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Contested Histories in Public Space

MEMORY, RACE, AND NATION

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Laurent Dubois, "Haunting Delgrès," *Radical History Review* 78 (fall 2000): 166–77.

Albert Grundlingh, "A Cultural Conundrum? Old Monuments and New Regimes: The Voortrekker Monument as Symbol of Afrikaner Power in a Postapartheid South Africa," *Radical History Review* 81 (fall 2001): 94–112.

Affective Distinctions

Race and Place in Oaxaca

Deborah Poole

IN MID-JANUARY 2005, in one of his first acts in office, Ulises Ruíz Ortiz, the new—and, in most people’s opinion, fraudulently elected—governor of the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca, made the extraordinary announcement that he would be moving the state government to a working-class suburb outside the historic district of downtown Oaxaca City. The architecturally imposing Palacio de Gobierno (Government Palace), located along one entire side of the capital city’s central square, or *zócalo*, was to be emptied of its desks and file cabinets and converted into a Palace Museum and Space of Diversity (Palacio del Museo, Espacio de la Diversidad). The governor described the space as a forum for transforming “every Oaxacan” into “a citizen who always acts on behalf of the greatness of the Nation.”¹ The state legislature, in turn, was to be moved from its home on a central thoroughfare named after Porfirio Díaz, the modernizing nineteenth-century dictator from Oaxaca, and converted into a theater named for the Zapotec statesman, Oaxacan governor, and national hero and president Benito Juárez. In this double move, Ruíz effectively rendered the architectural monument to state government that Juárez himself had

inaugurated in the mid-nineteenth century into a shrine for *national* culture, while simultaneously degrading Juárez into the symbolic figurehead for a new institution where the serious work of legislation would be replaced by the play-acting of cultural diversion.

Why would the newly elected governor want to break with a political tradition set in place by the unassailable national hero Benito Juárez and, in the process, dismantle the architectural artifice of power that had helped to sustain Ruíz's party, the PRI (the Institutional Revolutionary Party), at the helm of state government for the last sixty years? Why, in short, would he want to distance his government from the aura of legitimacy and even sanctity that surrounded a palace and the historic center where Juárez and other Oaxacans had governed? Few local commentators gave credence to Ruíz's own explanation that the move would help to bolster the tourist economy through the addition of yet another regional museum. Rather, given Ruíz's history as a PRI political operative, or *mapache*, Oaxacans reasoned that some other, more politically pressing motives must lie behind the governor's surprising move.

One frequently cited reason for the move was the recurring and long-standing *plantones*, or "occupations," that had regularly cluttered the section of the *zócalo* immediately facing the Palacio de Gobierno and caused bothersome traffic jams in front of the legislature. Traditional *plantones* in Oaxaca had always been directed at the government officials who were (presumably) at work inside either the palace or the legislature. However, in recent years Oaxaca's political and cultural organizations had begun to show both greater creativity and an increased awareness of the need to make their demands known to the public and the media. One group, for example, had staged a prolonged *plantón* under the windows of the governor's office to protest the imprisonment of indigenous leaders and the ongoing military occupation of the Loxichas in Oaxaca's southern sierra. Another group stationed themselves for several months across from the Palacio's main door, using a live pig to portray the then PRI governor José Murat and a loudspeaker to advertise their broad set of anti-neoliberal demands. While other governors had either ignored or politically co-opted such displays, Ruíz's strategy was to remove his offices to a police barracks on the outskirts of the city, where *plantones*—if they were allowed to happen at all—would be much less likely to draw media attention or to distract



1 School poster showing the iconography of Oaxaca's Seven Cultural regions, n.d. Purchased at the Provedora Escolar, Oaxaca de Juarez, June 1998 (Impresa R.A.F., SA, (Mexico City). Photo: Deborah Poole.

the attention of Oaxaca's many international tourists. Once "cleansed" of indecent displays of politicized behavior, the *zócalo* might then be rendered a neutral space to be filled by strolling tourists and temporary cultural displays.

In addition to this pragmatic removal of government operations from the public eye, Ruíz's promise to transform the empty Palacio into a "Space of Diversity" seemed to evoke a certain continuity with the popular image of Oaxaca City as the urban center for a state whose distinction lies in its many ethnically circumscribed places. As we will see, the PRI has for many decades promoted an image of Oaxaca as first a "racially," then an "ethnically," and more recently a "culturally" diverse space. Indeed, when asked to define Oaxaca, most Oaxacans will respond by referring to the "seven cultural regions" into which the state's territory is, somewhat arbitrarily, divided and, more specifically, to the well-defined iconography of female costumes through which all public school children in the state are taught about Oaxaca's cultural heritage.² (See fig. 1, above.)

In his speech, however, Ruíz failed to mention Oaxaca's indigenous cultures. He instead described the future Space of Diversity as an opening onto "the wide access routes of knowledge that will elevate the collective conscious into a superior understanding of the contemporary world, so as to make of each Oaxacan the citizen who always acts on behalf of the greatness of the Nation."³ As such, the Space of Diversity seemed less concerned with the aura of cultural distinction that supposedly surrounds Oaxaca as a place, than with promoting the political project summed up in Ruíz's governmental slogan: "Oaxaca: Facing the Nation" (Oaxaca: Cara a la Nación).

This shift in Oaxacan cultural policies did not go unnoticed. Local political columnists quickly condemned the proposed museum as "part of a centralist and colonizing move" in which Oaxaca's distinctive diversity and aesthetic tradition would be pawned to the federal government and national political interests.⁴ A first point of contention had to do with the intellectual authority for the proposed museum. Rather than inviting local anthropologists, artists, and academics to collaborate in the creation of the museum, Ruíz proposed to graft the museum onto an ongoing museum project mounted by Mexico's largest university, the UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México) in Mexico City. The actual inauguration of the museum one year later further highlighted Ruíz's modernist vision of culture. Timed to coincide with the two-hundredth birthday of Benito Juárez, the museum was inaugurated by the rector of UNAM on March 21, 2006. Rather than framing diversity as a quality inherent to or distinctive of Oaxaca (or assigning responsibility for mounting the inaugural exhibition to the Oaxacan university, named after Benito Juárez), the opening instead featured a UNAM-created traveling exhibit of the Mexico City ruins of Teotihuacan. Breaking with long-standing aesthetic and philosophical discourses through which Oaxaca's artistic and cultural elites had celebrated Oaxaca's distinctive provincial sensibility, colonial architecture, and indigeneity, the remaining exhibits focused on science and technology as routes to greater national integration.⁵ In short, Ruíz's goal in creating the museum would seem to have been twofold: to thumb his nose at local artists and intellectuals who had, for decades, worked to create an image of Oaxaca as a national—indeed international—center of culture and the arts, while simultaneously announcing the centrality of Oaxaca for Mexican *national*

agendas—including especially the (by March 2006, floundering) presidential campaign of Ruíz's fellow PRI comrade, Roberto Madrazo.

