EL CORRIDO DE LA REDADA DE LOS "41 MARICONES": DECOLONIZING EL PORFIRIATO AND ITS QUEER SIGNIFIER

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this article is to critically examine the story of the number 41 as a queer signifier in Mexican culture from a decolonial perspective, taking into account archival records in the development of hegemonic masculinity in the 20th century. An examination of hegemonic masculinity and homophobia of early 20th century Mexico is provided by reviewing colonial accounts of indigenous sexuality, as well as uncovering the hidden stories of the corrido/ballad of El Baile de los 41 Maricones. The corrido was used as satire to ridicule the homosexual practices by the bourgeoisie, creating a rift between social classes, and allowing the poor to take a higher ground by claiming real masculinity.

KEYWORDS: violence; resistance, criminal; homosexuality; raid; corrido

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When the Spanish landed in the 'New World' in 1519, they encountered an indigenous population dressed in accordance with the environment and their needs, without shame and guilt about their nudity, sex, gender expression, and sexuality. Following the arrival of the Europeans, indigenous people were exterminated, raped, enslaved/trafficked, and forcefully indoctrinated by Christian missionaries, transforming and restricting their views about sex, sexuality, and homosexuality, to immoral, wrong, transgressive, and/or sinful (Lavrin 2012; Sigal 2003).

It is the purpose of this study to use decolonial methods to examine the discourse surrounding the number 41 as a queer signifier in 20th century Mexico, by using archival records of news media coverage (newspaper reports, popular media broadsides, texts, and the compiled diary of Amada Díaz [daughter of Dictator/President José de la Cruz Porfirio (Porfirio) Díaz] to decolonize the rise of homophobia in Mexico (Franco 2019; Smith 1990; Smith [1974] 1993). These aforementioned archival records are used to investigate the history of homosexuality through the negotiation and integration of values; this methodological approach allows for the engagement of culture to generate new "oppositional knowledge…to resist injustice" (Collins 1998, xiii). This perspective as a framework allows us to explore the connections and pathways of a story by connecting ideas to a phenomenon. In other words, sociocultural history is linked to homosexuality.

The number 41 has its origins in the criminalization of homosexuality under the rule of Dictator/President Porfirio Díaz. During a police raid in Mexico City in 1901, according to media reports 42 men were arrested in an elite private party, but only 41 were arrested and charged for offenses to morals and good manners. The 42nd man went missing from the records and was rumored to have been the son-in-law of Porfirio Díaz (Orozco 2003). The news of this event became a national scandal and made international news in the print media and popular culture, inspiring the *corrido*/ballad of *El Baile de los 41 Maricones* (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003). To understand the development of 41 as a queer signifier, we must critically examine the intersections of hegemonic masculinity and homophobia of early 20th century Mexico by delving into the hidden story of the *corrido* of the 41.

Homosexuality was an open and acknowledged part of indigenous American culture prior to European colonization (Cannon 1999; Jacobi 2006; Sigal 2005). As part of Díaz's repressive regime, homosexuality was driven underground, and hegemonic masculinity became solidified. After this underground community was exposed in the media, the topic of debate shifted to one in which homosexual men were condemned and traditional hegemonic masculinity was defined as a set of macho heterosexist cultural ideals. The *corrido* was further used as satire to ridicule the homosexual practices by the bourgeoisie, creating a rift between classes, and allowing the poor to take a higher ground by claiming "real masculinity" (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003).

There are several instances of colonizers having first-hand experience with homosexuality through interactions with indigenous people. Jacobi (2006) stated many Europeans encountered natives whose behaviors went against their norms. One of the first Spaniards to walk across the Americas was Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca. He joined an expedition to Florida which resulted in

being marooned in the Gulf Coast area from 1528 to 1536. Cabeza de Vaca was held captive by the Karankawa people from the Galveston area and was eventually able to escape. After he managed to break free, he became a trader and then a shaman, allowing him to travel through and interact with many different semi-nomadic tribes known as Coahuiltecans and other southwestern tribes who lived in villages before eventually reaching Mexico City (Chipman and Joseph [1992] 2010). In his travel accounts, Cabeza de Vaca notes with Christian disgust that men married other men:

