous local bandit was Heraclio Bernal, who operated in the state for more than twelve years until his death at the hands of the rurales in 1888. The government had placed a price of ten thousand pesos on his head, a reflection of his importance. In an editorial about the government campaign against him, *La Bandera Roja* commented:

> Terror. We know that it is expanding among the inhabitants of the Sierra as the government troops march against Bernal. We have heard speak of many executions, of many victims of cruelties which we know cause horror . . . We agree that it is necessary to capture Bernal, but the sentiments of humanity rebel when one considers the number of innocent victims . . .[37]

Many American miners recalled that the mines were a frequent target for the state's numerous outlaw bands.[38] These diverse and dissimilar forms of political opposition lead one to surmise that a fairly long-standing and well-entrenched predisposition to oppose the government existed, particularly among the lower classes, and it was readily transformed into revolutionary activity.

The Maderist phase of the Mexican Revolution in Durango commenced on November 20, 1910, when a small band of rebels attacked Gómez Palacio. Momentarily successful, the rebels were soon driven out by Federal troops.

As the fatal days of 1910 drew to a close, Durango's social system was near collapse. The state was dominated by an intransigent political elite, whose sole purpose seems to have been to serve Díaz and the state's mining and commercial agricultural interests. This resulted in the birth of a political opposition movement among

the workers and the peasants. The economic slump in the mining industry provoked a downward trend in the Durangueño economy resulting in rising unemployment and increasing worker discontent. The introduction of commercial agriculture in the Laguna and the concomitant escalation of land encroachment by the hacendados seriously weakened the traditional social order, kindling a strong desire for agrarian reform among the peasants. Indeed, land reform became the rallying cry for the Revolution. Small groups of armed men began to consolidate in the countryside. The strain which modernization had placed upon rapidly deteriorating social conditions was bound to open up Pandora's box, and in early February 1911 the Revolution re-erupted simultaneously in several areas of the state.

NOTES

1. Lyford P. Edwards, *The Natural History of Revolution* (Chicago, 1927).

2. Anthony Bryan, "The Politics of the Porfiriato: A Research Review," *Latin American Studies Working Papers* (Indiana University, 1973), p. 2. This short article contains an excellent review of recent scholarship on the Porfiriato as well as information on current research projects.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

4. Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Order in Changing Societies* (New Haven, 1968); C. E. Black, *The Dynamics of Modernization* (New York, 1966); Chalmers Johnson, *Revolution and the Social System* (Stanford, 1964).

5. *The Mexican Yearbook, 1909-1910* (México, 1910), p. 10; Pastor Rouaix, "El fraccionamiento de la propiedad en los estados fronterizos," in Jesús Silva Herzog, ed., *La cuestión de la tierra* (México, 1961), vol. 1, p. 309.

6. Matías Romero, *Geographical and Statistical Notes on Mexico* (New York, 1898), p. 125; Rouaix, "Fraccionamiento," p. 309; Daniel Cosío Villegas, ed., *Historia moderna de México,* 9 vols. (México, 1955-1969), vol. 7, pp. 73-74.

7. In 1857 the state's population was roughly 144,331; by 1910 it had grown to 483,000. The period of greatest increase occurred between 1895 and 1910 when the population soared by some 200,000. Cosío Villegas, vol. 4, pp. 19-26, 147; Pastor Rouaix, *Geografía del Estado de Durango* (México, 1929), pp. 39, 41; Arnulfo Ochoa Reyna, *Historia del Estado de Durango* (México, 1958), p. 300.

8. Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the North Mexican States and Texas* (San Francisco, 1889), vol. 2, pp. 611-16, 627; Cosío Villegas, vol. 3, pp. 36, 186, 194, 374; vol. 2, pp. 75, 311.

9. In 1895, 28,861 immigrants came to Durango to labor in the mines and the cotton fields. By 1910 the figure had risen to 62,000. Indeed, Raymond Wilkie estimates that the majority of agricultural workers in the Laguna were either first or second generation immigrants. Cosío Villegas, vol. 4, pp. 21, 25-26, 148, 179; *United States Consular Reports: Dispatches from United States Consuls in Durango, 1886-1906*. National Archives, Record Group 59, General Records of the Department of State, (hereafter cited as RDS), 7/27/95, McCaughen to Asst. Sec. of State; 7/27/95, Poston to McCaughen; Raymond Wilkie, *San Miguel: A Mexican Collective Ejido* (Stanford, 1971), p. 16.

10. In 1910, 66 per cent of the population resided on haciendas, while 29.5 per cent of the population lived in rural free villages; thus, almost 85 per cent of Durango's population could be classified as rural. Frank Tannenbaum, *The Mexican Agrarian Revolution* (Washington, D. C., 1930), p. 403; Robert White, "Mexico: The Zapata Movement and the Revolution," in Henry Landsburger, ed., *Latin American Peasant Movements* (Ithaca, N. Y., 1969), p. 116; George McCutchen McBride, *The Land System of Mexico* (New York, 1923), p. 154.