On the one hand we might say that Ruíz's decision to transform the Palacio de Gobierno into a museum was motivated by some combination of a modernist sensibility and belief in "progress," a disdain for local cultural initiatives, and a desire to shelter Oaxaca's lucrative tourism industry from an increasingly contentious political arena. On the other hand, however, Ruíz's actions also speak clearly to the ongoing, very local struggle over who can best speak for an urban space that is understood to embody, somehow, the essence of Oaxacan political and civic life. The high stakes in this contest became apparent some weeks after the governor first announced his plan in 2005, when the state government began to dismantle the zócalo itself. (See fig. 2.) As one-hundred-year-old trees came crashing down and cobblestones were hauled away to be replaced with poured concrete, public outrage swelled at Ruíz's unilateral decision to redesign the city's beloved historical square. Political commentators denounced the "restoration" as a maneuver meant to funnel state funds into PRI's presidential campaign. Members of the architecture faculty denounced the renovation as illegal and as an attempt by Ruíz to display his own impunity before the law.⁶ The internationally celebrated artist Francisco Toledo early on expressed his outrage at the zócalo's destruction and successfully intervened at least to have the cement benches changed for more historically sensitive wrought iron ones. UNESCO authorities joined in, raising the troubling possibility that they could remove Oaxaca from their list of World Heritage Sites.⁷ The National Institute for Anthropology and History (INAH), which holds legal jurisdiction over all historic and archaeological monuments, similarly denounced Ruíz's destruction of the historical park as a violation of federal laws governing national patrimony.⁸ Despite early attempts to justify the project as a move to restore historical authenticity and to replace the imported or "Spanish" laurel trees with native *ahuehuate* trees, criticism intensified. Protests were organized and petitions signed. Interestingly, much popular outrage focused on the destruction of several large laurel trees which the Oaxacan architects who launched the project with Ruíz had condemned as "foreign" and lacking the "spirituality of [Oaxaca's] native species." Opponents of the restoration defended the laurels as part of Oaxaca's



2 Palacio de Gobierno and zócalo. April 22, 2005. Photo: Indymedia Oaxaca.



3 Demonstration against the remodeling of the zócalo, May 2005. Photo: Indymedia Oaxaca.

historical heritage, accusing the project’s designers of “botanical racism.”⁹ At stake were two racially driven visions of Oaxaca—one which allowed for foreign and “mixed” species, another which sought to locate the “spirituality” of Oaxaca in the botanical purity of its native species.

Yet work on the zócalo continued. Faced with public outrage, the government was forced to construct high metal walls around the construction site to prevent people from observing and commenting on the construction, which soon shed its pretense to historical and botanical authenticity. Trees continued to be cut down and hauled away under cover of night. The police were called in to quell demonstrations. (See fig. 3.) Eventually the Oaxacan artists working with the government bailed out, denouncing the betrayal of their original plan—including the idea of replacing “foreign” trees with “native species.”¹⁰ Once unveiled, the new, rather dreary, cement-gray zócalo, with its industrial lighting, was widely criticized for its dramatic break with Oaxacan architectural sensibilities. For Oaxacan artists and intellectuals, Ruíz’s vision of this civic space was far removed from both the indigenous realities of rural Oaxaca and the particular forms of sentiment, nostalgia, and aesthetic sensibilities that have been celebrated, since at least the early 1930s, as the essence of Oaxaca’s “provincial soul.”¹¹ While both visions of Oaxaca’s urban space appeal, at least implicitly, to the “very Mexican” notion of *mestizaje*, or mixture, they do so in ways that assign markedly different values to place, time, and presence. Thus, whereas Ruíz’s vision of *mestizaje* as nation-building (and hence political party building) frames

“diversity” as a leveling engine for creating a more modern, homogeneous future, the genealogical imagination underlying Oaxacan ideals of both cultural identity and “race” relies on a particular, historically contingent appeal to place as a form of historical, and racial, presence.

In this essay, I explore the histories of state intervention and cultural pedagogy that have gone into creating and fostering this distinctively *genealogical* imagination of *mestizaje*, and the forms of affective attachment to place through which genealogical belonging is expressed. I suggest that Oaxacan understandings of *mestizaje*, although not exempt from either racism or racialized forms of discrimination, nevertheless invoke a genealogical understanding of the local that allows for the presence of (certain forms of) “diversity.” The nationalist and revolutionary doctrine of *mestizaje*, by comparison, holds mixture and homogeneity as a constantly receding goal for cultural, racial, and national “improvement” in the future. Within this modernist imagination, public places such as the zócalo are imagined as empty spaces waiting to be filled, while disturbances such as plantones are read as signs of a public “indecent,” precisely because they reveal

that space is never truly empty. Ruíz's appeals to "diversity" and national unity thus seem to share much with the language and images of mixture and diversity that circulate as synonyms for *culture* and *identity* in Oaxaca. What they do not share—and, indeed, seek to undo—is the high value placed on those modes of affective attachment to place that animate Oaxacan understandings of both *mestizaje* and diversity.

SOVEREIGNTY AND LOCALITY

To understand how concepts of racial distinction and *mestizaje* figure in the struggle to control public space and cultural patrimony in the state of Oaxaca, it is useful to start with two historical facts. The first concerns Oaxaca's peculiar place in nineteenth-century liberalism and, in particular, in the disputes over federalist versus centralist forms of governance; the second has to do with the demographic facts of indigenous presence in Oaxaca. As citizens of the first state to establish its own legislature, Oaxacans, with some exceptions, remained staunch supporters of a federalist form of government throughout the nineteenth century. The most famous Oaxacan liberal, Benito Juárez, served twice as Oaxaca's governor before going on to fame and fortune as the national hero who ousted the would-be French emperor Maximiliano and then restored the liberal Mexican Republic. As an icon of the Mexican nation, Juárez is today seen to embody at once the quintessentially liberal ideals of popular sovereignty, state's rights, and the rule of law, *and* the revolutionary nationalism of a state in which the federalist framework has been preserved, until very recently, through the unifying apparatus of single-party rule. Indeed, part of Juárez's mystique as national hero has to do with his ability as a "Zapotec Indian made good" to straddle the somewhat contradictory foundationalist myths of liberal individualism and popular sovereignty, on the one hand, and the authoritarian nationalism of first Porfirio Díaz and then the PRI that succeeded him.¹²

Juárez's extraordinary symbolic potential as an icon of both locality and nation-building is not coincidental to the fact that Ruíz chose to inaugurate his *Espacio de la Diversidad* on the bicentennial of Juárez's birth. Similarly, Juárez's legacy was often cited by Ruíz's critics as that which was most betrayed by Ruíz's authoritarian decision to transform *Oaxaca's* Palace of

Government into a monument to *national* culture, engineered and administered by intellectuals from Mexico City.¹³ Juárez's Indian or Zapotec origins are seldom directly referenced in these symbolic appeals to his authority. Yet in Oaxaca, at least, it is his Indianness that lends credence to the idea that Oaxaca's liberal and cultural traditions bear a distinctive, nonassimilationist status with respect to both Mexican nationalism and its companion ideology of *mestizaje*. It is in this capacity as a symbol of the local—rather than as a marker of indigeneity *per se*—that the figure of Juárez is racialized in Oaxacan popular political culture: As a Zapotec Indian turned president, Juárez stands for the irreducible status of "Oaxaca" as *both* origin *and* other of Mexico's *mestizo* polity.

