Resurrection and Reappropriation:
Political Uses of Historical Figures in Comparative Perspective[1]

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[1] I would like to thank the following individuals for their helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper: Rogers Brubaker, Rebecca Emigh, Kurtuluş Gemici, Angela Jamison, David Lopez, Jeffrey Prager, and William Roy. I also wish to thank participants in the Culture Section Roundtables at the 2003 ASA Annual Meeting, in the fall 2002 UCLA Comparative Social Analysis Workshop, and in the 2002 UCLA Comparativists' Day Conference, where previous drafts were presented. This project was supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's Fellowship in Latin American Sociology and by UCLA's 2002 Summer Research Mentorship Fellowship. Direct correspondence to Robert S. Jansen, Department of Sociology, UCLA, 264 Haines Hall, Box 951551, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1551. E-mail: rjansen@ucla.edu

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ABSTRACT

The Sandinistas and Zapatistas both invoked past revolutionary figures in their rhetoric, but they did so in sharply differing ways. This variation is explained by the different representational possibilities created by earlier uses of the figures. Upon Sandino's assassination, the regime cast him into cultural oblivion. This left the Sandinistas free to rewrite the Sandino narrative and to use it in developing an historically-rooted revolutionary ideology. Upon Zapata's assassination, his enemies incorporated him into the symbolism of the newly-institutionalizing state. With no need to rediscover—or much freedom to reinterpret—Zapata, the Zapatistas challenged the state's right to invoke his name. These cases foreground the difference between the "resurrection" and "reappropriation" of historical figures, and show how each presents different opportunities and constraints for "agents of memory." The comparison highlights limitations on movement leaders' power to manipulate political symbolism and points to the need for a more processual approach to culture in the contentious politics literature.

In late 1974, a Sandinista commando unit appeared in a wealthy Managua neighborhood to interrupt a private party honoring the U.S. ambassador. At that time they released a statement in which they praised Augusto César Sandino's 1933 defeat of the U.S. Marines and hailed his popular rebellion as the foundation for their movement (FSLN 1979). Nineteen years later in southern Mexico, at the dawn of the Zapatista revolt, Subcomandante Marcos charged that President Salinas had betrayed Emiliano Zapata's revolutionary agrarian vision by accepting NAFTA; he went on to prophesize that Zapata—who "didn't die"—"must return" (Marcos 2001, pp. 31, 32, 35-36).

These movements were part of a broader wave of revolutionary activity that swept Latin America in the second half of the twentieth century. Time and again, movements across Latin America invoked the heroes of rebellious pasts. Representations of figures ranging from Simon Bolívar to Agustín Farabundo Martí cropped up in a variety of public spaces—from graffiti to manifestoes—as the rhetorical tactic entered into the repertoires (Tilly 1978, pp. 151-159; 1986) of various insurgent groups.[2] Hobsbawm (1983, p. 13) observed that movements have historically "…backed their innovations by reference to a 'people's past,'…to traditions of revolution…and to [their] own heroes and martyrs." This is in part due to the legitimizing power that such representations can provide. To succeed, contenders "…must strip the incumbent government of moral authority and cloak their own movement with that aura, shifting the loyalties of the…population to their movement” (Wickham-Crowley 1989, p. 143). The use of historical figures is an important tactic that movement leaders have employed in trying to accomplish this task.

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[2] Such "appearances" of historical figures in politics have not escaped the notice of scholars of Latin America. See for example Centeno 2002, Chapter 4; de la Fuente 2001, pp. 25-26, 32-33, 252; Dunkerley 2000, pp. 69-74; Martin 1993.

The Sandinista National Liberation Front of Nicaragua (FSLN, the *Sandinistas*) and the Zapatista National Liberation Army of Chiapas, Mexico (EZLN, the *Zapatistas*) invoked, even in the names they adopted, the earlier revolutionary figures of Sandino and Zapata. In many ways, the historical materials that the movements had to work with were remarkably similar. Sandino and Zapata were (roughly) contemporaries and were active for similar lengths of time, Sandino from 1926 until 1934 and Zapata from 1910 until 1919. Both were charismatic leaders who led regional, peasant-based guerilla armies in times of civil war. Both enjoyed popular support in their day, but were also labeled bandits by some. Significantly, both were assassinated by political opponents at the pinnacles of their rebellious careers. At the same time, there are arguable similarities between the FSLN and the EZLN. Both were late twentieth century leftist movements, the Sandinistas active from the early 1960s until their 1979 success and the Zapatistas from their 1994 public emergence until today. Both invoked their figures in communications with movement constituencies, and in both cases the political agenda and revolutionary situation of the figure differed from the context into which it was deployed. Finally, both movements have been politically and culturally successful, relative to other Latin American movements. Given these similarities, standard approaches to culture in contentious politics might expect the figures to have been used in similar ways to accomplish similar ends in the two cases.

Contrary to this expectation, however, the Sandinistas and Zapatistas used their historical figures quite differently. The Sandinistas used Sandino, via extended treatments of his life and thought, as a vehicle for developing their revolutionary ideology and strategy. Some of their pamphlets collect Sandino's writings, while others provide detailed biographical accounts or justify the Sandinista programme with Sandino's quoted speech. In fact, historical descriptions of the figure are often so closely intertwined with ideological proposals or typifications of the ideal revolutionary that it is difficult to separate them. In contrast, Zapatista communiqués rarely discuss Zapata in detail, but rather use the figure to engage in symbolic conflict with the state. They almost never present more than a few lines of general biographical information, and references invoking Zapata are typically brief allusions to commonly-known events or poetic tales that obscure him altogether. When Zapata is invoked, it is most often to claim his legacy or to discredit the state's claim to him.

What accounts for this variation in how similar movements used such similar historical figures?[3] Drawing primarily on studies of memory and commemoration, I conduct an historical comparison that is sensitive to the ways in which history and discursive relations condition the use of historical figures.[4] I argue that the cases differ both in terms of the "historical careers" of the two symbols and in terms of the contemporary discursive fields. Ultimately, as I explain more fully below, the Nicaraguan case can be characterized as an instance of what I term symbolic *resurrection*, while the Mexican case is one of *reappropriation*. The Sandinistas resurrected Sandino from relative obscurity, while the Zapatistas reappropriated Zapata from the ruling political party. This distinction highlights the operation of systematic opportunities for and limitations on how movements use culture—more specifically, symbols that are overtly historical—to achieve political ends.

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[3] This paper does not assess the popular resonance of the symbolic figures. It would be presumptuous to assume that the representations of the figures were always received in the way the producers intended, and this paper makes no such presumption. Fox (2003), for example, has documented the unreceptiveness of Romanian students to nationalist state rhetoric and projects. Likewise Stamatov (2002), in his study of Verdi's putatively nationalist operas, has argued that the political meaning of cultural objects is not in the object itself but a result of work done by "interpretive activists." Thus an account of popular reception would constitute an important and complementary project; but it would be a separate one, requiring the collection of different data and the application of different analytic methods. I argue that it remains

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important to explain variation in how movement leaders used historical figures, and it is to this question that the scope of this paper is limited. Such a focus on the production of cultural objects (see Griswold 1987) need *not* imply the faulty assumptions that meaning is "in" the object or that the intentionality of producers is equivalent to audience reception.

[4] Weber's ([1905] 2002) approach in his *Protestant Ethic* was similar. Like Weber, I do not propose an exhaustive causal argument, considering all possibly relevant factors. Such a task would require a much more detailed study of the political, economic, and cultural contexts of the movements, of the biographies and motives of the movement leaders, etc. Rather, just as Weber ([1905] 2002, p. 36, original italics) acknowledged that "innumerable historical constellations…had to come together in order for the [Protestant] churches to be able to continue to exist at all," and limited his inquiry to asking "which of certain characteristic elements of [capitalist] culture might be *attributable* to the influences of the Reformation as historical cause," I am interested in determining how the histories of certain symbols conditioned their uses in later politics.

DISCURSIVE RELATIONS AND HISTORICAL PROCESS

Scholars of contentious politics have increasingly emphasized culture in recent years.[5] In part, this shift is due to the empirical claim that movements since the mid-1960s have been increasingly organized around cultural agendas (Alvarez, Dagnino and Escobar 1998).[6] At the same time, it is due to a theoretical and methodological recognition that research on social movements and revolution would benefit from increased cultural sensitivity (Johnston and Klandermans 1995, p. vii). Most attempts to bring cultural analysis into the study of contentious politics have been interested in culture for what it can say about the interpretation of grievances (Moore 1978; Gamson 1992, esp. pp. 31-58; Snow et al. 1986) and for its role as a resource to be used by political activists (Pfaff and Yang 2001; Swidler 1986).

The most sustained attention to culture in the social movements field has come from studies of frames and framing processes.[7] The framing perspective, first elaborated by Snow et al. (1986), was designed to bring together resource mobilization and social psychological perspectives by highlighting the ideational dynamics between social movement organizations and potential movement participants. In addition to its positive role in reinvigorating the study of culture in politics, this perspective rightly argues that the *interpretation* of grievances is key to movement participation, and that this interpretation is an ongoing accomplishment (Snow et al. 1986). It also usefully highlights those dimensions of meaning-making that are unarguably instrumental.

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[5] See for example Foran 1997, Goldstone 1991, Goodwin 1994, Hunt 1984, Jasper 1997, Johnston and Klandermans 1995, McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 1997, Sewell 1980, and Sewell 1985. For a review of recent work on politics and culture, see Berezin 1997.

[6] For a useful review, see Pichardo 1997. For an historical critique of the "novelty" argument, see Calhoun 1993.

[7] For a review of this perspective's rise to prominence, see Benford and Snow 2000.

While the framing approach is useful for answering certain sorts of questions about particular topics, however, it has limitations that render it less suitable for the present inquiry. First, it often over-estimates the ideational options open to activists. Just because people are acting strategically does not mean that they are free to make any "choice" they like. As Steinberg (1999, pp. 742, 772) notes, the framing perspective, "in [its] focus on calculation and persuasion," fails to notice the extent to which activists are constrained by the discursive fields they are trying to manipulate. Second, much of the framing literature tends to reify its (metaphorical) frames as things-in-the-world to be taken hold of, rearranged, and used by the activist; and to be isolated, identified, and catalogued by the analyst. This misconstrued ontological status[8] undercuts the oft-stated aim (Benford 1997; Benford and Snow 2000, p. 614; Snow et al. 1986) of viewing fram*ing* as a process.[9] It also contributes to an ahistorical perspective on frames, symbols, and their uses. Third, the perspective is limited by its lack of subtlety relative to other culturalist approaches.[10] As Berezin (1997, p. 375) has observed: "The problem with frame analysis is that while its boundedness appeals to those who started out as structuralists, it is overly rigid to those who have a more fine-grained sense of cultural and historical analysis." Lastly, many limitations of the framing perspective can be traced to the fact that it is designed first and foremost to explain patterns of mobilization (see for example Snow et al. 1986, Snow and Benford 1988, Snow and Benford 1992). While such an emphasis is often necessary, participation need not be seen as the *only* important dependent variable. A restrictive focus on mobilization can blind the analyst to other important dimensions of the phenomenon, an understanding of which may contribute to a more complete picture of a movement's culture, social dynamics, or interactions with opposing groups. In order to avoid these pitfalls in the present study, it is useful to consider the relevance of work on memory and commemoration to the study of culture in contentious politics.

