TRANSCRIPT OF AN ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

WITH

MARIA J. BÓSQUEZ

July 8, 1975

INTERVIEWER: VICTOR F. BARELA

This interview was conducted as part of a series on the Mexican American in Minnesota.

Mrs. Bósquez was born María de Jesús Gutierrez, in Saqualco de Torres, Jalisco, México, on May 30, 1906. Her youth was spent in Saqualco. She took training in Saqualco and in Guadalajara and became a teacher. She married Concepción Bosquez at the age of 21, and entered the United States on February 5, 1928. She arrived with her husband on February 11th or 12th, 1928. Her family of eight, six girls and two boys, were born in Minneapolis. She was employed by Woolworth's for fifteen years and was forced to retire in 1968 because of her husband's illness. She and her husband presently live in Minneapolis.

Mrs. Bósquez remembers her childhood and the Mexican Revolution quite well, as well as the Cristeros War in Mexico. She speaks of her first impressions of her new life in Minnesota and of her immediate involvement in the activities of the Mexican American Community in St. Paul. She discusses her husband's involvement in the activities and problems of the Mexican Migrant in Minnesota. She recalls many names, activities, and leaders of the early Mexican American Community in St. Paul. She shares her impressions of life here in Minnesota and reveals some of her personal philosophy for living.

This is an English translation of the tape-recorded interview in Spanish. The original cassette recording is available in the Audio-Visual Library of the Minnesota Historical Society.
INTERVIEW WITH MRS. CONCEPCION BOSQUEZ

JULY 8, 1975

INTERVIEWER: VICTOR BARELA

Barela: This interview is with Mrs. Concepción Bósquez, she lives at 3015 E. 45th St. Minneapolis, Minnesota, today is July 8, 1975. I appreciate very much that you are permitting us to do this interview. We will start by asking you for your maiden name as well as your married name.

Bósquez: María de Jesús Gutierrez before I was married, now it is María J. Bósquez.

Barela: Who did you marry?

Bósquez: Concepción Bósquez.

Barela: Where were you born?

Bósquez: In Saqualco de Torres, Jalisco, Mexico. In 1906, the 30th of May.

Barela: How long did you live in Mexico?

Bósquez: twenty-one years. I got married and I came to live in Minneapolis.

Barela: Did you study in Mexico, then?

Bósquez: Yes, I studied in Mexico and I was a teacher there. I was a teacher until I got married.

Barela: Where did you study?

Bósquez: In Saqualco and in Guadalajare. I was a teacher for four years, until I got married. I taught in an elementary school.

Barela: Where was your husband born?

Bósquez: My husband was born in Villita de Encarnacion, San Juan de Los Lagos.

Barela: Do you remember the year?

Bósquez: In 1887, the 1st of January. When he was five years old he went to San Marcos, a neighboring town to ours. This is where I met him.

Barela: Where were you married?

Bósquez: In Saqualco. My home town. We had an elegant wedding. We came to the
Bósquez: United States to Minneapolis and since then I have lived here. I have gone back to see my parents every three or four years. My mother is still living. She is 95 years old.

Barela: What is your mother's name?

Bósquez: Her name is Refugia Oliver. She lives in Saqualco, near Guadalajara. My father died in 1944, in Minneapolis, and he is buried here.

Barela: When you came to Minneapolis, how did you come?

Bósquez: When we came to Minneapolis we came by train.

Barela: Where did you cross the border?

Bósquez: Through Laredo, Texas.

Barela: At that time did you need a passport?

Bósquez: Oh yes, I have my passport. I still have it because it is an important document.

Barela: Do you remember the year you crossed the border?

Bósquez: Before my husband and I got married he went to California. It was in 1912 and he worked at the Round House and in a rock quarry and then went back to Mexico. We got married and came back here.

Barela: So you came here by train. Did you come directly to Minneapolis?

Bósquez: Directly to Minneapolis because he had his job here. He worked for the Milwaukee Railroad, so he had passes for using the train.

Barela: So when did you come to Minneapolis?

Bósquez: In 1928, in February, the 11th or 12th, because we crossed the border the 5th, the National Day of Mexico. I remember it well.

Barela: What are some of the things you recall from your youth?