Oaxaca's strong federalist traditions are not unrelated to the striking diversity and fragmentation of its administrative, ethnic, and political system. The state is home to sixteen different ethnic or language groups. Its 570 municipalities account for almost 25 percent of all the municipalities in the entire country of Mexico. More striking still, over one-third of all the *indigenous* municipalities in Mexico are located in Oaxacan territory. According to the 2000 national census, 37 percent of the state's adult population speaks an indigenous language.¹⁴ Not coincidentally, along with its equally indigenous neighbors Chiapas and Guerrero, Oaxaca is also one of the poorest states in Mexico and home to 356 of the 400 municipalities classified nationally as falling within the category of extreme poverty.¹⁵ Of these southern states, Chiapas has presented the most publicized recent challenge to Mexican centralism via the militant challenges of the EZLN (Zapatista National Liberation Army). Oaxaca and Guerrero, however, are also home to numerous very influential and outspoken indigenous organizations, as well as to some lingering guerrillas.¹⁶

While its neighbors Guerrero and Chiapas also have large or even majority indigenous populations, Oaxaca is the state to which PRI politicians point most often when discussing the *virtues* of cultural diversity. Such claims speak to Oaxaca's status as a sort of testing ground for neoliberal multiculturalism in Mexico. Under the governorships of Heladio Ramírez López (1986–92) and Diodoro Carrasco Altamirano (1992–98), Oaxaca's PRI-dominated governments worked energetically to forge legislative and political initiatives that would recognize indigenous cultural rights and "customs," expand the

geographical reach of the state's cultural programs, consolidate the state's reputation for tourism, and promote the idea of Oaxaca as "the cradle of cultural diversity" in Mexico.¹⁷ As many theorists have noted, the spatial politics inherent to neoliberal governmentality place increasing emphasis on the redistribution of "autonomy," risk, and responsibility to localities and communities. In Mexico, one of the most notable of these initiatives was the 1998 Law of Indigenous Rights, passed during the final year of Carrasco Altamirano's six-year term. Held up initially as a model for how indigenous rights could be defended *outside* the framework of the Acuerdos de San Andrés, Carrasco's law served, in the short term, to bolster his party's control over key municipios, while respecting the neoliberal imperative to privilege locality and community as sites of governance. It also served, however, to confirm the image of Oaxaca as, if not the cradle of Mexican diversity, then, at the very least, as one available model for how multiculturalism might work in a nation that has long looked towards mestizaje as the unquestioned panacea for resolving the "problem" of cultural diversity.¹⁸

Carrasco's successors have placed relatively more emphasis on reinforcing the juridical framework through which the state government might appear as a defender of indigenous rights, while paying comparatively little attention to the sorts of cultural policies fostered by Carrasco's administration. PRI governor José Murat (1998–2004), for example, did little in the way of building local cultural institutions, and his administrative and political interventions on behalf of indigenous diversity and rights were all geared towards the national political arena. Murat's announcement of the creation of a new Oaxacan Ministry of Indigenous Affairs coincided with the March 2001 Zapatista march to Mexico City and was announced in the official government newspaper on Juárez's birthday, March 21. Murat's other intervention on behalf of indigenous issues was as opponent to the watered-down national constitutional reform on indigenous rights that was approved by the federal legislature in response to EZLN and indigenous demands. Following this dramatic—and well-publicized—foray into the politics of indigenous rights, Murat's remaining years as governor brought few substantive additions to existing laws and programs promoting indigenous rights and cultural diversity in Oaxaca itself.

The policies of his successor, Ruíz, toward Oaxaca's indigenous population have consisted, for the most part of repressive measures, including

tightened party control over rebellious municipalities, autonomous indigenous organizations, and popular political projects. These measures include traditional clientelist practices, as well as targeted assassinations of grassroots, opposition, and indigenous leaders, and the use of police violence to quell popular demonstrations.¹⁹ Framing culture as an issue of importance primarily for tourism, his cultural politics have been restricted, on the one hand, to increasing the number of performances of such popular festivals as the Guelaguetzta and Bani Stui Gulal, and on the other, to reconfiguring public spaces such as the zócalo, the government palace, and other urban parks and monuments. While such policies and projects may well be intended to expand opportunities for generating tourist dollars, they also play a key role in domestic (state-level) politics where celebrations of cultural unity and "Oaxacanness" (*oaxaquenidad*) are held up as counters to those who would dare criticize the state government.

In conjunction with appeals to local cultural pride, racialized discourses of "decency" and civility are also used to dismiss the plantones and other forms of popular political protest that annually threaten to disrupt the public spaces and official cultural performances that attract both national and international tourists. The annual strike and plantón organized by the Oaxacan teachers' union, for example, is consistently described by government newspapers as an "invasion" or "assault" on the propriety, hygiene, and civility of Oaxaca's historic center. One editorialist for a Mexico City newspaper, for example, described the 2006 plantón as a scene of "degradation" in which the teachers' "annual encampments in the zócalo [de Oaxaca] would seem to be raw material for a documentary on *Animal Planet*. The Oaxacan teacher . . . [who] descends each May to the city to cook, sleep and procreate in public thoroughfares . . . thus acquires his pathetic annual salary increase, from a similarly brutalized government, and then returns to his village with his females [*hembras*] fertilized, to confront another year of work."²⁰ Here the condition of occupying a public space is likened to a form of bestiality that invalidates the uniquely *human* quality of articulating political desires and demands.