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[8] Of course there are exceptions. Notable is Johnston (1995), who is particularly sensitive to the ontological status and "location" of frames when outlining his methodology of "micro-frame analysis."

[9] Benford (1997, pp. 414-420) similarly discusses how a descriptive "cataloging" bias in framing research often leads to reification and a distraction from framing processes.

[10] See for example Steinberg's (1998) argument for the superiority of a discursive approach.

Work on memory and commemoration includes studies of monuments and memorials (Scott 1996; Vinitzky-Seroussi 2002; Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz 1991, Young 1989), ceremony and ritual (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), and the reputations of public figures (Connelly 1977; Fine 2001; Lang and Lang 1988; Polletta 1998; Schwartz 1991a, 1991b, 1996; Verdery 1999).[11] Such studies argue that history is a cultural object (Berezin 1997, p. 373), the subject of "memory work" (Schwartz 1996, p. 911; Zelizer 1995, p. 226) by specific "agents of memory" (Vinitzky-Seroussi 2002, p. 46). Accordingly, they recognize the potential for conflict in memory-making, and so maintain the synchronic dimension of cultural politics attended to by the framing perspective, while often highlighting limitations faced by agents of memory. At the same time, because of the nature of the subject matter, commemoration studies take history seriously, adding a much-needed diachronic dimension.

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[11] For useful reviews see Olick and Robbins 1998 and Zelizer 1995. As this paper concerns movement representations of the past, I neglect discussion of the more everyday or individual aspects of collective memory (see for example Connerton 1989, Chapter 1; Halbwachs 1992; Olick 1999a; and Prager 1998).

By highlighting potential conflict in historical representation (Jedlowski 2001, p. 34), the commemoration literature draws attention to the context in which commemoration is done (Zerubavel 1996, p. 283). Cultural objects are poly-vocal, and so the establishment of any particular meaning is an accomplishment—a product of active work by both producers and interpreters (Griswold 1987; Hall 1982; Sewell 1999). Similarly, the representation of history always involves selection and exclusion (Ducharme and Fine 1995; Hall 1982, p. 68; Hobsbawm 1972; Jedlowski 2001; Lang and Lang 1988, p. 79), and this selectivity "…often benefits those who shape it" (Zelizer 1995, p. 226). In this sense memory is (at least potentially) a site of struggle (Olick and Robbins 1998, p. 126) where a "politics of memory" (Schudson 1989, p. 112) takes place. Agents of memory often participate in "mnemonic battles" over how to interpret the past, who should be remembered, and the form that the historical narrative ought to take (Zerubavel 1996, pp. 295-297). The outcomes of these conflicts are important, as the ability to align "…past, present, and future in some meaningful way for members of the group" can be a useful tool for "…defend[ing] different aims and agendas" (Zelizer 1995, pp. 226, 227) and for legitimating the elites who advocate them (Jedlowski 2001, p. 34). Such conflict also constrains agents of memory, as "…people's ability to reconstruct the past…is limited by the crucial social fact that other people within their awareness are trying to do the same thing" (Schudson 1989, p. 112).[12] Attention to this synchronic dimension of memory work—to relations within the contemporary discursive field—will constitute one aspect of the following examination of the uses of Sandino and Zapata.

Commemoration studies also foreground history, especially via the question of the "malleability" of the past—of whether historical representations are simply a product of present-day instrumental "invention," or whether they are rather constrained by characteristics of the actual past (Jedlowski 2001; Olick and Robbins 1998, pp. 128-130; Schwartz 1991b; Wagner-Pacifici 1996). Hobsbawm and Ranger's (1983) now classic edited volume on "invented" tradition is typically taken as the paradigmatic example of the instrumentalist position. The premise of the collection is captured in Hobsbawm's (1983, p. 1) introductory remark that: "'Traditions' which appear or claim to be old are often quite recent in origin and sometimes invented."[13] The work chronicles the recent origins of seemingly old traditions and demonstrates their importance for legitimizing institutions and action, and for building group cohesion through a sense of nationness and common history (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, pp. 9, 12, 15-16, 98-100, 263-265). Much of the work on conflict discussed above shares a similar presentist emphasis.

At the same time, a growing number of authors point out the restrictions that the "actual past" places on present-day memory work (see for example Centeno 2002, Chapter 4; Schudson 1989; Smith 1986). While typically recognizing the constructed nature of history as a cultural object, and so in part conceding to the "invention" premise, they argue that "Collective memory…cannot completely override history" (Prager 2001, p. 2225). Schudson (1989, pp. 106-107) argues that, while attempts are often made to use the past for legitimation, it is "…highly resistant to efforts to make it over," and the "available materials" set limits on constructions. Brubaker and Feischmidt (2002) likewise make a case for the resilience of history, in their study of sesquicentennial celebrations of the 1848 revolutions, by showing that the Slovak and Romanian attempts to use the past were considerably less successful than the Hungarian due to a paucity of usable materials or lively commemorative traditions. In a slightly different vein, Wagner-Pacifici and Schwartz (1991) show how the content of commemorated events—in this case the Vietnam War's unpopularity and status as a military defeat—goes a long way towards explaining the mnemonic practices surrounding those events.

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[12] See also Schwartz 1991b, p. 231.

[13] Although note his use of the qualifiers "often" and "sometimes."

The poles of this debate have been greatly exaggerated, and it is generally accepted that both positions are, at least partially, correct—memory work is limited both by the context in which it is done and by the available past. Both positions accede to general constructivist premises and, as Schwartz (1996, p. 909) points out, for both the past is taken as, more or less, "…a product of institutionally based pools of interests, resources, and experiences." The persistent question concerns the *degree* of malleability of the past (Schwartz 1996, p. 909), and in many cases this may be an empirical issue. For example, infrastructurally powerful states (Mann 1984) that enjoy some popular support may be more successful at using the past for novel purposes than weaker states or marginalized political movements. If this is the case, it may explain why Hobsbawm and his peers found nineteenth century European states enjoying considerable freedom to invent, while scholars of nineteenth century Latin America (Centeno 2002, Chapter 4) stress the resilience of the past.

Rather than focusing simply on the question of malleability, an increasing number of scholars are discussing memory and commemoration as processual—as unfolding over time—rather than as one-time happenings (Ducharme and Fine 1995; Olick 1999b; Olick and Levy 1997; Olick and Robbins 1998, p. 134; Zelizer 1995). Memory-making is not merely a dialectic of past and present, in which the past effects a present which interprets the past,[14] but it is rather an unfolding process that spans a series of "presents," each with its own memory dynamics. Memory work is cumulative, "…continually evolving across many points in time and space…" and "conducted amidst the ruins of earlier recollections," and is in this sense historically contingent, or path-dependent (Olick and Levy 1997, p. 923; Zelizer 1995, pp. 218, 220, 227-228). Not only do the "actual materials" constrain commemoration, but earlier representations constrain those that follow (Olick 1999b; Schwartz 1991b). The dynamics of these processes remain largely unspecified and open to elaboration, and one goal of this paper is to contribute to the empirical scholarship in this area. Such diachronic attention to historical process is as crucial as the synchronic dimension discussed above, and it constitutes a second aspect of the following examination of the uses of Sandino and Zapata.

METHODS

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[14] See for example Jedlowski 2001, p. 30.

To understand the uses of Zapata and Sandino by recent movements, it is necessary to take a longer historical view. Accordingly, I define the cases under study as *the historical legacy of Zapata* and *the historical legacy of Sandino*. These histories begin during the figures' lifetimes and end in 2000 and 1979, respectively.[15] The recent movements' uses of the figures, then, occur at particular historical moments within the broader cases.

The comparison draws on both primary and secondary sources. I rely on secondary historical texts to provide information on pre-movement representations of the figures. This allows me to identify moments in the histories of the symbols when shifts of usage took place prior to their uses by the EZLN and FSLN. I then focus on how the figures are represented in materials produced by the movements themselves. For the Mexican case, I analyze Zapatista communiqués released between the January 1994 public emergence of the movement and December 2000. During this period, 332 communiqués were released. Of these, thirty-nine make at least some reference to Zapata and were analyzed in full.[16] For the Nicaraguan case, I analyze the writings of Carlos Fonseca Amador—one of three founding members of the FSLN. While other Sandinista writers also discussed Sandino, there is a consensus among scholars and Sandinistas alike that Fonseca's characterization of Sandino was overwhelmingly definitive for the movement (Borge 1984, Cabezas 1985, Camacho Navarro 1991, Hodges 1986, Nolan 1984, Palmer 1988, Wheelock 1984, Whisnant 1995, Zimmerman 2000). Fonseca's complete writings were compiled by the Nicaraguan state, after the success of the revolution, in the two volume set, *Obras*. Thirty-eight of the documents in this set were unmistakably intended for public consumption—primarily pamphlets and short manifestos. Of these, twenty-nine make at least some reference to Sandino and were analyzed in full.

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[15] I limit my Mexican case to 2000 to avoid complications arising from the PRI's 2001 fall from power. And while the Sandinista government's use of Sandino after its 1979 revolutionary success is interesting in its own right, I limit my Nicaraguan case to the earlier period to facilitate comparison with the Mexican case and to avoid complications arising from post-success shifts in the use of Sandino's image (see Palmer 1988, p. 109; Sheesley 1991, pp. xxii-xxiii).

[16] These communiqués are archived at http://www.ezln.org/documentos/index.html. All translations from Sandinista and Zapatista documents are mine, except where otherwise noted.

The Zapatista communiqués and Fonseca's writings are comparable bodies of material, at least for the purposes of the question posed by this paper. Both were produced by movement leaders during periods of political activity and were intended for movement members, the national populace, and to garner international support.[17] While Zapatista communiqués have been shorter and more numerous than Fonseca's pamphlets, this is a result of political and technological opportunity. The Sandinistas had no access to conventional media due to political repression, and so published longer statements when alternate avenues presented themselves. The Zapatistas have been able to publish through newspapers, and so their communiqués have been shorter and more numerous. This difference, however, has little bearing on their uses of historical figures.

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[17] Granted, the Zapatistas' use of the Internet has provided unprecedented access to international audiences. However, most Zapatista communiqués focus on quite specific domestic issues (and assume a domestic contextual knowledge), and all are released to Mexican newspapers before being posted to the World Wide Web (Paulson 2001). Passages addressed to international audiences typically present demands, attack neo-liberalism, and call for international solidarity, while invocations of past revolutionary figures appear to be addressed primarily to domestic audiences with prior knowledge of the figures.

THE HISTORICAL LEGACIES OF SANDINO AND ZAPATA

As discussed above, it is important to be attentive to both historical process and the current discursive field when attempting to understand uses of the past. For this reason, I organize the following analysis of the Nicaraguan and Mexican cases according to four categories—two attending to the diachronic dimension of symbolic politics and two to the synchronic.

The first two categories highlight past uses of the figure and movement appeals to historical continuity. The first, *Pre-Movement Representations*, focuses attention on the symbol's "historical career"—on how the figure was represented, and by whom, before its use by the movement in question. As later representations of a figure may be influenced by how it was used in the past, this is a crucial (and often missed) analytic step. The second, *Historical Connection*, assesses movement attempts to establish continuity with a "suitable historic past" (Hobsbawm 1983, pp. 1, 7). Analysis according to this category highlights movement attempts to draw a legitimate line of descent to the historical figure.