> These are womanish, impotent men who cover their bodies like women and do women's tasks. They shoot bows and carry heavy loads. Among these people, we saw many of these womanish men, who are more robust and taller than other men and who carry heavy loads. (Núñez Cabeza de Vaca 1993, 90)

Other encounters by missionaries Jean Bernard Bossu, Pedro Font, and Joseph Francois Lafitau who encountered North American natives highlight the case of "perverse addictions" in that "they were dedicated to nefarious practices," and "...addicted to sodomy. They corrupt men..." (Cannon 1999, 3). However, we must remember that the sexual practices and beliefs of a people must be understood "within the situation of the gender-meaning system of the culture" (3).
Homosexuality practices were first noted in the colonial archives in the work of *Historia de la Nacion Chichimeca of Fernando de Alva Ixtlilxochit* and the *Monarquia Indiana of Juan de Torquemada* which outlines the active case of homosexuality. Fernando de Alva Cortés Ixtlilxóchitl was of indigenous noble descent and colonizer Cortes Ixtlilxochitl. He was university educated and through his research, chronicled pre-historic and colonial history, religion, and literature (Brokaw and Lee 2016). Fray Juan de Torquemada was a missionary in colonial Mexico who also chronicled the history and culture of New Spain by collecting documents and oral histories of the people, their history, their conquest, and the forced Christian conversion (Brading 1991).

Meanwhile, the *Florentine Codex* organized by Friar Bernardino de Sahagún, a Franciscan friar, in 1529 brought to light an oral discourse analysis used to attach metaphors, and concepts so that Christian meanings could be attached to the items which the Spaniards viewed as immoral. From here their alphabet set about knowledge to learn the indigenous language/speech and norms of the natives. This further situated a way to decode the indigenous language and behavior of the people to refute preconceived aspects or notions (de la Carrera 2010). The process of creating the *Florentine Codex* was done via Sahagún's writings of speeches and images/pictorial records collected from Nahua elders, known as *Huehuehtin*. Specifically, these records were collected through oral interviews and research documents to educate Spain of the people it conquered/ruled. The *Florentine Codex* consisted of more than 1,000 folios; these indigenous speeches and records were translated as part of a wider cultural translation endeavor to understand indigenous language, ideas, and practice (Kimball 1993). All original documents are still in the Royal Palace and Library of the Academy of History (Kimball 1993). Consequently, Christian priests were able to use the

codex as a heuristic tool to decipher the language and customs, to identify and record the indigenous traditions they found to be "evil" (de la Carrera 2010).

The homosexuality of today was not in existence as a self-identity of the past (Larvin 2012). Hence, the interplay between desire and power is illustrated by efforts to control the perception of sex and sexuality as dual natures. *Ometeotl* was the name of the primordial dual-sexed creator deity in Aztec civilization, who was a single entity that possessed both male and female characteristics (Joyce 2000). Accordingly, all forms of creative work demanded the participation of both men and women, due to this complementary dualism. Sigal (2005) notes that though the sexual identity of the past was not as it is today, the Mexica had Nahuatl terms which encompass homosexuality as existing and being part of society. The terms used to identify homosexuals were *xochihuah (sochioa), cuiloni, chimouhqui, cuiloyotl, patlache, and patlachuia. Xochihua* was used to refer to a person whose gender is unclear, or gender-bending and translated to "possessor of flowers" (Sigal 2005, 586). *Cuiloni* is a male homosexual who is penetrated (de la Carrera 2010; Kimball 1993). *Chimouhqui* is the crossdressing homosexual, c*uiloyotl* is the act of homosexual act of sodomy, and *patlachue* is a hermaphrodite. Finally, *pathlachuia* is the act of one woman engaging in sexual acts with another woman (Segal 2005). The deviancy of the terms Sahagún identified went against Christian ideals (Wawzonek 2017).

