

66

La situación del trabajo en México a principios del siglo XXI

Nueva Antropología

• **Luz María Espinosa Cortés, Silvia Diez-Urdanivia Coria**, Notas sobre la contribución de la mujer a la seguridad alimentaria de la unidad doméstica campesina • **Fernando Herrera Lima**, Trabajadores mexicanos en Nueva York: problemas y avances en su organización • **Sarah Hernández**, Democratizando a la jerarquía: relaciones en la producción y la división del trabajo en una cooperativa mexicana • **Marlen Osorio, Patricia Ravelo, Sergio Sánchez**, La respuesta sindical en el IMSS (líderes y bases del SNTSS ante la modernización), 1989-2004 • **Edgar Belmont Cortés**, Entorno y estructura: los límites del marco de acción de los electricistas del SME. • **Aldo Muñoz Armenta**, El sindicalismo corporativo mexicano y los partidos políticos en tiempos de alternancia • **Turid Hagene**, La mona, la virgen y el sufrimiento en los estudios de género en América Latina

CONACULTA • INAH

ISSN 0185-0636

Nueva Antropología 66

La situación del trabajo en México a principios del siglo XXI

Abstracts

Notes on the Contributions of Women to the Food Security of Peasant Households

Luz María Espinosa Cortés
Silvia Diez-Urdanivia Coria

This paper is about the relation between women and food security in the context of a peasant economy based on a sexual division of labor, in which unequal gender relations prevail. As a result of this situation, most of the weight of the rural economic crisis falls upon women, many of whom generate family incomes. However, women participation is not recognized or valued neither by their families nor by society unless they earn wages, which are often less than what men receive for similar work.

Due to the fundamental role that women play in the health and nutrition of the family, it's necessary to search for solutions that help improve their standards of living. A possible alternative is the design of a project focused on self sufficiency and sustainable peasant agriculture, but it will be incomplete if it does not consider women integration as agricultural producers, land owners and recipients of credit and technology, public and private resources.

Key words: gender, poverty, peasant economy, food security and social inequality.
The text was received July 16, 2002 and approved August 8, 2002

Mexican Workers in New York: Problems and Advances in Organizing

Fernando Herrera Lima

This essay analyzes the risk conditions under which Mexican workers labor in New York. The author focused his analysis on the immigrants from the Puebla-Tlaxcala

region in Mexico. He studies their insertion in the various labor markets of NY by analyzing some typical working contexts, such as apparel manufacture and services, and the gender differences that affect such insertion. He also reviews several cases of successful union organizing. Needless to say, this is a context where union organizing is very difficult, because it involves immigrant workers, many of whom are undocumented. The author studies the experiences of the UNITE! Union and the Tepeyac Organization.

This essay is also a methodological contribution, giving an insight "from the bottom" of the complex processes that take place at the present time in terms of so-called globalization. It debunks a series of presumptions related to the supposed passivity of the transnational migrant workforce and offers a moderately optimistic vision of these processes.

Key words: migrants, labor markets, union organizing and undocumented workers.
The text was received June 28, 2003 and it was approved September 17, 2003

Democratizing the Hierarchy: Production Relations and the Division of Labor at a Mexican Cooperative

Sarah Hernández

In view of the failures of neoliberalism and socialism, it's important to explore practical alternatives to both. Cooperativism is one of them. This is a case study of an industrial cooperative in Mexico that shows the unique character of the cooperativist division of labor, questioning the tendency among some academics and activists to think that cooperatives should overcome labor specialization. Based on 45 interviews with members and hired workers of the Sociedad Cooperativa Trabajadores Pascual, held in 1992 and 1993 and during a visit in 2001, it shows how the workers were able to establish a "third way," an economically successful manufacturing cooperative that has a division of labor but gives the workers control over the production process. This new production organization underlines the need to widen our analysis, from focusing on a technical division of labor to focusing on the division of labor in society. The cooperative becomes not only a production organization, but also a reproductive one that takes care of the human development of the workers. Use of employees limits equality within the cooperative, it doesn't, however, prevent changes in the relations *within* cooperativist production and the democratization of hierarchical structures.