The other two categories explore contestation over the contemporary meanings of the figures. Sewell (1992; 1999) argues that the reproduction of meaning is particularly contentious at the intersection of competing structures, where different schemas are available for application to shared symbols. This competition is one in which specific symbols become battlegrounds for groups attempting to gain supremacy by naturalizing the association between that symbol and their systems of meaning (Hall 1982, pp. 74-76; see also Hebdige [1979] 1986, p. 17; Martin 1993, p. 442; Stamatov 2002, p. 347; Wagner-Pacifici 1996, pp. 304-305, 309). The ability of a given group of actors to achieve legitimacy for their own representation of a symbol depends in large part on their ability to call into question the naturalness of dominant representations of the same symbol. Accordingly, the third category, *Dissociation from Competing Uses*, identifies movement attempts to dislodge the historical figure from any naturalized associations with competing groups. The fourth, *Association with the Movement*, is the complement of the third and focuses explicitly on movement attempts to frame its agenda in terms of the figure. The data and analyses presented in each of these sections are summarized in Table 1.

[Table 1 About Here]

Pre-Movement Representations

Augusto César Sandino was widely-known while alive, both as a bandit and as a patriot. After his death, a successful Somoza-led defamation campaign and subsequent censorship left the figure largely forgotten for a quarter-century. Like Sandino, Emiliano Zapata was also widely-known during his lifetime, both as a savage bandit and as a popular hero. Unlike Sandino, however, Zapata was successfully appropriated by the state party after his death. This difference set the two cases on divergent trajectories that would eventually lead to quite different uses of the figures by the more recent movements.

Sandino armed his first band in 1926 to join a Liberal revolt against the reigning Conservative party.[18] When the Liberals and Conservatives agreed to peace in 1927, under pressure of U.S. occupation, Sandino refused to capitulate. He instead reorganized his “crazy little army”[19] into the *Defending Army of Nicaragua’s National Sovereignty* and proceeded to wage a guerrilla war against the U.S. Marines, who withdrew in January 1933 having secured their influence over a firmly pro-U.S. *National Guard* headed by General Anastasio Somoza García. Sandino and the newly-elected President Sacasa quickly reached a cease-fire agreement, but it left General Somoza dissatisfied and so inaugurated a period of uneasy peace. In February 1934, on Somoza’s orders, Sandino was assassinated following a meeting with Sacasa to negotiate further disarmament.[20] Somoza took power in January 1937, elected to the presidency after leading a *coup* against Sacasa, initiating a 42-year presidential dynasty that would include both of his sons.[21]

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[18] The following paragraph draws on Baylen 1951 and 1954, Hodges 1986, Schroeder 1993, and Selser 1981.

[19] A moniker bestowed by the Chilean poet laureate Gabriela Mistral and later used by the Argentine historian Gregorio Selser for the title of his classic 1960 work on Sandino.

[20] Sandino’s assassination was part of a three-pronged attack on Sandino and his supporters. Sandino’s brother, an associate, and a ten-year-old bystander were also killed on the assassination night (Selser 1981, p. 177). Shortly thereafter, Somoza’s National Guard destroyed Sandino’s army of three hundred (plus their wives and children) at their Wiwilí cooperative (Hodges 1992, p. 156; Selser 1981, p. 178). For an account of the political violence that followed Sandino’s assassination, see Schroeder 1993. It is worth noting that the historical record of Sandino’s assassination and the immediate aftermath remains quite sketchy and

During his lifetime, Sandino's opponents publicly decried both the morality and legality of his rebellion. Early on, Liberal party leaders questioned his radicalism (Hodges 1986). When Sandino refused to accept the U.S.-brokered peace of 1927, the Marines branded him a bandit and outlaw (Camacho Navarro 1991, p. 33) and the U.S. State Department tried to impede his recognition as a legitimate political belligerent (Baylen 1951, pp. 405-407). Sandino's domestic opponents were then quick to adopt this mode of negative characterization (Baylen 1951, p. 405). The image of Sandino-as-bandit was shared in certain civilian sectors, often tinted by fear and racial prejudice, and newspapers echoed the elite view of Sandino's rebels as lower-class savages ravaging the countryside (Schroeder 1993, pp. 502-506).[22]

However, Sandino also had a loyal following. He made a name for himself early on in the Liberal rebellion, as his column enjoyed multiple victories and surpassed others

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contested. This is interesting in itself in that it highlights the unavailability of details about the events at the time.

[21] Somoza García held the presidency, with brief interruptions, from 1937 until his assassination in 1956. He was succeeded by his first son, Luis Somoza Debayle, who held power either directly or through puppets until 1967, when the second son, Anastasio Somoza Debayle, assumed the post. Anastasio Somoza Debayle's son was being primed to carry on the family dynasty when the Sandinistas triumphed in 1979.

[22] Throughout the rebellion, most major newspapers and party organs were stridently anti-Sandinista, as were all the leading families—Liberal and Conservative alike—in the region where Sandino was most active (Baylen 1954, p. 119; Schroeder 1993, pp. viii, 499, 502).

in size and renown (Hodges 1986, p. 11). Aware that his role as a charismatic guerrilla general required the "projection of a mythicized persona," Sandino changed his middle name to César, after the Roman emperor,[23] and referred to himself as "the one *called*" to defend Nicaraguan ideals (Baylen 1951, pp. 402, 410; Macaulay 1967, p. 49; Whisnant 1995, p. 349). He cast himself as the *Great Liberator* and drew on the imagery of David and Goliath (Baylen 1951, p. 404; Schroeder 1993, p. 18). In interviews with his first biographer, Sandino represented himself as a nationalist with populist leanings (Hodges 1992, p. 1). He described himself in simple terms: as a "humble artisan," a "mechanic, with my hammer in my hand," and a "*campesino* fighting for the autonomy of our people" (Sandino quoted in Whisnant 1995, p. 350). This self-presentation resonated with Sandino's troops and civilian admirers, who revered him as a father and, at times, even a mystic prophet or redemptive Christ-figure (Schroeder 1993, pp. vi, 16; Whisnant 1995, p. 350).[24] Indeed, the myth of Sandino took on national proportions during his lifetime (Baylen 1951, p. 410; Palmer 1988, p. 93; Schroeder 1993, p. 17; Weber 1981, p. 15). By the time of his death, Sandino had established himself as a well-known charismatic leader with a devoted following.

The myth of Sandino, however, would be short-lived—his image would be obscured for the quarter-century following his death. President Sacasa's quick political management upon Sandino's assassination—he declared a state of siege, censored telegraphic communications, and suspended newspaper publication—averted the immediate threats of either a popular uprising or National Guard *coup* (Baylen 1954, pp. 129-132).[25] These efforts, along with Somoza's public presentations of "evidence" against Sandino, rendered politically feasible a full amnesty for Sandino's murderers by August 1934 (Baylen 1954). Somoza would take advantage of this window of calm to solidify his own authority.

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[23] Hodges (1992, p. 6) notes that Sandino at times even transposed his first and middle names. When writing as second-in-command of the spiritualist-communist Hispano-American Oceanic Union he signed his name César Augusto [Caesar Augustus].

[24] Many have recounted Sandino's father's lamentation that redeemers always die crucified (Baylen 1951, p. 403; Macaulay 1967, p. 255; Selser 1981, p. 177; Whisnant 1995, pp. 350, 496).

While he ridiculed Sandino's revolutionary ideas, Somoza recognized them as a political threat (Hodges 1992, p. 156). For Somoza, it was crucial that Sandino not be remembered as a hero: he had to be either forgotten entirely or remembered only as a criminal (Whisnant 1995, p. 355). When two notable figures published books sympathetic to Sandino and critical of the National Guard,[26] Somoza responded defensively and in kind with his 1936 biography of Sandino, *El verdadero Sandino o el calvario de las Segovias*[27] (Camacho Navarro 1991, pp. 46-49).

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[25] Selser (1981, p. 174) attributes the continued dearth of press coverage *after* censorship was lifted to news agencies' interest in avoiding the implication of U.S. complicity. Alternatively, sparse coverage may have resulted from the anti-Sandinista attitudes of major newspapers noted by Schroeder (1993), or from discretion exercised by editors for the sake of political stability (Baylen 1954, p. 132).

[26] Sofonías Salvatierra, Minister of Agriculture and Work under Sacasa, wrote *Sandino: o la tragedia de un pueblo* (1934), and National Guard Lieutenant Abelardo Cuadra Vega wrote *Hombre del Caribe* ([1934] 1976).

[27] *The True Sandino or the Calvary of the Segovias*. Selser (1981) attributes its actual writing to Somoza's chief of staff and former counterfeiting comrade Camilo González. The biography has been

In his preface, Somoza is unequivocal: "The writers that have elevated Sandino as of one of the most radiant figures of the American Continent have done so on the wings of fantasy and in a deliberate attempt to forge a hero as a symbol…, [but] they could not forge it with the legend, because in the light of truth he fell from his pedestal" (Somoza García [1936] 1976, p. 4).[28] Somoza's biography of Sandino was a deliberate attempt to "read him out of the culture" (Whisnant 1995, p. 357). According to Selser (1981, p. 182), it was designed to justify the crimes committed against him—to prevent his martyrdom. The layout of the biography is designed to be emotionally provocative and unquestionably authoritative, utilizing graphically violent pictures and Photostats of Sandino's wartime correspondence.[29] Somoza represents Sandino and his men as deviants from the dominant Nicaraguan values of traditional Catholicism and liberal progressivism. He depicts Sandino as demented, despotic, ignorant, communistic, and violent (Camacho Navarro 1991, p. 51; Whisnant 1995, p. 357). He describes Sandino's army as a "ferocious band" intent on destruction and pillaging, and his followers as crazed killers, cutthroats, rapists and thieves, as illiterate, drunken, soulless, and

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"…overwhelmingly rejected as a caricature and falsification of the historical Sandino…" (Hodges 1992, p. 2).

[28] This accusation is doubly biting, as one of Sandino's more famous political manifestos was entitled "Light and Truth" (reprinted in English in Conrad 1990, pp. 361-362), and these themes, reflecting his theosophical beliefs, were common throughout Sandino's writings. (For analysis of these theosophical beliefs, see Hodges 1986 and 1992).

[29] For a discussion of the construction of authority in *El verdadero Sandino*, see Schroeder 1993, pp. 497-501.

uncultured (Schroeder 1993, p. 501; Whisnant 1995, p. 357). Sandinismo is represented as brigandage, false patriotism, fanatical bolshevism, and lower class social pathology (Schroeder 1993, p. 499). Because of Somoza's strict censorship regime, *El verdadero Sandino* was for years the only book available on Sandino in Nicaragua (Zimmerman 2000, p. 59).

Somoza's project was successful. He won public support and guaranteed little popular opposition during his rise to power (Camacho Navarro 1991, pp. 58-59). Sandino's movement disappeared from the political scene and he was remembered as little more than a bandit (Hodges 1986, p. 161; Palmer 1988, p. 94). While opposition groups did occasionally invoke the memory of Sandino-as-patriot, [30] such provocative uses of Sandino's image were uncommon due to government censorship (Camacho Navarro 1991, pp. 60, 76; Palmer 1988, p. 93). Somoza's success at neutralizing Sandino's image lay in his ability first to consolidate the negative discourses around the figure into one authoritative version, and then to then paint competing accounts as inauthentic, seditious, and consequently illegal. Over time, the memory of Sandino—as patriot *or* bandit—dissipated. For a quarter of a century, the myth of Sandino was for all intents and purposes lost.