Homosexuality was placed in an Indigenous matrix with religion, sacrifice, and the gods by the natives in contrast to that of purely sinful by the Spaniards (Sigal 2005). Subsequently, the sexual behaviors of the indigenous people were placed as part of a confessional manual. Gutiérrez (1991) mentions shame, and modesty as not occurring among these people before the encounter with the Spaniards. Their relationship towards their body and sex was to fertility, virility, as well as attributed/performed to religious/holy/spiritual practices (Sigal 2005). They viewed sexual intercourse as a symbol for cosmic exchange/harmony between the masculine and feminine forces of sky and earth. From this sex/erotic act, the various sexual forms (heterosexuality, homosexuality, and bisexuality) held no limit or form, nor boundary. Upon the Spanish encountering the natives, they situated their gender hierarchies and roles which are still evident today. León Portilla (1959) highlights the case of homosexuality in *Visión de los Vencidos.* This text was developed by Mexican historian Miguel Leon Portilla of the Aztec account of the conquest of Mexico from the perspective of the Nahuatl people. He noted the existence of a cross-dressing woman (womanish sodomite) who needed to be punished and controlled by the colonizer for the engagement outside of the binary.

Patriarchy is the subjugation of women as men possess primary power/dominance, assume roles of authority and social privilege, and exercise control over the distribution of wealth which was introduced by the Spanish (Kaufman 1987). This sentiment was held as the conquerors used women as property and objects to be raped, pillaged, and trafficked. All with the intent to create a system of breeding mestizaje that brought them under control by the Spanish under a caste system of patriarchal White supremacy. Thus, these practices situate and explain the domination of women by men and the subordination of homosexual practices.

COLONIAL BINARIES

The Spanish Crown, according to Szasz (1998), allowed for the admonishing of all sexual acts outside of marriage between a man and woman. As part of their effort to convert the conquered to the new Spanish beliefs, they [the Spanish Crown] introduced sexuality regulations to penalize behaviors such as sodomy. This was all done to control and limit the social power of the indigenous people by removing them from their sexuality. For example, men who had sex with men were charged with sin that necessitated punishment in society such that the forced moral obedience through measures of domination like death set about sexually acceptable conduct among the natives (Tortorici 2012). Spaniards used punishment as a form of fear and suppression to keep homosexuality at bay while focusing on sex purely for procreation, survival, and a means of expansion.

Moreover, Sigal (2011) noted that the Aztec (*Meshica*) view of sexuality was attributed to a deity associated with fertility, sexuality, and sexual love known as *Xochiquetzal*. She was the protector of mothers and pregnant women in childbirth. The Aztec's focus on their children was a product of raw material with their birthing process as mothers being the warrior princesses (*cihuapipiltin*) setting forth the next generation. For the Spaniards, their efforts to civilize the savage native brought about the superimposing of Catholicism upon their indigenous rituals, beliefs, and values which attempted to remove the agency of women and placed them in a subjective role. However, among the Aztecs, the women worked together in complementary and symbiotic roles in their division of labor and in combat. Nonetheless, women were deterred from combat as even these people placed women in supportive roles (*mociuaquetzque)*, no longer allowed to be warrior chiefs, but pleasure girls (*auianimes*) only worthy of providing sex (Resendiz 2001).

Sigal (2002) noted that in gendered warfare, sodomy as an act was used to discredit enemies as they were charged with the allegation of "sodomotic passivity," which was feminine as a form to discredit and remove agency from the natives. Examining same-sex behaviors was done to assert control and superiority of the elite through heteronormative hegemonic ideology. Furthermore, Gutiérrez (1991) extends this conversation to female sexuality in that through women's sexual exchange with men who were the outsiders, men from other clans/groups, became part of the community. Through a woman's sexuality, expectations towards reproduction were set forth as the outsider became part of the group. The sexual transformation of the Mexica people occurred to create cultural dominance by the Spanish (Cañizares-Esguerra 2006). Sexuality was a tool and instrument to enact power differentials and set about a historical construction upon one ruling power to another dominated people. Hence, the knowledge, expectations, and socially acceptable behaviors privileging heterosexual relations are a result of the imperial/colonial legacy set up by the Spanish Empire.