11. Fred Powell, *The Railroads of Mexico* (Boston, 1921), p. 94; Cosío Villegas, vol. 2, pp. 546, 567, 576, 578; Alfonso Velasco, *Geografía y Estadística de la República Mexicana* (México, 1893), vol. 13, p. 164; *Anuario de Estadística de la República Mexicana* (México, 1893), pp. 469, 476; Robert and Florence Lister, *Chihuahua: Storehouse of Storms* (Albuquerque, 1955), p. 175.

12. Cosío Villegas, vol. 2, pp. 516, 519, 526, 566, 601; Ochoa Reyna, p. 213; Powell, pp. 138, 164; Marie Robinson Wright, *Mexico* (Philadelphia, 1911), p. 398.

13. *Engineering and Mining Journal*, vol. 75 (Jan. 3, 1903), p. 37. (Hereafter cited as EMJ).

14. Cosío Villegas, vol. 7, pp. 745, 747; *The Mexican Yearbook, 1909-1910*, p. 411.

15. In 1893, for example, revenue from the *alcabala* (an excise tax dating from colonial times) contributed over 62 per cent of the state's income: only Puebla with a figure of 68 per cent was higher. Cosío Villegas, vol. 2, pp. 300, 912.

16. The most important mining operation in the state was the Peñoles Mining Company. By the turn of the century, it was the most profitable independent mining concern in Mexico. The company had been formally incorporated in the United States in 1887. In the same year Peñoles began to modernize its Durango operation with the aid of American and Mexican capital. As profits streamed in, the company continued to improve its facilities. By 1903 it could boast the largest and most modern power plant and smelter in Mexico. The company paid some of the most fantastic dividends in the history of Mexican mining, and by 1900 Peñoles stock was selling for $1,000. a share on the New York stock market, and dividends were running over 100,000 pesos a month. Less fortunate than Peñoles were the Velardeña mines of the American Smelting and Refining Company. The Velardeña Mining and Smelting Company was formed in Colorado in the mid-1890's with a capitalization of 3,000,000 pesos. Despite its high capitalization, the mines remained unprofitable, and were sold in May 1904 to the Guggenheim Exploration Company in one of the largest deals in Mexican mining history. Guggenheim paid 10,000,000 pesos for the Velardeña complex. This operation employed 5,000-6,000 workers and was one of the largest employers in the state, but on the eve of the Revolution, the Velardeña mines were still operating in the red. The number of mining concessions rose steadily throughout the Porfiriato, reaching over 4,000 in 1910 alone. Diego López Rosado, *Historia económica de México* (México, 1961), p. 47; Cosío Villegas, vol. 2, p. 135; *Anuario de Estadística de la República Mexicana*, p. 432; *The Mexican Yearbook, 1909-1910*, p. 559; Antonio García Cubas, *Atlas geográfico y estadístico de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* (México, 1887), p. 96; John Southworth, *Las minas de México* (México, 1905), p. 105; Marvin Bernstein, *The Mexican Mining Industry* (New York, 1964), pp. 51, 67-68; EMJ, vol. 75 (Jan. 3, 1903), p. 37, (June 6, 1903), p. 869, vol. 76 (May 19, 1904), p. 817, vol. 88, (Dec. 4, 1909), p. 1128; Harvey O'Connor, *The Guggenheims* (New York, 1937), pp. 106, 131.

17. On the world monetary market, the Mexican peso slipped from a rating of 100 to the dollar in 1873 to 44.5 to the dollar in 1902, a decline of over fifty per cent. It has recently come to my attention, after a conversation with a graduate student friend who is studying the State of Chihuahua, that while there may have been a decline in the value of the peso, the same

may not have been true with regard to the price of silver. He suggests that it was not until the business depression of 1907 that the price of silver on the international market dropped dramatically, and that even then the silver market had substantially recovered by 1908. He further suggests that the mining industry continued to boom and that silver production in particular continued to increase. This would tend to conflict with my findings concerning the depression of the mining sector in Durango and the closing of a number of mines in the period immediately preceding the outbreak of the Revolution. How this applies to Durango I do not know as yet since I have not had adequate time to study this new evidence. For further information see David Pletcher, "The Fall of Silver in Mexico, 1870-1910, and its Effect on American Investments," *Journal of Economic History,* vol. 18 (March 1958), pp. 26-62.