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[30] In 1946 Somoza was forced to respond to one such effort by instituting a *Society for the Investigation of the True History of Sandinism*, with the stated intention of neutralizing the fanciful figure of Sandino (Camacho Navarro 1991, pp. 67-70). For a detailed account of the sporadic uses of Sandino by opposition groups between 1934 and 1959, and of Somoza's responses, see Camacho Navarro 1991, pp. 59-77.

By the late 1950s most Central American leftist groups, including the Nicaraguan Socialist Party, dismissed Sandino (Borge 1984, p. 20; Nolan 1984, p. 17; Palmer 1988, p. 95). However, a small group of militant Marxist students, inspired by the events and thought of the Cuban revolution, saw something in the figure (Loveman and Davies 1997, p. 344; Palmer 1988, p. 96).[31] Carlos Fonseca saw a potentially "resonant myth" and "symbol of the national popular collective will" that could galvanize the revolutionary opposition (Palmer 1988). He first learned of Sandino through Somoza's own *El verdadero Sandino*, and his interest was reinforced upon visiting Cuba in 1959 and learning that Sandino was respected by that revolution's leaders (Zimmerman 2000, pp. 59, 61). Somoza's picture of Sandino-as-communist was of particular interest to the Nicaraguan students, and they began a clandestine study of internationally-published texts on the figure (Hodges 1986, pp. 163-164). They pieced together a revolutionary history until it could be said that Sandino "…was resurrected…as political mentor and cultural hero" (Whisnant 1995, p. 346). The *Frente* was founded in 1961, and the adjective *Sandinista* was added to its name in 1963, at Fonseca's insistence (Hodges 1986, p. 165). In 1961, an early, mimeographed version of Fonseca's carefully-edited compilation of Sandino's writings, *Ideario politico del general Augusto César Sandino*,[32] began to circulate among FSLN militants. It was the first of many documents in which Fonseca would present a systematic conception of Sandino.[33]

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[31] The Cuban Revolution had a profound impact on the Nicaraguan students (Hodges 1986). When Sandino began to appear in the rhetoric of that revolution, it completed for the students a feedback loop of Nicaraguan revolutionary ideas—they saw in Cuba "a modern, perfected form of Sandinism which had drawn from Marxism a clear vision of its goals and methods" (Weber 1981, p. 20). Borge (1984, p. 28) remembers: "For us, Fidel was the resurrection of Sandino, the answer to our doubts, the justification for our heretical dreams…."

The early stages of the Mexican case share many similarities with the Nicaraguan, but the two diverge quite dramatically in terms of how political opponents eventually responded to the stature of the figure.[34] In 1911, a movement led by Francisco Madero toppled the thirty-year regime of Mexican dictator Porfirio Díaz. Zapata, a mestizo peasant and popular village chief, participated in the uprising assuming that large haciendas would be forced to return communal lands to villages.[35] When agrarian reform was not forthcoming, his peasant movement again rebelled and proposed their *Plan de Ayala*, a program for land redistribution and condemnation of Madero. After Madero's death in a 1913 *coup*, a new revolution developed—led in the south by Zapata, in the north by Venustiano Carranza and Francisco "Pancho" Villa, and in the west by Alvaro

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[32] *The Political Thought of General Augusto César Sandino* (Fonseca 1982l).

[33] Hodges (1992) has shown that the Sandinistas were selective in their portrait of Sandino. He argues that the Sandinistas purveyed "…a sanitized image of their hero's ideology" to present the figure in a positive light (1992, p. 186).

[34] The following paragraph draws on Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, Cosío Villegas 1961, Hodges and Gandy 2002, Johnson 1968, McLynn 2000, O'Malley 1986, Riding 1985, and Womack 1968.

[35] Wealth in Morelos was highly concentrated. By the end of the nineteenth century, its thirty-seven haciendas and twenty-four mills were distributed among only seventeen *criollo* families (Riding 1985, p. 42).

Obregón. Obregón took Mexico City in 1914. After a revolutionary convention[36] failed to unite the various factions, Carranza and Obregón took control by force. Carranza was elected president in February 1917, and a new constitution that significantly increased the power of the executive was adopted shortly thereafter. Zapata, still in revolt, was double-crossed and killed in April 1919 by a general secretly allied with and under orders from Carranza.

While Zapata was alive, political opponents and local elites—worried by Zapata's attacks on private property and disdainful of his lower-class origins—defamed him and his army. In a 1912 congressional report, Madero called Zapata's "amorphous agrarian socialism" a "sinister vandalism" (Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, p. 25). A 1914 propaganda campaign against Zapata in Mexico City newspapers painted his men as "crazed, peyote-drugged, genocidal war criminals" (McLynn 2000, p. 222). In a 1915 manifesto, provisional president Eulalio Gutiérrez denounced Zapata as an unjust military dictator unfaithful to the revolution (Johnson 1968, pp. 275-276), and in 1919 Carranza announced that Zapata was "beyond amnesty" (Womack 1968, p. 321). Such portrayals reverberated in a Mexico City press brimming with exaggerated stories of "atrocities" committed by the bloodthirsty hordes inspired by Zapata's false doctrines (Johnson 1968, pp. 83-84, 262; Knight 1986, pp. 262, 317, 383; McLynn 2000, p. 109; O'Malley 1986, p. 42). Likewise, local landlords and merchants complained of Zapata's socialist pretensions and, afraid of a "caste war," made no distinction between the terms "Zapatista" and "bandit" (Knight 1986, pp. 9, 262, 352-353). Upon Zapata's assassination, Carrancista newspapers "rejoiced at the finish of 'the Famous Attila'" (Womack 1968, p. 327).

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[36] For accounts of the revolutionary convention held at Aguascalientes in October of 1914, see Hodges and Gandy 2002, pp. 26-27, Johnson 1968, pp. 245-254, McLynn 2000, pp. 256-263, and Womack 1968, pp. 214-219. In recent years, the Convention has been symbolically important to the EZLN.

For others, however, Zapata was a respected leader and stalwart representative of the landless. He was a trusted member of his native village and regionally renowned for his horsemanship and flamboyant style (McLynn 2000, pp. 47-49; O'Malley 1986, p. 42). Zapata's redistributive *Plan de Ayala* captured the hearts of southern peasants, and as his fame grew, so did the legends around him (Hodges and Gandy 1983, p. 27; McLynn 2000, pp. 38, 91). As early as 1911, a Mexico City Congressman remarked: "Emiliano Zapata is no longer a man, he is a symbol" (José María Lozano quoted in McLynn 2000, p. 115), and according to Johnson (1968, p. 338), Zapata's 1919 assassination was the death of a messiah for southern peasants.

With the institutionalization of the revolution, Zapata would be transformed from a perpetual enemy of the state into one of its principal symbols. By the time of his death, Zapata's forces were no longer a serious military threat and peasant pressure to enforce constitutional provisions for land redistribution abated (Johnson 1968, p. 333; Riding 1985, p. 182).[37] But popular memory of Zapata did not die. From the day his corpse was put on public display in Cuautla, rumors circulated that it was not his (O'Malley 1986, pp. 43-44). Years later, many persisted in believing him alive, and regional tales had him riding through the hills or reincarnated as later revolutionaries (Hodges and Gandy 2002, p. 94; Johnson 1968, p. 337; Martin 1993, pp. 452-453; O'Malley 1986, p. 44).

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[37] Since 1917, Carranza had been under peasant pressure to act on Article 27 of the new constitution. Article 27 declared that the interests of the state or nation superseded those of individuals or groups, providing a formal legal basis for agrarian reform (Cosío Villegas 1961, p. 28; Hodges and Gandy 2002, pp. 35-36). President Salinas' 1992 amendment of Article 27—which cleared the way for NAFTA by

Peace fostered the gradual elaboration of a new politics. Obregón succeeded Carranza in 1920, bringing centrist populism and political stability (Hodges and Gandy 2002, pp. 32-33). In 1928, in an effort to overcome factionalism, Obregón's successor Plutarco Elías Calles founded the National Revolutionary Party (PRN)[38] and pronounced everyone within the government a member (Riding 1985, pp. 51-52). This new state party was intended to be a "pragmatic coalition of interests"—making concessions to dissatisfied Zapatistas, Villistas, and Carrancistas—that would replace individuals with institutions (Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, pp. 256-257; Fuentes 1996, pp. 68-73). President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940) assured the stability of this system by organizing peasants, workers, and the middle class into corporations within the party, and with the most sweeping application of Article 27 the country has seen (Fuentes 1996, pp. 70-71, Yashar 1999, pp. 80-84).[39] His reforms effectively demobilized the peasantry while

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officially ending agrarian reform and allowing the privatization of campesino land—was an important factor leading to the 1994 Zapatista rebellion (Johnston 2000, p. 473; Stephen 1997b, pp. 15, 21-22).

[38] Calles' PRN became the Party of the Mexican Revolution in 1938, and finally the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) in 1946. The party held power in Mexico from 1929 until the election of National Action Party (PAN) candidate Vicente Fox in December 2001.

[39] Under Cárdenas, around 46 million acres of land were distributed as communal *ejidos*, benefiting some 750,000 families (Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, p. 143; Riding 1985, p. 54). Cárdenas also implemented

turning the state party into a powerful instrument of the presidency (Bartra 1985, p. 65; Riding 1985, pp. 55, 181).

This new state-party system came to draw heavily on the memories and symbols of the revolution. As the rebellious fervor in Morelos died down and the Mexico City government began to see Zapata as a viable revolutionary symbol, the figure's official image experienced a positive shift (Martin 1993, pp. 450-452; O'Malley 1986, pp. 44-45). At the second anniversary of Zapata's assassination, the government sponsored a memorial in Morelos (O'Malley 1986, p. xii). Calles began his 1924 presidential campaign with a pilgrimage to Zapata's tomb, where he swore to carry on his programme (Hodges and Gandy 1983, p. 51). In 1930, Zapata was honored in a state-sponsored Mexico City memorial for the first time, and in 1931 Zapata's name was inscribed in gold letters on the wall of the congressional chamber of deputies alongside those of Madero, Carranza, and Villa (Riding 1985, p. 15). The government developed an annual tradition in which the Agrarian Reform minister would lay a wreath at Zapata's statue in Cuautla—ritualistically reinforcing its pledge to bring justice to the peasantry (Riding 1985, p. 180). To commemorate what would have been Zapata's 100th birthday, the government attempted (but met with opposition and failed) to transfer his remains from Cuautla to Mexico City to lie beside Carranza at the Monument of the Revolution

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measures to arm the peasantry, in an effort to protect against the attacks of large landholders, and nationalized foreign railroad and oil companies (Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, p. 142; Riding 1985, p. 54).

(Harvey 1998, pp. 131-132). As late as 1989 President Salinas dubbed his presidential airplane *el Emiliano Zapata* (Hodges and Gandy 2002, pp. 130, 134).