Such pronouncements can easily be cited as exemplary of a neoliberal multiculturalism in which local claims to cultural and political distinction are tolerated, and even celebrated, as long as they are not articulated as part of oppositional, contestatory, or class-based political projects.²¹ Yet what is

both unique and instructive about the Oaxacan case is that the racialized debate over culture, propriety, and moral decency is not by any means restricted to overtly indigenous actors or demands. Rather Ruíz's attempts to appropriate and rework public spaces such as the *zócalo* have encountered fierce public resistance from middle-class and urban "mestizo" sectors, and attacks against the morality or decency of participants in *plantones* and other forms of political activism are directed at mestizo subjects whose improprieties make them *like* Indians and animals by virtue of their unauthorized occupation of public space. In this respect, it is important to note that in Oaxaca intellectual and political projects are conjugated as at once external to and constitutive of broader, national discourses in which both *mestizaje* and indigeneity are alternately invoked as sources of cultural authenticity. To explore the history of Oaxaca's contentious relationship with national ideals of *mestizaje* and its relevance for present day struggles over the moral and cultural configuration of public space in Oaxaca, I now turn, briefly, to the late 1920s and the years of what we might well think of as Oaxaca's "cultural revolution."

UNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

While the Mexican Revolution in 1910 was at heart a struggle against the political monopoly on power exercised by Porfirio Díaz and the economic and social injustice promoted by his model of capitalist "progress," it was also a struggle to forge a national state capable of governing Mexico's multiple *patrias chicas* or "little fatherlands." Culture was, of course, key to the forging of this nation and the revolutionary ideologies that would hold it together for the next sixty or seventy years. Manuel Gamio and other early intellectual leaders of the Mexican Revolution viewed the *patrias chicas* of states such as Yucatán and Oaxaca both as a problem, in that they housed potentially troublesome local elites, and as inspirations for how music, art, and culture could be used to integrate Mexico's many unruly *patrias chicas* into a unified, national project. In the case of Oaxaca, the challenge of taming the cultural independence of the *patria chica* was sharpened by the fact that Oaxacan liberal elites had aggressively defended the sovereignty of the Oaxacan state against the new national constitution and national revolu-

tionary state. In this respect, the nationalist revolutionaries' commitment to creating a unified national culture ran up against the recalcitrant federalist tradition of Oaxaca's liberal elites.²²

To understand the complementary roles of culture and race in this post-revolutionary struggle to control the *patria chica*, it is useful to begin with the "Oaxacization" program of Genaro V. Vásquez, who served as interim governor of the state from 1924 to 1929. Like other governors of the period, Vásquez was charged by the national government with bringing the rebellious provincial elites of his state into the fold of the nationalist revolutionary project. For this task, Vásquez's principal tool was a sort of soft-core socialism that he assiduously pursued through both anticlericalism and the cultural programs that would be the hallmark of his administration. Land reform did not take place during his governorship, and, other than educational programs and school-building, few organizing activities were attempted among the peasant and indigenous sectors of the state. Faced with a rather remarkable proliferation of local socialist and communist parties, Vásquez's first step was to form the Socialist Party Central of Oaxaca. Beyond its obvious function of placing centrifugal forces of popular and student socialism under state control, the Central also served as the principal site for the many cultural events including Cultural Saturdays, poetry and song competitions, recitals, and exhibitions mounted by Vásquez's industrious team of cultural engineers.²³

Vásquez's goal as governor of a fractious and politically divided state was to unify it through the two means summed up in his administration's slogan: "Roads and Schools." While roads would facilitate communication and commerce between Oaxaca's contentious regions, schools would provide a platform for the novel cultural policies through which Vásquez and the circle of intellectuals who surrounded him hoped to create and disseminate a "cultural sentiment" capable of overcoming the political and economic differences that had prevented centralization of power in the state in the past. Vásquez himself was an ethnologist and self-proclaimed *indigenista*, who claimed affiliation with the "Zapotec race of the Sierra Juárez" through his mother's side. As interim governor he continued to intervene in cultural debates with his own writings and speeches on music and racial diversity in Oaxaca.²⁴

In many respects this project echoed on a regional level the challenge facing the new national state in its task of uniting the different regions and states of Mexico under a single revolutionary mantle. Indeed, in their quest to build a new Oaxacan culture, Vásquez and his followers made use of such federally imposed and sponsored projects as the Cultural Missions created by another Oaxaqueño, José Vasconcelos, for the specific purpose of championing racial and cultural assimilation as the route to revolutionary nation-building.

Vasconcelos's influential concept of "the cosmic race" celebrated the strength and vitality of Latin America's mixed races as innately superior to the degenerative weakness of the Anglo-Saxon races.²⁵ Vásquez and his followers, however, set out to solve the problem of unity, not by calls for either cultural or racial mixture, but rather by naturalizing the divisive political factions within the state as cultural and "racial" territories or regions. To achieve this, the intellectuals around Vásquez repackaged the cultural genealogies through which nineteenth-century Oaxacan intellectuals had attempted to trace a link between the pre-Columbian Zapotec and Mixtec kingdoms and Oaxaca City's modern liberal culture.²⁶ In designing the curriculum for the Institutos Sociales, which the federal Secretariat of Public Education organized for the different regions of Mexico, Oaxacan intellectuals and educators emphasized the resistance of the Oaxaqueño "tribes" to domination by the Mexica and Aztecs of Central Mexico. They also encouraged the use of regional iconographic styles and sponsored competitions in which the songwriters, artists, poets, and painters who won were routinely those who were judged to best represent *both* the specific spirit of their region *and* the general "soul" of all Oaxacan people. Finally, they worked to construct a visual inventory of the different cultural and racial types found in the territory.²⁷ While similar projects emerged in other Mexican states in the turbulent years of Mexico's nationalist revolution, Oaxaca was in many ways unique for the way in which the nationalist racial rhetoric of *mestizaje* was joined with a regionalist discourse in which the language of *diversity* would become the means for inventing the new Oaxacan citizen.

The cultural projects of the 1920s peaked in the Racial Homage (Homenaje Racial) held in Oaxaca in 1932. Organized as part of the fourth centennial celebration of the founding of the city of Oaxaca, this predecessor



4 Homenaje Racial, 1932, showing the Delegation from the Isthmus Region in front of Miss Oaxaca's throne. Photo: Deborah Poole, courtesy of Fundacion Bustamante Vasconcelos.

of the modern Guelaguetza festival was sponsored by Vásquez's successor, Governor Francisco López Cortez (1929–32). The organizing committee, however, was made up of the three leading architects of Vasquez's Oaxacanization programs (Policarpo T. Sánchez, Alberto Vargas, and Guillermo A. Esteva). Described by its scenographer, Alberto Vargas, as a "great festival of the races to the Sultanness of the South," the Racial Homage brought five "racial ambassadors" (*embajadoras raciales*) to the city of Oaxaca to render homage to Miss Oaxaca. (See fig. 4, above.) As symbolic representative of the state capital, Miss Oaxaca was imagined by the organizing committee as "a beautiful dark-haired woman [*morena*] svelte in build [and] of solemn bearing." As her subordinates, however, the ambassadors—all of whom came from the most powerful (and conceptually "whitest") families of their respective regions—were required to wear the "autochthonous garments" proper to their supposedly discrete cultural territories. In their instructions to the regional committees charged with raising monies and costuming the ambassadors and their entourages, the Central Organizing Committee in Oaxaca cautioned the regional committees to "make a careful selection of types" so as "to give a perfect idea of the moral, ethnic, and social character

