American Foreign Policy towards Mexican Illegal Immigration
Case Study: Barack Obama vs. Donald Trump

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By

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved parents Mr. AbdelAzize and my mother Fatiha, who were my source of inspiration and gave me strength when I thought of giving up, who continually provide their moral, spiritual, emotional, and financial support. To my brother Islam. To my sisters Imen, Khadija, and Meriem.

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved father and mother, my dear brother and sisters: Salim, Amel, Sihem, and Manel. My whole family and those who I love the most.
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Thanks to our families for their help and support during all our years of studies.
Abstract

This dissertation investigates the changes that took place in the American foreign policy towards Mexico, concerning the Southern border issues focusing mainly on the illegal immigration issue. It tackles the nature of the relationship between the United States and Mexico that shifted dramatically from being unfriendly during the Mexican-American War (1846-1848), to a more bilateral relationship based on mutual respect in the First and the Second World Wars. This relationship, however, deteriorated under Trump’s administration, due to his controversial decisions towards Mexican illegal immigration. In this sense, the dissertation sheds light on the varied policies taken under a democrat president, B. Obama and a republican one that is D. Trump toward Mexican illegal immigration.

Keywords: American Mexican relationship, foreign policy, border issues, illegal immigration, Obama and Trump administrations.
Résumé

La présente thèse consiste à mettre en évidence les changements survenus sur la politique étrangère américaine vers le Mexique ; concernant les enjeux de la frontière méridionale axée principalement sur le problème de l’immigration clandestine. Elle aborde la nature de la relation entre les États-Unis et le Mexique qui s’est transformée radicalement d’être inamical durant la guerre Mexique-américaine (1846/1848) à une relation bilatérale fondée sur le respect réciproque au cours de la première et la deuxième guerre mondiale. Toutefois, cette relation n’a fait que s’aggraver sous le régime de Trump à cause de ses décisions controversées envers l’immigration mexicaine clandestine.

Dans cette perspective, ce présent travail met en lumière les entités politiques prises au titre d’un président démocrate B.Obama et un autre républicain qui est D.Trump vis-à-vis l’immigration mexicaine clandestine.
ملخص

يدور هذا البحث حول التغيرات التي طرأت على السياسة الخارجية الأمريكية نحو المكسيك، بخصوص المشكلات التي تواجه الدولتين على مستوى الحدود الجنوبية المشتركة، مع التركيز بشكل خاص على مشكل الهجرة المكسيكية الغير شرعية. كما تطرأ هذا البحث إلى طبيعة العلاقة بين الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية والمكسيك؛ فقد انتقلت العلاقة بينهما من علاقة عدائية خلال الحرب المكسيكية الأمريكية إلى توقيع عقد两只ة دبلوماسية في الحرب العالمية الأولى والثانية. هذه العلاقة انهارت تدريجياً لتتحول إلى علاقة سيئة في فترة حكم الرئيس الأمريكي الحالي دونالد ترامب بسبب أرائه وقررائه العدائية، والمثيرة للجدل بخصوص مشكلة الهجرة المكسيكية الغير شرعية. كما يوضح هذا البحث التباين الواضح بين السياسة الأمريكية الخارجية المنتهجة تجاه الهجرة الغير شرعية في عهد الرئيس الأمريكي السابق باراك أوباما، والرئيس دونالد ترامب.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BECC</td>
<td>Border Environmental Cooperation Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLO</td>
<td>Beltran Leyva Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIRA</td>
<td>Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DACA</td>
<td>Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAPA</td>
<td>Deferred Action for Parents of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHS</td>
<td>The Department of Homeland Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DREAM</td>
<td>The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DTO</td>
<td>Drug Trafficking Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ejido</td>
<td>a system of communal land tenure in Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hacienda</td>
<td>a large estate especially in a Spanish-speaking country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICE</td>
<td>Immigration and customs Enforcement</td>
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<tr>
<td>IRCA</td>
<td>Immigration Reform and Control Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>LFM</td>
<td>La Familia Michoacana</td>
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<tr>
<td>NADBank</td>
<td>North American Development Bank</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAFTA</td>
<td>The North American Free Trade Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OAS</td>
<td>Organization of American States</td>
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<td>USD</td>
<td>U.S. dollar</td>
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General Introduction

The U.S. role in the world since the end of World War II (1945) is generally described as one of global leadership. The United States, also, has a significant engagement role in international affairs applied through a set of U.S. foreign policy decisions, which caused it to build nothing but shaked history of relations with the rest of the world. Therefore, this dissertation aims to shed light on how the United States managed to create a remarkable unfriendly relationship with one of its most important neighboring countries, "Mexico" throughout history, and how this relationship is witnessing a critical phase under Trump’s administration.

This dissertation attempts to explore the true nature of the relationship between the United States and Mexico during and after WWII since economic, political, and military cooperation between the two neighboring countries grew deeper during the War. Cooperation between the U.S. and Mexico, however, started to break down after the end of the war, and Mexico decided to shut down its borders to any American trade or investment.

The main purpose of this dissertation is to examine the most debatable issue that ever faced, and is still facing the U.S. foreign policy that is, "illegal immigration". It focuses particularly on the Mexican immigration toward the United States. It tackles how this problem contributed in creating an unfriendly relationship between the two neighboring countries, especially when it comes to serious issues such as: drug trafficking and environmental issues, occurring on the most important shared area between the two countries, which is the U.S-
Mexican border. This dissertation aims at showing how the United States, under particular circumstances, developed a special foreign policy toward Mexico in order to maintain a helpful collaboration on one hand, and to keep its national safety as priority on the other.

This dissertation investigates how the current American President Donald Trump is dealing with the question of Mexican immigration towards his country. How his new policies such as "the border wall" and "zero tolerance" policy, are making Trump’s administration the first one in modern U.S. history that have ever placed such high priority on immigration, if compared to previous administrations, mainly Obama’s administration.

The main questions that this dissertation attempts to answer are:

1. How the American policies of interventionism and manifest destiny took part in shaping a sensitive relationship with one of its main Latin American cooperative countries, Mexico?

2. Is Illegal Immigration the only area of conflict in the relationship between both countries?

3. Are Obama’s administration decisions concerning U.S. foreign policy toward Mexican immigration too tolerant, or that Trump’s administration new approaches to the issue are too aggressive and feudal?

The research methodology of this dissertation is based on the historical approach since the research is tracing the origins and nature of the American foreign policy in regard to its
relationship with Mexico. Also, the qualitative approach is used, since the research is based on data collection of sources such as presidential addresses, speeches, and books like: Dirk Hoerder and Nora Faires’ book *Migrants and Migration in Modern North America*, Said Saddiki’s book *World of Walls*, and dissertations like: Major Jess’ dissertation *Pulling Success from Failure: The Texas War of Independence*, placed under the format of (MLA) the 7th Edition.

The dissertation is composed mainly of two chapters. The first chapter is titled "A Historical Background of the USA-Mexico Relations". First, it tackles the Mexican War of Independence 1821, as an opening step for the relationship between the two nations. It also offers a review on the most important events in the history of the two nations’ relationship, mainly the Mexican-American war (1846/1848), which represents the only major military dispute between them that was ended with a decisive American victory. It traces the causes that led to the conflict, the main figures who led it, the aftermath of the Mexican-American war; in addition to the most influential treaties that were signed between the two nations.

The second chapter is titled "American Foreign Policy toward Mexican Immigration". It explores the history of Mexican immigration toward the United States, starting from 1848 under the treaty of "Guadalupe Hidalgo", which gave large amounts of land to the United States. It examines a range of issues that occurred on the U.S-Mexican border which threatened the national security of both countries. The last part of this chapter sets a comparison between a Democrat president policy toward Mexican immigration, that is, Barack
Obama’s administration (2009-2017), and a Republican president policy toward Mexican immigration, that is the current president of the United States, Donald J. Trump.
Chapter one: A Historical Background of USA-Mexico Relations

Introduction

The American-Mexican history of relations may only be described as tense and unfriendly, rather than cooperative. Mexico suffered from the Spanish Rule for almost 300 years, until 1821 when it won its independence, and when everything almost seemed perfect to rebuild the Mexican society. An internal conflict, however, occurred between the mother country and one of its main regions, Texas. In fact, this conflict was the foundation stone that led to conquer half of Mexico’s territory in 1848 by the United States which would determine the feelings of resentment and mistrust between the two neighboring countries.

In addition, the two countries developed close diplomatic and economic ties under the presidency of Porfirio Diaz, during which Mexico was opened to foreign investment, and the United States to agricultural and mining investment. Moreover, the United States played a significant role in the Mexican Revolution (1910-1920), through which it practiced the policy of interventionism which is considered one of the basic characteristics of American foreign policy.

Therefore, the major concern of this chapter is to provide an overall overview on the most important events that took place in the American-Mexican history, and how they contributed in shaping the bilateral relations. More, the relations during and after WWI are highlighted as the most respectable and friendly, in which many long-standing disputes were resolved, and relations were the warmest in history.
I. The Texas War of Independence (1835-1836)

1. Causes of the War

Winning its independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico made the move to toward populating its northern parts, mainly Texas. However, this move shortly started to reflect badly on the country, and as Barker, the author of "the organization of the Texas revolution" said "when Stephen F Austin, an American empresario known as, 'The Father of Texas, settled his first family of Anglo-Americans on the banks of the Brazos. Fate issued her fiat that in the end, Texas must belong to the United States" (01). Yet, it can not be denied that those magnitude settlers, especially in Austin’s territory, were highly ready to show a complete loyalty to the Mexican government. But this loyalty sooner will be shaken by different new policies.

In the spring of 1829, many political changes were made by Santa Anna, a Mexican politician and general, to support his central regime mainly:

- The Emancipation Proclamation of 1829. This law attempted to prohibit slavery in the Mexican republic.

- the inspection tour of Texas in 1827/1828 by General Manuel de Mier Y Terian, alongside with the disturbances of 1832 in many Mexican regions such as Anahuac, Velesco, and Nacogdoclus, in which certain Anglo settlers clashed with Mexican officials.

- The law of April 6, 1830 which was made as a result to a report by General Manuel de Mier Y Terian, that revoked the national colonization law of August 18, 1824 that allowed
foreigners to gain title to land, that was within 20 leagues of the border of another country, or within 10 leagues of the coast, and suspended all incomplete contracts of the empresarios (Kite 12).

In fact, all these events set the stage upon which, the three main political parties of Texas, made their initial appearance, starting with: the Peace party, composed of men who believed in the good faith of Mexico. The second was the Conservative party, composed of those who gradually assumed neutral position. The third party composed of men who believed that, Texas should no longer believe that the Mexican government will end the injustice and oppression, and that was the Independent or the War party (Barker 04).

A new series of political changes and governmental attempts were made, through which, Both the Peace and the War parties were the most active ones; Such as:

-The liberal land sale acts, that were passed in 1834 by the newly established Monilova legislature, in an effort to raise revenue quickly for the state treasury;

-The federal government again, sent to Anahuac a customs collector with deputies, and a small detachment of soldiers under the command of Captain Antonio Tenorio, to begin the collection of shipping duties (kite12).

