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SOCIETY: REFLECTIONS FROM THE FIELD IN
CALIFORNIA**

Paul Johnston

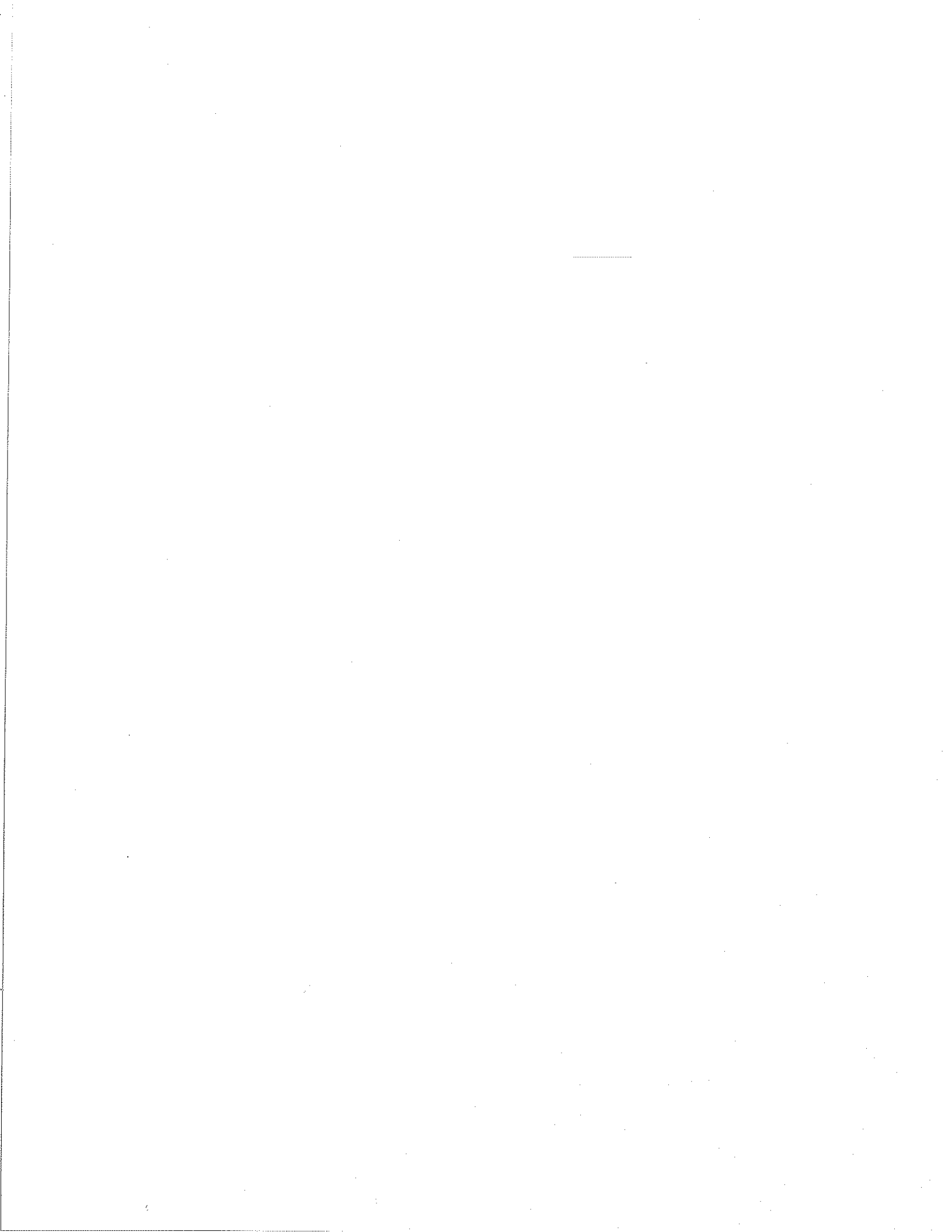
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**Working Paper No. 36
Chicano/Latino Research Center**

November 2001

**Chicano/Latino Research Center
1156 High Street
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**Citizenship Struggles in Transnational Society:
Reflections from the Field in California**

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This essay draws out an account of a California community's response to a raid by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in order to introduce three conceptual frameworks arising from field work among Mexican immigrants in California. These are (1) the resurgence of industrial unionism among immigrant workers as a force for citizenship development; (2) patterns of change in the boundaries of citizenship produced in part by this process, and associated with the emergence of what is here termed "transnational society"; and (3) related changes in the character of public organizations associated with the more complex polities that result.