[*talla*] of the race.”²⁸ In those cases where the regional committees respectfully disagreed with the choice of costume or cultural affiliation for their region, the central committee moved to enforce its selection: if necessary, they instructed, costumes were to be borrowed from other places.²⁹

Miss Oaxaca’s status as a *mestiza*—and hence “national”—subject was further reinforced by the entourage of *charros* and *chinas*, representing the iconic male and female figures of Mexican revolutionary nationalism. Here it is important to note how Vásquez’s revolutionary intellectuals mapped the grammar of racial distinction along an urban-rural divide. As an idealization of the *mestiza* woman, Miss Oaxaca represented, first, the racial superiority of the City of Oaxaca over her provinces and, second, the importance of the City of Oaxaca as a meeting place between these “regional races” and the national *mestiza* race (*la raza*), embodied in the contingent of *charros* and *chinas* who accompanied her. In this way, the inventors of the Homenaje Racial sought to negotiate the contradictory semantics of contemporary racial discourse: “Oaxaca” consisted, on the one hand, of the many different races found in the provinces of Oaxaca and, on the other, of La Raza, the national race, which was at once singular, urban, and *mestiza*.

The sponsors and creators of the Homenaje Racial clearly intended to promote a shared Oaxacan identity that could be both singular in its racial grounds (*mestizaje*) and diverse in the forms of cultural allegiances it invoked. This cultural affiliation that was “Oaxaca” was, however, unevenly distributed across space and time. Thus, the Homenaje Racial assigned ethnic or racial types to each of Oaxaca’s regions, while leaving Oaxaca City to stand as a sort of cultural marketplace—a site where ethnic costume (*traje*) was not so much an “identity” as a fashion to be assumed by any *mestiza* oaxaqueña. The important point was to police the territorial, administrative, and political boundaries that the festival would establish for Oaxaca’s seven different “cultures,” while at the same time creating a central urban space and pageant that could project what the Organizing Committee repeatedly referred to as “an agreeable impression of the whole.”³⁰

As a racial project, the cultural programs promoted by the early post-revolutionary governments of Vásquez and López Cortez shared a certain basic grammar with the language of *mestizaje* and cultural nationalism promoted by Vasconcelos, Gamio, and other revolutionary nationalists. Both celebrated, for example, a general principle of unification and a desire

to create an “agreeable impression of the whole.” Both too shared in the general consensus that saw Mexico’s cities as the spaces in which *mestizaje* could be made to prevail over the divisive racial and cultural allegiances of the country’s rural inhabitants. Where Vásquez’s project differed was in its particular conjugation of time in relation to the places—or territories—that were made to stand for the primordial affective ties associated with “race.” Whereas the nationalist political project of *mestizaje* contained within it a future orientation in which racial difference was to be eventually erased, the Oaxacan notion of a “racial region” was a timeless one whose continuity had as much to do with the stability of its spatial location as with the continuities that could be continually evoked through references to racial genealogies, aesthetic dispositions, and very particular historical pasts. As the urban center for these dispersed “racial regions” Oaxaca City was imagined as at once both *mestizo* and indigenous.

STOPPING TIME

The decades following the cultural revolutions launched by Governors Vásquez and López Cortez brought a gradual consolidation of the nationalist revolutionary state’s hold over education, culture, and politics in Oaxaca. As elsewhere in Mexico, the National Indigenista Institution carefully administered claims to distinctive ethnic identities, while other PRI-sponsored organizations bridged the political needs of the governing party and the economic and social demands of the country’s indigenous municipalities and communities. In this way, Oaxaca’s indigenous majority remained, with some exceptions, strategically linked with the institutional politics of the PRI and its client organizations. At the same time, in its cultural policies, the state government continued to promote an image of peaceful, unifying diversity. The Homenaje Racial, for example, was performed regularly in both Oaxaca and Mexico City during the 1930s and 1940s. Then, in 1975, the pageant was moved to mid-July (in part to displace the religious festival of Carmen) and officially rebaptized as the Guelaguetza, a Zapotec word meaning “mutual aid.”

As a successor to the Homenaje Racial, the Guelaguetza—which continues as the centerpiece of Oaxacan cultural allegiances—retains many of the same formal attributes: Delegations from the seven officially recognized



5 The Guelagueta, delegation from the Central Valley cultural region; Oaxaca, 1998.
Photo: Deborah Poole.

ethnic or cultural regions of Oaxaca perform highly stylized versions of dances or ceremonies considered “autochthonous” to their regions. (See fig. 5, above.) Following their performance, the delegations offer gifts to the governor of the state, who sits on a raised platform facing center stage. They then throw smaller gifts to the tourists and Oaxacans who attend the spectacle. Among the elements that have remained unchanged during the years from 1932 to the present are this offering of gifts (now to the governor; then to Miss Oaxaca); the rhetorical celebration of diversity *per se* as the basis of a unified Oaxacan culture; and the visual mapping of regional diversity onto the highly standardized costumes of the female dancers. In addition, today the Guelagueta has been extended over a two-week period to include numerous public pageants, parades, and performances in the city’s zócalo and historic center.

On one level, then, the Guelagueta offers an opportunity for Oaxaca’s many different indigenous and regional “cultures” to establish a certain sort of presence in the city’s urban public spaces. Indeed, the young provincial dancers who make up the regional delegations consider an invita-

tion to dance at the Guelagueta as both an opportunity to pursue careers as cultural performers and a means to establish politically crucial ties to representatives of the Oaxacan state. In this respect, their presence in the city might be considered a sort of invasion—yet it is an invasion whose “decency” (unlike the plantones) is not contaminated by either politics or spontaneity. The state makes its presence—and its control over urban space—felt at all levels of the Guelagueta. To obtain an invitation to dance in the Guelagueta, the performers first have to pass the rigorous scrutiny of the powerful Committee of Authenticity. During the months before the Guelagueta, the twelve senior folklorists who make up this committee travel to each of Oaxaca’s seven “ethnic regions” to preside over auditions. Their task, as one of the committee members explained to me, “is to take care [*cuidar*] that the delegations really present themselves with the authenticity and dignity of their ethnic group.” At the same time, the committee chairwoman was careful to emphasize that their vigilance not be read as an actual intervention into the performers’ ways of life. “We do not impose on them. They present themselves to us. They simply present us what they have, and we accept what they give us. We do not want to change their ways of thought and ways of being. We only arrive, look, observe, and that’s it.” In describing how they reached their judgments about appearance, dignity, and authenticity, however, committee members stressed the importance of detail. “We focus [*fijamos*] on the details of the dress, hairstyles, braids, ponytails, earrings, necklaces, in all the details,” the chairwoman explained. “Choreography is another important detail” they watch out for. Through such passive policing of the distinction between general “ways of being” and the extremely concrete details of costume, choreography, and appearance that constitute evidence of “authentic cultural expression,” the committee establishes certain limits for the ways in which claims to cultural distinction can be made.³¹