Thus, after clashing with the Mexican officials over a perceived oppression in the application of customs law, a group of colonists under the leadership of Andrew Briscoe, and William B. Travis forced Tenorio to surrender his post on June 30 (Kite13). However, the
majority of Texans disproved this action, because the public opinion in Texas almost always, had favored caution and conciliation.

Moreover, as a reaction to the previous action of the colonists, general Cos was elected by Santa Anna as the new governor of Coahuila, replacing its previous governor Viesca. Cos released an order for the arrest of a group of opponents to Santa Anna, in which he included William B. Travis (Kite 13). Of course, the colonists refused this conduct, and what followed was as a snowballing effect toward war.

Consequently, the Community committees of Safety and Correspondences all over the province of Texas, called for a consultation to meet at Washington-on-the Brazos on October 15. A movement through which, the War party tried to convince the Texans to shift from the realm of loyalty to the realm of rebellion. Initially, the consultation addressed the issue of Independence, but it was not able to decide which policy to accept, so the general body took the issue and voted to stay loyal to the 1824 constitution of Santa Anna (Gruter13; kite 13).

Having a clear policy now, the consultation turned its efforts to the creation of an army, which everyone knew would be needed because it was only a matter of time before Santa Anna, would cross the Rio Grande to crush the discontent in Texas. In addition, the consultation turned its focus, now to the creation of a government, but this was not that easy due to the diversity of the principles of the policy makers, which led to the creation of many gaps within the government. Nevertheless, Sam Houston, the Commander in Chief of the
Texas army, was appointed under those wrecked circumstances to carry on the war against Mexico (Gruter16).

Sam Houston was a leader, he was a man with magnetic personality, combat experience, and finely tuned political instincts and more importantly, he was excellent at identifying the possibilities and designing plans to realize those possibilities. But due to the shacked political leadership within the Texas government, even Houston could not manage to avoid big washouts when tracing the road for the war of independence (Lohmann17).

2. The Alamo Battle

It all started in December 1835, when a group of Texans volunteers led by George Collinsworth and Benjamin Milan, overpowered the Mexican garrison at the Alamo and captured the fort, controlling San Antonio. By mid February 1836, Colonel James Bowie and lieutenant colonel William B. Travis drove Texan forces in San Antonio. Even though Sam Houston, convinced Bowie and Travis that they should abandon San Antonio, because of the troops’ members number which was insufficient to get involved in such a big attempt, but the Alamo’s defenders ignored him and prepared to defend the fort to the last ("The Alamo").

Thus, on February 23, a Mexican force variously estimated at 1.800 to 6.000 men, led by General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna arrived from, the south of the Rio Grande and immediately began a siege of the Alamo. The Texans held out for 13 days, however in the morning of March 6, Mexican forces broke through a breach in the outer wall of the courtyard, and overpowered Bowie’s and Travis forces ("Alamo").
3. The War of Independence

The Battle of the Alamo was actually a booster through which, the Texans were inspired to join the Texas army, and to fight against those who killed their brothers. Hence, Sam Houston's small army started gradually to grow in number and strength. From March 17 to March 26 due to moving from one region to another starting from Colorado, and getting deeper and deeper within Texas, where the population was very enraged about the tragedy at the Alamo, the army grew from 374 men to approximately 1400 men (Gruter 38).

While the Mexican army, which still chasing the Texas army, no longer had the advantage of a sympathetic populace. After a long series of chasing between the rival armies, the politicians started to get angry and made it known that they were in no mood to watch the Texas army play "cat and mouse" with the Mexicans. For this reason, David G. Burnet, the interim president of Texas, wrote to Houston saying: "The enemy is laughing at you to scorn. You must retreat no further. The country expects you to fight. The salvation of the country depends on you doing so" (Gruter 37).

Brunet was correct in his words; the enemy must be faced and defeated in order to achieve the stated political objective of independence.

Finally, when Houston’s army got ready on April 21, 1836, he ordered the attack. The Mexicans were tired and hungry from chasing after the Texans for almost three months and a half. Moreover, the Mexican army was divided into large portions distributed between the north and the south, and the forces in hand numbered only approximately 1200 men. When
Santa Anna finally saw the needs of his men, he allowed them to rest, however at the most inappropriate time and the Mexicans were literally attacked by the Texans while they were asleep, raising their voices with shouts such as "Remember the Alamo". The killing did not stop until almost 650 Mexicans lay dead, and another 700 were prisoners, while the Texans lost 09 of them, and 30 wounded (Gruter 46). Yet these losses were never for nothing after achieving the goal of their fighting, which is the Texas’ independence.

II. The Mexican American War (1846-1848)

After the annexation of the independent Republic of Texas, General "Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna" still considered Texas to be its northeastern province and never recognized the Republic of Texas. In 1845, the newly elected American President James k. Polk sent troops to the disputed area and a diplomatic mission to Mexico. The Mexican government broke off diplomatic relations with the United States, after Congress had passed the joint resolution of annexing Texas. Mexican forces attacked American forces, so that Congress declared war.

President Polk was against the war, he sent a representative "John Shidell" to Mexico City with specific proposals for peace. He said that:

The United States would take over all past monetary claims (almost 2 million dollars) of American Citizens against Mexico if Mexico would agree to “The Rio Grande" as the legal boundary between the two nations.

In addition, the United States would be willing to pay 5 million dollars for
the territory of New Mexico and would purchase California for 25 Million
dollars. (Jaccob27)

Even before the arrival of Shidell to Mexico, newspapers there expressed, they were
against any compromise with the US. They were so angry at the loss of Texas and they were
afraid of losing more territories. The Mexican government refused to meet with Shidell and
President Polk moved swiftly toward preparation for war (Jaccob27).

1. Westward to California

Jaccob explained that the prize president Polk looked for most of all was that the
nation would span the continent. With the addition of the Mexican province of California,
America would extend from sea to shining sea. In June 1846, American settlers in the
Sacramento valley of northern Carolina received word of war with Mexico. At once they
made a revolt displaying a banner of independence the Bear flag, with a grizzly bear facing a
red star (Jaccob 27).

On the American side was Captain John’s Fremont. Explorer, soldier, and destined in
1856 to be the Republican Party’s first candidate for presidentcyof the United States.
Fremont, commanding sixty men, did not just happen to be with in the area when war was
declared. His assignment from president Polk was that, in the event of war, he should work
with the officers of American ships offshore and with the land populations in order to
establish the Republic of California (Jaccob37). After the fighting began, Commander John D.
Sloat cruising the coast of California, landed a force of soldiers and marines and captured the
When he slowly became ill, Commander Robert F. Stockton took command of the expedition and continued the fighting. Meanwhile, Colonel Stephen W. Kearny set out for California from Fort Lewen Worth, Kansas, with his army of the west. In August, he captured the important market city of Santa Fe without a struggle. Then, with Scout Kit Carson as his guide, Kearny rapidly made his way westward.

At San Pasquale, California, Kearny was badly wounded in a cavalry charge by Mexican lancers. But, victorious anyway, he drove on toward San Diego, where he linked with the troops of Commander Stockton. Together, the two leaders defeated a powerful Mexican force in the battle of San Gabriel. With that victory, all of California was under American control. While conflict was taking place in California, Colonel Alexander W. Doniphan was left behind to conquer the province of New Mexico. On December 26, 1846, he captured the town of El Paso. From there, he crossed the Sacramento River to take the town of Chihuahua. Using cannons and cavalry to prepare the way for his infantry, he managed to win the battle of Sacramento at a total cost of one man killed and eight wounded. The Mexicans on the other hand, suffered 600 casualties (Jaccob39).

By this victory in the west, President Polk could devote all of his attention to a campaign aimed at conquering Mexico City. Polk knew that his two leading generals, Zachary Taylor and Winfield Scott, were both Whigs and eagerly hoped to become president of the United States. President Polk decided to appoint Winfield Scott as the general who would sail through the Gulf of Mexico with an armed force. He then was to capture the port city of Veracruz and go on from there to force the final surrender of the enemy in Mexico City.
2. The Conquest of Mexico City

Jacob described the battle. He said:

As General Winfield Scott's troops landed on the shore at Veracruz they were greeted by massive cannon fire from fortified castle overlooking the harbor. Slowly, carefully, Scott surrounded the castle with his own powerful cannons. Then for three days and three nights, he pounded the Mexican fortress. Finally, after much of Veracruz had been leveled by a flood of shells, Mexicans raised the white flag of surrender. Veracruz had fallen. (41)

On September 13, 1847, the American forces attacked. They pounded the castle with blows from their artillery. Inside the castle walls, a group of Mexican military cadets struggled against overwhelming power of attacking American marines. It was they who were the final defenders of the Mexican flag, soon to be replaced by a white flag of surrender and then by the red, white and blue of the United States of America. By the end of the day, the American forces swept across the rest of Mexico city. The city was theirs. With the completion of military operations around the city in few days, the armed struggle for the conquest of Mexico was over (Jacob45).

3. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo

Although the war had ended, the peace had not yet begun. No peace treaty had been signed between the United States and Mexico. The peace talks were negotiated by "Nicholas Trist" a chief clerk of the United States department, who had accomplished General Winfield
Scott as a diplomatic and president Polk’s representative. The treaty signed on 2 February 1848 at Guadalupe Hidalgo, formally ending the war. According to the treaty:

- Mexico accepted the Rio Grande as its boundary with Texas. It agreed to that Texas, New Mexico and California now belonged to the United States.
- In exchange trust agreed that United States would pay 1.5 million dollars to Mexico for its lost territories and take over 3.5 million dollars in claims of American citizens against Mexico. (Jaccob48)

Thus the US policy of "Manifest Destiny" that the United States followed to expand its territories, was applied even on its neighboring countries.

### III. The Mexican Revolution (1910-1920)

In 1910, the Mexican people were preparing to celebrate the 100th anniversary of their war of Independence, which freed the country from the Spanish rule, and this was supposed to be a triumphant time. But what started as a celebration of national pride would soon turn into one of the bloodiest periods in the Mexican history.

On the 28th, November 1876, Porfirio Diaz, who was leading a revolutionary movement against president Sebastian Lerdo y Tejada, through which he revolted against the principle that an outgoing president should not be capable to reelection, and declared himself interim president of the Mexican republic. However, Porfirio Diaz had no idea that he will be resigning the presidency of Mexico, because of a revolutionary movement that will rose for the same purpose of that in 1876 (Rowe 281).
According to Rowe in describing Mexico’s development "During the thirty-four years which elapsed between 1877 and 1911, Mexico shifted from a condition of political anarchy, social disruption, and economic stagnation, into a well organized, consolidated and progressive modern state" (Rowe 281). Therefore, upon becoming president in 1877, Diaz intended to keep the peace in order to forge an industrial future in the country, because while Europe and the United States, and even Latin nations such as Brazil, Argentina, Chile, and Cuba were progressing in the industrial world, Mexico lacked even a modern railroads, and all this was due to the nearly six decades of political warfare in the country (Stein 13).