In this way, Zapata became a symbol of the increasingly solid Mexican state. A “hero cult” emerged around the figure of Zapata as he was incorporated into the “hagiography of the regime” (O’Malley 1986, p. 7). This helped state leaders to develop a stable ideology and language, and ultimately enabled them to establish official versions of the revolution and claim to be its legitimate continuation (Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, pp. 159-161; Cosío Villegas 1961, p. 24; Martin 1993, pp. 442, 450; O’Malley 1986, pp. 3-4; Riding 1985, pp. 69-70; Stephen 1997a, p. 42). At the same time, the institutionalization of Zapata precluded the possibility of future Zapata-style innovation—it guaranteed the rightness of the present while delegitimating political change (Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993, pp. 159-160; Martin 1993, pp. 443, 449; O’Malley 1986, p. 7; Riding 1985, p. 57).

The Mexican state successfully appropriated Zapata. However, its right to the symbol has not gone unopposed. Rural and urban opposition movements, as well as leftist intellectuals, have repeatedly challenged its pretensions to an exclusive claim on Mexico’s revolutionary heritage (Bartra 1985; Aguilar Camín and Meyer 1993; Cosío Villegas 1961; Hodges and Gandy 2002, pp. 108-119; Johnson 1968, p. 384; Schulz 1998, p. 594; Stephen 1997b). The EZLN is part of this tradition. Although its organizational origins in already-politicized peasant groups are uncertain,[40] it is clear that the group was founded in 1983, that it quickly removed to the Lacandón jungle of southeastern Mexico (*not* in the zone of Zapata's military activities), and that its membership and bases of support were composed primarily of Chiapan indigenous peasants (Collier 1994, pp. 53, 81-82; Harvey 1998; Higgins 2000, pp. 360-361). The EZLN had been an open secret for several years when it rebelled on January 1, 1994 (Collier 1994, pp. 53-54; Schulz 1998, p. 593). Calling for a new constitution, the Zapatistas seized Chiapan towns, attacked an army base and nearby penitentiary, kidnapped a former governor, and addressed the populace in a series of communiqués (Collier 1994, pp. 1-2).[41] In other communiqués that followed, the EZLN drew on the dominant culture of the Mexican Revolution, but also radically reinvented it by working to construct a new understanding of citizenship (Harvey 1998) and by connecting the figure of Zapata to current social issues (Stephen 1997a, pp. 42-43). In response, the Mexican government has repeatedly charged the Zapatistas with misrepresenting

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[40] Collier (1994) and Harvey (1998) both offer helpful analyses of the milieu of competing peasant groups active in Chiapas prior to the founding of the EZLN. There is general agreement that the group was

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founded by a detachment of urban leftists—by members of the FLN (National Liberation Forces), a clandestine organization that launched guerillas in Mexico's southern jungles in the 1970s (Harvey 1998; Hodges and Gandy 2002; Stephen 1997b).

[41] The Zapatistas are perhaps most well-known for their creative use of communication technologies—such as fax, video, and the Internet—to present materials to the conventional press and directly to supporters (Parra 1995, pp. 69-70; Schulz 1998, p. 603). As Johnston (2000) points out, however, it is important not to loose sight of either the Zapatistas' use of violent force or of the economic issues that are at the heart of Zapatista demands. The Zapatistas use innovative technology and political symbolism to accomplish actual political, economic, and social ends.

Mexico's revolutionary past, and has worked to reclaim Zapata and restore him to the "pantheon of state heroes" (Long 1999, pp. 102-104).

This comparison of the histories of Sandino and Zapata as symbols draws out the first crucial difference between the two cases: abandonment versus appropriation (see Table 1, row 1). Both Sandino and Zapata were important popular figures and even potential martyrs during their lifetimes, and both were also branded bandits by their enemies. This is an important similarity in that the potential legacy of each figure was initially an open question. The key difference involves how the enemies of the figures attempted to defuse popular unrest upon their deaths. In Nicaragua, Somoza defamed Sandino with authoritative "evidence" while forbidding further representation of him. In Mexico the state party, claiming to represent the revolutionary heritage, gradually appropriated Zapata in a series of stages paralleling the institutionalization of the revolution. Both methods were successful. Sandino's symbolic power was effectively defused as he was displaced from public recognition for a generation, while Zapata was transformed from a perpetual enemy of the state into one of its principal symbols. At the same time, this meant that the later movements would confront different sets of initial conditions—different symbolic terrain—in their uses of the figures.

Historical Connection

With this history of representation established, it is possible to turn to an analysis of how the more recent movements used the figures. Not surprisingly, attempts to connect with the figures' historical legacies are common in both the Sandinista and the

Zapatista documents. The Sandinistas tried to forge a connection between Sandino's historic rebellion and their own conflict with the Somoza regime by situating both within a unified tradition of *lucha popular*, or popular struggle. Literal continuity is asserted between the earlier and later rebellious episodes, and is described as a process of fits and starts, to be learned from and improved upon at each step.[42] The Zapatistas likewise tried to draw a legitimate line of descent from Zapata to their own movement. Unlike the Sandinistas' attempt to demonstrate literal continuity, however, the Zapatistas asserted a more symbolic connection with their historical figure.

Carlos Fonseca fixes the roots of the FSLN's popular struggle well before Sandino's lifetime by establishing continuity with Sandino's movement, and with even earlier Nicaraguan rebellions.[43] He then infers from Sandino's quoted words a hope that his rebellion would outlive him.[44] It is this literal legacy that the FSLN takes up. In declaring that "….the [FSLN's] war of the people's guerillas against the National Guard is the continuation of the fight that…Sandino sustained against the Yankee invaders…," Fonseca directly equates the political repression of the Somoza regime with that of the U.S. Marines, and clarifies that the people's fight remains the same.[45] The twenty-five years of silence after Sandino's death can then be described as merely a lull in an ongoing conflict.[46] Occasional flare-ups of subversive activity in the interim, and the involvement of veterans of Sandino's army in the FSLN, are marshaled as evidence of continuity through this latency period.[47]

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[42] Fonseca 1982p, p. 57.

[43] Fonseca 1982o, p. 274; 1982t, p. 409; 1982y, pp. 103-104; 1982z, p. 34.

[44] Fonseca 1982g, p. 237; 1982i, p. 259; 1982q, p. 80; 1982x, p. 382; 1982z, pp. 64, 80.

[45] Fonseca 1982n, p. 28. Also Fonseca 1982b, pp. 40-41; 1982p, p. 65; 1982q, pp. 94-95; 1982x, p. 368; 1982y, pp. 97, 108; 1982aa, p. 251.

According to Fonseca, when a new generation of Nicaraguan youth—energized by the Cuban example—rekindled the popular struggle in the late 1950s, Sandino was reborn.[48] As Fonseca explains, "…'58 finally brought huge assemblies of students and for the first time in years the name of Augusto César Sandino returned to echo in Nicaragua, after a quarter century of darkness, of paralysis, of atrophy of the Nicaraguan popular movement."[49] Critical to this rebirth was a theoretically-informed evaluation of Sandino's "political limitations."[50] Through such evaluation, Sandino's example became a path for the FSLN to follow: "Ernesto Che Guevara and Augusto César Sandino, yesterday, heroically marked the indispensable guerilla route that will lead the peoples victimized by imperialism to the absolute possession of their own destinies."[51] The FSLN's adherence to Sandino's path provided the new generation with theoretical lessons, but it also justified and lent meaning to their revolutionary actions. FSLN participants became descendants, sons, and orphans of Sandino.[52] The historical Sandino likewise became a precedent, inspiration, and guide, the "…precursor of the new age that the subjugated peoples now forge…."[53]

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[46] Fonseca 1982d, p. 424; 1982o, p. 272; 1982q, p. 84; 1982s, pp. 130, 131.

[47] Fonseca 1982j, p. 221; 1982r, pp. 395, 397; 1982x, pp. 383-384.

[48] Fonseca 1982e, p. 166; 1982f, p. 357; 1982j, p. 217; 1982n, p. 38; 1982s, p. 127; 1982z, p. 85; 1982aa, p. 251.

[49] Fonseca 1982j, p. 217.

[50] Fonseca (1982b, p. 42; 1982n, p. 37; 1982q, pp. 82-83; 1982s, p. 124; 1982x, p. 378; 1982z, pp. 22-23) concludes that Sandino was limited by a lack of ideological development and correct political strategy. Further, the *campesino* composition of his army meant that he lacked an adequate urban front and that his troops and officers often lacked political sophistication. Fonseca also notes political repression and Latin America's inexperience in dealing with imperialism as inhibiting factors. While concluding that Sandino's rebellion could not have continued, however, Fonseca is clear in praising Sandino for exploiting to the fullest what the concrete conditions of the situation presented, and for preserving with clarity the social ideals that were often blunted in other Latin American rebellions.

Likewise, the Zapatista communiqués identify a tradition of struggle of which Zapata and the EZLN are parts.[54] As one document states: "We, the insurgents, have been given an inheritance by yesterday's transgressors of the law, delinquents of the past, those persecuted before, by Hidalgo, Morelos…, Francisco Villa, Emiliano Zapata."[55] But this is a less literal continuity than in the Nicaraguan case. Rather, it is acknowledged that the figure is being invoked as a symbol of resistance, and that "…indigenous Mexicans…have *added* the name of Emiliano Zapata to their history…."[56] A common theme is that Zapata never died, lives on, or has been born again, and that the EZLN is heir to his heritage.[57] This sentiment is echoed in declarations that “Emiliano Zapata died, but not his fight nor his thought,” and that “Zapata is alive, and in spite of everything, the struggle continues.”[58]

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[51] Fonseca 1982x, p. 368. Also Fonseca 1982c, p. 257; 1982e, p. 167; 1982r, p. 401.

[52] Fonseca 1982i, p. 260; 1982n, p. 38; 1982r, pp. 395, 396; 1982w, p. 247.

[53] Fonseca 1982x, p. 368. Also Fonseca 1982b, pp. 42, 46; 1982e, pp. 110, 164; 1982k, p. 241; 1982s, pp. 131, 137.

[54] EZLN 1994a, 1995a, 1996e, 1998b.

[55] EZLN 1995c.

[56] EZLN 1998b, English translation available online, emphasis mine. Also 1999c.

Zapata is represented as the historic commander of the present-day Zapatistas, and they as his children.[59] Similarly, a common motif is that Zapata’s heart is the heart of the people of Chiapas: “Guardian and heart of the people, [Zapata] is also guardian and heart of the word…. Now that we have spoken and listened, the heart of [Zapata], the guardian and heart of the people, is happy.”[60] A most overt example of the symbolic historical connection declares that “…the Zapatistas of 1994 and those of 1910 are the same.”[61] This statement demonstrates what is an often cyclical conception of time—blurring “yesterday,” “today,” and “tomorrow”—for which Zapata is simultaneously “origin” and “destination”: “We are the stubborn history that repeats itself so that it won’t repeat itself again, the gaze behind that enables us to walk ahead.” [62]

Both the Sandinistas and the Zapatistas tried to establish historical connections to their respective historical figures, although the Sandinista connection is more literal and the Zapatista more symbolic (see Table 1, row 2). The Sandinista documents situate Sandino and the FSLN on the same path of popular struggle, placing the FSLN at the start of a reinvigorated phase of a continuous rebellion. The Zapatista documents, on the other hand, portray Zapata as a living, popular symbol (not one calcified in the discourse of the institutionalized revolution) that represents a struggle with which to identify. While not regionally or organizationally linked with the original movement, the EZLN claims the favor and legacy of Zapata by virtue of its renewed struggle. The motives for such historical links may have varied slightly across the two cases. As Sandino had been largely abandoned, Sandinista attempts to connect with him meant doing more than merely *claiming* his legacy. It meant actually painting a picture of what that legacy, and the popular struggle, actually *was*, and it meant providing evidence for its existence and vitality. The young Nicaraguan radicals had to lead a mass, public remembrance in order for the symbol to be of any use to them, and the construction of this Sandino narrative is a crucial element of their texts. Somewhat differently, as Zapata had been appropriated, claiming to be rightful heirs to his legacy was a relatively oblique way for the EZLN to invoke the already-established power of the symbol while implicitly dissociating it from others who would claim his legacy, without attacking anyone directly. Despite this slight variation, the commonality remains that both movements made significant attempts to connect with their figure’s history and to claim his legacy. That both movements did this is not surprising, as it would seem that establishing such historical links is a crucial precondition for other, more elaborate uses of historical figures.