Homosexuality was relegated to the underground where it persisted privately and escaped civil legal order. However, two versions of sexual practices by males took precedence which was of the effeminate sodomite and lusty native who was known to be the two-spirit which we know today as berdache (*berdaje)* (Lavrin 2012). These berdaches represent the gender variance of these

indigenous cultures given their transdisciplinary gendered role in society. They engaged in the third gender role that played a significant role in the community for cultural, spiritual, and religious aspects in the family and community. As a result of their existence, it is possible they held honored roles as spiritual leaders, mediators, and diplomats (Wawzonek 2017). Such with homosexuality and being two-spirit was part of their religious life, but the Spaniards placed these practices within the bounds of sin and gave them a lowly and despised treatment which resulted in deviance and death (Sigal 2005).

HOMOSEXUAL PERSECUTION IN THE 20TH CENTURY: LOS 41 MARICONES

Upon Mexico's independence from Spain, colonial persecution of homosexuality subsided, but did not disappear completely. Although the death penalty for homosexuality could no longer be enforced, public decency standards still had to be followed, and the conduct of homosexuality was still stigmatized and confined to private realms (Lavrin 2012). Laws against soliciting and aberrant public conduct were severe and draconian. The social and political upheavals brought about by the new Spanish reforms triggered economic issues for Spain (Deagan 2003). Mexico's moral code resulted in a paradigm change in sexuality and attitudes about gay partnerships as the region's sexual platform was altered. Homosexuality had to be practiced privately given that it was still seen as a moral failing or lapse in judgment (Franco 2019).

Buffington (2003) notes in both the 19th and 20th century Mexico, deviance of any kind was often linked to the unnatural, antisocial, and criminal which included individuals who engaged in homosexuality. Sexual deviance was a sign of criminality which in turn threatened the social, political, and economic development of the times, especially when men took passive roles with men. This does not mean that men engaging in active roles with men was not a problem, but it had fewer ramifications and criticisms. However, the topics of gender, masculinity, and sexuality were not actively addressed under the rule of Porfirio Díaz (Navarro 2017).

Díaz's dictatorship/presidency was regarded in Mexico as a time of socioeconomic disintegration and oppression of the civil liberties of its people (Evens 2012). His rule wreaked havoc on the lower classes and established an inequitable system of wealth and class distribution. In other words, under Díaz's rule, the poor stayed poor, and the wealthy got richer while sexuality remained hidden. Opponents of Díaz's rule feminized the cultural European identity of the elite while bringing to light their vulnerability as they championed brute masculine standards of masculinity (Buffington 2003; Navarro 2017). This call for hypermasculinity against Porfirio Díaz's rule lay the framework for homophobia creating an anti-elite narrative that influenced Mexico's ideals of hegemonic masculinity, framed against the fear of the homosexualization of Mexico brought to the forefront by the national scandal of the dance of the 41. The police raid of *El Baile de los 41 Maricones* occurred on November 17, 1901, at approximately 3 a.m. Additional reports refer to November 18th and 19th, but the broadside pamphlet for the *corrido* references November 20th (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003). The *corrido* appears in the first column with an English translation in the second column:

Aqui estan los maricones	Here are the fairies/faggots
Muy chulos y coquetones	Very cute and coquettish.
Hace aun muy pocos dias	It was a very few days
Que en la calle de La Paz,	That in the street of La Paz,
Los gendarmes atisbaron	The armed police peeped
Un gran baile singular	One great singular dance.
Cuarenta y un lagartijos	Forty-one lizards
Disfrazados la mitad	Half in costume
De simpaticas muchachas	Of charming girls
Bailaban como el que mas	Danced like the most
La otra mitad con su traje,	The other half with their suit,
Es decire de masculinos	Is to say in masculine,
Gozaban al estrechar	Enjoying as they moved
A los famosos jotitos…	the famous *jotitos* (feminine little gays)...
	(Espinoza and Resendiz 2018, 24)