So, in order to put an end to these savage military mutinies, Diaz offered his rivals the choice of "pan o palo" i.e. bread or the club. Indeed, he tried to convince the ambitious politicians and generals by working with him so that they get rewarded, or fighting him and they will be beaten down, and sooner, Diaz’s political strength grew to cover the entire nation, and all 27 of Mexico’s state governors were men chosen by Diaz (Stein 14). According to Stein:

Mexico under Diaz’s rule finally joined the industrial age. During his time in office, more than 9,000 miles of railroad tracks were laid down, the output of mines increased threefold, and the value of goods Mexico shipped abroad registered a fivefold gain. Also new laws backed by Diaz, encouraged the growth of huge plantations, which produced sugar, coffee, tobacco, cotton, and
rubber steel plants opened in Nuevo Leon, and textile factories operated in Veracruz. (15)

The fact that nine out of ten Mexicans lived in farming communities during the Diaz era, boosted the most explosive problem that ever faced the president during his rule. It was actually one of the main reasons, due to which the Mexican revolution aroused, was the problem of landownership, an issue as old as Mexico itself. Under Spain, farmland was mostly divided into "ejidos" owned by Indians, and "haciendas" owned by Europeans, and Diaz always believed that the haciendas were more functional than the ejidos. That is why he allowed wealthy land barons to strip millions of acres from Indian villages (Stein 16).

In addition, and starting from 1900, president Diaz fell under the spell of a small group of business men called "The Cientificos" i.e. the scientists (Stein 22). These cientificos, led by the finance minister José Limantour, according to them believed in their country’s progress through investment in mines, railroads, factories, and harbors; the incomparable value of technology, and the cultural superiority of white men over Indians and mixed breeds (Grayson 18).

As a result to this new approach, American companies sooner ran Mexico’s railroads, and owned three quarters of its mines, as well as, more than half of its oil fields. Thus, foreign firms came to own one-third of the Mexican economy, for example, the French operated the textile mills, and the British interests acquired gold and silver mines (Stein 23). This whole
Cientificos strategy and its bad effects on the Mexicans, was another major cause that led people to revolt asking for change.

Moreover, in 1908 in an interview with an American newsman called James Creelman, Diaz declared that he has no attempt to reelect for the upcoming presidency, stating that:

No matter what my friends and supporters say, I retire when my presidential term of office ends [in 1910], and I shall not serve again… I welcome an opposition party in the Mexican Republic. If it appears I will regard it as a blessing not an evil. (Stein 27, 28)

However, by 1910, Diaz acted like he had never said those words in the interview, and announced his reelection again, which made people all across the country angry and disappointed, and were willing to support anyone bold enough to stand up to the presidency.

Indeed, in the Northern state of Coahuila, the Mexicans found their candidate, Francisco Madero. Even though, Madero came from an old hacienda -owning family, he was genuinely kind to the poor and peasants, and that’s why, probably, he gained the public support, but Diaz felt the threat, after seeing Madero’s audience getting bigger to cover almost every layer of the Mexican community, and reacted in a particular way, by throwing Madero in jail on trumped-up charges. Thus, June 21. 1910 the day of elections had came, and it was an ordinary day as it was expected, because Diaz won by a huge majority (Stein 28-31).
On the other hand, in Mexico City, the great celebrations of 16 September began, where the priest in the churchyard addressed the Mexicans with the same speech that Miguel Hidalgo, the gentle bookish priest, addressed his people 100 years before, and with that one fiery speech, the Mexican Revolution was launched (Stein 31).

In the meantime, after being released from prison, Madero believed that the only way to get rid of Diaz’s dictatorship is through a rebellion. So, his words that were published under the name "Plan de San Luis Potosi" echoed through the ears of the Mexicans, and encouraged them to stand up for their rights ("Mexican Revolution").

Consequently, resistance movements started to spread in both, the Northern and Southern parts of Mexico, starting from the north, and exactly in the state of Chihuahua, where Pancho Villa, the rustler and bandit chief, began a series of devastating raids on wealthy cattle ranches. While in the south, where Emiliano Zapata, led a bloody campaign against the rural political bosses, but among all these revolts, the most remarkable one was of spring 1911, where revolutionary forces took Ciudad Juarez, forced Diaz to resign, and declared Madero as the president of Mexico, where he had an overwhelming majority of people, shouting for him "viva Madero!", "viva la revolucion!" (Stein 33-39). And what came after this phase was, definitely not expected.
1. The US Intervention in the Mexican Revolution

Neighboring nations, usually become involved in the political events of the lands close by, and the United States during the Mexican Revolution was no exception. Madero was determined to create a democratic regime in Mexico that is opposed to the previous dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz. However, this led the United States to fear that a civil war may breakdown in the neighboring country, which will threaten the property of its citizens, and mostly will threaten its business interests there.

Moreover, tensions in Mexico reached its peak when new factions aroused against President Madero, mainly the faction that was led by Diaz’s nephew, Felix Diaz. This last clashed with federal troops in the city under the leadership of Victoriano Huerta, who was the chief of staff of the Mexican army, under Madero’s presidency ("Mexican Revolution"). This conflict was like the perfect opportunity for the U.S.A to go beyond minding its own business, whereas Ambassador Henry Lane Wilson, a quintessential supporter of dollar diplomacy, actively plotted Madero’s ouster from the presidency … (Grayson 21).

Furthermore, Ambassador Wilson was of great help in arranging a series of secret meetings between Huerta and Felix Diaz, until these two last concluded a secret pact, and on February 18, 1913, the agreement which became known as "the Pact of the Embassy", held the terms that Huerta would install himself as president (Stein 61). Now Mexico’s fate is in the hands of a new leader, and not only Mexico but also the fate of its previous president Madero. Unfortunately, after nearly four days from removing Madero and arresting him, and
exactly on February 22, 1913. He was assassinated by a shot in the head, while Huerta and Ambassador Wilson were celebrating a Washington’s Birthday party, at the American Embassy (Stein 65).

More importantly, after becoming president of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, showed a huge dissatisfaction in the dollar diplomacy of his country’s previous administration. He also viewed Huerta as a corrupt president and did not want him to control U.S interests in Mexico, and that he was just another dictator ruling the Mexicans, that is why he said: "I am going to teach the South American Republics how to elect good men". (Stein 76)

Meanwhile, opponents to Huerta’s regime in Mexico started to form an alliance against him. This alliance was formed between: Pancho Villa, the bandit turned revolutionary; Carranza, the governor of the northern state of Coahuila, and later on started to be called the first chief of the revolution against Huerta, and finally Alvaro Obregon from the state of Sonora, who would become the most successful leader of the revolution. The alliance was concluded by a plan which called "The Plan of Guadalupe" that aimed simply to overthrow Huerta and the restoration of the 1857 constitution (Stein 71-72).

Moreover, President Wilson ordered his fleet to occupy Veracruz, the major gulf ports, through which ships full of machine guns coming from Germany for Huerta’s army will arrive. Indeed, President Wilson’s attempt was to help the Mexicans to get rid of Huerta, but
this military action made them angrier towards their neighboring country, because it reminded them of nothing more than the disastrous war of 1846.1848, and its bad results (Stein 77).

Once more, the American interference in the Mexican affairs took place, when President Wilson announced in October 1915 that the United would recognize Carranza as the legitimate president of Mexico. Thus, this American move opened the angry fires of the generals mainly Villa, against the Americans in Mexico, which led to the execution of many U.S citizens in March 1916, exactly in the town of Columbus (Stein 107).

Therefore, supporting the presidency of Carranza was the last attempt of the United States that shows a direct interference into its neighboring country affairs, and what came after this was marked somehow with stability and peace. However, it did not mark the end of the Mexican Revolution itself. Carranza remained in power by eliminating those who opposed him; on top of those was Zapata who was assassinated in the morning of April 10, 1919(Stein 117).

But in 1920 opposition reached its climax, when Carranza tried to break up a railroad strike in Sonora, thus he got abandoned by all his supporters including Obregon, and was shot and killed by one of Obregon’s loyalist, named Rudolph Herrera. In September of 1920, Alvaro Obregon was elected president of the Mexican Republic, and with his determination to bring peace to his battered land, marked the end of the warfare that had gripped the nation for ten years (Stein 119-22).
IV. The Relationship between the United States and Mexico During and After WWII

The United States looked for strengthening ties with the Mexican government. Beginning on April 1, 1941, many treaties were signed such as: Mutual landing rights for the aircraft of each other's country and a US agreement to purchase Mexico's output of strategic raw materials, which were destined for war related industries in the United States. Mexican officials worked with their US counterparts to curb German activities in Mexico, and president Manual Avila Camacho, who had succeeded Cardenas in 1940, declared that his country would enter the war on the Allied side if the United States were attacked.

In January 1942, a Military cooperation took the form of a joint United States-Mexican defense commission was created to coordinate military action and assure the training of Mexican officers in the United States. Closer military cooperation led to Mexico's entry into war. There was an agreement between the two countries upon the mutual conscription of resident aliens into the armed forces of the other. According to Grayson:

While Mexican authorities drafted few Americans, Uncle Sam took approximately 250,000 Mexicans into the US Armed forces: 14,000 of these men participated in combat: 1000 died in battle. Three squadrons of Mexican air force officers and recruits were trained in the United States and, in March 1945, squadron 201 flew to the Philippines where it saw action during the last summer of the war. (27)
An additional contribution to the war effort was a contract labor program; in which the USA implements a labor agreement with Mexico known as the Bracero program where Mexican agricultural workers were brought under contract to the US to do mainly agricultural labor as well as replacing US workers from the southwest who had been mobilized into the armed forces. Grayson reported that:

his program brought 400,000 braceros per year into the United States before it was discontinued in 1964. The supply of Mexican workers exceeded the demand, and many people who failed to secure entry under this program entered the United States as illegal migrants. (27)

During World War II, Mexico entered in closer economic, political, and military relations with the United States than anytime. In 1938, President Roosevelt and Secretary of state Cordell Hill followed "the Good neighbor policy". Supporting Mexico's sovereign right to nationalize its oil, they concentrated their attention on the difficult task of negotiating terms of compensation for oil companies' losses. In 1943, Franklin Roosevelt became the first U.S president to make an official state visit to Mexico, under scoring the value the United States placed on Mexico as an ally in World War II (Ribaroff 26).

Throughout the war, Mexico helped the military effort by supplying important strategic raw materials to United States industries. Mexican soldiers fought in the U.S Army, and a squadron of newly organized Mexican Air forces saw action in the pacific in 1945. The good
neighbor policy laid the groundwork for the era of good feeling. The United States were signed by cordiality, mutual support, and dedication to resolving the problems that arose between the two countries. It was during this time that the idea of a partnership between the neighbors took root, and it was also at this time that the personal relationship between the leaders of the two countries became a significant factor in their relationship (Ribaroff 26).