Two things interest me in this negotiated conversation about detail and effect: First, the committee authorizes its judgments (and hence its power) through unarticulated “feelings” or “sentiments.” The legitimacy or “authenticity” of these “feelings” is, in turn, grounded in the committee member’s simultaneous (and rather privileged) access to both the specific traditions of the particular regions to which they have genealogical or family ties *and* the general authorizing history of the capital city, its state

apparatus, and cultural tradition. As the committee's chairwoman explained to me when I asked what archival or photographic documents they used to judge historic authenticity: "What is authentic in my region I just know," she told me (in a rather sharp voice). "Why? Because I was born there. I lived the customs of my land. . . . It is a sentiment that we are interpreting." At the same time, she was careful to point out that her own instinctive *feel* for the authentic differed from the opinions of the dancers and delegates who live in that region in that they were not able to see their own "details" as part of the "agreeable impression" that their performance must make as part of the Guelaguetza.

Second, I am interested in understanding how the shadow of the state invades and authorizes the genealogical and historical grounds from which these "sentiments" and claims to knowledge are authenticated or authorized. Here place enters as a palpable dimension of the sensuous context within which the grammar of culture is learned. Genealogical ties to places—articulated through the idiom of history, as well as race—legitimate both the Authenticity Committee's claims to an intangible knowledge of the authentic and the performers' presumed natural ability to re-present their culture as an unbroken inheritance from the past. Yet the material signs through which this bond with place and history is acknowledged reside in the plasticity of culture, clothes, and choreography. The ability to recognize that which is "authentic," or truly *from Oaxaca*, is what binds both performers and "authenticators" as Oaxacans.

The African-descended populations from Oaxaca's coast and southern sierra serve as a limit case for this calculus of cultural recognition and territorial inclusion. For the Authenticity Committee, these "Afro-mestizos" from Oaxaca are "a race, not a Oaxacan ethnic group" ("una raza, no una etnia de Oaxaca"). This distinction is, in turn, itself grounded in the perception that "blacks" do not originate in—or have genealogical ties to—the territory of Oaxaca. Thus, in 1999 when the elected representative from the coast finally managed to convince the Authenticity Committee to allow a group of Afro-mestizos to dance, the Oaxacan press uniformly dismissed their presence as both unaesthetic and unintelligible in that it fell outside the bounds of that which could be assimilated as a "Oaxacan cultural sentiment."³² For one journalist, the alien character of black music and dance remained so far removed from the sanctioned domain of "culture" that

their dance merely "provoked boredom among the spectators," whereas another described the Afro-mestizos' dance as a clear "break with the *indigenous* context and rhythm" of the Guelaguetza.³³ Excluded politically and culturally from the Oaxacan polity, the Afro-mestizos represent that which cannot be rendered "intelligible" within the grammar of cultural distinction proper to the Guelaguetza, as Oaxaca's official doctrine of cultural diversity. As the ultimate outsiders, their racial alterity offers Oaxacans no imaginable sentimental links to the forms of cultural distinction through which inclusion and belonging have been mapped. As the head of the Authenticity Committee commented to me in a 2002 interview:

The public whistled at the [black] Chaquina dance because it was all the same, very monotonous. For that reason, it is not appealing [*no tiene atractivo*] and the public rejected it totally. We [on the Authenticity Committee] understand and that is why we don't schedule those dances. It is not that we don't value them [*no es que las menospreciamos*]. We do want them to continue preserving their dances, but we want them to do it *in their own context [and] in their own origin place*.³⁴ (emphasis added)

If the map of Oaxaca is one of diversity, it is a diversity that has been carefully crafted to reflect only two sides of the official dance of mestizaje—the indigenous and the Spaniard.

THE PLACE OF RACE

So what do these cultural practices and politics tell us about the place of race in the struggle for control of Oaxaca's public spaces? For governor Ruíz and his party apparatus, the zócalo represented an opportunity for some creative budgetary maneuvers, carried out, perhaps, in the hopes of extracting some extra cash either for PRI's lagging presidential campaign or simply for their own pockets. In choosing to start his campaign of urban "renewal" in the zócalo, however, Ruíz also chose—no doubt intentionally—to take on the cultural elite of Oaxaca and to show them, as well as the federally controlled INAH, that his government was intent on carrying out whatever infrastructural improvements they deemed necessary to advance the Oaxacan tourist economy and the political fortunes of the PRI. Perhaps thinking of the successful internationally advertised mobilization some

years earlier against a proposal to open a Macdonald's franchise in the zócalo, Ruíz no doubt hoped to make clear that his government would not tolerate any interference in its plans to "modernize" Oaxaca. Indeed, we can imagine that Ruíz acted in anticipation of the negative response to his plan for the zócalo when he recruited some of Oaxaca's top opposition architects and intellectuals to do the "historic restoration"; when he framed the need for secrecy and unilateral government action as part of a declaration of Oaxacan autonomy vis-à-vis such federal agencies as the INAH; and, finally, when he attached the word "diversity" to his proposal to convert the Palacio into a museum of science and technology. Through such idioms Ruíz invoked long-standing Oaxacan traditions of federalism, state sovereignty, and diversity. Yet these gestures failed all the same to assuage the profound resentment that was stirred up along with the centuries-old cobblestones and streetlights of Oaxaca's central square. My suggestion is that they failed to do so, at least in part, because they broke so dramatically with the genealogical and racial languages through which previous instantiations of the Oaxacan state had manipulated affective ties to the *place* of Oaxaca.

As we have seen, in Oaxaca the concept of race runs throughout the history of state projects to ground identity in place. As a hegemonic project, the revolutionary concept of *mestizaje* is best understood not by reference to the "facts" of racial mixture in Mexico, nor by the idea that early twentieth-century Mexican politicians and intellectuals actually aspired to construct a mixed-race nation. Rather, *mestizaje* was an ideal, a never-to-be accomplished possibility, an affective goal that operated quite independently of the messy racial and class realities of Mexico itself. It is in this guise as a belief or aspiration that revolutionary intellectuals and politicians, such as Gamio, Vasconcelos, and—to a lesser extent—Vásquez, hoped to use *mestizaje* as a weapon to undermine the local cultural allegiances of recalcitrant regional elites. Ruíz's ill-fated intervention in Oaxaca's zócalo can be read, on one level, as an attempt to resurrect this sense of *mestizaje* as nationalist and modernizing project, and to do so in a way that was clearly designed to remind people of his willingness not only to ignore democratic process but also to flaunt the impunity that underwrote his power (and partisan commitments).