The police raided the dance on the grounds on the pretense that they [the event organizers] had failed to obtain the appropriate permits to hold such an event when the event offended public morality (Irwin, McCaughan and Nasser 2003). The 42 men in attendance were believed to be from the upper class; the name *lagartijo* (lizard) in the *corrido* refers to the opulent clothing worn by the elite (i.e., large hats and coattails). Half of the participants were dressed in ball gowns, attire, and full make-up, while the other half were dressed in suits. However, just one was permitted to leave discreetly without persecution (Irwin and Nasser 2003; Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003; Naja 2017; Orozco 2003). The men in attendance at the event were divided into two groups: half in feminine dress and the other half in suits. Of the total of 41 people that were arrested and processed, only 19 were prosecuted by the law (Buffington 2003; Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003).

Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser (2003) note that Jose Guadalupe Posada's broadside pamphlet print of the *corrido* gained national attention as *El Baile de los 41 Maricones* made the number 41 synonymous with homosexuality. To this day, the identity of the *corridista* (author) remains a mystery. Irwin and Nasser (2003) state there remain discrepancies and inconsistencies over the number of men detained in the raid as reported by *El Universal*, *El Popular*, *El Pais*, *El Imparacial, El Diario del Hogar, La Patria*, and *El Popular*. As a result, the first publication of the number was 42, but was later amended to 41. In the print media, it was reported that the police raided the dance on the grounds the organizers lacked a license, and the event offended public morality given this watershed moment (Franco 2019; Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003). The news media (i.e., newspapers) of the time reported a sizable proportion of those arrested were from privileged backgrounds (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003). The publication *El Hijo del Ahuizote* condemned the situation, citing unequal penalties (Barrón Gavito 2010); those (twenty-two) jailed in masculine garb (tuxedos) claimed they were unaware their dancing partners were

males in feminine attire, thereby buying their release from the Twenty-Fourth Batalion's Barracks (Franco 2019).

To restore some order to the heteronormative standards of Mexican society the men dressed in female attire were prosecuted by the governor of Mexico City, Ramón Corral (Castrejón 2003; Franco 2019; Sifuentes-Jáuregui 2002). Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser (2003) found that the governor ordered the 19 male crossdressers, who were in violation of male effeminacy, to clean the streets while clad in their dresses in order to publicly humiliate them. As an additional punishment, they [the 19 crossdressers] were mandated to serve in the federal army in the form of labor conscription as cooks and support workers doing manual labor on Mexico's southern border as part of their sentence (Franco 2019).

There was a great deal of public outcry since the public did not accept such disgusting individuals serving in what they thought to be a dignified army of heteronormative males. That being the case, these men who were caught in drag, the cross-dressing transvestites, were assigned to assist the federal troops by serving as maids to the soldiers and working in the meal halls while the 'masculine' soldiers battled against indigenous Mayan uprisings (Mayan Caste War) in the Yucatán Peninsula (Franco 2019). Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser (2003) state that it is extremely likely that these '19 criminals' were subjected to emotional, physical, or sexual violence or even worse atrocities such as death, during their time serving in the federal army. The male crossdressers' punishment exemplified the institutionalization of hegemonic masculinity using shame and punishment to regulate gender norms, expression, and heterosexuality. Espinoza and Resendiz noted,

> to be gay and masculine could be forgiven with the right payment, but to be gay and feminine was to be publicly denounced, ridiculed, and punished. In turn-of-the-century Mexico, homosexuality itself was not a crime, but a violation of heteronormative gender roles... (2018, 25)

The arrests and police reporting were impacted and modified by the privileges afforded to certain social classes under the law. This becomes abundantly evident when we examine the missing 42nd male, who was not processed by police and released from custody. A question raised is "Who was this 42nd person and why was he spared from prosecution?" Allegedly the person was Ignacio 'Nacho' de la Torre y Mier, a rich landowner who was married to Porfirio Díaz's daughter, Amada (Orozco 2003). Nacho was freed to avoid a societal-political scandal at the behest of the president. Amada Díaz had previously expressed concern about her husband's sexual inclination, which had been widely publicized in the circles of Mexican high society. She had consigned herself to a life of luxury with no intimacy at her husband being gay.