The support of Mexico to US policy continued even after the war. Although Mexican officials never generated the intense enthusiasm for the Cold War demanded by the United States. In the event of the war between the US and the Soviet Union, President Harry Truman was informed: "the department of state has been assured informally by the Mexican government that the United States could count on its support in the event of a show down with the Soviet Union" (Niblo249). So, Mexican officials assured Washington of their country's commitment to continue to furnish raw materials, as it did during World War II.

On the US side, the military priorities shifted significantly and a new set of goals emerged. Mexico's military importance declined in the new bipolar world. Washington officials began to look at the Mexican military as an institution to influence rather than as a possible ally in the event of war, as had been the case from 1939 to 1942. As president Truman's military aide, Major General Harry Vaughan, put it, "the primary objective has now become the standardization of the armament and training of the armed forces of our two countries". Hence, perpetual innovations in equipment, as well as the economic power of the
United States made it inevitable that the Mexican military would be influenced by its neighbors (Niblo 250).

Although Mexico's strategic importance minimized, President Truman insisted upon an "escape clause" to make certain that free trade principles did not unduly damage US interests. When the Mexican international account deteriorated dramatically after World War II, the US influence increased notably. The United States again placed open door policies toward Latin America, but by the Eisenhower era, the importance of Latin America diminished too. The diminished role of Latin America in world affairs made it difficult for new Deal diplomats to sustain their personal belief that Mexico and the United States shared a community of interests in which each country benefited from contact with the other.

There was something of crisis of confidence as Washington turned away from her allies in Latin America and post war inflation quickly eroded the region's savings. That generation of US diplomats believed that they were fighting for democracy in the hemisphere, and therefore the need to accommodate dictators in the name of the Cold War was unpleasant (Niblo 251).

Throughout the 1960s and the early 1970s, the author Ribaroff explained that:

The United States watched in alarm as leftist rhetoric found increasing tolerance in Mexico. The fact that this rhetoric took the form of denunciations of the United States was particularly damaging to relations between the countries. Anti-American sentiment is nothing new in Latino America, but in
this period it became identified with extremists who in United States eyes were distinguishable from Fidel Castro's revolutionaries. (28)

On the official level, Mexico was distancing itself from the United States. Luis Echeveria Alvarez, who became Mexico's president in 1970s, went even further than his predecessors had done in establishing an independent course for Mexico in foreign affairs, he sought to make his country a leader in the third world, and in doing so positioned himself in opposition to the United States on many issues. Echeveria's friendship with Chile's legally elected Marxist president, Salvador Allende, caused particular concern in Washington. But the countries had usually managed to keep foreign policy differences separate from many other issues that affected the two countries. Ribaroff gave the example that:

In the early 1960s, at the same time that Mexico was actively opposing United States policy toward Cuba, progress was made in resolving two problems that had long defied solution: the settlement of a hundred-year-old dispute over the Chamizal, a piece of land that had shifted to the US side of the Rio Grande when the river changed course in 1844; and an agreement to begin negotiation on the issue of the quality of water in the Colorado River, which is shared by the United States and Mexico. (28)

Ribaroff argues that the turning point in relations between the United States and Mexico was when Fidel Castro adopted the communist economic system, and the United States decided to exclude Cuba from the (OAS) Organization of American states, but Mexico refused to vote against Cuba.
In the 1960s and 1970s, however, world events, and especially events in the western Hemisphere began to cause erosion in American relations with Mexico. When Castro announced in 1961 that he was a communist and that he would look to the Soviet Union for economic and military assistance, the United States rallied to nations of Latin America to oppose totalitarianism in the hemisphere. When the United States led members of the organization of American states (OAS) in voting to exclude Cuba from the hemispheric Organization and to enforce economic sanctions against the Communist state, Mexico refused to follow people, Mexico refused to break Diplomatic relations with Cuba, and has maintained a friendly relationship with Castro ever since. (Ribaroff 27)

As the 1980s began, Mexico’s economic future looked bright, the discovery of vast oil reserves in southern Mexico in the mid-1970s held the promise of wealth that might alleviate the desperate poverty that two-thirds of the country's people endured. By the money that oil production generates, Mexico’s economy was growing at an annual rate of 8% in 1981. The Mexican oil discovery was a good news for the United States since it imports almost 30% of the oil it uses. Since 1978, the United States has purchased over half of Mexico's exported oil and has contracted to buy large quantities of natural gas ("US-Mexico relations").

However, this economic growth carried a disaster. By August 1982, Mexico faced bankruptcy in which the government and private businesses were deeply in debt to foreign banks and unable to pay even the interest on their loans. Because of the close ties between the two countries, Mexico's crisis had a negative impact in the United States. Mexico's economic
difficulty in paying its foreign debt has affected the US banking system, and its recession has taken a heavy toll on trade with the United States in which local economies of US border towns that depend on trade with their Mexican neighbors have declined, and hard times have brought an increase in Mexican migraines looking for work in the United States (Ribaroff 53).

The possibility that the crisis could split a violent revolution has caused concern in the United States. So that the United States ambassador to Mexico, John Gavin, described the relationship between the two countries as a "marriage without the possibility of divorce" and the United States granted 12 billion as an emergency aide to pay its foreign debt in 1982. Moreover, the United States played an important role in persuading the International Monetary Fund to give Mexico 3.84 billion in credit, and waged US banks to renegotiate Mexico's loans (Ribaroff 53).

While some Mexican critics viewed the US efforts as unwanted interference in their economic affairs, others believed that the United States would try to exploit the crisis to get concession from Mexico in trade and foreign policy issues. But on the official level, there has been little criticism of the United States. President De la Madrid declared that "Mexico's relations with the united States are very good and based on mutual respect"(Ribaroff 54).

V. North American Free Trade Agreement

The United States deepened its economic ties in 1994 with the passage of The North American Free Trade Agreement or NAFTA. It is a trilateral agreement between the United
States, Canada and Mexico. It pledges to eliminate tariffs over fifteen years and make its signatories the second- largest trading bloc after the European Union. NAFTA opens the door to a new institutional relationship between the United States and Mexico on issues including military training, environment, and degradation at the border, central bank cooperation, and rule of law. The negotiations over NAFTA took two years to conclude and it faced domestic resistance in all 3 countries, especially the United States President Bill Clinton spent much of his first year in office campaigning to get the public and congressional support necessary for NAFTA's approval (Keller14).

In the twenty years since it went into effect, Keller argued that NAFTA had very mixed results. On one hand, the agreement succeeded in lowering barriers to trade and investment, and Canada and Mexico are now two of the United States three most important trading partners. It also helped transform the US automotive industry and increased US exports of certain manufactured goods like computers and fabrics. The agreement had an even greater impact on Mexico; Mexico's exports, most of which go to the United States, have jumped from 60 billion in 1994 to almost 400 billion in 2013, and US investment in Mexican industries helped manufactured goods replace oil as Mexico's main source of export revenue.

On the other hand, NAFTA results have contributed to another long standing source of tension in US- Mexican relations which is immigration. The end of Bracero program in 1964 did not mean an end of the Mexican migration to the United States, millions of Mexican citizens have continued to make their way to the US in search of work. The issue of
immigration continued to strain US-Mexican relations in the 21st century. Since 2000, more than 7 million Mexicans have migrated to the US which led the US government to take numerous unilateral measures to secure its border, such as building fences, increasing the members of National Guard members and Border patrol agents, and even deploying drones (keller15).

Conclusion

Mexico is considered as one of the most important countries in Latin America to the United States. Although the first contact between the both nationstook place when the United States defeated Mexico in the Mexican-American war 1848 and took half of its national territories. Over the coming two centuries, both countries struggled to establish a relationship based on mutual trust and respect, and played a central role in shaping each other’s political, economic, and social development.

Mexico's importance to the United States appeared during the First and the Second World Wars, where there was a close military cooperation that took the form of a joint United States-Mexican commission which led to Mexico's entry into the Wars fighting on the American's side. Throughout the Wars, Mexico helped by supplying important strategic raw materials to the United States industries and even Mexican soldiers fought in the US Army. In addition to the Bracero program, due to which Mexican workers were the source of cheap labor in the US and the backbone of the US agricultural and industrial sectors. This closeness was deepened more by the first official visit of the US president Roosevelt to Mexico,
following what was called "the good neighbor policy" under scoring the value the United States placed on Mexico as an ally in the World War II.

After World War II, Mexico’s importance declined, and the military priorities shifted significantly and a new set of objectives emerged. Washington officials began to look at the Mexican military as an institution of influence rather than as a possible ally in the Cold War. But although Mexico's strategic importance was minimized, the US president Truman insisted upon an "escape clause" to make certain that free trade principles do not unduly damage US interests.

On the official level, Mexico was distancing itself from the United States. Luis Echeveria Alvarez, Mexico's president in 1970, went further than his predecessors had done in establishing an independent course for Mexico in foreign affairs. He sought to make his country a leader of the Third World, and in doing so he positioned himself in opposition to the United States on many issues, like in the case of Cuba. But the two countries managed to keep foreign policy differences separate from many other issues that affected the two countries.

But after the discovery of Mexico's oil reserves in 1970, Mexico's importance to the US was resumed since it was the major supplier of oil and natural gas to the US and also as a trading partner. The commercial relationship helped strengthening the US economy and provided a basis for ongoing communication between the two countries. Mexico also acted as a source of labor for US farm and industries.
Mexico, however, can only serve these important interests of the US if it remains politically stable and economically healthy. To help Mexico maintain its equilibrium, the US tried to develop what it described as a "special relationship". From the US perspective, the idea behind the special relationship is the interdependence of the two countries, based on their mutual needs: Mexico requires money and technology to develop its industries and expanded markets for its exports, all of which the US can supply. The US in turn, needs oil and natural gas, raw materials, labor and investment opportunities, all of which Mexico can supply. That is why the US described the relationship between the two countries as "marriage without possibility of divorce".
Chapter Two: American Foreign Policy toward Mexican Immigration

Introduction

The United States has been often called the nation of immigrants because of its long history of admitting large numbers of immigrants from all around the world. The two thousands mile border between Mexico and the United States made Mexico the largest immigration group in the United States creating a generation of "New Mexicans" or "Mexican-Americans".

But the increased numbers of Mexican immigrants have been a subject of congressional disputes over many decades, with the main concern on how to prevent undocumented immigration. Thus, Mexico’s status as the source of unauthorized immigration affected the United States immigration policies towards Mexicans. This chapter explores the United States attempts to decrease and prevent Mexican undocumented immigration, and compares between a Democrat president policy and a Republican president policy.

I. The History of Mexican Immigration to the United States

Mexican immigrants, along with their Mexican American descendants, occupy a unique place in the story of US immigration. They are known by many different names, coming from divergent origins, and taking different paths to become part of the United States. Millions of people in the United States today identity themselves as Mexican immigrants or Mexican Americans. Some Mexicans were already living in the southern and Western regions of the North American continent centuries before the existence of the US. Many more Mexicans came to the country during the twentieth century, and Mexican immigrants continue to arrive today.
1. Becoming Part of the United States

The first Mexicans to become part of the United States never crossed the border. Instead, the border crossed them. In 1846, after signing the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo between the two nations, the United States benefited from large amounts of lands, including what would later become the states of California and Texas, as well as parts of Colorado, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah and Nevada, in exchange for a token payment of 15 million dollars. In addition to one more important piece of land, in 1854, when the US bought what is known southern Arizona and New Mexico from the Mexican government for 10 million dollars. This land deal is known as the Gadsden Purchase that brought the US a much coveted railroad route, and helped to open the West to further expansion ("Library of congress").