6 Graffiti mural in the arcades of the abandoned Palacio de Gobierno produced during the 2006 plantón, Oaxaca, June 2006. Photo: Deborah Poole.

Yet what is at stake in this struggle over Oaxaca's public square goes beyond partisan politics and competing political styles. Ruíz's zócalo project was driven by a vision of urban public space that has been "cleansed" of local political life—including its own state government. Not only did such a vision of Oaxaca's historic center run counter to the history of Oaxaca and its distinctive cultural policies. It also proved to be remarkably short-lived. Less than one year after its inauguration, the newly remodeled zócalo was once again the site of an extensive and long-lasting plantón staged by the powerful Oaxacan teachers' union. Although the plantón was originally inspired by salary and education-related demands, following the violent (yet ultimately unsuccessful) police intervention ordered by Ruíz on June 14, 2006, the teachers' strike extended into a broad-based political movement demanding the ouster of the governor himself, as well as other members of the PRI administration. (See fig. 6, above.)

The plantón, which was initially attacked in the government-controlled press as a "contamination" of the city's public spaces, continued and was strengthened by the formation of the Popular Assembly of the Peoples of



7 Graffiti showing Ulises Ruíz as a PRI political operative, or *mapache* (raccoon), stealing money from the Guelaguetza, June 28, 2006, Oaxaca. Photo: Deborah Poole.

Oaxaca (APPO) and by the successful organization of a series of “Megamarchas” in which hundreds of thousands of Oaxacans from all over the state came to express their support for the demand to remove Ruíz from public office. Several factors contributed to the broad popular support among Oaxaca’s urban residents for the 2006 teacher’s strike. The first was the June 14 police intervention, and the second was government corruption. The third most often cited reason, however, was continuing anger over Ruíz’s destruction of Oaxaca’s zócalo and other culturally symbolic urban sites. While an assault on public space may not have been sufficient in and of itself to generate a demand for Ruíz’s impeachment, the zócalo and other symbolic urban parks and monuments figured prominently in the 2006 demonstrations and in the impassioned phone calls that soon swamped the newly formed opposition radio station, where Ruíz’s cultural policies were frequently denounced as contributing to the “privatization” of both the zócalo and the Guelaguetza. (See fig. 7, above.)

The plantón continued until it was violently ousted by federal military police forces in November 2006. Among its more significant immediate



8 Poster for Megamarcha calling for Oaxaca’s Seven Cultural Regions to converge on the city of Oaxaca; July 2006. Author’s collection.

outcomes was the historic defeat handed to the PRI by Oaxacan voters in the July 2006 presidential and national legislative elections. In the long run, popular outrage at Ruíz’s repression of the plantón and his earlier incursions into the historical zócalo have contributed to the strength of the APPO, whose political demands include a call for an end to the “privatization of the Guelaguetza” and the formation of alternative and free “Popular Guelaguetzas,” such as those organized by the Oaxacan teacher’s union and the APPO in July 2006, 2007, and 2008. Moreover, in turning their anger on Ruíz’s state, Oaxacans have effectively mobilized the entire repertoire of cultural imagery—the Seven Cultural Regions, women’s dress, Juárez, and the Guelaguetza—that had been sanctioned and, indeed, created by the Oaxacan state. (See figs. 8 and 9.)

Even this brief survey of the 2006 plantón and demonstrations makes abundantly clear that the extraordinary affective attachments that fueled discontent with Ruíz’s zócalo project in 2005 derived at least some of their power from cultural pedagogies in which sentimental ties to the space of Oaxaca have been articulated as embodied and *racial* genealogies of place. Oaxacans’ responses to the perceived destruction of *their* zócalo, the debate



9 Protest poster from the fourth Megamarcha, showing Governor Ruíz dressed as a Tehuana (one of the cultural regions), July 2006. Photo: Deborah Poole.

concerning native and foreign trees, and the deference to Mexico City's cultural authority in the construction of the Palacio museum must be read against the long history of Oaxacan state involvement with the politics of sentiment, nature, race, and space. In this respect, race has served in Oaxaca not only as a mechanism of spatial exclusion—as occurs daily with respect to Oaxaca's rural indigenous population—but also as a genealogical discourse that grounds individuals' emotions, ideals, and aspirations in a politically charged, and historically constructed, geography of "racial regions," "cultural territories," and "mestizo" urban squares.

NOTES

- 1 Ulises Ruíz O., quoted in Humberto Torres R., "Será Museo del Palacio, Espacio de la Diversidad," *El Imparcial* (Oaxaca), March 16, 2005.
- 2 On the language of racial type informing this regional imagery, see Poole, "An Image of 'Our Indian.'"
- 3 Ruíz quoted in Torres R., "Será Museo del Palacio."
- 4 Guillermo Marín, "Sobre el Museo del Palacio de Gobierno," *El Imparcial* (Oaxaca), March 23, 2005.