The essay begins by describing an episode of conflict surrounding a raid by the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Services on the community of Greenfield in April 2001. The Greenfield story is renown for sexual themes which are not a focus of this analysis. The episode is of interest here, rather, for patterns of change which parallel those in other settings in California during this period. Nor are these patterns unique to the California case. More so than in any other state, however, the undeniable achievements of Mexican migration and a citizenship movement spearheaded by immigrant worker unions have begun to remake California as a transnational society.

The Greenfield Story

At this writing in the months of April and May in 2001, public attention in the Chicano/a/Mexicano/a communities of the Salinas Valley has focused on an unusual April 6 raid

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by the United States Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) in Greenfield. The town is 45 miles south of the city of Salinas, in the heartland of California's vegetable industry.

Greenfield's population averages just under 9,000, expanding and contracting with the harvest season. According to the 2000 census, 88% are "Hispanic", mostly Mexican-born or children of Mexican immigrants.

Triggered by the passage of California's Proposition 187 in 1994, a naturalization movement had surfaced among long-time legal permanent residents of Greenfield in the late 1990s, adding hundreds of new U.S. citizen voters to the town's political equation. As a result, by 2001 a political transition was underway in Greenfield. Though a conservative retired police officer still served as town mayor, three young Latino leaders (two associated with labor unions with mostly immigrant members) now formed a new city council majority.

The Greenfield raid was a departure from standard practice by the INS in this region. The economy of the area is heavily dependent on the work of undocumented farm workers; therefore, not only immigrants and their advocates but also employers oppose INS enforcement efforts against otherwise law-abiding unauthorized immigrants. So, in a policy brokered by the region's congressional representative, enforcement is limited to the deportation of persons arrested by local law enforcement authorities for criminal behavior.

There seemed to be good reason, however, for INS agents to make an exception to standard practice in Greenfield. They had received reports and gathered evidence of sexual harassment of school children by immigrant men loitering on the streets of Greenfield, including one man who had fully disrobed in public. The men alleged to have committed the sexual harassment were members of the Triqui group, an indigenous people from rural Oaxaca. Allegedly, some Triqui men would stand outside a local pool hall (directly across the street from the town's police station) in the afternoon. According to the INS, their undercover operation established that some of these men made sexual comments and rude gestures toward girls as they left a nearby school in the mid-afternoon.

When the INS team arrived in town on April 6, they swept the area around that location, apprehending several unauthorized immigrants. Then they moved to an apartment complex elsewhere in town where the majority of Triquis were known to live. Acting without warrants, they forcibly entered three units, apprehending all the men, and pursued and apprehended other Triqui men who were observed fleeing the area. A total of 39 men were detained by the INS and immediately deported to Mexico.

In the days and nights following the raid, the families of the men who had been taken were panicked, fearful that the INS would return. A group of women and children fled the town to hide under a nearby bridge. A local union representative for the Teamsters union opened up his home to them. The Citizenship Project, a local immigrant rights group sponsored by the Teamsters, began to provide support to the affected families and to assemble community leaders for action in response to the raid.¹

Three days later, the Mexican consul arrived from San Jose to conduct a community meeting, take statements from witnesses and prepare a protest on behalf of those deported. Members of the Triqui community gathered to meet with him and other community members in a large meeting room at the United Farm Workers (UFW) union office, and the consul subsequently appeared to address several city council meetings.

Considering the serious nature of the charges made against these men, INS officials had expected to receive local community support for the raid. They were surprised when, instead, hundreds of community members turned out at the next two Greenfield city council meetings, with INS critics vastly outnumbering supporters.