The Nation had expanded its size by one-third; and almost tens of thousands of Mexican citizens have become residents of the United States. According to the treaty, most of the Mexicans who lived in the new United States territories became US citizens. The treaty also guaranteed their safety and property rights, as if the property belonged to citizens of the US according to the principles of the Constitution. In practice, however, the new territories were far from the centers of US government, and these guarantees were not reliably enforced. By the end of the 19th century, many Mexicans-Americans had been deprived of their lands, and found themselves living unprotected in often hostile regions ("Library of congress").

2. The Mexican Revolution and Mexican Immigration

In 1876, the president Porfirio occupied the reins of the Mexican government. His supporters and opponents never imagined that his dictatorship would have an effect on the progress of Mexico and the impact of the consequent mass of immigration of Mexico to the US. His dictatorship was the main reason which led to a revolution which led, in turn, to an international migration of Mexicans to the US.
During the Mexican revolution, Mexicans sought refuge in the United States, leaving their small villages and starting a journey to "El Norte", the North, as they called the United States, using the railroad system built under the Diaz regime as a mean of transportation of Mexican immigrants to south western part of America. Hundreds of thousands of Mexicans made this trip across the Rio Grande. The United States did not keep complete immigration records for Mexicans entering the country because many entered without checking at border entry points. The US census started keeping records for Mexicans immigration in 1930. The 1930 census showed that the total population of Mexican immigrants grew from 367,510 in 1910 to 700,541 in 1920.

By the beginning of the Great Depression, approximately 1 million Mexicans resided in the United States. They settled along the US-Mexican border in such states as Texas, Arizona, and California. Communities of Mexican immigrants were established in places such as Elpaso, San Diego, San Antonio, Texas, Los Angeles and California. By 1920, Elpaso and Texas had the largest Mexican population of any state in the United States and had more Mexicans than Anglos; San Antonio had the second largest population of Mexicans (Garcia 16-17).

Most immigrants were peasants, unemployed and dissatisfied working-class persons who fled the impoverished conditions and violence practiced throughout Mexico. The need for unskilled and semi-skilled workers during American industrialization era was the reason for the ease with which Mexican immigrants entered the United States during the late 19th and early 20th century. Mexican immigrants were considered as the backbone of the southern economy by providing a constant and a cheap source of most unskilled labour. They contributed to the economic boom; they were concentrated in such industries as the railroads, construction, mining and agriculture. But economic discrimination was created, Anglo-American workers concentrated in higher paying occupations unlike Mexicans. Unskilled
workers found it practically impossible to improve their occupational status because most unions restricted membership to Anglos. These patterns of discrimination affected the development of Mexican immigrant communities during this period and subsequent generations of Mexican Americans who continue to place patterns of inequality (Garcia 20).

3. The Immigration Act of 1917

The Immigration Act of 1917 was an early attempt to restrict the flow of immigrants to the United States. By the increasing numbers of immigrants from all parts of the world, including Mexico, exaggerated and often inaccurate reports of Mexicans posing health problems and representing a bad moral influence on American citizens contributed to this early episode of anti-American immigrant sentiments. The immigration act of 1917 called for a head tax of 8$ and a literary text. Mexican immigration hardly increased from 1917 to 1918.

Although they were not eligible to be drafted, many Mexicans feared conscription to American armed forces fighting in World War I and returned to Mexico, discouraging others from immigration to the United States. American employers experienced economic difficulties caused by a shortage of labour due to a decrease in Mexican immigration and the numbers Americans citizens drafted into the armed services. Sufficient pressure was exerted by employers and eventually the department of labour suspended the immigration law to allow Mexican immigrants to enter the country as agricultural workers. By the middle of 1918, Mexican immigration resumed and continued to increase rapidly. Many companies, especially the railroads and mining, actually entered Mexico to recruit labourers (Garcia 20-21).
4. Continued Immigration, World Wars and the Aftermath

4.1 Continued Immigration and Labour Unrest (1920-1940)

Because of labour shortage of workers during war, American immigration policies represented legislative efforts to attract greater numbers of Mexican immigrants to work in war industries. In 1917, the US government relaxed all laws limiting Mexican immigration. Interestingly, the US born children of Mexican immigrants were not allowed to enter the army, which enforced segregation of all groups considered "non white". Records showed that many Mexican Americans changed their last name in order to avoid serving in segregated battalions (Garcia28).

The liberalization of US immigration restrictions led to a significant increase in Mexican immigrants living in the Border States. In the twenty years between 1920 and 1940, the Mexican population living in the United States increased in 2%, the population grew from 8.8 million in 1920 to 14.4 million in 1940, with migration from central and southern states in Mexico to Border States. Large numbers of Mexicans who moved to the Border States eventually entered the United States and settled in existing Mexican communities throughout the southwest. Immigrants concentrated in such cities as San Diego and Los Angeles. In Elpaso, the Mexican immigrants and us-born Mexican -American population became the majority group over all groups.

The 1920s witnessed the rise of extreme prejudices and discriminatory practices among Mexicans groups. The so-called "Mexican problem" refers to the widespread belief that Mexican immigration created the country's economic disaster in the 1930s. Racial prejudices contributed to a further resentment against Mexican immigrants and immigrants from other countries. All these factors led to the passage of restrictive immigration laws. Feelings of intense hostility against Mexican immigrants culminated in a government policy of "repatrie". It is estimated that about 500,000 Mexican immigrants left the United States.
But not all these immigrants made the return journey voluntary. Many Mexican immigrants were forcefully repatriated by the government and were sent back to Mexico. Between 1929 and 1935, large numbers of immigrants were forced to leave their Mexican communities in the United States. The highest rates of deportation (called repatriation by Hoover administration) took place in California, where the majority of Mexicans resided. Government officials and law enforcement agencies combined their efforts to appease the business and labour union sectors by conducting these mass deportations. All too frequently, the American-born children of Mexican immigrant parents were deported along with their families (Garcia 28-29).

In the mid 1920s, as the same time that many immigrants were being deported, other groups of Mexicans and Mexican American workers started collective efforts to improve their working conditions. Mexican immigrants entered a variety of industries during the 1920s and 1930s; they represented the dominant labour population in industries like mining, agriculture and the railroads. Mexican workers established unions that initiated several large-scale strikes. California's agricultural workers experienced the majority of these strikes. Many strikes succeeded in improving working conditions for immigrants, but many proved unsuccessful. As the economy improved, resentment against immigrants calmed gradually. Increased numbers of Mexicans started to enter the United States. Their numbers would grow even more when the US found itself engaged in World War II (Garcia 29-30).

4.2 World War II and the Bracero Program (1942-1964)

The Spanish word for hired hand is "bracero", from the word "Brazo" or arm. Bracero refers to contract labourers recruited from Mexico under specific legislation. When the United States entered into World War II, the country needed for a large supply of workers in War industries. The US government and the Mexican government designed the Bracero program to
guarantee a steady supply of Mexican immigrant workers. During the Bracero program, it is estimated that 350,000 changed their status from temporary workers to immigrants living on a permanent basis in the United States. Hence, the bracero program produced another wave of Mexican immigration. It began in 1942 when close to 200,000 Mexican contract workers migrated to the US along twenty-one states. California became the temporary home for about half of all braceros workers who were recruited to come to the US as agricultural workers. Braceros served as a source of cheap labour (Gregory 45).

The program stipulated that the immigrants were to return to Mexico at the end of the war. In 1945, World War II ended, most growers wanted the US government to extend the program. In January 1947, a bill was passed to extend the Bracero program until 1948. But the agricultural business sector continued to experience labour shortage. They wanted to make the program renewable every two years, which led to the passage of another congressional bill. American involvement in the Korean conflict, beginning in 1950, produced a marked increase for contract labourers from Mexico. The Mexican government, however, in response to widespread abuses of braceros, declared that it would only participate in the program if the US government improved its controlling of the treatment of the workers. With such a guarantee assured, the Mexican government accepted an extension of the Bracero program, which will exist until 1964 (Garcia 32).

The new Bracero program retained its original guidelines. The Mexican government recruited the workers who would enter the country as contract labourers. As a result of large numbers of Mexicans who wanted to become braceros, the Mexican government created a lottery system to be used in the selection. Immigration records showed that about 4.8 million Mexican workers entered the United States. Under Eisenhower administration congress passed a legislation to end the program, but there was a strong pressure by California's growers which blocked the bill to terminate the Bracero program. By 1960, the National
Council of Churches of Christ in America and the National Consumers of League joined together to stop the continuation of the Bracero program. The impact of the growing Civil Rights Movement provided the anti-Bracero program with a renewed spirit. Opposition groups began to see some results in Congress. In 1963, Congress voted against the extension of the Bracero program, and it comes officially to an end in 1964. It is estimated that 8% of the total number of the Bracero program settled in the United States (Garcia 32-33).

All through the 1950s and early 1960s, the increased numbers of Mexican immigrants, usually undocumented, would make the long journey to the United States, becoming a growing generation of "New Americans" who like the generation before them, brought their dreams and hopes with them to what would become their new homeland. This generation of New Americans and the one immediately following it, the generation of 1970s and 1980s, would experience the effect of new series of immigration laws beginning with the immigration act of 1965.

5. Mexican Immigration Since 1965

The Immigration Nationality Act of 1965 set strict quotas on the number of persons who could legally enter the US from Latin American nations, and most New Mexican migration to the US in the 1960s and 1970s was temporary. Since the 1980s, Mexican immigration increased dramatically due to economic push factors in Mexico, labour needs in the US, in addition to the enactment of NAFTA in 1994 which brought a flood of a subsidized US corn into the Mexican markets, driving down grain prices and forcing hundreds of thousands of people from rural areas to migrate in search for better economic opportunities. The 2000 Census showed that the foreign-born population of the US increased by 11.3 million people in the 1990s, and Mexican immigrants accounted for 43% of that growth. The region which had the fastest growing immigrant population was the southeast, where many Mexicans
who found work in construction, as migrant agricultural workers, and in textile factories (Lacy 6).

6. Mexican Immigrant Population in the United States

![Figure 1](image)

**Source:** Data from U.S. Census Bureau 2010 and 2017 American community surveys (ACS)

This picture shows that after four decades of strong growth, Mexican immigrants population in the United States hit a turning point in 2010. The overall number of immigrants in the United States increased every year between 2010 and 2017, but it decreased between 2016 and 2017 by about 300,000 from 11.6 to 11.3 million, but they remained the largest foreign-born group in the country, accounting for 25% of the 44.5 million immigrants as of 2017. This decrease is due to factors like the improving Mexican economy, and the US immigration enforcement ("migration policy").