Bósquez: I enjoyed being young. As a teacher, I belonged to the church societies. I would help them in raising funds for the church. I helped them raise money for a new cemetery and to remodel the old church. My sister was buried
Bósquez: in the cemetery. It makes me happy to know that in my youth I contributed something. Now here in Minneapolis, when I was younger, now I am older and I can't. We helped with the festivities during the 16th of September. We helped to put on programs to help "La Raza" and also to build our new church in St. Paul.

Barela: So when you came to St. Paul, did you live there?

Bósquez: No, we lived in Minneapolis, but we knew a lot of families from there. When my husband was younger he helped the Chicago Consul to take a census to see how many Mexicans there were here in St. Paul because they did not have a consul in St. Paul. And that's how we met Father Dicks, Mr. Rangel, Mr. DeLeon and many families, and became involved in taking part in the festivities.

Barela: After settling here, did you get involved right away?

Bósquez: Yes, because the people knew that I had been a teacher. The Father, Mr. Rangel and Mr. deLeón invited us to take part in the programs.

Barela: Do you remember who were some of the first families that lived in St. Paul and Minneapolis?

Bósquez: Mrs. Chavez, Mr. & Mrs. Rangel, Mr. deLeon, Mrs. Felicitas, and a Miss Garcia who ran for queen, she still lives in Minneapolis but I don't know her address. One of my daughters competed for queen with Miss Esperanza Garcia for the 16th of September festivities. My daughter was queen.

Barela: What year was this?

Bósquez: I don't remember the year. I still have the pictures of my daughter. I don't recall the year. I came in 1928 and my daughter must have been about 18 years old, so it must have been in 1945. There were other families that lived in the north, but the man died. I don't remember the name of the lady that used to help us so much.

Barela: After you came, your husband helped the Consul and this is how you met all the people?
Bósquez: No, the young man that was Consul was a young boy then. My husband helped the Chicago Consul because we did not have one. And this is how we got to know the "West Side".

Barela: What was it like during that time? Where there a lot of Mexicans?

Bósquez: When I came it was winter time and the first mountains in Iowa were covered with snow. I thought I was going to be very sad here because the trees were bare, there were no leaves on them, and there was no grass on the ground. I thought it was going to be very ugly here. I was wearing a very light coat and it was very cold. The first days I spent being sad, but when spring arrived my husband wanted to start a garden, we did, and in the summer I changed my mind because it was so beautiful. I liked the trees and the flowers. We had a garden. On the 24th of September, that first year here when it snowed very early in the day, I was frightened because it was the first time I had ever seen snow. I ran and I cut everything in the garden and all the flowers. When my husband came home from work he asked me why I had done that. I told him that it had snowed and that everything would get ruined, so I cut them all. He explained that it had only snowed a little and that it was still going to be nice. I didn't know. We lost everything in the garden. During the winter time I was very lonely. I would wait for the mailman to come and anxiously awaited letters from my mother and sisters. It was a little lonely at first, but later I began to like it. I have always liked it because I have lived here all this time. Now I think this is the biggest and greatest nation in the world. This is what I think. At the same time I long for my country, too. But I have gone to visit my relatives in my country.

Barela: Do you still visit your family?

Bósquez: Yes, my brother died and one of my sisters died about two years ago.
Barela: What was her name?

Bósquez: The one that died was Fidela Gutierrez. My brother was Juan Gutierrez. The ones that are living are my mother and my sister, Guadalupe Gutierrez, and my mother's name is Refugia Oliver.

Barela: Does your husband have any family in Mexico?

Bósquez: My husband has a sister in California. Her name is Refugia Bosquez. He also has some nieces and other relatives in San Marcos where he grew up.

Barela: Does he come from a large family?

Bósquez: He had two sisters. That is all. One died and the other one lives in California. His parents died before we were married. I did not get to know them.

Barela: Were you then obligated to come because you got married?

Bósquez: Well, we came because he had his job here. We thought that if we did not come back he would lose his job.

Barela: Did you ever work?

Bósquez: I had my family and I did not start to work until they were all grown up. I had eight children and one step-son. Two daughters and six sons.

Barela: What are your sons' and daughters' names?