The county sheriff attended these meetings alongside the INS, and spoke in defense of the raids and the conduct of his own department. Both the sheriff and the INS representative spoke at length about their concern for the safety of the children of Greenfield. They noted the presence of several registered sex offenders in the area, and repeatedly referred to an incident in which one man had allegedly disrobed completely. News coverage which followed emphasized

these themes, and was picked up in papers around the U.S. In most of these stories an INS officer was quoted referring to the naked man, and concluding that "we believe we may have narrowly averted a tragedy in Greenfield."

The county sheriff acknowledged that his staff had been the source of the complaint to the INS, and also admitted that neither he nor his staff had passed the same allegations on to the Greenfield police, but rather took them directly to the INS. Greenfield's local police chief stated that his department had been aware of a "loitering" problem, but had received no complaints of sexual harassment. He also clarified the episode of the naked man: Greenfield police had reprimanded a recent arrival from Mexico who had removed his clothes in a local laundromat, wrapping himself in a burlap sack while his only clothes went through the wash and dry cycle.

The city council meetings drew large crowds, including around 50 Triqui. Over 30 people spoke. Only six were Anglo. All the Mexicano/as and Chicano/as and half the Anglos (excluding the INS spokesman and the sheriff) criticized the INS. The citizenship status of speakers ranged from undocumented recent arrivals to lifelong residents. A Triqui woman, whose husband and grandfather had both been deported, spoke in very limited Spanish. She described the forced entry by the INS to her home and the fear of her family members. She was followed by a Chicano/a Vietnam veteran who was a native of Greenfield. Speaking without a trace of Spanish accent, he described his own experience of being stopped by the INS due to his Latino appearance, and asserted that those who had been deported were victims of the same mentality.

Some parents of children at the school involved claimed that the charges of sexual harassment were fabricated. They charged that the whole affair had been manipulated by a school district employee and two sheriff's deputies who were known in town for their hostility to the Triqui. Others, including Triqui speakers, protested that no allegations of misconduct had ever been made against the overwhelming number of those taken, many of whom were at work in the fields at the time of the alleged offensive behavior. Some, observing that the INS officers

appeared to have targeted the distinctive-appearing Triqui in the round-up, claimed that the episode smacked of racial profiling or even ethnic cleansing.

The strongest criticism, however—echoed in an editorial in the *Salinas Californian*, the region's main local newspaper—opposed the involvement of the INS in a matter that could have been handled by local law enforcement agencies. These critics pointed out that without the separation of local law enforcement from immigration enforcement, unauthorized immigrants would be afraid to report crimes and become even easier targets for muggers and other predators. They argued that if the county sheriff had information that a crime had been committed or a threat to public safety existed and believed that the Greenfield police could or would not handle it, he should have offered the assistance of his department rather than bringing in the INS. Along the same lines, others protested the involvement of school district staff in summoning the INS, suggesting that now undocumented parents would be afraid to come to the school or perhaps even keep their children away from the site.

This proved to be a particularly strong criticism, because the principle of separation between local public authority from immigration enforcement is formal or de facto policy in most local governments in the U.S. The Monterey County sheriff's vulnerability to criticism stemmed from his violation of this principle. The 1996 immigration law does require local government to assist federal agencies in immigration enforcement, but that provision has not been enforced. On this basis, undocumented immigrants in interior regions like the Salinas Valley are in effect sheltered from criminalization, and so enjoy a basic level of civil and educational rights.

Two weeks after the raid and again in a packed meeting hall, the city council, acting on a request from the Teamsters, the UFW and the Citizenship Project, passed a strongly worded resolution criticizing the INS. Among other points, the resolution asked the INS to refrain from taking such action within the city limits again, directed that local law enforcement activities be conducted separately from immigration enforcement, condemned ethnically targeted

immigration enforcement, and directed the chief of police to notify individual council members immediately if he learned of any such planned activity.

The measure narrowly passed on a 3-2 vote which pitted the mayor—a retired Mexican-American police officer—and a conservative Anglo small businessman against three younger and more recently elected Mexicano/as. One of these latter votes came from the son of a long-time UFW union leader. Another came from the spouse of a Teamsters striker, recently elected in a political mobilization triggered by a strike at a local food processing plant.

Within the week following the city council's action, the regional director of the INS met with a group of local elected officials and union and community representatives. He expressed chagrin over the fallout from the raid, and promised that the agency would refrain from similar activity in the Salinas region for the foreseeable future.

