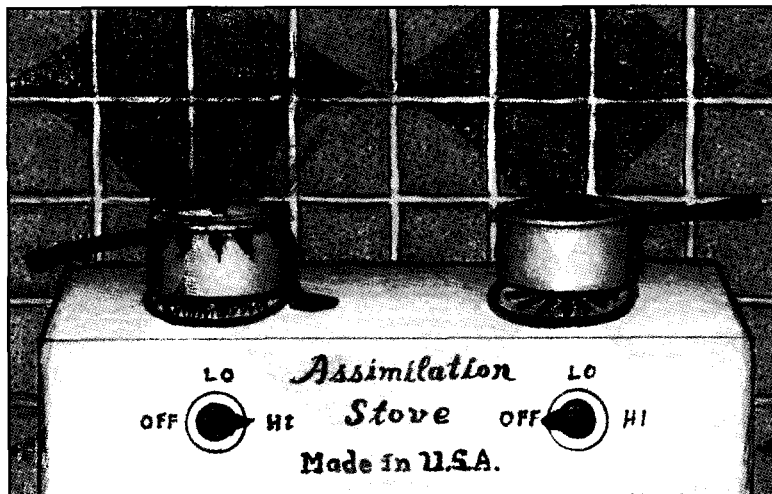


A Nation of (Proletarian) Immigrants

Mexicans, Here and There

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.



Stephen Ward Anderson

One of many reasons conservatives are so often at a disadvantage in political discussions is that we do not see why there should *be* any discussion, since we do not recognize a problem *open* to discussion at all.

Take, for instance, assimilation. If you do not believe the United States should be accepting immigrants in the first place—and I mean, at this point in history, *any* immigrants at all—then the issue of whether immigrants should be made to assimilate is, at the very least, a secondary question, since your main concern is for halting immigration entirely.

The issue here is, among other things, whether solutions to the assimilation problem should be developed at the national level or the local one. Under the U.S. Constitution, the establishment of “a uniform rule of Naturalization” is entrusted to the federal government, not to the states that make up the federal union. The Constitution, however, is mum on the subject of any kind of rule, uniform or not, of assimilation; the Constitutional Convention never envisioned the central government needing to *have* a policy. This, of course, is because secession, not assimilation, was what the new government believed it had to fear from uncooperative and malign aliens.

That is not to say that the Founding Fathers, as individual citizens, were unconcerned by nonassimilation—quite the opposite, in fact. John Jay, John Adams, John Randolph of Roanoke, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington—to name just a few—all spoke or wrote on the importance of what they called uniformity of principles and habit and the

necessity for a heterogeneous compound formed by one American people.

While the U.S. government passed, in 1819, the first federal act dealing with immigration and, a year later, went on to enact what became a national immigration policy, before 1819 and after that time, the various states and municipalities wrote and enforced their own immigration controls. Nevertheless, for about 150 years now, immigration policy has been the preserve of the federal government and is certain to remain so. Moreover, no assimilation policy whatsoever exists. We may be absolutely certain, however—particularly after September 11—that if such a policy ever is created, it will be a *federal* policy with an agency or subagency of its own, managed by Bill Bennett, Lynn Cheney, John Miller, Ron Unz, or one or another of their faceless simulacra. So enough said about *assimilation* as a national project, like the WPA, CCC, VISTA, or AmeriCorps. The real issue is *immigration*.

Despite the impression readers may have received from *The Hundredth Meridian*, I cannot claim to have traveled extensively in Mexico. I *have* spent enough time south of the border to have developed plenty of impressions of Mexico and the Mexican people and to have drawn what I consider to be fair conclusions.

Mexicans in Mexico are a warm and friendly people, even to gringos—particularly when the gringo wears jeans, cowboy boots, and a straw hat instead of shorts, a Hawaiian shirt, and a *Como Caca* cap. Much of the tension between the Mexican natives and tourists is class-based and unrelated to racial or cultural differences. Mexicans are a simple, not to say naive, people, accustomed to accepting others at face value. This partly explains why Mexican culture seems primitive to American and

Chilton Williamson, Jr., is the senior editor for books at *Chronicles* and the author of *The Immigration Mystique: American's False Conscience* (HarperCollins).