Bósquez: My step-son's name is Salome Bosquez. My daughter's is Guadalupe Bosquez, now Bromer, because she is married. She is the supervisor for the Visiting Nurse Service. My other daughter's name is Refugia Bosquez, now her married name is Zachariason. She is a teacher in a Junior High. My sons are: the oldest is Toribio Bosquez; then Antonio; he is an electrician, Andres; Pablo; are contractors for Dry-Wall Company, Juan; he works for the Labor Union, Roberto, works for Dry-Wall Construction Company. That is all. They are all married and some live in the city and others in the suburbs.

Barela: Even with such a big family, did you involve yourself with community
Barela: activities?

Bosquez: Yes, my sons used to participate in the 16th of September celebrations. One would recite poems or do dances like "Las Chapanecas", "El Jarabe Tapatio", "El Jarabe Michoacano", and others. I was active in other things.

Barela: What organizations were there to organize the activities for the Mexican people?

Bosquez: The only one that I knew of was the "Anahuac Society". I was not a member because I was very busy and it was more for the men. Mr. Rangel and his wife, and the others, would let us know of what was going on and when we had to get together we would. We would get together to practice. There was a building that the Society had for that purpose. I don't remember the address. I believe it was the Neighborhood House. It was close to the church.

Barela: What are some of the holidays that you celebrated?

Bosquez: We would celebrate the 5th of May and 16th of September. We would have a queen and a parade. We celebrated very beautifully. Although here you can't do it like in Mexico, because there they do it in the open fields. I think we have only celebrated for two or three years in a park near the river. We worked very hard for being such a small community to celebrate these days. Especially the Consul of Mexico in St. Paul. He has worked very hard for the community.

Barela: Did you have foods and music?

Bosquez: Oh yes, some of the people would have stands and sell enchiladas, tacos, tamales, different foods. We always had some good music. The mayor would attend some of the festivities. One time Humphrey was running for office and he went to our fiesta.

Barela: Did you have a food stand?

Bosquez: No, I was too busy with the program. Between Maria Rangel, another lady and
Bósquez: I would have to lead the program, organize the dance, speakers, etc. It kept us pretty busy so we could not take part with the food. A lot of ladies from St. Paul participated in preparing the food.

Barela: Do you remember a Mrs. Cruz?

Bósquez: Yes, that is the one I was telling you about. She is the one that used to help us. Yes, Mrs. Cruz, we know each other. Since we moved we have lost track of each other and I have not visit them for a long time.

Barela: Of the ladies that prepared the food, do you remember anyone that was an extraordinary cook?

Bósquez: Well, have you talked with Mr. Rodríguez? His wife used to take part in all this. She had the food stand.

Barela: So your family participated in all the festivities?

Bósquez: My daughters that did not take part in the speeches would dance, and my children would all take part in the programs. Not only that, but when they saw that Juan and Coca danced "Las Chapanecas" and other Mexican dances, they were invited to a 4th of July celebration in a park so they could be in the program. They were also invited on a television program and in the schools that had Spanish classes. They would dance Mexican dances to entertain the Spanish classes. It was like this until they grew up and got married. About three years ago my oldest son made a float advertising what he does at work. He arranged it with Lupe, the youngest, dressed as a "China Poblana". Another one of his sons dressed as a "Charro", and my grand-daughters dressed as "China Poblana" and this is how we decorated the float. This was three years ago, but now my husband is sick, so I can't do that anymore.

Barela: Do you remember some of the problems you encounter when you first came, such as with the language?
Bosquez: No. With the language, yes, because the first day or the first week I told my husband, "If someone comes to the door what am I going to say?" "Well," he said, "Just tell them you don't speak English." "How can I say I don't speak English, if I am going to say it in English?" He said, "that's O.K., just tell them you can't speak English." And this is what I did. It is very hard when one does not speak the language. Then my two children were born and started school they did not know any English. The first year was the hardest. The second year they could speak a little because they used to play with the other children. It was much harder for the first two but later with the older kids the younger ones would learn the language. One day I wanted to go to the store and buy some corn, but I knew no one would be around to go with me by the time the store opened, so I told my husband and he told me how to ask for it in English. I wrote it down in Spanish just as he had told me. I went to the store and asked for the corn. When my husband came home he was very happy that I was able to buy it. It really is awful when you don't speak the language. Little by little I started to learn English. Later I went to school for about six months to learn English. I learned very little, and I still don't speak it well, after all this time. At least now I can make myself understood.