Days later, however, INS agents again conducted a raid, this time at a farm outside town. They apprehended five men, all Triqui who had been deported and had already returned, none accused of any inappropriate sexual behavior. Within an hour, the regional director of the INS began receiving calls from the local representatives to whom he had given his personal assurances. He acted to rein in his staff, directing them to immediately release the men involved. That afternoon all five received personal rides from INS agents to their homes in Greenfield.

In sum, despite their portrayal of the Triqui as sexual predators, the INS and the county sheriff failed to win local and regional political support for the raid. The INS beat a hasty retreat and even took the extraordinary step of releasing of a group of undocumented immigrants who had been apprehended for deportation. In contrast, the county sheriff remained unrepentant. Six weeks after the raid, however, an informal group of Chicano/a and Mexicano/a labor and political activists assembled to plan a campaign to elect a new sheriff. His likely opponent: a second-generation Mexican immigrant whose father came to the U.S. as an undocumented worker. Three months later, the sheriff announced he would not seek re-election.

A surprising point, then, and most important for our purposes here, is the manner in which people and institutions rallied in support of the Triqui and how the INS responded to that mobilization. What kind of public space is emerging in Greenfield? What does this episode suggest regarding the citizenship status of these most recent and least "reputable" arrivals from Mexico? How did Greenfield become such a bastion of immigrant rights? And how did the INS, of all agencies, become vulnerable to immigrant community opinion?

The arguments that follow jump to a very general level of analysis to address these questions. They explore three patterns of citizenship development evident not only in the City of Greenfield but in its larger historical environment. These are (1) the emergence of transnational society, including several forms of transnational citizenry; (2) related patterns of change in public organizations and the inter-organizational fields within which they are situated, and (3) the particular role of employment and labor relations in citizenship development.

Transnational Society and Dual Citizenship

Recent work in economics, anthropology, political science, citizenship studies, organizational analysis, immigration studies, urban studies, legal studies and even industrial relations research has emphasized the increasing emergence of social phenomena which cross national boundaries. And the Greenfield story, to be sure, does include some actors whose networks cross the border between the U.S. and Mexico. But now with the accelerated "Mexicanization" of California communities (Allensworth and Rochín, 1998) it becomes less satisfactory to think of Mexico and the United States in these terms: as two distinct societies connected by cross-border networks. By the same token it becomes less satisfactory to grasp transnational phenomena as border-spanning networks, institutions, and social movements. Both

perspectives reify the border in an era when states, nations, polities, economies and societies are becoming less congruent and less bounded.

Greenfield itself is somehow both Mexican and “American.” Or perhaps it is “American” in an dual sense, referring both to U.S. society and to the continent. Greenfield is not partly Californian and partly Mexican; it is rather wholly “Californian” in a sense which acknowledges the increasingly transnational character of this society.

The two images below over-simplify these patterns (neglecting, in particular, the added complexity of indigenous peoples and other racialized social groups) to highlight this suggested shift in focus from cross-border networks to overlapping societies:

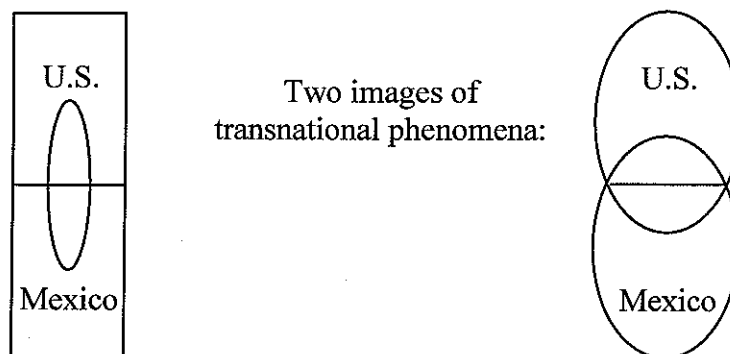


Figure one:
“cross-border networks” vs “overlapping societies”

These two images are not inconsistent. Research on transnational networks has stressed that these are not simply migratory flows, but apparently enduring social relationships. The second image, however, also suggests what follows: an emerging incongruence of society and state. It points as well to emerging phenomena within each society: phenomena which are “transnational” not by virtue of cross-border relationships but rather because of a new complexity within state borders. Cross-border relationships remain, then, important objects of

research. But it is also useful now to broaden our view to ask, "how does the emergence of overlapping societies transform society within state borders?"

