Buenos Aires, e.g.) acquire significance in voting abroad. However, the longstanding migratory tradition of Portugal means that today 40 percent of its citizens reside beyond its national boundaries, although Portuguese elections suffer from high abstentionism. Spanish and Portuguese emigrants can vote by sending their ballot through the mail.

The final section of the book treats the cases of Canada and the United States, countries that routinely incorporate the votes of citizens abroad through “absentee voting.” Both countries explored early the possibilities of seeking to include the votes of military personnel stationed away from their homes; interestingly Canada also included the Bluebirds, nurses stationed in Europe during World War I. Experiences of both countries showed that votes cast outside of electoral districts, be it nationally or internationally, would be no problem. Indeed, by the 1970s, the United States had incorporated absentee voting for those outside of their official electoral districts, or temporarily or permanently abroad. Concurrently, Canada legislated that Canadian citizens who had voted in the elections of another country, could still vote in Canadian elections, regardless of their residence, and later defined the right to vote as universal for people living outside their electoral districts. Incorporating absentee voting has not challenged the political cultures of either Canada or the United States, but has expanded the voting franchise in efforts to respect the spirit of democracy.

Since the authors hail from many countries and disciplines, the studies use many perspectives and sources of information to present the data regarding each country, many with extensive bibliographies. Moreover, each section also includes useful basic statistical data about population, voters and percentage of the population actually living abroad. Chelius Calderón opens the volume with an extensive analytical essay about the short-term and long-term significance of studying the electoral systems of immigrant-sending countries, and the processes through which they evolve to include emigrants or not on their voters’ lists.

In conclusion, Votar en la distancia fills voids in many areas of studies. Students of Latin America, elections, political science, acculturation and migration will all find useful information not easily available in other formats, unique in presentation and practical in application. Since the question of extending voting rights to emigrant communities is evolving quickly, one would only wish that Calderón Chelius would repeat the study in 10 years to ascertain the future electoral relationship between body politic and the corresponding diasporas.

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East L.A. Historia de un barrio
(East L.A. History of a Neighborhood)
Ricardo Romo
CISAN/Coordinación de Humanidades/CEPE

Practically all Mexicans have or have had a relative, friend or at least an acquaintance living in Los Angeles, California. Most probably, they lived in East Los Angeles, “the barrio.” Of course, this is not mere chance.

As the respective histories of their neighboring countries converged, Mexicans and Americans had their most fruitful mis-encounter during the first three decades of the twentieth century, until along the banks of the Los Angeles River, the neighborhood that is today home to almost 2 mil-
The book looks at questions such as the growth and development of the Mexican barrio, the labor market, residential segregation and the social experiences of Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles in the 1920s.

Ricardo Romo tells us all this in his essay East Los Angeles. Historia de un barrio, which places things in their proper perspective by showing how Mexicans adapted to the explosive process of industrialization without losing either their language or their customs. This is how they ended up forming the largest Mexican community in the United States: an authentic city within the city, a metropolis inside a megalopolis.

The book looks at questions such as the growth and development of the Mexican barrio, how Mexicans fare in the labor market, the problems associated with residential segregation and the social and educational experiences of Mexican immigrants in Los Angeles in the 1920s. But, importantly, it returns to us the profound significance of this unstoppable migratory flow that, from the beginning of the last century, is a kind of peaceful “reconquest.” Compulsory reading.

_Eunice Cortés_  
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