

Indigenous Land Dispossession and the Prospects of Demystifying the Mexican War on Drugs in Contemporary Indigenous Literature

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Despite the emergence of ethical and rigorous investigative journalistic work that refutes the official narrative presented by the Mexican State that blames drug cartels for the death of more than 350,000 people (+ 72,000 still missing) since the beginning of the so-called War on Drugs in 2007, highly visible authors and intellectuals continue to reproduce the idea that the State is plagued by corruption and thus prolonging the myth that society's number one enemy is the narco. As prominent journalist and cultural critic, Oswaldo Zavala, has showed, the media outlets and many fiction writers of narco literature are largely responsible for reproducing a depoliticized image of cartels, when in fact, as Zavala's research shows (2022), the military is responsible for most of the deaths but for whom the military itself and State police have failed to provide substantial evidence proving the nexus of thousands of victims to drug cartels and, most importantly, have failed to conduct thorough investigations. The lack of criminal indictments and the rising violence support Zavala's findings: Mexico is fighting an imagined enemy. Put another way, and building on Achille Mbembe's theoretical framework, Mexico is perhaps suffering its most violent era of necropolitics in recent history. Furthermore, the main sites of violence are rural areas of north and central Mexico, many of them belonging to Indigenous communities. These territories have been for long the target of violence by transnational mining companies and other predatory enterprises with State-backed concessions, looking to acquire the lands for mineral and hydrocarbon explorations. As we can imagine, violence against Indigenous

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