18. Rouaix, *Geográfico,* pp. 81-83, 105, 110, 145, 148.

19. For example, between 1905 and 1910 the number of ranchos in the Laguna grew by 90 per cent, but in the districts outside the Laguna the rate of increase was closer to 600 per cent. The fate of the Durango pueblos was almost exactly the opposite of that of the ranchos. By 1905 there were only 45 surviving free pueblos in the state, as compared to a total of 168 in 1810. The principal reason for this precipitous decline was the avaricious land encroachment policies adopted by the hacendados. In the Mapimí, Nazas, and Cuencamé districts of the Laguna, for example, the pueblos had all but disappeared by 1910. The gradual increase in the number of congregaciones during this period suggests that many pueblos were reduced in status as their lands were despoiled. McBride, pp. 80, 90, 93, 98, 131; Velasco, pp. 69-190; Rouaix, *Geográfico,* pp. 205-24; Fernando Gonzales Roa, *El aspecto agrario de la Revolución Mexicana* (México, 1940), p. 210; Ernest Gruening, *Mexico and Its Heritage* (New York, 1928), p. 130.

20. In 1910 there were 81,515 heads of rural families, but only 2,681 of these could be classified as rural property holders. The majority of the land was dominated by 3.2 per cent of the rural population, which left the remaining 96.8 per cent landless. McBride, pp. 63, 154; Cosío Villegas, vol. 4, pp. 2-4. Raymond Wilkie does not agree that the Durangueño haciendas were well above the size of the national average and suggests just the opposite.

21. The creation of large estates in this region dates back to the colonial era when three major haciendas, each well in excess of 1,000,000 hectares, dominated the Laguna. With the breakup of these estates in the late 1830's and early 1840's, the entrepreneurial hacendado began to reemerge. By the late 1840's, these hacendados had commenced work on

damming the waters of the Nazas and Aguanaval Rivers. Upon completion of the dams the first cotton crop was introduced in the early 1850's. This process was momentarily interrupted during the wars of the Reforma and the French intervention. Then a number of the haciendas were confiscated by the victorious Juaristas because their owners had sided with Maximilian. Much of their land, in turn, was purchased by American, British, and German stock companies. By 1890 there were nine dams along the Nazas and the area was becoming heavily irrigated. With the advent of the railroads, the Laguna reached the economic take-off stage. In 1887 cotton production in the Laguna reached over 3,000,000 kilos and in less than six years production had topped the 8,000,000 kilo mark. The tremendous importance of water to the dynamic development of cotton was captured in the local saying that "each drop of the Nazas produced a cotton bud." Clarence Senior, *Democracy Comes to a Cotton Kingdom* (México, 1940), pp. 11-12; Ochoa Reyna, pp. 300-03; Wilkie, pp. 3-12; Everado Gómez Olivas, *La Revolución en el Estado de Durango* (México, 1963), p. 10; Cosío Villegas, vol. 2, p. 45, vol. 7, p. 73; Antonio García Cubas, *Mexico, Its Trade, Industry and Resources* (México, 1893), p. 140, *Atlas*, p. 204.

22. Wilkie, pp. 13-17; Senior, p. 12.

23. While the commercial haciendas were undermining the old social order, the traditional haciendas found it increasingly difficult to keep their workers on the land. Peasants, who no longer felt constrained by the old ties of paternalistic loyalty could get cash wages not only in commercial agriculture and the mining industry, but could also find employment in the cotton textile industry concentrated around Torreón. For example, the mining complexes at Peñoles and Velardeña, which employed close to 15,000 workers, provided a relatively easy avenue of escape for the peasant and thus further hastened the breakdown of the old order. Senior, p. 11; Cosío Villegas, vol. 4, pp. 148, 233-34.

24. Charles Cumberland, *Mexico: The Struggle for Modernity* (New York, 1968), p. 199; Rouaix, *Geográfico*, pp. 89, 111-12, 136, 155-56; Ochoa Reyna, pp. 310-11; Gómez Olivas, pp. 11, 13. Santa Catalina, the largest hacienda in the state, covering over 700,000 hectares, was notorious for its land grabbing and responsible for despoiling the lands of numerous nearby pueblos. Pueblos outside the Laguna were not immune to the expansion of the haciendas, but suffered to a lesser degree, owing to the high concentration of the commercial haciendas in the Laguna. In the Laguna the pueblo of San Juan del Río was completely engulfed by neighboring haciendas, and Santa Clara del Álamo was divided between the haciendas of Santa Catarina and Juan Pérez by a barbed wire fence which ran down the cen-

ter of the pueblo's main street. Nazas had already been overwhelmed by the expansion of the commercial haciendas.