Key words: division of labor, cooperativism, production organization and workforce.
The text was received July 2, 2002 and it was approved September 17, 2002

Union Response at IMSS (SNTSS Leaders and Workers Face Modernization) 1989-2004

Marlen Osorio
Patricia Ravelo
Sergio Sánchez

The 80's in Mexico involved the challenge of adapting to the neoliberal policies that started to be implemented during those years. It wasn't easy for the population, especially for the workers who lost some of the privileges obtained during decades of benevolent governments. Companies, workers and unions had to adapt and accept structural changes to their old labor schemes. Doubtlessly, this period marked the beginning of the new road that had to be followed by Mexican workers. That was the case for IMSS workers, who stand out for their combative tradition, which was developed during the anti-modernization struggles of the 80's. It must be noted that this combative tradition has not been a constant at SNTSS. Quite the contrary, during the 90's this union was characterized as a "passive" union regarding mobilizations, a surprising attitude if we keep in mind that at this time IMSS faced downsizing, outsourcing, strong criticism regarding the quality of the services they provided, and reforms to the Social Security Law (Ley del Seguro Social), which led to the creation of Afores. In recent years, facing new challenges like the attempt to change their pension plan, IMSS workers have shown again their capacity for mobilization and their combative tradition. This article presents the union reaction, involving both leaders and workers, to attempts to transform the institution by changing their collective bargaining agreement, pension plan, The Social Security Law, and by implementing quality and productivity programs.

Key words: neoliberal policies, productivity, unions, collective bargaining agreements, Social Security Law.
The text was received June 30, 2003 and it was approved June 25, 2004

Context and Structure. The Limits of the Frame of Action for Energy Workers at SME

Edgar Belmont Cortés

Analyzing the process through which actions are defined and decided within the frames of collective action and, therefore, union discourse, allows us to identify two turning points in the strategic orientation of the Sindicato Mexicano de Electricistas. In both stages, "politic alliance" and "politic confrontation", the protagonic role of the union leadership is visible while the negotiation space continues

to be the political space. However, insuring the modernization of the energy sector and of the company, Luz y Fuerza del Centro, implies not only the construction of socio-political agreements, but also the construction of compromise within the company. In this sense, the participation of department representatives and of the workers, and the ensuing decentralization of collective bargaining is a central topic in the restructuring of the energy sector and the likely beginning of a new stage which hasn't yet taken shape.

Key words: Compañía de Luz y Fuerza, energy workers, decentralization, labor bargaining.
The text was received December 1, 2002 and it was approved August 22, 2003

Mexican Corporatist Unionism and the Political Parties in Times of Electoral Alternation

Aldo Muñoz Armenta

This work studies the political and institutional factors that allow the PRI (Party of the Institutionalized Revolution) to keep a corporatist relationship with the majority of the Mexican labor movement, despite the fact that since 1997 the Mexican political regime is democratic. The article establishes that the main parties opposed to the PRI, namely the PAN (National Action Party) and PRD (Party of the Democratic Revolution) have not been able to add to their numbers the organized labor movement because they don't have an organizational structure that allows for the inclusion of the labor movement agenda, or mechanisms for the insertion of union leaders to their respective leadership structures, and even less for the possibility of providing fixed spots for union leaders on their election tickets at the municipal, state and federal level, as has been the case with the PRI. Meanwhile, their party political programs are either foreign or contrary to the predominant unionist ideology.

Key words: corporatist relations, labor movement, political parties.
The text was received June 5, 2003 and it was approved September 21, 2004

The Monkey, the Virgin and Suffering in Latin American Gender Studies

Turid Hagene

This text falls within the realm of Latin American gender studies. It explores the meaning of the "feminine suffering" discourse and the relations of power-

subordination or victimization of women, using as an example a case study of a group of women owners and workers at a seamstress cooperative in a small city of Carazo, Nicaragua, in 1983-1996. The author explores these women's ability to act and negotiate as a group and the high degree of management capacity they have demonstrated in diverse social contexts, including the possibility of countering their husbands' infidelities. In light of this case study, the concept of "marianismo" (as a mechanism of feminine victimization) is discussed and contrasted with the management capacity of Nicaraguan women, who show an ability to transform suffering and self-sacrifice into influence and power.

Key words: gender, power, feminine suffering, management capacity.
The text was received March 10, 2003, approved the April 30, 2005.