European visitors—who are charmed or appalled, accordingly—when, in fact, it is simply *basic*. This quality of basicity, so repellent to the ordinary tourist, has fascinated artists and writers—Caroline Gordon, Graham Greene, Evelyn Waugh, Malcolm Lowry, Tom Lea, Cormac McCarthy—who discover in it reality, *la condition humaine*, which is, of course, what genuine artists and writers are after. This reality is what I value and appreciate in Mexico, to the extent that it no longer exists in the United States.

I find attending Mass in Mexico, where often the church floor is dirt and the congregation is made up of people in rags, the halt, and the lame, a far more genuine and moving experience than attending Mass often is in the United States, where half the affluent so-called worshipers are in shorts and sandals and the kid in front of me is wearing a T-shirt with a drawing of one pig mounting another on the back of it, above the legend “Makin’ Bacon”—precisely obscuring my line of vision just at the moment of the elevation of the Host.

If immigrants from Mexico brought that quality of simple piety and basic experience north with them, I would feel somewhat better about the invasion from Mexico—while uttering a prayer that Makin’ Bacon and his sort never make their way south to Chihuahua, Sonora, Jalisco, Zacateca, and Sinaloa to poison the forms of local piety there. They do not bring such piety north, of course, because it is precisely that simplicity of experience that immigrants to the United States are attempting to escape. Far from appreciating the human condition for what it is, they hope to transcend it; and, while we cannot entirely blame them for that, we need to realize that the immigrant “dream” we hear so much about from American politicians, journalists, and immigration activists is essentially a proletarian dream, a dream that has a very specific cultural and political component. If there is anything worse than proletarians, it is proletarians with money; and America is rapidly becoming a nation of such proletarians.

Since the 1920’s, America has been a proletarian’s dream, which is why she has become a magnet for the proletariat internationally. Native-born Americans have devolved from a free and independent people into a *wealthy* proletariat—which is not a contradiction in terms when you think of how servile politically, how puerile and degenerate culturally, we have allowed ourselves to become. What is most attractive about America for today’s immigrants is precisely what sophisticated and intelligent Old Americans abhor most about their country: shopping malls and fast food, slovenly clothing, movies, TV, rock music, mass sports events—in other words, bread and circuses.

It is not that Americans are assimilating to the immigrants; instead, both are meeting halfway to form the North American component of an international proletariat that happens to be American in the same way that U.S.-based international corporations happen to be American. In other words, both natives and immigrants are assimilating to an international ideal—one that is created, fostered, and developed by globalist financiers, corporatists, and politicians alike—inspired by the American example. Immigration, viewed in this way, is quite literally the fusion and reinforcement of the worst of both worlds, the Third and the First.

Those simple, open, warm Indians—and we need to remember that, when we speak of Mexicans, we really mean *Indians* working for the Indian, not the Spanish, *reconquista*—I

know from riding the third-class trains in Mexico, attending the bullfights there, walking the streets, and eating and drinking in the restaurants and *cantinas*, become a very different people when they cross the border to settle in *El Norte*. Partly, this is just human nature, whose hostile, competitive, and exclusivist side is always encouraged by the presence of its own kind in numbers. Increasingly, however, it is assuming a deliberate political aspect, developed and encouraged by politicians in Mexico City determined to establish a powerful Fifth Column in the United States. Whether the aim ultimately is *reconquista* does not really matter. In fact, I can imagine that Washington, say a half-century from now, will be delighted to give Texas and California back to Mexico (if she wants them back, that is). Why buy the cow when you can get milk through the fence?

And it is not just Mexican immigrants who are getting aggressive. “Spokesmen” for the Asian immigrant community are beginning to follow the Mexicans’ example. My late friend Jim Rauert, who spent his life in Chicago before he retired to New Mexico, told me a story about a Korean couple who owned the condominium next door to his on the Gold Coast. “You know,” the Korean wife told Jim, “we think you and Ann should know how Koreans feel about white people. We think you’re lazy and you’re stupid and you’re ugly, and also you smell. We Koreans expect to take over America and run it for ourselves. No offense, you understand. Just so you *do* understand.” (If it had been I instead of Jim, the only honest Korean immigrant in America would have been a dead Korean immigrant as well.)