25. Yet another water rights dispute involved La Compañía Agrícola Limitada del Tlahualilo. In 1887 the company signed an agreement with the Secretaría de Fomento to establish agricultural colonies in the northern Laguna. It was hardly coincidental that the Mexican Congress, which passed the law giving the Federal government dominion over the nation's water resources on June 5, 1888, approved the Tlahualilo concession the following day. It permitted the company to construct a canal from the San Fernando dam to the Tlahualilo area, a distance of 120 kilometers. Immediately after the announcement of this concession, the Federal government began receiving complaints from numerous Laguna pueblos who claimed that the canal would deprive them of much needed water. In December 1890 the government, responding to the uproar, called for a conference in an effort to mediate the dispute. The effort, however, proved fruitless. In 1900 the vecinos from the San Fernando area formed the Nazas Sindicato to defend their water rights. The vecinos received little satisfaction from the government, and on the eve of the Revolution they were still forwarding their protests to no avail. For a more complete discussion of the water rights controversy see, Emiliano Saravia, *Historia de la Comarca de la Laguna y del Río Nazas* (México, 1909); Ochoa Reyna, pp. 300-01.

26. Cosío Villegas, vol. 7, p. 296; Matías Romero, *Mexico and the United States* (New York, 1898), pp. 513-16; José María Marqués, *El Veintiuno* (México, n.d.), pp. 1-10.

27. RDS, U. S. Consular Reports from Durango, 8/31/96, Kedize to Asst. Sec. of State.

28. Cosío Villegas, vol. 4, pp. 358, 313, 329; Gómez Olivas, p. 13.

29. One of the frequent targets of the miners' wrath was predominance of the *tienda de raya* in the U. S. controlled mines. Not only were the workers paid in script, which was redeemable only in the company store, but the price of goods was generally a good deal higher, which resulted in an even further lowering of the miners' real wages. McCaughen to Governor Flores, 12/26/95; Id. to Asst. Sec. of State, 4/29/96; Id. to Id., 12/12/91: Leroy to Id., 8/03/06; all in U. S. Consular Reports from Durango, RDS; newspaper clipping from *La Evolución*, 9/27/97, RDS, 812.992, 812.1124. *La Evolución*, also, from time to time, accused the U. S. controlled Mexican press of stirring up labor discontent as a consequence of what *La Evolución* labeled its sensational reporting of labor strikes, warning that unless this type of reportage stopped, some sort of social explosion was likely.

30. Bancroft, vol. 2, pp. 623-27; Ochoa Reyna, pp. 288-90; Cosío Villegas, vol. 9, p. 428.

31. Ochoa Reyna, pp. 291-98; Cosío Villegas, vol. 9, p. 491; RDS, 812.1579.

32. Flores was a part owner of the Cerro del Mercado iron mine near Ciudad Durango, the largest in Mexico, and Fernández was a wealthy hacendado, who represented the San Fernando dam in the Nazas water rights dispute. Sutton to Asst. Sec. of State, 7/20/90, U. S. Consular Reports from Durango, RDS; Ochoa Reyna, p. 298; Marie Robinson Wright, *Picturesque Mexico* (Philadelphia, 1897), p. 271; Saravia, p. 11.

33. Ochoa Reyna, pp. 296, 312; Rouaix, *Geográfico*, p. 156.

34. The political inflexibility of the governors and the interests which they represented resulted in a number of spontaneous demonstrations. There were major riots in 1887 and 1892 and an incident involving a religious procession in 1909, all of which were violently put down by the government. The manner in which the Velardeña strike in April 1909 was repressed likely further increased the discontent of the masses. Bancroft, vol. 2, p. 601; Cosío Villegas, vol. 7, p. 20, vol. 4, p. 494, vol. 9, pp. 472, 864-65.

35. James Cockcroft, *Intellectual Precursors of the Mexican Revolution* (Austin, 1968), pp. 94, 100, 180.

36. On his second visit to Durango, Madero, in outlining his political program, made what appeared to be a disastrous political blunder when he left the impression that he favored the continuation of the Díaz policy of accomodation with the Catholic Church. This upset many local liberals, but Madero was soon able to smooth over ill feeling. Ochoa Reyna, pp. 313-14; Stanley Ross, *Francisco I. Madero, Apostle of Democracy* (New York, 1955), pp. 92-93; Charles Cumberland, *Mexican Revolution: Genesis Under Madero* (Austin, 1952), p. 97; John Kenneth Turner, *Barbarous Mexico* (Chicago, 1910), pp. 183, 186, 194-95; Gómez Olivas, pp. 12-13, 17.

37. Lister and Lister, p. 214; John Reed, *Insurgent Mexico* (New York, 1969), pp. 46, 56; Cosío Villegas, vol. 4, p. 433; Ricardo García Granados, *Historia de México* (México, 1956), pp. 274, 279.

38. According to González Ramírez, many "corridos populares" were written about Bernal and others like him which elevated such personages to the position of heroes of the people and victims of the Díaz oppression. García Granados, p. 279; EMJ, vol. 77 (Oct. 2, 1909), p. 635; Manuel Gonzales Ramírez, *La revolución social de México* (México, 1960-1966), vol. 1, p. 43.