7. Mexicans in the United States

Mexicans were considered as the largest group of legal and illegal migrants in the US. In 2004, there were approximately 11.2 million Mexicans in the United States, 5.3 million had legal status, whereas 5.9 million were undocumented which means 57% of all Mexicans
living in the United States are undocumented, a percentage that remained constant over the past decades (Martin and Latapi 10).

II. The US-Mexico Border Issues

1. Drug Trafficking and the Mexican Cartels

The US-Mexican border is without any doubts, one of the most unique borders in the world in nearly every aspect. The entire border region was part of Mexico in 1848, thus Mexican culture including food and even the Spanish language are still present. However, the 2000 mile border today is mostly considered private property, with more than 1200 miles including the Rio Grande River, which works as a natural barrier that wraps through Western Texas, separating Mexico on one shore and the United States on the other (Mazza 33-34).

According to Mazza, an adjunct lecturer in the Johns Hopkins University, the border is considered the world’s busiest border in terms of people and daily commerce, where one million people and 1.5 billion dollar worth of goods cross every day. Also, the US-Mexico border became the home to the single busiest land port, the crossing between San Diego, California and San Isidro-Tijuana, where 50,000 vehicles and 25000 pedestrians pass each day (34).

Indeed, being one of the most unique borders in the world, the US-Mexican border covers the most dangerous types of crimes, where the growth of drug trade and the rise of anti-immigrant sentiment boosted the increase of militarization along the border. The last two decades of the twentieth century recorded that smuggling drugs across the border delivered nearly 13.8 million dollar in sales per year. This gainful trade has released a rash of violence among smugglers and government forces, and among competing traffickers that had left more than 11,000 dead since 2006 (Jiménez 244).
Drug trafficking or more specifically, the Mexican cartels along the Southern border is what poses a serious threat to Mexico’s national safety and public health, and not only a threat to the Mexican republic, or to the USA national security. According to Anders, a master student at Air Command and Staff College, these Mexican cartels are geographically situated between the world’s largest producer of cocaine (Colombia), and the world’s largest consumer of cocaine (United States), leading Mexico to be a natural drug transhipment route between the two countries. Mexican cartels transport drugs imported from South America as well as drugs locally produced, and move them north across the United States (03).

However, like any other organized crime group, these Mexican cartels are profit driven. This means that, their primary goods trafficked are drugs, but they do generate income from other illegal activities such as the smuggling of humans and weapons, kidnapping for ransom and extortion, counterfeiting and piracy (Anders 03). The Mexican government reported that there are seven drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) operating in Mexico:

1- Sinaloa Cartel which controls most of the drug smuggling on the Southwest border, and is led by Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman. This drug trafficking organization was founded nearly 35 years ago, and it was also known as the Federation because it runs a sub-groups that operate as an alliance to share resources for the common goal of trafficking huge quantities of cocaine from South America into the United States.

2- Gulf Cartel is considered to be the oldest organized crime group in Mexico. It includes a large scale of marijuana and cocaine trafficking through smuggling corridors in North-eastern Mexico.

3- Los Zetas Cartel which is composed of former Mexican Special Forces members who were hired originally by the Gulf Cartel to their security and enforcement team. The Zetas worked on expanding the Gulf Cartel’s business to include
prostitution, murder, kidnapping and media piracy. However, this organization was separated from the Gulf Cartel in 2008 and became an independent one.

4- Juarez Cartel also known as Vicente Carrillo Fuentes organization, has controlled the Juarez-El Paso Corridor in Chihuahua Mexico, since the early 1990s. This organization launched by the mid 2000 a campaign to have the absolute control over drug trafficking activities in Chihuahua, which was dominated more by other organizations, and after long years of conflict the Juarez Cartel was able to dominate the Western and Central potions of Chihuahua state.

5- Beltran Leyva Organization (BLO) which considered originally a part of the Sinaloa Cartel, and was splitted away from it after the arrest of its leader, Alferedo Beltran Leyva, in January 2008.

6- La FamiliaMichoacana (LFM) is a cartel that originated in the 1980s as a primarily marijuana production and distribution organization. It is founded in the state of Michoacán, Mexico, and its primary production is methamphetamine, as well as the transportation of cocaine and marijuana to the United States.

7- The 7th drug trafficking organization that operates in Mexico is the Tijuana Cartel which, from the mid 1980s till 1990s, was one of the most powerful poly-drug trafficking organizations in Mexico (Anders 04-06).

These cartels and due to the fact that they operate actively on the border and have already tentacles that stretch across the border, is what makes them the primary concern to the United States. According to Anders, master student at Air Command and Staff College, the Department of Justice reported in 2009 that the Mexican gangs are the biggest organized crime threat to the United States, and that crimes connected to Mexican cartels are spreading across the Southwest. Phoenix, an America city, had more than 370 kidnapping cases in 2008,
turning it into the kidnapping capital of the U.S, and most of the victims were illegal aliens or linked to the drug trade (07).

Furthermore, terrorists and insurgents who represent what is called Crime-Terror Insurgency Connection proved that they turn to cartels and transnational criminal organizations to generate finding and acquire logistical support to fulfil their violent acts. The Department of Justice reports shows that the most international drug trafficking organizations threatening the United States were associated with terrorist groups a recent example shows the connection between Mexican cartels and terrorist attempts took place in October 2011, when Manssor Arbabsir, a naturalized U.S citizen who holds both Iranian and U.S passport, allegedly contracted with men he believed were Mexican cartel associates, to set off explosives at a public restaurant in Washington, D.C (Anders 07-08).

Violence involving Mexican cartels is considered another major problem that occurred in the U.S-Mexican border region. Due to the difficulties that these cartels find in controlling the production zones, markets, and smuggling routes into the United States. According to Anders:

Much of the violence has been increasingly concentrated in the four Mexican states bordering Texas and Juarez that are in close proximately to El Paso. The percentage of organized crime related homicides that occurred in the states bordering Texas was 17 percent in 2007, 35 percent in 2008, 39 percent in 2009, and 43 percent in 2010. (10)

Additionally, American citizens in Mexico have also been victims to the act of violence mainly citizens living in the four Mexican states adjacent to Texas, where the US State Department reported that 341 American citizens’ death in Mexico, are classified as homicides, execution, or drug-related, between January 1/2006, and December 31/2010.

Attempts to put an end to the illegal drug trade by the United States occurred in the late 1980s, when it stationed the National Guard at the international boundary. However, in 1997 the US Department of Defence responded to the widespread fear that the border would be militarized in order to control the flow of drugs and migrants. It ordered the US ground troops units to pull out the patrols in the region. Thus, all the US antidrug efforts at the border were withdraw (Lorey 162).

2. Environmental Issues

The border region poses on both the United States and Mexico, other difficulties alongside the drug trafficking issue. According to Liverman et al., professors of geography and development at the University of Arizona:

the border region is one of the most environmentally stressed areas in the world … potable water supplies are scarce as increasing number of domestic, agricultural, and industrial users compete for limited and often polluted surface-water and groundwater resources. (609)

One of the most notable examples of pollution in the border area is the Salton Sea. The shallow lake located north of the international boundary in California, consists of huge levels of contaminants mostly caused by agricultural runoff containing both naturally occurring substances and fertilizer, herbicide, and pesticide residues from Mexico and the United States, which made the lace a toxic one (Lorey 158).
Further, several border cities are facing serious air pollution problems related to the growing numbers and use of trucks and automobiles. Lorey, the author of the book "The U.S-Mexico Border in The Twentieth Century" stated saying:

foul air north and south the boundary was generated by automobiles, smelting plants, and other businesses, and agriculture … the mixing and movement of pollutants in air currents steaming from different sources in Mexico and the United States, created a region of wide problems particularly severe in Ciudad Juarez-El Paso, and Tijuana-San Diego. (159)

Moreover, many communities on the border rely heavily on groundwater, which makes the groundwater depletion issue another challenge that faces the border region. According to Liverman et al., professors of geography and development at the university of Arizona: several large cities are finding aquifer depletion a serious problem, especially the El Paso-Juarez conurbation, in which 90 percent of water supplies from the several over drafted Hueco Bolson, and Mesilla aquifer … the level of Hueco Bolson has fallen 45m since 1940; in some parts of Juarez, well levels are falling by 10m/year. The city of El Paso projects that at current rates, the aquifer will be exhausted by 2050, causing massive shortage in the region (611).

Many attempts were traced to find an actual solution for these environmental issues since 1993, with the signing of NAFTA. Two agencies were hired under NAFTA to charge with border environmental improvement. These two agencies are: the Border Environmental Cooperation Commission (BECC) and the North American Development Bank (NADBank). The role of BECC was to evaluate the infrastructure projects that helped preserve and enhance the environment of the border region, and the role of NADBank was to make loans for border cities to fund such projects as sewage, treatment plants, and water purification (Lorey 160).
However their attempt in solving the environmental issue was not that successful. NADBank found it difficult to loan the border communities that are most needful of environmental infrastructure, because most of them were not able to repay the loans. Thus, until now the United States and Mexico still find it difficult to deliver concrete long term environmental solutions (Lorey 161).

III. The United States Foreign Policy toward Mexican Illegal Immigration

Immigration policy was the subject of Congressional concern over many decades, with the focus on how to prevent undocumented immigration. Mexico's status as the largest source of US migrants and a continental neighbour means that US immigration policies (including stepped up border and interior enforcement) affected Mexicans. Therefore, immigration is a central issue in US-Mexicans relations (Seelke12).

1. The Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986

The United States struggled with the issue of undocumented immigration. In 1989, Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) was the product of that struggle. IRCA was the first and most comprehensive legislation in the United States immigration policy to take on the issue of undocumented immigration, using both legislation programs to regularize immigrants already in the country and stronger enforcement mechanisms to prevent new entries. This legislation had two major objectives: amnesty and enforcement. IRCA provided amnesty to undocumented workers who had resided in the US continuously since January 1, 1982. The 1989 legislation also contained enforcement provisions to prevent future illegal entry and punished the employers who hired undocumented workers (Garcia 47).

Although IRCA was designed to prevent the flow of immigration, it merely kept the flow constant. Many undocumented immigrants made trips back and forth to Mexico and
therefore were not eligible for amnesty. Many undocumented parents had children who had not entered the United States with them and had not been reunited with them until after 1982. A significant number of families who experienced these circumstances, hoped for an amendment that would allow for family reunification in cases where family's children were not eligible for amnesty under IRCA (Garcia 47).

2. The Immigration Act of 1990

Congress passed an additional bill that confirmed the legislative attempts to control undocumented immigration. The immigration Act was signed into law by George H.W.Bush on November 22, 1990. The bill was designed to assist the growing number of American businesses that were experiencing a shortage of highly skilled and educated professionals, particularly in the high-rich industries. The Act provided a specific number of visas for those immigrants with the ability to find employment in these industries or to set up a business in key target areas in the US characterized by high unemployment (Garcia 49).