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[57] EZLN 1994c, 1994d, 1995a, 1995c, 1996a, 1996e, 1996f, 1997b, 1998a, 1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2000b.

[58] EZLN 1995a, 1996a, 1997b.

[59] EZLN 1996d, 1996f, 1997b, 1997d, 1998a, 2000b.

[60] EZLN 1996b. Also EZLN 1994c, 1995a, 1996a, 1999c.

[61] EZLN 1995b.

[62] EZLN 1996e. Also, EZLN 1994f, 1998b.

Dissociation from Competing Uses

While both the Sandinistas and the Zapatistas made relatively similar attempts to claim their figures' legacies, the different histories of pre-movement use in each case strongly conditioned the ways in which they would use the figures against their contemporary competition. The Zapatistas confronted an appropriated symbol and so were able to use it to attack the legitimacy of the Mexican state. As the Sandinistas confronted an abandoned symbol, they did not enjoy such an opportunity.

Very common in the Zapatista communiqués are attempts to dislodge the symbol of Zapata from the state's grasp. First, official narratives of Zapata's life and death are called into question by pointing to aspects of the Zapatista fight that have been "overlooked" or "misrepresented" by historians, implying that the standard history isn't the "real story."[63] One communiqué, for example, prefaces a portrayal of Zapata (which draws heavily on indigenous mythology and is extremely vague in narrative detail) with a rejection of the standard emphasis on Zapata's heroic exploits:

> [Marcos narrating] …I begin to talk about the times of Zapata and Villa and the revolution and the land and the injustice and hunger and ignorance and sickness and repression and everything. And I finish by saying "so we are the Zapatista Army of National Liberation." I wait for some sign from Old Man Antonio who never took his eyes from my face. "Tell me more about that Zapata" he says after smoke and a cough. I start with

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[63] EZLN 1994f, 1995a, 2000b.

> Anenecuilco, then with the Plan de Ayala, the military campaign, the organization of the villages, the betrayal at Chinameca. Old Man Antonio continued to stare at me until I finished. “It wasn't like that” he says. I'm surprised and all I can do is babble. “I'm going to tell you the real story of Zapata.”[64]

In other instances, the documents more overtly question the government’s honesty in representing Zapata.[65] One explains how “…the evil government proposes to erase [the true] history.”[66] Some discussions are more veiled. For example, Zapata is often described in the communiqués as the bearer of “the word” of truth. The following statement plays on this motif: “Many words walk in the world. Many worlds are made. Many worlds are made for us. There are words and worlds which are lies and injustices. There are words and worlds which are truths and truthful.”[67] The implicit argument of the full communiqué is that the *world* constructed by the Mexican government is untruthful and consequently incapable of carrying the true *word* of “Zapata.” Rather than listen to the official narrative, the reader is encouraged, in another communiqué, to disregard the lying, criminal government and to listen rather to the voice of children, women, the elderly and the poor—that is, to the legitimate representatives of revolutionary ideas.[68]

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[64] EZLN 1994f, English translation available online.

[65] EZLN 1994c, 1997a.

[66] EZLN 1996a.

[67] EZLN 1996a, English translation available online.

[68] EZLN 1996d.

These critiques of the government's historical honesty tie directly into attacks on the legitimacy of a state and party that claims a revolutionary lineage. One communiqué boldly declares that "…the federal government has usurped the legitimacy—left to us by its heroes—of the Mexican Revolution."[69] In another example, the Mexican government is depicted as maintaining the *foreign* legacy of neo-liberalism rather than Zapata's *domestic* revolutionary legacy.[70] Such charges are made more forceful through indictments of government actions as treasonous. Connections are often drawn between Zapata's assassination and the indulgences of current state officials. The documents remind readers that Zapata died by "treachery," "falsehood," and "deception," and at Carranza's orders.[71] They then argue for a stark continuity between Carranza and the current state elites by virtue of the "long dictatorship" of the PRI.[72] Finally, current elites are painted as the rich and self-indulgent carriers of Carranza's treason, as evidenced by their "betrayal" of Article 27 of the 1917 Constitution.[73] For example:

> After 80 years of fighting, the same accounts are still pending and the same betrayals keep coming…. Those who killed [Zapata] today debase themselves with riches and blood in huge government palaces selling our

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[69] EZLN 1994e.

[70] EZLN 1996a.

[71] EZLN 1994b, 1995a, 1999c, 2000b.

[72] EZLN 1994c, 1994d, 1996e, 1996f, 1997b, 1997c, 1999c.

[73] EZLN 1997a, 1997b, 1999c.

> riches and land, and so destroy the great Mexican nation…. 80 years later, the same who betrayed and killed Zapata are in power.[74]

Such attacks often conclude with a flourish, with defiant declarations like: "Here [in Chiapas] Zapata still lives. Try to assassinate him again"[75] and "Zapata will not die by arrogant decree."[76]

As explained above, and in stark contrast with the Mexican case, Sandino was *not* closely associated with a competing group at the time of the FSLN's invocation of him. Somoza never appropriated Sandino, but instead had tried to defuse his memory. In rare instances around mid-century, conventional opposition movements originating within the Conservative party did invoke Sandino, and Fonseca occasionally tried to discredit such uses (Camacho Navarro 1991). For example, in one case Fonseca warns:

> One doesn't need much discernment to see that the enemy will try to penetrate the organization—our own ranks—through people who can pass as Sandinistas…. Indications of this possibility can be seen in the pose of Mr. P.J. Chamorro [a key leader of the conservative opposition], who dares to display Sandino's image in his office.[77]

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[74] EZLN 1999c.

[75] EZLN 1994b.

[76] EZLN 1994c.

[77] Fonseca 1982y, p. 100.

But such opposition uses and Sandinista responses were uncommon. Considered in this way, there are no attempts to dissociate the figure from competing use in the Nicaraguan case that can compare with the Mexican examples.

The closest approximations to "dissociation" in the Nicaraguan case are Fonseca's efforts to redeem Sandino from Somoza's slanderous portrayal. The documents dispute Somoza's representation of Sandino as an inconsequential bandit, vandal, and communist "of the worst kind," claiming that "The Yankee master and his pawns tried to slander Sandino's name."[78] Just as Somoza calls Sandinista writers fanciful, Fonseca describes Sandino's detractors as liars.[79] Fonseca interprets the chronology of Sandino's military struggle in a way that directly contradicts Somoza's account.[80] The documents highlight Sandino's *refusal* to accept the 1927 peace agreement as the key event legitimating his actions, reversing Somoza's charge of illegality by claiming that Sandino, in continuing to fight, was not an outlaw but a patriot.[81] The documents then emphasize Sandino's readiness for peace upon the Marines' 1933 departure.[82] Regarding Sandino's death,

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[78] Fonseca 1982z, p. 65. Also, 1982e, pp. 100, 101, 103, 151, 157.

[79] Fonseca 1982z, pp. 54, 65.

[80] Somoza's narrative identifies three stages in Sandino's identity (Camacho Navarro 1991, pp. 69-70). [1] Before the 1927 peace agreement, Sandino was a valiant and noble soldier fighting for the Liberal party. [2] After 1927, when he refused to acquiesce to the plan as other Liberal generals had, Sandino became a terrorist chieftain uninterested in peace. [3] After Sandino's death, he was the muse of misguided writers elaborating a fabulous legend.

[81] Fonseca 1982e, p. 156; 1982f, p. 350; 1982h, p. 364; 1982q, p. 79; 1982x, pp. 371, 381; 1982z, p. 47.

[82] Fonseca 1982d, p. 415; 1982e, pp. 143, 145-147, 156; 1982f, p. 351; 1982q, p. 80.

Fonseca is clear in accusing Somoza of complicity in what he describes as the traitorous murder of a valiant patriot who had agreed to peace, going so far as to speak of Sandino's "crucifixion" and the "genocide" of his army.[83] Sandinista pamphlets also contradict Somoza's account of Sandino-as-bandit by presenting a virtuous figure. Many documents characterize Sandino as a national hero, and Fonseca is careful to note—in direct conflict with Somoza's account—that Sandino was indeed literate and intelligent, and that he enjoyed popular support.[84] Elsewhere the documents highlight Sandino's moral authority, humility, honesty, sobriety, and spirit of sacrifice.[85] In fact, Fonseca reverses the accusation of banditry by contrasting "Sandino's honesty" with the "vandalism of the invader," as he twice recounts the story of Sandinista troops recovering and returning a gold chalice that a Marine had stolen from a local church.[86]

Highlighting attempts to dissociate the figure from dominant uses, then, brings out another key difference between the Nicaraguan and Mexican cases: the Zapatistas used their figure to attack the state's legitimacy, while the Sandinistas could not (see Table 1, row 3). The most common, explicit, and analytically interesting references to

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[83] Fonseca 1982a, p. 249; 1982b, p. 39; 1982d, pp. 412-413, 417-422; 1982e, pp. 153, 155-158, 160; 1982f, p. 351; 1982g, p. 233; 1982n, pp. 25-26; 1982o, p. 272; 1982p, p. 65; 1982q, p. 80; 1982r, pp. 393-394, 395; 1982v, pp. 385, 390; 1982x, pp. 383-384; 1982z, pp. 24, 82-83, 85.

[84] Fonseca 1982d, pp. 412, 416, 419, 424; 1982e, pp. 107, 122, 134, 141, 143; 1982h, p. 364; 1982k, p. 241; 1982n, p. 26; 1982v, p. 385, 389; 1982w, p. 247; 1982x, pp. 368, 377, 380-381, 383; 1982y, p. 103; 1982z, pp. 21-22, 42, 44, 47, 49, 61, 63, 64, 65, 76, 78, 83.

[85] Fonseca 1982e, pp. 134, 141; 1982l, pp. 194-199; 1982x, pp. 374, 377; 1982z, pp. 50, 55, 63-65, 78, 81.

[86] Fonseca 1982x, p. 374; 1982z, p. 55.