Barela: Did you get to see much suffering among the families?

Bosquez: Oh, my husband. There were many men that came from Texas to work in the beet fields in Chaska and other places in the state. Since my husband had been here for a while, someone from the office at the train depot downtown called him and asked him to come down because there were many men at this farm and no one knew what they wanted. My husband went down to the farm and found about eight Mexicans. Some of the men wanted to find work there, others wanted to go back to Mexico and didn't have any money. My husband was able
Bosquez: to communicate what the men wanted, and they took care of them. Later they called on him again to go to Chaska. There were many Mexican men there. My husband did not mind. He liked helping them because he knew the language and he felt sorry for them. At the same time he wanted to help them. Later he liked doing this, so every Sunday he would go to the farms to help them. He had a good time helping them.

Barela: Did you accompany your husband?

Bosquez: No, there were only men there. So only he went, if there had been women and families I would have gone with him. About three years ago a man and a woman named Perez came. They came from Jocotepec, Jalisco and they did not speak English. When the man arrived here in the winter he went and put his two daughters in school and he did not know what to say. My son, Juan, lives in the same neighborhood. It is the same school my grandchildren went to. The principal of the school saw that neither the parents nor the children spoke any English. The principal of the school told my grandchildren's teacher to tell my son Juan to come to the school. She wanted to tell him about the Mexican family. She felt they might need help since they didn't speak any English. My son called me and told me about the Perez family. I told him to come and get me when he was going to see them. They did not live very far from where my son lived. My son Juan, his Anglo wife, the children, my husband and I went over to visit the Mexican family. When we got there both of the children were sliding on the ice outside with their shoes on at around 7 o'clock. When I greeted the children in Spanish they were very surprised. We went into the house and the father and six daughters were sitting wrapped in a blanket. They did not have any furniture or beds. They had fourteen children in all but some of them were married. At that time they had six girls and one boy. The man introduced himself and was very happy to see us. I told him that the school had informed us of their family
and that we thought that they might need some help with grocery shopping or other things. I told them to be sure and call on us. My son, Juan, lived only three blocks from their home. Juan called the priest at the church and told him that the family did not have any furniture and that there were many children. The priest put up a bulletin telling about the family needs and asking if anyone could help. If so, they were to call my son Juan. The next day people called and brought many things like shoes, overshoes, blankets, dishes and everything. People were bringing things for the week, by the end of the week they had everything. They thanked us for what we did for them.

After visiting their son in Chicago, the older girls, 16 and 18, liked it so well that they wanted to move there. Last November their parents left their jobs and they moved to Chicago. Two months later the father came back and wanted his job back, but they would not give it to him. So they are still in Chicago. I received a Mother's Day card from the mother. She also wrote to tell me that her daughters have gotten married. We always did what we could for people that were in need. Regardless of who they were.

Do your sons involve themselves?

No, since my children were all born here. The people from Minnesota rather, the state of Minnesota, is one of the states that helps "La Raza" the most. I have seen it on television and in the paper. My own children have gotten the work that they have wanted. One is an electrician, the others work for a construction company, another one in the Labor Union, the other a teacher, and the oldest a supervisor of the nurses. I can't complain, Minnesota has treated us like it does any other people. The people in the neighborhood have been good to us. When they saw that my husband was getting old and he could not do anything, they came and shoveled our snow and cut the lawn or whatever I needed. I have never heard of another state like this. I have
Bósquez: not lived in any other state but my husband did with his first wife. He never told me of anything bad that happened to him, but I have heard that there is no other state like Minnesota for the Mexican. I feel that the Mexican that gets an education, works hard and is good to others can lead a good life here. I have a friend that feels the same way. She worked for a high society lady, but they treat her real well. I think it is the state. When the Blacks first came, when I first came, there were not too many of them. They have had a lot of privileges and they now have good jobs.

Barela: When you first came did you go to St. Paul often?

Bósquez: Yes, we did because that was where most of the Mexicans were. There was a Mexican show and a Mexican church and we would visit with the families there. We had a lot of friends there. We also visited many of our friends there. We have visited many of "La Raza" when they were in the hospital.

Barela: When you first came was the Mexican community very large or small?