Particularly significant in this context is the emergence of "dual citizenship." Dual citizenship refers here not only to the sudden recent explosion of dual citizenship as a formal status (Spiro 1998), but also to the longer and more complex emergence of substantive social, economic, cultural and political membership in overlapping societies. This is a dynamic historical process, with radical consequences for the character of communities in general and public life in particular within as well as between overlapping societies.

Again, the Greenfield story offers an image of this process. Consider, in particular, the public space constituted at the city council and other community meetings. These meetings were attended by U.S. citizens, by Mexican citizens, and by new U.S. citizens with enduring Mexican nationality status who addressed public issues in the presence of both U.S. and Mexican government officials. Other people and institutions in Greenfield and the Salinas Valley expressed a common identity with the Triqui and asserted and affirmed their civil rights, both as Mexican citizens and also as members of this California community. Here, Mexican citizens appeared not as aliens without rights but as participants—active, passive, furtive, frightened, rejected, embraced, expelled but still returning and determined to remain, embedded in a traditional culture but now knowing that life has changed forever, forced to begin to grasp their place in a complex and changing public order.

The emergence of dual citizenship among Mexican and other immigrants in the United States reflects an intriguing set of contrary trends in patterns of immigrant incorporation. On the one hand, with the global revolution in communication and transportation, today's immigrants remain more rooted in the polity, economy and society of their society of origin than ever before.

I refer here, again, not only to enduring cross-border connections, but also to the reproduction and development of that society in their new communities. On the other hand, first generation immigrants are simultaneously more assertive in the struggle for basic rights in U.S. society than ever before.

The boundaries of membership in U.S. society have been repeatedly challenged, of course, by the influx of immigrants. But as immigration has changed the composition of society in the United States, first generation immigrants have remained attached to their homelands. Many chose to return to their sending countries. Those who settled were inevitably targets of recurrent waves of exclusionary sentiment, and still remained by and large outside public life. As the political and economic landscape of the 20th century took shape, progressive era reforms suppressed the urban political machines that had been the great exceptions to this rule. Only in the second generation have immigrant communities sought—and sometime won—inclusion as full members of society. Not until the labor movement of the 1930's and upheavals in local government politics in the same period, for example, did the children of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe win a degree of membership in a new “white” nation comparable to that of northern European immigrants in U.S. society (Piore 1979). Throughout the 20th century, this historical exclusion of first generation immigrants and migrants has contributed greatly to the sharp inequality in economic life in the U.S. (Mink 1986).

Now, however, something new is happening. On the one hand, thanks to cheaper and faster travel and communication and greater back and forth movement across borders, immigrants are remaining rooted in their countries of origin even more than in the past. At the same time, on the other hand, driven by the desire for rights and security for themselves and their families and an educated future for their children, unprecedented numbers of first generation immigrants now also seek full membership in U.S. public life. If the historic exclusion of first-generation immigrants from economic and public life is indeed an essential ingredient in the

deeply dualistic direction of development over the past century, then the result of this new trend may be a process of social change toward a less bounded and more inclusive transnational order.

Again, these contrary trends are particularly marked in California's Mexican communities. Driven by the growth of transnational media, the strength and size and numbers of transnational families, the unalterable reality of the cross-border labor market, the growing rooted-ness of Mexican communities on California soil, and the massive scale of today's cross-border networks of both unauthorized travel and legal eligibility to emigrate to the United States, both of these trends are by now irreversible. Now visible on the horizon, moreover, is a new political force straddling the border, as migrant workers seek public status in both the U.S. and Mexico.