Zapata in the Zapatista communiqués are attempts to dispute the state's claim to the figure. These are often direct challenges to the state's honesty in history-telling and authority to carry the revolutionary symbols. Such dissociative moves serve a dual purpose. They simultaneously make the symbol available for Zapatista use and help to build a critique of the "revolutionary" state. Although unlikely to achieve anything like a total redirection of the revolutionary legacy, each antagonistic reference is a quick jab at the state's legitimacy. Such uses were only possible because of the state's initial appropriation of the figure. The Sandinistas, on the other hand, did not confront the appropriation of their chosen figure, but rather its abandonment. By the late 1950s, the major obstacle to Sandinista use of Sandino was not Somoza's negative depiction of him, but the general neglect and forgetfulness that it produced. Fonseca had to bring the figure back into public life. To do this it was necessary to address Somoza's official narrative, but this task was fundamentally different from that faced by the Zapatistas. The fact that Somoza never appropriated Sandino meant that the Sandinistas did not stand to enjoy any easy leverage against the legitimacy of the regime by his use. This explains why direct attacks on the Somoza regime invoking Sandino are noticeably absent from the Nicaraguan documents.

Association with the Movement

The two cases also vary with respect to whether the more recent movement used its figure to help frame its agenda. Such associations between Sandino and the FSLN in Sandinista documents are common and explicit, whereas in the Mexican case they are rare and vague. After first identifying Sandino as a path (as demonstrated above), the Sandinistas were able to draw more substantive connections between his struggle and their own. Fonseca's interpretation of the figure is developed in tandem with his elaboration of FSLN ideals: many specific Sandinista proposals, strategies, and positions are framed in terms of Sandino, and Sandino's biography is framed in turn by the FSLN ideology. In stark contrast, associations between Zapata and the EZLN in Zapatista communiqués are uncommon, and Zapata is only mentioned in connection with Zapatista proposals in a very general way.

Fonseca's first step toward solidifying an explicit association between Sandino and the FSLN is to situate the figure on par with other revolutionary thinkers. For example, at one point Fonseca states that the FSLN is inspired by the "…righteous ideal of Karl Marx, Augusto César Sandino and Ernesto Che Guevara, an ideal of national liberation and socialism, of sovereignty, of land and work, of liberty and justice," and at another point refers to Marx, Sandino, Guevara, and Camilo Torres together as "the great revolutionaries of history."[87] Fonseca emphasizes the friendship between Sandino and his Salvadoran contemporary Agustín Farabundo Martí, while arguing that their falling out has been overblown.[88] Fonseca similarly points out various references to Sandino in the rhetoric of the Cuban revolution.[89] In this way he marks the historical Sandino as a precursor to the Cuba-era wave of Latin American insurgency, while simultaneously identifying the reborn and re-evaluated Sandino as a result of the renewed revolutionary activity.[90] By so doing, Fonseca contributes to the naturalness of associating Sandino with the FSLN.

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[87] Fonseca 1982m, pp. 264-265; 1982p, p. 66. Also Fonseca 1982c, p. 257; 1982d, p. 426; 1982j, p. 227; 1982m, p. 263; 1982u, pp. 268-269; 1982x, p. 368.

[88] Latin American leftists who had dismissed Sandino as a revolutionary figure (as noted above) made much ado about the broken relationship between Sandino and the communist Farabundo Martí. See Fonseca 1982e, pp. 120, 126, 134, 155; 1982h, p. 365; 1982p, p. 68; 1982x, p. 379; 1982y, p. 111; 1982z, pp. 70, 81.

This paves the way for Fonseca to discuss the relevance of Sandino's ideas. He predicts definitive FSLN success because it "…is supplied by the ideas of Augusto César Sandino, ideas that daily unite all Nicaraguans of clean conscience."[91] The documents situate the FSLN "under the banner of Sandino" and call for emulation of his rebel determination: "We fight like he fought, sincerely, without sparing any sacrifice…."[92] They identify "free homeland" as a demand shared by Sandino and the FSLN, and often suggest adoption of Sandino's call for "liberty or death."[93]

The associations, however, are often much more specific and elaborate. Fonseca stresses Sandino's and the FSLN's shared concern with national sovereignty, including control over natural resources and political autonomy.[94] For example, he highlights

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[89] Fonseca 1982e, p. 166; 1982z, p. 21.

[90] Fonseca 1982r, p. 398; 1982x, p. 384.

[91] Fonseca 1982e, pp. 154-155.

[92] Fonseca 1982n, p. 38. Also, Fonseca 1982a, pp. 248, 250; 1982e, pp. 99, 101; 1982x, p. 371; 1982z, p. 49.

[93] Fonseca 1982b, p. 54; 1982g, p. 237; 1982i, p. 259; 1982n, p. 38; 1982x, p. 373; 1982z, pp. 49, 50-51.

[94] Fonseca 1982x, p. 380. Also, Fonseca 1982a, p. 250; 1982x, pp. 377-378; 1982z, pp. 49-50, 63, 68, 69, 78-79.

Sandino's demand for revision of the Bryan-Chamorro treaty (which granted the U.S. sole rights to build a canal through Nicaragua) and denunciation of all "…treaties that harm the dignity and sovereignty of the nation." The documents also assert that "The popular interests are, clearly, represented by Sandino."[95] But Fonseca stresses that Sandino was more than a populist nationalist.[96] The documents emphasize Sandino's "…identification with social ideas bordering on socialism," and twice note reports of the singing of the "The International" in Sandino's camp.[97] As he notes:

> There are people, blinded by prejudice, who try to deny Sandino's preoccupation with welding the struggle for national independence with the struggle to achieve a society without class enemies. The truth is that sympathy for a social revolution pulses in Sandino's written documents.[98]

Fonseca labors over his presentation of Sandino's class analysis, and in so doing elaborates *his own* broad understanding of class conflict that unites workers and campesinos under a collectivist and anti-imperialist banner. In one document Fonseca explains that Sandino identified with the "world proletariat" and notes that he told his army he foresaw "…a future proletarian explosion," while in another he declares that the current "…cracking of the foundations of imperialist domination…is the 'proletarian explosion' Augusto César Sandino dreamed of."[99] Other documents identify Sandino as a "worker of campesino origin" and use this as an opportunity to argue that the FSLN must draw on both (i.e., proletarian and peasant) bases of support.[100]

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[95] Fonseca 1982z, p. 81. Also, Fonseca 1982h, p. 364; 1982w, p. 247; 1982x, pp. 368, 371, 378; 1982z, p. 68.

[96] Fonseca 1982p, p. 68.

[97] Fonseca 1982e, p. 126; 1982x, p. 378.

[98] Fonseca 1982p, p. 68.

Fonseca identifies two enduring categories of opposition: the "country-selling oligarchs" and the "Yankee invaders."[101] In the documents these two fronts imply two consistent responses: collectivization and unified international resistance.[102] On the point of international resistance, Fonseca emphasizes in particular Sandino's calls for Latin American solidarity against "imperialism." As Fonseca explains,

> [Sandino] was…disposed to pick up the rifle in other lands. He said: "It wouldn't be strange to encounter me and my army in whichever Latin American country the invader fixes his plans of conquest."[103]

Sandino is also quoted "…outlining the unity of the Latin American peoples" and is said to have referred "…to the necessity of a united fight to achieve the independence of the continent."[104] Finally, Fonseca takes from Sandino his justification for the necessity of guerilla tactics, given Nicaragua's physical, political, and economic geography, to accomplish these goals. [105] He also takes Sandino's example as proof that such tactics can be successful in Nicaragua.[106]

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[99] Fonseca 1982d, p. 426; 1982e, pp. 126, 130.

[100] Fonseca 1982x, p. 368; 1982z, pp. 42, 44. Also, Fonseca 1982d, p. 419; 1982e, pp. 92-94, 120, 139; 1982s, p. 137; 1982x, pp. 369, 372, 377-378; 1982z, pp. 43, 47, 49-50, 65, 69, 70.

[101] Fonseca 1982a, p. 250; 1982e, pp. 98, 100, 126, 144, 147, 164, 167; 1982f, p. 358; 1982h, p. 364; 1982u, p. 267; 1982v, p. 385; 1982w, p. 247; 1982x, pp. 368, 371, 377, 378, 381-382; 1982z, pp. 21, 42, 43, 47-50, 63, 68-69, 70, 79.

[102] Fonseca 1982e, pp. 103, 109, 112-114, 115, 116, 117, 120, 139, 166; 1982x, pp. 372, 378-379; 1982z, pp. 21, 49, 69, 74.

[103] Fonseca 1982x, p. 379; 1982z, p. 74.

Compared to these elaborate Sandinista framings, Zapatista associations with Zapata are strikingly infrequent and vague. Zapata is occasionally invoked in negative depictions of the state. He is used in denunciations of the government as evil, and in declarations that it only serves the interests of the wealthy.[107] Like in Zapata's time, the documents argue, many are being incarcerated and killed by the state, and there is rampant injustice, poverty, misery, and a need to combat despotism.[108] But positive uses of Zapata to frame movement demands are considerably less common. The most explicit relate to the Zapatistas' call for agrarian reform. The communiqués refer to Zapata's vision "that the land was for everyone," and call for the "right to land for those who work it." [109] They argue for land redistribution, against the "feudalism of the fields," and insist "that Article 27…be retaken in the spirit of Emiliano Zapata." [110]

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[104] Fonseca 1982e, pp. 112, 113.

[105] Fonseca 1982b, pp. 53-54; 1982x, pp. 368, 369.

[106] Fonseca 1982b, pp. 53-54; 1982x, p. 373; 1982y, p. 105; 1982z, p. 63.

[107] EZLN 1997b, 1999c, 2000b.

[108] EZLN 1994e, 1995a, 1997b, 2000b.

[109] EZLN 1994c, 1996c, 1999c, 2000a.

[110] EZLN 1996c, 1996f, 1999c.

But most invocations are less detailed than this, extolling only vague virtues and goals. In some cases, the Zapatistas take up Zapata's rallying cries. The most common of these is Zapata's demand for Land and Liberty:

> …Carranza's betrayal tried to drown out [Zapata's] cry for Land and Liberty! …[But] the right to land for those who work it can never be given up and the war cry 'Land and Liberty!' lives on without rest in Mexican lands.[111]

More typical are references to abstract ideas like "democracy" made in conjunction with some indirect allusion to Zapata: "His name summons a fight for justice, the cause of democracy, the thought of liberty."[112] Likewise, the documents represent the movement as peasant-based and "for the poor," and call for freedom, rights, "sovereignty of the people," truth, "freedom of life and thought," inclusiveness, dignity, shelter, land, work, bread, health, education, independence, and "a just peace."[113] As the Zapatista rhetoric became increasingly framed in terms of indigenous rights (Wimmer 2002, p. 114), brief references identifying Zapata with such issues became more common.[114] In a fairly explicit example, one communiqué equates Zapata's struggle for campesinos without land to that of the current indigenous population:

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[111] EZLN 1994b. Also, EZLN 1994c, 1994d, 1995a, 1996c, 1996f, 1997b, 1999c.

[112] EZLN 1995a. Also: 1994c, 1994e, 1995a, 1997b, 1998b, 1999c.

[113] EZLN 1994a, 1994e, 1995a, 1996e, 1996f, 1997b, 1998b, 1999c.

[114] EZLN 1995a, 1997b, 1998a, 1998b, 1999b, 1999c, 1999e, 2000b.

> The [original] Zapatista banner of Land and Liberty is raised today by the workers of the field, by the landless peasants, by the impoverished of the ejidos, by the small and medium landholders, and by those who are the last in riches and in life, the first in misery and in death: the Mexican indigenous.[115]

Overall, when Zapata is invoked in support of movement ideas, it is usually to make vague rhetorical demands and not to develop revolutionary theories or strategies.