An implicit theme of my book, *The Immigration Mystique*, is that, contrary to received opinion among even immigration restrictionists and reformists, the post-1965 immigrant groups are not the only ones who have not assimilated. The post-Civil War immigrants—the Irish to some extent, the Slavs, the Southern Europeans, and those from Eastern Europe—have not, either. Needless to say, this was among the least popular arguments in a very unpopular book, and I have regretted ever since that I neglected to appeal to Daniel Patrick Moynihan’s and Nathan Glazer’s *Beyond the Melting Pot* as well as Michael Novak’s *Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* for support. All three men made the same argument that I did, while staying rich, famous, and respected into the bargain, being obviously non-WASP. I could not get away with saying the same thing, of course. (With a name like Chilton Williamson, Jr., no one suspects you of being Catholic.)

For most of America’s history—up until 1965, that is—the dominant WASP population was resented and disliked by non-Protestant, non-British immigrant groups. Since 1965, that dislike and jealous resentment has been transferred to European-Americans generally by non-European immigrants, encouraged by a natural sense of ethnic and cultural hostility and identity as well as by the suicidal impulses of European-America itself. Today, the only conceivable advocate for assimilation is the federal government, for whom assimilation only amounts to another form of “homeland security.” And we may easily imagine what a national crusade for assimilation in *that* context would entail.

So it comes down, finally, to this: If there is no need for something, there is everything to be said *against* having it, and nothing to be said *for*. Does America *really* need 30 million foreign-born proles arriving over a period of three decades to complement the 200 million native ones already here? Whether assimilated or not, more immigrants spell nothing but inconvenience, at best, and disaster, at worst, for this country.

Apocalypse Now

by Aaron D. Wolf

"If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand."

—Mark 3:25



American evangelicals, according to former Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu, "are the Israelis' best friend in the whole world." In return, they dubbed him "the Ronald Reagan of Israel." That so many are still surprised by those statements indicates that, by and large, those happy to be called evangelicals or even fundamentalists have been largely ignored by most of the dominant American mass culture, though a few outside the fold who have stopped ignoring this "sleeping giant" have reaped tremendous rewards: election victories, foreign-policy directives, and undying political loyalty.

Republicans, driven by such key evangelical leaders as Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell, have, at least since the Reagan Revolution, made use of the "Christian Right" during election season, parroting such shibboleths as "pro-life" and "pro-family" to the soul-stirring delight of the world-weary faithful; those who are the most interested in being "best friends" with the evangelicals, however, are the Israeli political right, whose political objectives are the unlimited expansion of Israeli territories and the subjugation (if not deportation or even elimination) of the Palestinians. Neoconservatives in Washington and New York City, together with those evangelicals who have entered the realm of politics (from Robertson to James Dobson to Lindsey Graham) with a view to advancing the Christian Right's agenda on a national level, demand that every evangelical's chad be punched "Republican: Straight Ticket" for two reasons: The GOP is pro-life; the GOP is pro-Israel. (For faithful evangelicals, the argument that Israel, not the United States, is threatened by Saddam's alleged "weapons of mass destruction" only makes the case for total war against Iraq stronger.)

Aaron D. Wolf, a Church historian, is the assistant editor of *Chronicles*.

That Paul Wolfowitz or Bibi Netanyahu may merely be using the evangelicals' faithful support to advance an agenda incompatible with the American interest or the principles of justice does not occur to faithful believers who love "Zion." They are driven by a theology that is as ingenious as it is unbiblical. When they watch Bibi as he extends the hand of friendship, they look beyond him to the New Jerusalem, the coming Millennium. When the liberal media mocks their "rigid biblical literalism," they cling to their Bibles: "All Israel shall be saved"; "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings"; "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved"; "as much as ye have done it unto the least of my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Every time they approach the voter's booth, they know that they have but one choice: Support the candidate who supports God's chosen people, or face divine judgment ("I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee").

Christians familiar with the historic interpretations of the biblical prophecies concerning "Israel" (the Church) and the latter days may find it easy to dismiss the biblical claims of evangelical Zionists. The blame, however, for this eschatological aberration must be laid at the feet of the Main Lines and their clergy and scholars for failing, at a crucial moment in American Church history, to articulate the genuine, historic, Christian doctrine of Christ so beautifully and succinctly rendered in the Nicene Creed: "He shall come again in glory to judge both the quick and the dead, whose kingdom shall have no end"; and, again, "We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come."

The fact that evangelical Christians can countenance a belief that the Judge of the Quick and the Dead could return to