These circumstances can produce several kinds of "transnational citizenries." These include groups which participate in more than one polity, and also polities which simultaneously embrace more than one nationality. The image of overlapping societies suggests, for example, both Mexican and U.S. citizenries extending across the border. Within state boundaries, however, two distinct patterns of collective identity less congruent with exclusive national identity emerge as well. First, a polity that recognizes distinct (ethnic) nationalities within the borders of a single state becomes, strictly speaking, transnational. And second, as a more inclusive identity is constructed (or perhaps never fully constructed, but only demanded by social movements) within an increasingly multi-national (multi-ethnic, multi-racial) state (i.e., cultural citizenship in a plural society), then groups which simultaneously participate in that and in their own national identity of origin (including, perhaps, whites in the U.S.) become in a different (dual) sense transnational.

Unless democracy is to be far more sharply curtailed, these trends threaten to rearrange relationships between citizenship and the nation-state. This new more inclusive polity may be characterized by a post-national citizenship, defined by shared membership in a “constitutional” order (Habermas 1992) or, in a variation on the same theme, by membership in an encompassing “new nation” defined by its embrace of racial and ethnic diversity. This does not imply, then, that citizenship is detached from the nation-state. It would suffice for citizenship to become less exclusively related to a single nation-state, for the state to encompass more than one nationality and for the “constitutional” nation to embrace more than one “ethnic” nationality.

Another consequence of the emergence of overlapping or transnational society is that in unequal international relationships, overlapping citizenship systems are a distinctive and increasingly significant pattern of social inequality, like gender or class. This is nothing new. Within the boundaries of the nation-state, stratified citizenship status (based on property, gender, age, race, indigenous status, etc.) has long been a significant principal of inequality, and historically conquest and occupation has always formed a basis for such stratification. Increasingly now however, and ironically in light of citizenship’s also-growing promise of equality and freedom, citizenship status becomes a main principle of inequality and exploitation.

It also follows from the appearance of citizenship status as a principle of social inequality that social struggles are increasingly defined by their emergence within and against these frameworks of overlapping citizenship status. Now, however, the legitimizing principles of citizenship also appear to be resources for social movements among those excluded from its ambit. Thus social movements increasingly appeal to the promises and rely on the resources of citizenship. And thus our attention is drawn to a species of social movements, including but not

limited to social movements among immigrants, which share common features that together justify the label of “citizenship movement.”

The Experience of Eligibility and the Transformation of the INS

The ambivalent behavior of the INS in the Greenfield incident—aggressively apprehending and summarily deporting an indigenous group on the one hand, promising to cease on the other, then renegeing on that promise with another raid, and again reversing course to release and return those arrested to their homes—reflects another trend running through these decades. This trend is a visible focus of struggle and change in the whole ensemble of public institutions, but its archetypal case concerns those institutions charged with maintaining the boundaries of the nation-state: here, the INS. It reflects, at the same time, parallel developments in personal identity and civic life in immigrant communities as they encounter public institutions in the new society.

A central moment in this process of change came in the late 1980's, with the enactment of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act. That law regularized the status of 2.7 million formerly undocumented immigrants across the United States, most in California. It led nearly two million immigrants of Mexican origin, again most in California, to assemble documentation and complete applications. Most of these applicants eventually acquired legal permanent resident (LPR) status in the United States.

The amnesty process, moreover, was also a citizenship experience of a new type. More than a simple change in status, it began to shape individuals in new ways by focusing their attention on eligibility criteria for their own immigration and eventual naturalization and that of their family members. It began to construct them, in other words, as persons able to exercise

eligibility rights in a public bureaucracy. Through familial criteria of eligibility for immigration, moreover, it activated an awareness of eligibility and a general orientation toward U.S. public bureaucracy extending through the transnational family deep into Mexico.

But deep divisions ran between unauthorized immigrants, on the one hand, and the INS bureaucracy, on the other. Until this period, as outsiders to citizenship, this population was neither client nor constituent but rather the target of INS enforcement. Largely rural in origin and with little formal education, moreover, most were not well prepared to present themselves to any bureaucracy, much less one historically committed to hunting down and deporting unauthorized immigrants. Also, language barriers and pervasive patterns of racial inequality compounded the challenge of implementing the amnesty program.