By focusing on the attempts to associate the figures with the movements, another important difference between the cases comes to light: the Sandinistas used their figure in a much more elaborate way to develop their ideology and strategy than did the Zapatistas (see Table 1, row 4). Because of a lack of popular familiarity with the historical Sandino, the Sandinistas were able to use their historical connection to the fullest to frame their agenda explicitly in terms of the figure and vice-versa. Sandinista documents describe Sandino's army and the FSLN in remarkably similar terms—as guerilla movements dedicated to improving the lot of the poor through a broad, nationalist, anti-imperialist class struggle. Such an association meant that Sandinista ideals and strategies could be defended by detailed historical example. It also meant that, unencumbered by other uses of Sandino, the FSLN was free to develop the symbol in tandem with their own movement such that remembrance of Sandino would imply recognition of the FSLN. Conversely, Zapatista associations of Zapata with the EZLN are rare and vague. Undoubtedly, the Zapatistas used Zapata to frame some of their issues. But such framings can hardly compare with the Sandinistas' use of Sandino to develop detailed proposals and strategies. When the documents describe the figure, it is typically in very general terms that attempt no radical reinterpretation. Such references are also considerably less frequent than other uses that involve forging an historical connection or dissociating the symbol from the state. Because official characterizations of Zapata were so well-entrenched prior to the EZLN's emergence, it would have been a monumental task to rework the accepted image of Zapata and develop it in tandem with movement ideology as the Sandinistas did.

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[115] EZLN 1996f.

RESURRECTION AND REAPPROPRIATION

The Nicaraguan case exemplifies the *resurrection* of an historical figure.[116] When a figure is not already closely associated with competing groups but has instead been for all intents and purposes lost, movements will be freer to associate explicitly with the symbol in extended biographical treatments and to claim its legacy. At the same time, however, the figure will initially be of little rhetorical value—the rhetorical value will have to be *made* as the figure is made known. Because Sandino had been essentially forgotten and was not associated with competing groups, the figure alone did not provide the Sandinistas with an easy rhetorical weapon. Unlike in the Mexican case, movement leaders were unable to use the figure to chip away at the legitimacy of the state by way of dissociation. The Sandinistas also faced the immense task of making a forgotten symbol known to a large audience. However, they took advantage of this relatively blank slate to develop the symbol and their young movement ideology concurrently, such that they would be inextricably linked. When resurrecting a symbol, movement leaders are freer to shape the figure in ways helpful to the development of their movement because they need not focus as much energy on overcoming the strength of pre-existing symbolic attachments and representations. Because of these various constraints and opportunities, as the Nicaraguan case makes clear, a resurrected historical figure is particularly useful for developing movement ideology and strategy.

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[116] Lang and Lang's (1988, p. 81) discussion of the "rediscovery" of forgotten artists—their coming back to life "…after a long period in which they had been all but forgotten, and even despised…"—is similar to my use of the term "resurrection," except that mine conveys the messianic overtones that were very much present in the Nicaraguan case.

The Mexican case exemplifies the *reappropriation* of an historical figure. When a figure is already closely associated with an opposing group, movements may gain some legitimacy by attempting to usurp its legacy, but the figure will be most useful as a rhetorical weapon against the group laying competing claim to it. At the same time, however, specific associations of the figure with the movement will be constrained, as representational possibilities will be less “open.” The Mexican state’s ownership of Zapata was the EZLN’s greatest asset *and* its greatest liability in using the figure. On one hand, if the Zapatistas could occasionally succeed in claiming Zapata as their own and calling into question the state’s naturalized association with him, they would inevitably strike blows to the regime’s “revolutionary” credentials. At the same time they might bolster the legitimacy and appeal of their own movement, as a reappropriated figure already enjoys widespread recognition. On the other hand, this widespread recognition also meant that the Zapatistas could not use Zapata to develop their movement ideology and strategy in the way that the Sandinistas did. They could not present extended treatments of Zapata's life and thought that might contradict popular knowledge. Rather, they had to be highly selective and careful in their engagements with the figure's political meaning. Reappropriation presents the opportunity to delegitimate competing groups and to legitimate one's own. Conversely, however, movements trying to reappropriate an historical figure are limited in their ability to reinterpret it, as the symbol is already well-known. Because of these various constraints and opportunities, as the Mexican case makes clear, a reappropriated historical figure is particularly useful for legitimating a movement and for attacking the legitimacy of competing groups.

CONCLUSION

The Nicaraguan and Mexican cases demonstrate that a resurrected historical figure is most useful for developing movement ideology and strategy, while a reappropriated figure is first and foremost a potential weapon in legitimation struggles. The potential "usefulness" of the historical figure in each case was in large part set by its status in the contemporary discursive field, which at least partially resulted from how the figure had been used at various points in the past. These ongoing histories of use, comprising quite divergent trajectories, offered different configurations of opportunities for and constraints on representation, and so conditioned how agents of memory in the two cases would use the historical figures. This difference provides one example of how historical processes and contemporary discursive relations can bear significantly on movement leaders' power to do certain things with certain symbols at particular points in time.

This is not to say that agents of memory absolutely could not have *attempted* to do whatever they wished with the figures, but rather that their choices were strongly influenced by previous and competing uses.[117] This is demonstrated more sharply by positing the counterfactuals: could the Sandinistas have used their figure, as the Zapatistas did, to attack the state's presumptions of representing the people and their history? Could the Zapatistas have used their figure, as the Sandinistas did, to develop a coherent revolutionary ideology constantly in dialogue with the history of the figure? Surely they could have tried. But the Sandinistas' efforts would have been severely hampered by the regime's lack of pre-existing attachment to Sandino and by a lack of popular memory, and the Zapatistas would have confronted well-established understandings of the "authentic" Zapata—linked to the state and all of its representational resources—that would have been extremely difficult to overcome in reworking the figure for their own ideological purposes.

This paper reinforces the memory and commemoration literature's finding that memory work is governed in many ways by conflictual dynamics in the contemporary discursive field. Additionally, the historical careers of the symbols to be used proved extremely influential in contributing to variation between the cases. This is not to say that the actual past does not matter (a third case lacking a viable revolutionary figure would undoubtedly demonstrate this point). Rather, it is to emphasize that neither appropriate historical materials nor savvy cultural entrepreneurship alone are sufficient. Both are important, but equally influential are the representational dynamics characterizing the temporal distance *between* the figure's actual lifetime and the later movement. In this, I agree with the memory and commemoration literature's increasing processual focus, and have added empirical detail to what is still a rather amorphous conceptualization of mnemonic process.

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[117] In his *Protestant Ethic*, Weber ([1905] 2002, p. 36, original italics) is clear that he has "…no intention of defending any such foolishly doctrinaire thesis as that the 'capitalist spirit'…*could only* arise as a result of certain influences of the Reformation," but only intends "…to establish whether and to what extent religious influences *have in fact* been *partially* responsible for the qualitative shaping and quantitative expansion of that spirit…." It is this sort of qualified *partial responsibility* of the past in conditioning the present that I have tried to demonstrate.

This paper also highlights some of the limitations of the framing perspective. Framing's focus on mobilization as the dependent variable would lead it to overlook the usefulness of the Nicaragua-Mexico comparison altogether, as both movements were relatively successful. Its lack of historical focus would lead it to miss a crucial constraint on the agents of memory that led to variation between the cases—the historical careers of the symbols in question. Moreover, the framing approach could miss the striking differences in what made the figures useful in the two cases. Here, it proved more illuminating to consider contributions that the commemoration literature can bring to the study of social movements, in particular its sensitivity to deeply historical and processual dimensions of culture. No doubt more dialogue with other sub-fields would greatly enrich our understanding of the cultural aspects of social movement dynamics; social movement scholars should reconsider their implicit one-theory-fits-all devotion to the framing perspective as the only tool necessary for the study of culture in contentious politics.

Posing the problem of the differential representation of historical figures opens up a field of related questions. One set concerns state responses to opposition. For example, the cases show that how the state treats symbolic political threats can have long-term consequences. What prompts state leaders to deal with such threats in various ways under different conditions? Another set of questions concerns movements' garnering of support. Do responses to certain historical reconstructions vary across different strata or groups within society, leading to support in some cases, indifference in others, and active resistance in still others? Was the reconstructed history understood in the way intended, or was it systematically "misinterpreted" in certain sectors? A third set of questions concerns political culture. In what ways, if at all, does the use of historical figures contribute to an emergent and internally-consistent "movement culture" and what does this tell us about how information and meanings are transmitted within and beyond the movement? In what other ways do the histories of cultural objects and the construction of historicity play into social movement dynamics? Finally, do the answers to the above questions vary according to whether cultural objects are resurrected or reappropriated? This paper has taken an initial step in the direction of such questions by identifying systematic constraints on and opportunities for representation that are *prior* to issues of reception.[118]

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[118] A further step, after establishing the conditions of both representation *and* reception, would be to explore how, if at all, successful or unsuccessful resonance—or the *perception* of resonance—contributes

The use of historical figures is one aspect of a larger explanation of political outcomes; I do not suggest that uses or *mis*uses explain movement success or failure. However, it may very well be the case that success depends in part on movement legitimacy and the delegitimation of the competition, on adherent loyalty and animation to action, on a favorable definition of the situation, on a sense of the possibility of success and a positive perception of political opportunities, and on an ideology that makes common sense and that seems grounded in domestic conditions and history. The political use of historical figures is one of many ways in which movements may work toward these ends, and as such the tactic demands analysis on its own terms. But beyond being one of many tools for doing legitimacy-work, the political use of historical figures can be, for the analyst, a window into a movement's culture and approach to political contestation. Building a more holistic sense of a movement in this way—which may sometimes require postponing the desire to explain differential success—can be ultimately helpful, a few steps removed, for explaining not just the *fact* of mobilization, success, or failure, but for giving a more complete account of the *quality* of these outcomes. In this endeavor, it is necessary to remain attentive to the historical and contextual conditions under which cultural and rhetorical strategies are enacted.

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to the modification of movement leaders' rhetorical strategies over time, in a feedback loop of self-correction.

TABLE 1:
Summary of Nicaraguan and Mexican Case Comparison

	Sandino	**Zapata**
Pre-Movement Uses of the Figure	**Symbol largely forgotten** *Sandino seen as both bandit and hero while alive; Slandered by Somoza and forgotten after death*	**Symbol appropriated by state** *Zapata seen as both bandit and hero while alive; appropriated by state after death*
Historical Connection	**Attempts to establish literal historical continuity are common** *FSLN situates itself on Sandino's path of "popular struggle"*	**Attempts to claim symbolic legacy are common** *EZLN claims to be symbolic heir to Zapata's struggle*
Dissociation from Competing Uses	**No competing use--no need/ability to dissociate from it** *Sandino described as hero and martyr, contra Somoza's narrative*	**Attempts to dissociate from state use are very common** *Honesty of official uses of Zapata questioned, state legitimacy attacked*
Association with the Movement	**Detailed associations between symbol and movement are frequent and explicit** *Sandino's ideals and strategy analyzed and applied to FSLN, and vice versa*	**Direct associations between symbol and movement are rare and vague** *Zapata and EZLN described as sharing only very general ideals*
	Figure used as a vehicle for developing movement ideology and strategy	**Figure used to legitimate movement and attack state legitimacy**
	Resurrection	**Reappropriation**

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