

## **SEX IN REVOLUTION: GENDER, POLITICS, AND POWER IN MODERN MEXICO**

Jocelyn Olcott, Mary Kay Vaughan,  
and Gabriela Cano, Eds.  
Durham: Duke University Press,  
2006

### **REVIEWED BY CRISTINA SANTOS**

With a cover consisting of a family portrait of Frida Kahlo dressed in men's clothing, the editors of this collection of essays cleverly set the tone for this volume on women, gender, and the Mexican Revolution.

The book consists of four main sections dedicated to Mexican women's embodiment of and into revolutionary culture; the redefining of women's place in the domestic sphere and in the workforce; as well as their participation in emerging post-revolutionary politics. Regardless of this physical division in the organization of the essays the editors have succeeded in presenting a volume in which some of the contributions are connected by their considerations of how the government and Catholic Church had been the dominant factors leading to the Mexican Revolution, while also pointing out that the ground gained against these institutions by the revolutionaries did not necessarily apply to women. As a result, modern Mexican women found themselves obliged to undertake a second wave revolt (in their own unique ways) in post-revolutionary Mexico in the attempt to obtain some of the same rights and privileges granted to their male counterparts. In essence, even in post-revolutionary Mexico women found themselves, both in the private

and public sphere, defined by the gaze of their sexual, ethnic or social Other. Fernández-Aceves summarizes eloquently the true nature of women's struggle in Modern Mexico vis-à-vis the CFO (Círculo Feminista del Oriente) as: "...a New Woman, a politically informed, revolutionary citizen, antithetical to the stereotype of the submissive, religiously obsessed Catholic female prevalent in the rhetoric of male revolutionaries."

Another unifying characteristic to the essays is their depiction of Mexican women's struggle against the well-established Mexican patriarchal icons of womanhood—be they cross-dressing (or not) *soldaderas* to labour union organizers to working mothers. It becomes obvious that these classic Mexican icons of female virtue (the Virgin of Guadalupe, La Malinche and La Llorona) remain the defining ideals for the modern Mexican woman. This is evident in society's valuing of self-sacrificing mothers who stay at the home to keep house and raise their children (the Virgin of Guadalupe); whereas the women who choose to work or organize labour unions are depicted as whorish or prostitutes and are at times victims of assault, rape or torture (La Malinche); and those mothers who take on the iconic value of La Llorona because they "choose" to abandon their children (either at home or to the streets) in order to work in the labour force.

As Carlos Monsiváis introduces in his foreword to this collection: "These militants (and martyrs) were feminists in the full sense of the word: workers, educators, and political activists who combined their demands with professional duties." In *Sex in Revolution* Olcott, Vaughan, and Cano succeed in compiling a group of scholars and their essays that reflect the sociological and cultural contributions of this generation of women who fought on the battle-

field of the Mexican Revolution (the *soldaderas*) and those that continued the battle for equal rights for women, irrespective of race or social status, in the social and political arena (e.g. *las pelonas*). If the editors were to do a follow-up study to this volume it would be interesting to see the inclusion of women journalists of that period and other contributors to the defining of the "new" Mexican woman. *Sex in Revolution* will undoubtedly interest scholars not only of Latin American history and cultural studies but also feminist researchers looking for a concise yet detailed account of modern Mexican feminist accounts.

*Cristina Santos is Associate Professor of Spanish at Brock University. Her current research and scholarship reflects an interest in investigating the monstrous depictions of women as aberrations of feminine nature. She is the author of Bending the Rules in the Quest for an Authentic Female Identity and co-editor of Defiant Deviance: The Irreality of Reality in the Cultural Imaginary.*

## **LA EXPLOTACIÓN SEXUAL COMERCIAL DE NIÑAS, NIÑOS Y ADOLESCENTES. UNA APROXIMACIÓN SOCIOLOGICA, 2ºED<sup>1</sup>**

Erick Gómez Tagle López  
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### **REVIEWED BY MARINETTE BRICARD GONZÁLEZ**

Commercial sexual exploitation harms millions of girls, boys, and teenagers around the world, but especially exposed are girls living in