Not surprisingly, however, some labor unions mobilized to help their own members take advantage of the amnesty opportunity. Joining them, and serving the broader constituency of unorganized workers and their families was an array of Latino community-based schools, churches, social service agencies and advocacy groups. Recognizing that organizations rooted in immigrant communities could play a useful role in bridging the mistrust of undocumented residents, the Immigration and Naturalization Service licensed hundreds of organizations or special projects within other immigrant community-based organizations as "Qualified Designated Entities" to screen eligible applicants, helping them to assemble documentation, and accept applications to be forwarded to the INS for processing. At the same time, public adult education programs and other less formal schools responded to the increased demand for classes in English and preparation for a simple test in U.S. history and government required of amnesty applicants.

The amnesty process also produced the beginnings, then, of new relationships between undocumented immigrants and the INS, and also a new kind of civic infrastructure in the policy domain of immigration and naturalization. Although many of these projects folded after the amnesty window closed in 1989, they left in their wake new "scripts" for INS behavior, new capacities among applicants themselves, and new local and national networks of expertise and support among individuals, activists and organizations for Mexican immigrant incorporation in this developing public policy arena. Also evident in the aftermath of that episode was a growing split within the INS between its service and enforcement arms. In recent years, in fact, that split has led to calls for the division of the INS into two agencies (DiMeglio 2000). In sum, the amnesty episode began to change the Mexican-oriented immigration policy domain from an apparatus focused on the exclusion of aliens into one also able to bridge racialized boundaries of language and national difference, in order to treat Mexicans not only as "targets" but also as clients and constituents.

To generalize from this case, it is useful to imagine a state agency that treats people entirely as objects, and another in which people are also subjects or active participants. For the first, people are "problems" and therefore the "targets" of policy and practice. For the second, people also have the capacity to use public resources and to participate, to some degree, in self-government. For the first, people may have obligations; for the second, they also have rights. We might call the first a state apparatus, and the second a public institution.

These are two extreme types of organization, useful mainly for purposes of comparison and analysis of change. Many agencies—prisons, police forces, schools, social welfare systems—may operate more as an "apparatus" with respect to one part of the population and as public institution with respect to another. This division between the targets and the constituents of state activities is the fundamental fault-line in democracy: in the

elusive democratic ideal they are identical, as subject and object of governance come together.

The nation-state as we know it is a public institution in its dealings with its members and a state apparatus in its dealings with aliens. So within the framework of national citizenship, all state agencies lack this public dimension when they deal with non-citizens. The recent evolution of the inter-organizational field of the U.S. INS in this transition toward transnational citizenship suggests that, as an array of citizenship rights are extended to those formerly excluded, these organizations must change in ways that allow them to bridge national cultures, acknowledge new rights, and respond or at least appear to respond to new constituencies.

Labor Movement as Citizenship Movement

The ubiquitous appearance of the Teamsters and the UFW in the Greenfield story reflects the historic intersection of labor movement revival and immigrant struggles for expanded citizenship. This has by no means been a simple matter of labor support for immigrant rights. Low-waged and unorganized immigrant labor has historically threatened the labor market position of workers and their unions, and even the UFW has at times responded with calls for strengthened immigration enforcement. Boundaries associated with that threat to workers' labor market power and also with racial and ethnic difference have coincided with citizenship status, to produce apartheid structures of business unionism. The past three decades have also witnessed, however, a gradually—and recently accelerating—trend away from the exclusionary stance of the U.S. labor movement in the post-war era.

The UFW's 1970 general strike in agriculture in the Salinas Valley, for example, centered on a demand that dramatized the connection between labor relations and political rights. In late July of 1970, in an effort to forestall the organizing drive which the UFW was expected to launch in the aftermath of its victory in the grape industry, Salinas valley growers signed "sweetheart" contracts with the Teamsters Union to represent more than 8,000 farm workers. Within days, in what would be the first great explosion of a working-class citizenship movement among a new generation of mostly undocumented Mexican immigrants, over 8,000 farm workers gathered in Salinas and launched a strike for the right to vote for their own union representative.