IV. A Democrat President Policy toward Mexican Illegal Immigration


Immigration policy is an issue that divided the parties internally and policy changes were made by compromises. When Obama come into office, immigration was moving from an issue that traditionally drew bipartisan alliance to an increasingly partisan issue. Changes within both parties recast these debates with enormous consequences for Obama's immigration policy.

While he was on the presidential campaign, Obama signalled his commitment to look over the immigration issue, saying in 2008: "I think it's time for a president who won't walk away from something as important as comprehensive reform when it becomes politically
unpopular and that's the commitment I am making to you"("the American Presidency Project"). He even promised to make the immigration issue as a top priority in the first year of his administration. In practice however, he was busy with other heavy political issues like the health care program which prevented him from battling for the immigration reform. Although he promised to fix it in his first year in office, in summer 2009, he announced: "now i have got a lot on my plate, and it's very important for us to sequence these big initiatives in a way where they don't all just crash at the same time"("National Achieves and Records Administration"). Despite the fact that the administration delayed pushing a comprehensive immigration reform, Obama's administration began to make efforts to take immigration enforcement. This immigration enforcement took the form of deportation as it established before under President Clinton and enhanced under the second Bush administration.

2. The Executive Power and Deportation

Obama used his executive powers in order to increase immigration enforcement and deportations. In other words, he followed an immigration policy that was not supported by Latinos and was likely to inflect negative consequences on the constituency that supported him in 2008. Since Obama assumed to office in January 2009 to the end of 2011, 1.2 million Latinos have been deported. The deportations affected the lives of Latinos. Families separated and torn apart, people live in fear of deportations, and racial profiling increased (Wallace 1367).

3. Secure communities and the (287g) program

The 287 g agreement and the Secure Communities programs were developed and supported by Obama. The Secure Communities program was established in 2008 to make Latinos communities safer from criminals by using a fingerprinting system to identify
undocumented immigrants with a criminal background. These data are used by the ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) to identify immigrants for deportation. But less than 40% of deportations under Obama have been of people who have criminal background, and many of those with a criminal background are offenders with misdemeanour records rather than with serious crimes.

The use of the 287g agreement allowed local law enforcement to enter into agreements with the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS), which gave the local police powers of the federal immigration agents to investigate immigration cases, to arrest immigrants, and to transport immigrants to detention facilities. But the program was criticized because it increased racial profiling and targeted immigrants without suspicion of criminal activity. In February 2012, Obama announced the end of the 287g program and focused on the Secure Communities (Wallace 1367).

4. The DREAM Act

The president pushed to move on the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) in fall 2010. It provided citizenship for undocumented people who are college students or in the military, but this legislation came into a quick end. In 2010, 3 Republicans in the senate voted with 5 Democrats to block the bill. The cloture of the DREAM Act was significant for two reasons. First, it revealed who opposed the Immigration Act even within the Democratic Party. Second, with the Republicans set to control the House in 2011, it guaranteed that Comprehensive immigration legislation was dead for the president's first term (Zelizer 205).

There was a strong opposition to Immigration Reform since 2000, but it accelerated more after 2010 elections. Which brought new members aligned with the Tea Party into
Congress. Immigration was a major issue to the Tea Party because 80% of the Tea Party activists viewed undocumented immigration as a serious problem to the United States that is why they opposed any form of legislation or any immigration reform.

5. The DACA Program

In Summer 2012, and before the November election, some of the Democrat activists pressed the president to show some efforts on the immigration reform. President Obama turned to his executive powers and declared the creation of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. DACA provides protection from deportation and work authorization to certain undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children. It is estimated that 741,000 individuals have benefited from the DACA program, allowing them to make a significant contribution to the economy and their communities. Many Republicans opposed the DACA program because it was launched through executive action and not legislation. But the administration justified its executive action by arguing that it was a legal use of authority of the federal government to exercise prosecutorial discretion with regard to undocumented immigrants in order to prioritize deportation proceedings (Zelizer 205-206).

Many believed that Obama had not done enough in his first term because he failed to pass a large comprehensive immigration reform. In an interview by Jorge Ramos, a journalist, who asked Obama about his failure to pass an immigration reform although he had the control of both chambers of Congress and as he promised before, Obama replied that he made his promise before the economy was on the verge of collapse, and his first priority was preventing the US from falling into a great Depression. He added that he was also championed with the "Obama care" program and got other legislations passed. Ramos retorted, "you promised that and a promise is a promise. And with all due respect, you didn't keep that promise" ("National Achieves and Records Administration").
Despite the fact that the president did not succeed to pass a comprehensive immigration reform as he promised in his first term, his efforts with DACA were successful in securing Latinos turnout. According to a survey of Latino voters, 58% said that the DACA program made them more enthusiastic about supporting Obama's reelection. Besides, Obama in his election speech mentioned immigration as a priority for his second term.

House Republican opposition to supporting a Comprehensive reform bill grew during the spring of 2014 following a sudden surge at the Southern US border of unaccompanied minors and women with children from the Northern Triangle countries of Central America...fleeing gang and cartel violence in their home nations and seeking refugee status in the United States, ... Over 68,541 unaccompanied minors had been apprehended at the border. President Obama declared the issue a humanitarian crisis, and the administration struggled to address the detention of minors. Nationwide, this surge of migrants fuelled calls for immigration restriction among conservative activists. As a result of these prevailing winds in the House, in June 2014 speaker John Boehner informed that there would be no vote on immigration for the rest of the year. (Zelizer 207-208)

So the president realized that there be no future deals on immigration legislation, and he declared that he would again use his executive power to change the immigration system by the end of the summer. He was looking to expand opportunities for legislation and to slow down interior enforcement and deportations.

After the election, Obama announced his executive action concerning immigration. Obama noted that mass deportation of potentially millions is "not who we are", "we shall not oppress a stranger for we know the heart of a stranger, we were strangers once too". He
addressed Republican members who opposed his actions by saying: "to those members of Congress who question my authority to make our immigration system work better, or question the wisdom of me acting where Congress has failed, I have one answer: pass a bill"("National Achieves and Records Administration"). Then, he announced his executive order which was about new program called DAPA.

6. The DAPA Program

"Deferred Action for Parents of Americans" a program announced by president Obama on November 20, 2014. This legislation program was created to defer the deportation of undocumented immigrants who were parents of either US citizens or legal permanent residents. Under DAPA program, parents of US citizens or legal permanent residents would be able to apply for grant relief from deportation and be authorized to work provided that they lived in the US for five years or more. It is estimated that 3.6 million individuals were eligible for DAPA. When Obama announced the DAPA program, he announced that DACA would be expanded by increasing the deferred action period to three years and by changing the qualification criteria to allow more individuals to apply.

The president executive action drew huge criticism from those who opposed the immigration reform. Some congressman declared that it was an unconstitutional action that illegally granted amnesty to millions. Although the DAPA and expanded DACA programs were challenged by Texas and twenty five other states, president Obama made many other changes to immigration enforcement efforts in order to change the immigration policy (Volpp 389-390)
V. A Republican President Policy toward Mexican Illegal Immigration

1. Donald Trump’s Administration (2017-2020)

In 2013, the United States obtained the first rank in the world as an immigration host country with 46.1 million immigrants, and the US-Mexico border as the biggest migration corridor with 13 million users (Saddiki 84). As a response to the large number of illegal immigrants entering the United States, two important pieces of legislation were presented on the Congress floor between 2005 and 2006. The first bill was called "the Border Protection, Anti-Terrorism, and Illegal Immigration Control Act" of 2005. Its main goal is to introduce a series of measures that help to construct a 700 miles reinforced fencing along the US-Mexican border (Facchini 6).

The second bill is labelled as "The Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act" (CIRA) which was introduced to Congress in 2007. This bill aimed at increasing security along the US-Mexican border, but it took a comprehensive approach in doing so. For instance, it called for expansion of the number of guest workers over, and above those already present in the USA through a new "Blue card" visa program. These two bills failed in becoming laws, but they have been for sure a stimulus to rise the immigration debate in the future (Facchini 6).

One of the most important aspects of international immigration is the link between immigration and security and criminality in the national policies of the host countries. According to Saddiki, the author of the book "World of Walls":

since the 9/11 attacks, several legislative measures have been taken to tighten security control on the US borders with Mexico and Canada, and in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, some American politicians called for severe restrictions on immigrant admissions to the United States, and many "anti-
illegal" immigration groups have taken advantage of the opportunity to increase their demands. (86)

However, after the election of Donald Trump to the US presidency, the US immigration policy entered a new phase. Many bills were adopted by the new president concerning illegal immigrants, deportation, security border control, and banning Muslim individuals from entering the country. Almost 11 million people living illegally in the USA are facing the risk of deportation or at least living in fear and anxiety (Saddiki 87).

Trump’s administration reflects a sharp break from the enforcement priorities of other presidents who largely addressed immigration as a positive force and part of the U.S DNA. For instance, in 2014 the Obama administration focused on interior enforcement, almost exclusively on criminals such as: gang members, felons and those who threatened national security. If someone does not fit into one of the previous high priority categories, the chance of being deported is virtually zero (Meier 08).

However, Trump’s administration shifted from Obama’s administration top priorities to include those who do not specifically have criminal records, or pose a threat to society. In practice this means that Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE) can deport anyone convicted or charged with any criminal felony. Thus, many undocumented Latin American migrants are now facing dramatic consequences due to these changes. An undocumented immigrant commented worriedly in an interview with the NY Times: "I have been living in the country for 25 years, we have our whole lives here, our children are US citizens but now, I don’t know if I can go out, if I should drive" (Meier 08).

In addition to these changes that came with the new executive orders, the most controversial order according to Meier, an associated professor of Global Health policy at the University of North Carolina, is the prosecution of parents who pay for their children to be
smuggled across the border. Not only is this new policy challenging a centre piece of the US immigration system, it also criminalizes parents who pay smugglers in the search to increase the safety of their children in an already dangerous journey (09).

Moreover, the new administration shows another controversial aspect of its "zero tolerance" policy by declaring that there will be no more the so called "catch and release" policy, in which undocumented migrants were often released into the US while their request for asylum was processed ( Meier 09). The new administration worked on locking up migrants, separating migrant children from their parents and placing them in shelters run by separate government (Pierce et al. 5).

Trump’s administration is also working on cutting back on humanitarian programs. Such programs were created under Obama’s presidency, and worked on granting benefits to certain types of undocumented immigrants. Such benefits were represented in a program that gave work permits and temporary protection from deportation to roughly 750 migrants who were brought to the US as children. This program is known as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), and another program that offered protection to nationals of certain countries facing different obstacles such as violent conflict or environmental disasters, this program is known as Temporary Protected Status (TPS) (Meier 10).

According to Pierce et al., so far the Trump administration has ended TPS for nationals of El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, Nepal, Nicaragua, and Sudan, and has ended similar protections for several thousand Liberians. By January 2020, approximately 310,000 TPS holders will lose their benefits. This means losing their work authorization and protection from removal from the United States (7).