- 5 "Inauguran en Oaxaca Museo del Palacio, Espacio de la Diversidad," *La Jornada*, March 22, 2006.
- 6 Reynaldo Bracamontes, "Es El Zócalo un caso de ilegalidad e impunidad," *Noticias* (Oaxaca), Oct. 23, 2005, 1.
- 7 *Noticias* (Oaxaca), Sept. 9, 2005.
- 8 On federal control of public spaces, see Melé, "La Construcción jurídica de los centros históricos."
- 9 For a chronology of public mobilization against the cutting of trees and the zócalo project in general, see Ernest Reyes, "Remodelación forzada del Zócalo," *Contralínea* (Oaxaca), 1, no. 11 (Aug. 2005): 12–16. On the trees, see Mark Stevenson, "Oaxaca Residents Battle Over Shade Trees," Associated Press, May 22, 2005; also on the website of the Oaxaca Hotel group, www.oaxacainfo.com/oaxaca/zocalo.htm (accessed May 10, 2008).
- 10 "Artists Quit Controversial Oaxaca Project," Associated Press, June 12, 2005; <http://www.oaxacainfo.com/oaxaca/zocalo.htm> (accessed June 1, 2006).
- 11 On Oaxacan provincialism, see among others, Campbell, ed., *Zapotec Renaissance*; Holo, *Oaxaca at the Crossroads*; Martínez Vásquez, *De la milpa oaxaqueña*; Poole, "An Image of 'Our Indian.'"
- 12 On Juárez and Oaxacan federalism, see Hamnett, *Juárez*; and Guardino, *The Time of Liberty*.
- 13 One critic, writing for the pro-government newspaper *El Imparcial*, suggested that a more appropriate use of the palace would be as a museum dedicated to Juárez and the period of liberal state and economic reform known as La Reforma; Marín, "Sobre el Museo."
- 14 *XII Censo General de Población y Vivienda 2000*. (Oaxaca. Instituto Nacional de Estadística, Geografía e Informática, 2000); hereafter cited as INEGI.
- 15 On ethnic and linguistic diversity in Oaxaca, see Barabas, Bartolomé, and Maldonado, eds., *Los pueblos indígenas de Oaxaca*. On poverty, see INEGI; and Silvia Chavela Rivas, "Es Añeja la marginación municipal en Oaxaca," *Noticias* (Oaxaca), March 31, 2005, 1.
- 16 On indigenous politics in Oaxaca, see Hernández-Díaz, *Los Reclamos de la identidad*. For recent pronouncements of the Oaxacan guerrillas, see "Ulises Ruíz atenta contra la libertad: EPR," *Contralínea* (Oaxaca) 1, 11 (Aug. 2005): 7–11. On political uses of culture in Oaxaca, see Campbell, *Zapotec Renaissance*.
- 17 Diodoro Carrasco Altamirano, cited in "Presencia de Oaxaca en París: Oaxaca, principal nicho de la diversidad indígena de México," *Noticias* (Oaxaca), Sept. 29, 1998, 5A. On Ramirez's and Carrasco's cultural policies, see Muñoz, "Explaining the Politics of Recognition of Ethnic Diversity and Indigenous Peoples' Rights in Oaxaca, Mexico."
- 18 On neoliberal multiculturalism in Mexico and Latin America see, among others, Speed and Sierra, eds., *Critical Perspectives on Human Rights and Multicul-*

- turalism in Neoliberal Latin America*; and for Oaxaca, Martínez, “El Proceso de reforma constitucional en material indígena y la posición del estado de Oaxaca.” On the 1998 indigenous rights legislation, see Martínez, “El Proceso de reforma constitucional”; Muñoz, “La Política del reconocimiento en Oaxaca”; Recondo, “Usos y costumbres”; Sitton, “Autonomía indígena y la soberanía nacional”; and Velasquez, *El Nombramiento*.
- 19 On political violence in Oaxaca, see “Situación de los derechos humanos en Oaxaca,” VI Informe de la Red Oaxaqueña de Derechos Humanos, Jan. 20, 2006; <http://www.rodh.org.mx/SPIP> (accessed May 2008). On the sharp escalation of repression in the first fifteen months of Ruíz’s term, see, among others, “Van 10 muertos en el Sexenio,” *Noticias* (Oaxaca), Feb. 12, 2005; Ivan Rendon, “Suman en Oaxaca 24 Reos políticos,” *Noticias* (Oaxaca), Feb. 24, 2005; Reynaldo Bracamontes, “Violencia en Oaxaca,” *Noticias* (Oaxaca), Dec. 4, 2005; and Juan Balboa and Octavio Velez, “Matan a tiros a activista del Sol Azteca en Oaxaca,” *La Jornada*, May 20, 2006.
- 20 Claudio Lomnitz, “El Hábito y el monje,” *Excelsior* (Mexico, D.F.), June 29, 2006. Lomnitz’s editorial fails either to mention or to reflect on the “decency” of the 1,700 armed police forces and helicopter sent in by the Ruíz administration on June 14, 2006, to forcibly and violently evict the teachers from the zócalo. Similarly racialized discourses of “decency” and public immorality were routinely deployed to describe the unsanitary conditions and disruptions occasioned by the plantón in the pro-Ruíz newspaper *El Imparcial*. See, for example, “Genera toneladas de basura plantón masivo,” *El Imparcial*, May 23, 2006, 1; Humerto Torres R., “Convertido en macro tianguis al Centro Histórico,” *El Imparcial*, May 25, 2006; “Alerta ante posible ola de enfermedades,” *El Imparcial*, June 5, 2006; Yadira Sosa Cruz, “Continuye la cuarta semana de movilización magisterial,” *El Imparcial*, July 5, 2006, 1.
- 21 Hale. “Does Multiculturalism Menace?”
- 22 Gamio, *Forjando Patria*. On the Oaxacan sovereignty movement, see esp. Cervantes, *La Revolución en Oaxaca*. On the revolutionary period, see Martínez Vásquez, ed., *La Revolución en Oaxaca, 1900–1930*.
- 23 For histories of this period, see Arellanes Meixueiro, *Mutualismo y sindicalismo en Oaxaca, 1870–1930*; Arellanes Meixueiro, Martínez Vásquez, and Ruis Cervantes, *Oaxaca en el siglo XX*; Martínez Vásquez, *Historia de la educación en Oaxaca 1825–1930*; Martínez Vásquez, *La Revolución en Oaxaca, 1900–1930*; and Sánchez Pereyra, *Historia de la educación en Oaxaca (1926–1936)*.
- 24 See Vásquez, *Indios de Mexico*. For Vázquez’s views on music, see esp. his *Música popular y costumbres regionales del Estado de Oaxaca* and “El Aspecto pedagógico del folklore.”
- 25 Vasconcelos, *La Raza cósmica*.
- 26 On nineteenth-century Oaxacan celebrations of Zapotec and Mixtec indigenous culture, see Poole, “Siempremuertas.”
- 27 On the visual iconography of racial types in Oaxaca, see Poole, “An Image of ‘Our Indian.’”
- 28 “Argumento Escenificado del Homenaje Racial,” *El Mercurio*, April 20, 1932, 3.
- 29 Circular del comite organizador, March 18, 1932. Archivo Histórico de la Municipalidad de Oaxaca.
- 30 Carta circular de Policarpo T. Sánchez, Dec. 10, 1931. Archivo Histórico de la Municipalidad de Oaxaca.
- 31 All citations are from interviews with members of the Authenticity Committee, conducted by the author in Oaxaca in 1998, 2003, and 2004.
- 32 Rosy Rames, “De Nuevo, la magia y el color de los días cultivaron a propios y extraños,” *Noticias* (Oaxaca), July 25, 2000, 3.
- 33 Jesús García, “Guelaguetza, muestra del valor que da Oaxaca a sus tradiciones,” *Noticias* (Oaxaca), July 25, 2000, 1A; *Noticias* (Oaxaca), July 26, 2000, 2.
- 34 Margarita Toledo, interview with author, July 2002, Oaxaca de Juárez.