Over the following decade, Cesar Chavez' organizers raged up and down the state. Increasingly, their efforts focused on the adoption of legislation and the passage of voter initiatives for the establishment of collective bargaining rights in California agriculture. In the face of overwhelming employer resistance, hostile Republican control of the new Agricultural Labor Relations Board, a workforce constantly changing with the flow of immigrants into the fields from Mexico and out of the fields to other employment in the U.S., and the shortcomings of its own charismatic and personalistic internal culture, the UFW was unable to consolidate its achievements and entered into decline in the 1980s. The effervescent experience of its campaigns had an enduring impact, however, on the identities and capacities of many thousands of farm workers. Hundreds of labor and political organizers honed their skills in UFW campaigns, including both former farm workers and others, who joined the movement and then often moved on to work with other unions or in electoral politics. Thus a culture of citizenship and capacity for political mobilization among

Mexican immigrants emerged and grew, as it has in many other times and places, from roots in the claim to fairness in employment.²

Any review of the linkage between Mexican immigrant's struggles for citizenship status and the revival of the U.S. labor movement would follow former farm workers and farm worker activists out of the fields and into urban settings, where they would eventually transform and re-energize building maintenance and other unions to help trigger a successful insurgency in the leadership of the AFL-CIO. It would follow those same Mexican immigrants and their unions as they surface, most prominently in Los Angeles, as a powerful force in the changing equation of urban politics. It would also trace the direct relationship between labor movement strength in various industries and workforce citizenship status, both as defined by law and as enforced in practice. It would also document the emergence of a hybrid array of new community-based immigrant workers' rights organizations across the United States. It would trace the origins of the new political strategies deployed by U.S. unionists in their quest for labor movement revival to their origins in the heyday of the UFW. It would follow the more recent travails of the UFW, influenced by AFL-CIO operatives who had not yet grasped the significance of citizenship status, as that union tried and failed in the mid-1990s to organize the strawberry industry in the Salinas Valley while side-stepping issues of immigrant rights. It would emphasize the historic significance of the AFL-CIO's more recent embrace of immigrant rights in 2000. And if it directed our attention back to the Salinas Valley, it would also note the remarkable transformation of the Teamsters union by movements for racial justice and union democracy leading to its emergence as the strongest political force in the Mexicano/a community and the main resource for immigrant rights throughout the region (Johnston 2001a).

In contrast to this perspective, some other recent U.S. industrial relations research has minimized the significance of citizenship status for labor relations (Delgado 1993). Those findings rely, however, on research conducted during the amnesty era of the late 1980s when lax immigration enforcement reduced the apparent significance of formal citizenship status. Also in recent years, some scholars have intentionally downplayed the significance of citizenship status for fear of undermining union commitment to organizing efforts among undocumented workers. Regrettably, these trends were not inconsistent with a strong trend among AFL-CIO union organizers, who favored organizing strategies that did not address immigrant rights issues. When new leadership at the AFL-CIO began to chart a course for labor movement revival in the mid-1990s, these views went unchallenged. Consequently, the labor movement by and large missed the opportunity to identify itself with the new aspirations for citizenship which erupted among immigrant workers in that period. Not until 2000, as the AFL-CIO reversed its exclusionary stance to call for a new amnesty and an end to sanctions against employers who employ undocumented immigrants, did that possibility become a reality.

This intersection of the citizenship movement and the labor movement among Mexican immigrants might appear to be an historical coincidence. After all, over the past decade millions of recently settled Mexican immigrants began to achieve citizenship status and otherwise assert their right to membership in U.S. society just as the long crisis of the U.S. labor movement produced new leaders groping for new constituencies. But its earlier emergence in the UFW's Salinas strike of the 1970s and the political battles which followed suggests a deeper connection between social movement unionism and struggles for expanded citizenship. Elsewhere I examine this connection in some detail, arriving at a conception of

citizenship movement unionism applicable not only to immigrants excluded from basic rights by virtue of their citizenship status, but to all labor movements which seek to draw upon or to strengthen the power of public institutions in the face of the overwhelming economic power of employers. In such circumstances, I argue, labor relations become a crucible of citizenship. (Johnston 2001b)

¹ The Citizenship Project is the product of collaboration between the Teamsters union and an action research project by the author, who observed the developments described here in the role of a participant in the Citizenship Project.

² See, e.g., Marshall 1950, Hobsbawm 1968, Thompson 1974, Montgomery 1993, Foweraker & Landman 1997.

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