Trump also has issued executive orders that will increase vetting and put more obstacles to people entering the country. The administration is working on increasing the number of
interviews that the applicants for visa must take before having the approval on travelling or immigrating to the United States. Further, the vetting process expanded to the point where applicants must provide more detailed information such as; giving their usernames they have used on all social media accounts within the last five years (Pierce et al. 8).

2. Trump’s Border Wall: Opponents vs Proponents

One of the most debatable orders that were made by the Trump administration is the construction of a border wall between the United States and Mexico. Trump made it clear that he attempts to make Mexico pay for this wall. The president based his executive order on assumptions that immigrants coming from Mexico are harmful to the American society. On 31 June 2019, Trump tweeted saying:

Very sadly, murder cases in Mexico in 2018 rose 33 percent from 2017, to 33,341. This is a big contribution to the humanitarian crisis taking place on our southern border and then spreading throughout our country. Worse even than Afghanistan. Much caused by DRUGS. Wall is being built! (@realDonaldTrump)

The new wall is estimated to cost a great amount of money, as well as issues. Saddiki, the author of the book "World of Walls", reported that:

The wall is expected to cost between USD 12-15 billion. Additionally, the maintenance of the wall could cost as much as 750 million dollar per year. Moreover, Trump project will likely face significant funding challenges and practical difficulties, especially in Native American reservations. It will have serious environmental effects along the Rio Grande River, where the wall cannot be built in the middle of the valley. (92)
That is why opinions are conflicting between those who welcomed the wall, and others who argued against it. Proponents of the wall believe that the impact in terms of crimes committed by illegal immigrants from Mexico against Americans has been tragic. They also believe that the disastrous trade deals and immigration policies have destroyed their middle class where nearly 40 percent of black American teenagers are unemployed, and nearly 30 percent of Hispanic teenagers are unemployed. Thus they believe that the Mexican immigrants are stealing the chances of the America citizens in having jobs ("Trump").

On the other hand, opponents to the wall argue that the immigration problem is not a Mexican problem, but rather a Central American problem. According to AcMoody, a Senior Policy Specialist, "a vast majority of those who immigrate illegally across the border are fleeing other Central American countries with unstable governments such as Honduras and El Salvador" (01). Also opponents argued that the construction of the wall will only divert immigrants to the unfenced boundary miles that will be left. Because the wall will cut across lands owned by tribes, and will work on a barrier that will make it difficult for these tribes’ members to visit relatives and others in Mexico (Jimenez 245).

Furthermore, Trump’s executive order for building the wall is opposed by even environmental experts, who believe that the wall will be a deathblow to the wild life on both sides of the US-Mexico border. According to Greenwald et al., Endangered Species Program Directors for the Centre for Biological Diversity in Oregon, the border wall will have disastrous impacts on our most vulnerable wild life, including:

1- threatened, endangered and candidate species would potentially be affected by construction of a wall and related infrastructure spanning the entirety of the border, including jaguars, Mexican gray wolves and Quino checkers pot butterflies.
2- The wall would degrade and destroy critical habitat for 25 species, including a total of 2,134,792 acres that occur within 50 miles of the border. Species with critical habitat on the border include the jaguar, arroyo toad and Peninsular bighorn sheep.

3- Studies on portions of the border wall that have already been constructed demonstrate that the wall precludes the movement of some wildlife. For example, the cactus ferruginous pygmy owl tends to fly low over the ground and avoids open areas, so the border wall will isolate U.S. birds from those in Mexico. This is true for many other species as well. (01)

Trump’s biggest obstacle in achieving his goal and build the wall is the Democrats. These last believe that the wall is "immoral, ineffective and expensive," especially after Trump’s promise during his 2016 campaign that Mexico will pay for the wall, but Mexico rejected the idea several times. However, President Trump is threatening the Democrats that he could declare a national emergency to built the wall if they keep refusing his requests for funding (Daly).

In a recent attempt, the Democratic Party launched an investigating campaign through which it tried to impeach President Donald Trump. This campaign is known as the "Special Counsel investigation" of 2017-2019 that worked on investigating Russian interference in the 2016 US elections, where President Trump is suspected to have links with this Russian interference. This investigation was concluded on March 22, 2019 with a report called the "Mueller Report" which stated that the investigation did "identified numerous links between the Russian government and Trump campaign … but it did not establish that members of the Trump campaign conspired or coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities" ("Special Counsel Investigation").
Therefore, Donald Trump believes that the Democrats are turning to be "THE DO NOTHING PARTY! ", and that they should stop their attempts to impeach him because he has done nothing wrong, and instead they should focus on the serious issues that ruin the country. In one of his recent statements, Trump tweeted saying:

The Democrats are getting nothing done in congress. All of their efforts is about a Re-Do of the Mueller Report which didn’t turn out the way they wanted. It is not possible for them to investigate and legislate at the same time. Their heart is not into infrastructure, lower drug prices, pre-existing conditions and our great Vets … (@realDonaldTrump)

Finally, Trump’s biggest obstacle may be the Democrats, but also the Mexican government and its zero response to stop migration to the US and control its northern border. In another recent tweet on 19 Mai, 2019 the American President renewed his criticism to the Mexican immigration policy saying:

I am very disappointed that Mexico is doing virtually nothing to stop illegal immigration from coming to our Southern Border where everyone knows that because of the Democrats, our immigration laws are totally flawed and broken. Mexico’s attitude is that people from other countries, including Mexico, should have the right to flow into the US and that the US taxpayers should be responsible for the tremendous costs associated with this illegal migration. Mexico is wrong and I will soon be giving a response! (@realDonaldTrump)
Conclusion

Lastly, it may be concluded that American foreign policy toward immigration, and in special case the Mexican immigration, is taking different directions according to the Democrats or the Republicans. However, this shift in policies marks strong evidence that immigration is perennially an important issue in US history, because it is always linked to the fate of both native and foreign born Americans.

President Obama's policy on immigration is different from Trump's'. Although Obama failed to pass a Comprehensive Immigration Reform as he promised since he faced a great opposition from the Republicans, he turned to his executive authority to order programs like: DACA and DAPA that provided protection from deportation and work authorization to certain undocumented children and parents but this will be ended under Trump's administration.

Obama as many named him a "chief deporter" because since he took office, more than 2.5 million immigrants have been deported, but he prioritized the deportation of only gang members and criminal offenders. Unlike Obama, Trump established a "zero tolerance policy" of prosecuting all people caught crossing the border illegally. As a result of this policy, families apprehended at the border were systematically separated because children cannot be prosecuted with their parents. Under Obama's administration, there was no policy that practiced the systematic separation of families at the border, like we are seeing now under Trump administration.
Moreover, the US-Mexican border continues to pose challenges for both nations. Even though the idea of constructing a wall between the United States and Mexico seems like a remarkable solution to Trump, yet it has not stopped drug smugglers and undocumented immigrants who managed to dig tunnels to bypass the structure or to even pass it through air and sea. It also confirmed to borderland residents that distant central governments continue to misunderstand the region's needs, where residents there are suffering from the consequences of this solution.

Indeed, Trump may not be able to reshape the US immigration system to another one that will fit his desire, but he may over time reduce total immigration admissions, simply by limiting refugee numbers, and forcing other immigrants out by narrowing the application of existing laws on detention and deportation. In short, Trump will for sure be successful in reducing immigrants in practice, but his new policy decisions are proving nothing but a hatful and aggressive position by Trump toward the issue, especially when his decisions are compared to the previous administrations’ policies, such as Obama’s administration.
General Conclusion

American-Mexican relationship can be described as complex. It started as being unfriendly, since the United States took half of Mexico's national territory in the Mexican-American war. But throughout the years, the two countries struggled to reshape their relationship on the basis of mutual trust and respect that were achieved during and after the First and the Second World Wars in which Mexico acted as an important ally for the US and fought on its side. It was the major supplier of strategic raw materials to the US industries and even Mexican soldiers fought in the US Army. In addition to the Bracero program which guaranteed Mexican workers as the source of cheap labor in the United States and the backbone of the US agricultural and industrial sectors.

The two countries developed close diplomatic and economic ties in which Mexico opened its doors to foreign investment. Moreover, the United States played a significant role in the Mexican revolution through which it practiced the policy of interventionism which is considered as one of the basic characteristics of American foreign policy. It played also an important role during Mexico's economic crisis by persuading the International Monetary Fund to give Mexico 3.84 billion in credit, and waged US banks to renegotiate Mexico's loans.

This closeness was deepened by the first official visit of the US president Roosevelt to Mexico, following what was called "the good neighbor policy" underscoring the value the United States placed on Mexico as an ally in WW II. Both countries demonstrated that they can work together for the betterment of their countries. Both countries relied on each other for their stability and prosperity. But the question was that whether the United States and Mexico will be able to face their shared challenges (immigration and drug trafficking) along the
southern Mexican-American border, by finding cooperative solutions that meet both countries' needs.

Immigration and drug issues were the subject of Congressional concerns over many decades. Their main concern was how to prevent undocumented immigration and to stop smugglers from entering to the United States. By the increased numbers of undocumented Mexicans, American foreign policy toward immigration took different directions due to the divergent views between the Democratic and the Republican administrations as it is evident between both Obama's and Trump's administrations.

On the one hand, Obama's policy toward Mexican immigration can be described as more tolerant, although he failed to pass a Comprehensive immigration reform as he promised during his presidential campaign. In fact, he faced a sharp opposition from Republicans; he used his executive power to make some immigration enforcement like the "DACA and DAPA programs, the Secure Communities, the 287g agreement program, and the DREAM Act". Obama, as many named him, was a "chief deporter" since more than 2.5 million immigrants were deported under his administration, but he prioritized the deportation of only gang members and criminal offenders.

On the other hand, the Republican president Trump, from his earliest days in office, signaled his attention to take a tough stance on immigration. He launched series of executive orders, promising major changes to the US immigration system. He ended the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program, and the separation of unauthorized migrant parents and children apprehended at the southern border, as a result of "the zero tolerance policy" that calls for persecution of any adult that crosses the border illegally. He ended also the TPS program (Temporary Protected Status) that offered protection for the nationals of
certain countries that face different obstacles such as violent conflicts or environmental disasters.

Another major effort of Trump to cut illegal immigration is his attempt to construct a border wall between the United States and Mexico, and declaring that Mexico should pay for it. Trump's idea of constructing a border wall is faced by a great opposition not only from the Democrats but also from environmental experts who believed that the wall will be a deathblow to the wild life on both sides of the US-Mexico border.

Finally, no administration in modern US history placed such a high priority on immigration policy or on restricting immigration flows like president Trump. Trump's administration expanded the reach of interior enforcement, reduced refugee admissions and slowed visa processing times. But Congress, local and state governments, and the courts have in some cases acted as countervailing forces by slowing the implementation of some measures and stopping others. It is only Congress that has the authority to pass legislation which would reshape the country's legal immigration policies and to put the appropriate budget needed to fund the president's wall. At last, Trump may not succeed in changing the immigration laws, but he might succeed reducing the numbers of the Mexican immigrants.
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