> Nadie me habla del vicio de Nacho, pero todos lo saben y me compadecen. Que terrible castigo envió Dios a mi vida; muchas deben haber sido mis culpas! La sodomía de Nacho causa asco y burla en la gente, dejando en mi necesidades físicas insatisfechas (lo que ninguna mujer decente debiera mencionar), que solo la practica intensa de la religión me permite soportar. (Orozco 2003, 17)

Porfirio Díaz protected his son-in-law to keep his daughter from experiencing any shame or embarrassment (Orozco 2003). Amada wrote in her journal about the day her father summoned her to the presidential palace to notify her that her husband had been apprehended while participating in a private event for crossdressers. Because of the political and moral climate of the period, the news of the incident became an (inter)national scandal. The image of Ignacio was pasted on Posada's broadside, bringing this to the attention of the whole public. He was depicted wearing a gown as a means of undermining his masculinity. However, when he was apprehended, he was dressed in a man's suit as reported by Amada.

Upon Porfirio Díaz's intervention, the raid's police records, including the witness testimonies, court transcripts, and even diary entries, were tampered with and destroyed (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003; Monsivais 2003; Najar 2017). Historian Juan Carlos Harris managed to unearth the names of some of the persecuted despite the raid's intention of erasing all traces of it. Seven of the detainees, Pascual Barrón; Felipe Martnez; Joaquin Moreno; Alejandro Pérez; Ral Sevilla; Juan B. Sandoval; and Jess Solórzano, sought a writ of *amparo*/constitutional protections against military service because homosexuality was in fact not illegal. Even though their charges were reclassified as crimes against decency, there was no change in the severity of their sentencing (Franco, 2019; Monsivais 2003; Morales 2018).

However, one participant was known to be in attendance at the ball and was prosecuted but was released at the behest of his family influence. The story of Antonio Adalid, also known as Toña, told in Salvador Novo's novel *La Estatua de Sal*, is an example of class privilege in action (Monsivais 2003). Novo's book tells the story of Adalid, the son of Don Jose Adalid, a *caballerango,* and godson to Emperor Maximillian I of Habsburg, I, who ruled Mexico from July 11, 1863, to June 19, 1867. Monsivais (2003) also reported that Antonio Adalid was known to be a transvestite. In *La Estatua de Sal,* Adalid goes on to provide further details of the night he was sold to the highest bidder at the ball at the reported age of 14 according to the account in the corrido *El Baile...* Antonio was really 20 years old at the time he was sold (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003; Monsivias 2003). Nevertheless, Antonio's prostitution could be deemed trafficking given that his body was sold as a commodity to the highest bidder; but the act itself was not viewed as a criminal act. Instead, Antonio was prosecuted following this experience as one of the 19 crossdressers who attended the private event referred to in the *El Baile de Los 41 Maricones*.

Novo further reported that Adalid's family did pay for his release to prevent him from being accused or penalized for any wrongdoing (Monsivais 2003). The second factor in his release was his attire at the time, which was a suit rather than a dress shirt and dress pants for women. In this case, his transgression was not a violation of heteronormative gender role performance. However, once his identity was revealed to the world, he was disowned and disinherited by his family. He got shipped off to California with no way to support himself. Upon his arrival in California, he went to the church that heard of his troubles and the local priest was instrumental in helping him secure a position as a Spanish instructor at a nearby college (Monsivias 2003). Accordingly, the press reports influenced the lives and mainstream aspects of masculinity for these people who were publicly ridiculed for their engagement in the private party.

BROADSIDE PUBLICATION FOLLOWING THE *GRAN REDADA*

The *Gran Redada* resulted in the publication of the *corrido El Baile* which mocked homosexuality and gender violations against hegemonic masculinity (Sifuentes-Jáuregui 2002). The broadside sheets drawn by Posada were the principal source that kept the narrative of the 41 alive (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003). Posada was a renowned printmaker best known for his broadsides, etchings, and engravings that called attention to the absurd and obscene (Sifuentes-Jáuregui 2002). He recreated the event through a series of engravings.

Amada Díaz, Ignacio's wife of over 13 years, said the drawing by Posada featured her husband disguised as a woman right in the center main scene (Orozco 2003). So, as Amada stated, "La noticia trascendió al público merced a una hoja ilustrada donde aparecía mi marido, en caricatura se entiende, vestido de damisela" (Orzoco 2003, 45). Hence, this picture of homosexuality served as a source of amusement for the audience. Posada's photos and portrayals of the events of that night and the following weeks were published in El Mundo in 1901, which criticized the *baile* (Sifuentes-Jáuregui 2002).

Orozco (2003) further makes mention of homosexuality being a trend for Ignacio after this occurrence. Amada Díaz mentions in her diary entry on September 13, 1912, that her husband had a "close, but stretched friendship" with future revolutionary, Emiliano Zapata. Amada notes how Zapata was one of the best horse trainers and that he had previously worked at multiple ranches in the area, and that they [Ignacio and herself] met him when he worked at the *hacienda de Atlihuayan* at the De la Torre family ranch. Zapata was well known for his horse training work. She explains that at the behest of saving Emiliano from forced punishment in working in the stables of the 9th regiment for supposedly not supporting Pablo Escandón when he ran for governor and won, Ignacio asked his father-in-law, Porfirio to get Emilio's location commuted to their family *hacienda* de Santiago Tenextepango. Díaz agreed and Zapata was sent there to serve at their hacienda for a time (Monsivais 2003; Orozco 2003).

Eventually, Ignacio would end up as a prisoner at Lecumberri as a result of his involvement with several government schemes that occurred over the course of several years. General Zapata, having taken control of Mexico City, gained Ignacio's custody on January 26, 1915. Ignacio was forced as a prisoner to "…preparar alimentos y cumplir con las tareas que le imponen." (Orozco 2003, 122). On the account of his forced custody, she [Amada] would later find that he had been released due to health issues. She was informed through telegram on March 19, 1918, that her husband had been released and sent to New York for extensive medical care. When she was finally able to reach him weeks later, she discovered him in the hospital, unrecognizable and dying. Amada said, "Cuando vi a Nacho casi no pude reconocerlo; esta convertido en un viejo de rostro cadavérico" (Orozco 2003, 185). The doctor further explained to her,

> Nacho tiene destrozadas las paredes rectales y despedazado el esfinter del ano. Que el paciente paso mucho tiempo sin recibir atencion medica y el daño estaba tan avanzado que afectaba hasta el colon transverso (habre entendido bien esos terminos medicos?). (Orozco 2003, 185)

On April 1, 1918, Ignacio passed away as a result of complications following an unsuccessful effort to remove a portion of his colon through surgery. Based on Amada's diary entries, we can see that Ignacio had a role in *El Baile...* and died possibly because of his homosexuality, having been raped repeatedly while under the custody of Zapatista revolutionary forces.

HOMOSEXUALITY DURING *EL PORFIRIATO*

Before 1901, José de la Cruz Porfirio Díaz (Porfirio's) regime (*El Porfiriato*) kept homosexual life concealed, and out of sight. Porfirio Díaz, of indigenous ancestry, rose to become dictator of Mexico from 1877 to 1911. He continued to be re-elected via the use of violence to silence any resistance. When Francisco Madero defeated Díaz in the 1910 presidential election, Díaz went as far as to re-establish himself as the president-elect again and thus taking the reins of the government as a dictator-presidency. The capitalist class and politicians committed abuses and injustices against *campesinos/*peasants under *El Porfiriato* presidency. Political dissatisfaction continued to grow in intensity until it culminated in the Mexican Revolution of 1910 (Ibáñez 1920; Monsivais 2003).

Mexican citizens who had been repressed under *El Porfiriato* considered the president's modernization, affiliation with capitalist outsiders, and extravagant life as decadent as the class war in Mexico grew. Because of the controversy in 1901, many members of the working class began to identify homosexuality with the excesses, and decadence of the upper-class and the advancement of modernity. Broadsides distributed by the press helped to perpetuate homophobia as well as the media's coverage of the issue. Due to their heightened awareness of high society's corrupt nature, the c*ampesinos* came to view their role as the ideal for what it means to be a definition of a man (Barrón Gavito 2010; Irwin, McCaughan and Nasser 2003). *El Porfiriato* attempted to keep the reigns of control by keeping control and authority of the people and government (Navarro 2017).

This attempt at control resulted in the number 41 acquiring a connotation of being lesser than a man. Irwin (2003) posits that the number 41 is derivative, disparaging, and disrespectful to heteronormative males since it implies that a man is passive and/or effeminate, degenerate and so a lesser human. When a person reached the age of 41, they began to refer to themselves as "30-11 years old" (Irwin 2003, 178). The government and military of Mexico removed the number 41 from public buildings, license plates, and police badge numbers because it had come to denote homosexuality. This reinforced hegemonic masculinity and demonstrated institutionalized homophobia, which treats anything feminine as submissive, passive, and degenerate (Sifuentes-Jáuregui 2002).

Considering the exposure to and interest in Posada's works, gender transgressive homosexuality became widely associated with the number 41. This sentiment is expressed clearly by Roumagnac, "Criminals constituted an identifiable class with distinct traits that included atavistic homosexual tendencies" (1904, 80). Homosexuality was acceptable exclusively for criminals; however, it was not okay for them to be passive or effeminate (Buffington 1997;

Roumagnac 1904). Díaz incorporated depraved language to feminize indigenous men in his memoirs. For example, whenever he described the *juchitecos*, the indigenous men from the Juchitán, Oaxaca village, who served under the *Porfiriato* battalion he described them as degenerate or backward (Navarro 2017). Díaz assigned grades of masculinity where his generals were the alpha males, and the subordinate soldiers were not seen as male and identified as effeminate to keep a sense of order and power. He further placed the indigenous people as ignorant and superstitious; however, many of his soldiers were native. The *juchitecos* were described as bloodthirsty and fierce, but because they did not meet the European view of masculinity; under the *Profiriato* the *juchitecos* were viewed as feminine/inferior (Roumagnac 1904). Essentially, the natives were good enough to be soldiers but were not good enough to be treated as 'men' and were sexually denigrated (Navarro 2017).

Sifuentes-Jáuregui (2002) noted that given this master narrative by the Porfiriato people could be called gay-effeminate/sissy after *El Baile...*, based on the number 41, and be equated to homosexuals. The mainstream discourse explains the events of the raid became associated with homophobia and hate crimes as a symbol of corruption, depravity, and is inherent to the elite of this raid (Monsivais 2003). Buffington (2003) highlighted that the working class also defined a suitable working-class concept of the masculine as people could be called gay effeminate/sissy based on the number 41 and how they carried themselves. The relationship between the working class, along with the press, brought to light evidence that the elite had become "too soft to govern their women... [to] assert their masculine prerogatives and obligations" (Buffington 2003, 218).

Homosexuality posed a threat to the elite upper-class men and the effeminate behavior of the Mexican government (Barrón Gavito 2010). These political issues would be highlighted in the mediums of film, literature, and the news on homophobia and *machismo* in Mexico. Masculine values were privileged as Mexican identity was distanced from queer culture and history (Navarro 2017). Mexico tried to expel the effeminacy from national attention, yet it still gains notice today. Thus, we can see:

> The modern notion of homosexuality in Mexico is born not because of a new transvestitism or a new mechanism of sexual desire between men, but because there was a scandal that provoked a new discourse formulating the possibility of a certain eroticism existing between men. (Irwin, McCaughan, and Nasser 2003, 3)

Since bringing to light this movement of oppression noted in the news media, we must remember the battle that has been waged across time and in the current time against homosexuals. Therefore, *El Baile de los 41* serves to set up a discourse to identify an understanding, awareness, and culture for queer people. Moreover, these images, words, and narratives have become embedded in the culture, language, and history, positioning a conversation that social justice advocates must confront in the pursuit of agency, freedom, and social recognition.

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