Bósquez: I don't remember. There were 400 families. This was the year they took a census. The number has increased.

Barela: Do you remember the church?

Bósquez: Yes, the first church was in a small old regular building or house. It had benches. We went because it was a Mexican church. The Father was a great person. He helped those who needed help. We liked going to church because this also gave us a chance to visit our friends. Then they decided to build a new one so we worked very hard on that project for many years.

Barela: Outside of the patriotic feast, were there other celebrations?

Bósquez: We had food festivals. We would have a lot of food stands, and it would be held across the street from the church. Mr. Rodriguez, the one that I was telling you about, used to participate in these festivals. He had a restaurant.
Barela: Do you remember his first name?
Bosquez: Pete Rodriguez. He was a real good friend of my husband's when they were young.
Barela: What were the Christmases like during that time?
Bosquez: I think we celebrated them with piñatas. We only celebrated them at church.
Barela: You say you remember a lot about Alfonso Vasquez?
Bosquez: Yes, Alfonso Vasquez, is one of the persons who participated the most in the patriotic and church festivities. He helped "La Raza", too.
Barela: Did the Mexican community exert some political power at that time?
Bosquez: No. It took a long time before we did, because we did not have a lot of educated people like Mr. Rangel, Mr. de Leon, and the Chavez'. Some of the other people did not want to become involved. I don't know why.
Barela: When you wanted some changes, did they call on the Consul in Chicago?
Bosquez: You mean when we wanted something done? Yes, we would have to rely on the Consul in Chicago because we did not have a Consul until we finally got our own. This was something that was badly needed. When we wanted to go to Mexico we had to send our visa papers two or three months before our planned vacation or visit to Mexico, we had to send our papers and include our money, then he would send it to us.
Barela: How much did this cost you?
Bosquez: I think it was $2. Now with Mr. Saucedo, we wanted to go to Mexico and he would get our papers within a week. He gets things done fast.
Barela: Did you ever get to see any big storms or tornados?
Bosquez: In Minneapolis no, there has never been one. There was one about eight years ago but it wasn't too bad. The insurance company paid for the damages. I know a lady whose home was damaged but her insurance paid for everything. No, we never had bad luck here in Minneapolis. God has taken care of us.
Can you tell me something about your job?

Bósquez: All my children were grown. I went to work downtown at Woolworth's. I worked there for 15 years in the kitchen. I was very happy there. I liked the people. Then my husband had an operation. He was in the hospital for a month so I had to quit work to take care of him. At that time I was already 62 years old so I retired. My foreman at work did not want me to leave my job. He wanted me to take a leave and go back, but I did not want to do that because I felt I had to take care of my husband.

Barela: Did your husband enjoy his job?

Bósquez: Oh, yes. He worked at the railroad and he was President of the Union. Later he left that job because he said it was too much to do his job and be involved with the Union. In 1958 he retired. I retired in 1968. Both of us are very old now.

Does your family still maintain the Mexican traditions?

Bósquez: Yes. I am completing a skirt of "China Poblana" with sequins. I have a lot of dresses that my children wore when they were young. If my grandchildren do not want them, I am thinking of donating them to the Institute. I have Juan's charro suit that he wore when he was eight years old, and other things. I don't know, but some of my grandchildren might want to take dancing lessons.

Barela: Do you still prepare Mexican foods?

Bósquez: I have to tell you that I am very proud of all my in-laws. One of my sons-in-law likes beans and chile. My three daughters-in-law know how to make flour tortillas. One always has hot sauce on the table. Three of them learned to make enchiladas, tacos and tostadas. Yesterday one of my daughters-in-law that lives in the suburbs came and told me that she was going to give a party and that she was only going to serve Mexican food in honor of my husband. She asked for the recipe for the enchiladas. I made the tortillas
Bósquez: for her, the tostadas, and tacos. I told her that it was going to be a lot of work for her but she said that if I can make them she can make them too. For everyone of my in-laws bridal showers I gave them a "molcajete" that underneath says "Mexico". In St. Paul there is a store where they sell them. Also, I give them a little bag of hot peppers. I tell them that I give them this because if they are marrying my sons they are going to have to make some. After they taste the food they really like it and later they learn how to make it. There are only two that have not learned yet. So every Christmas, Thanksgiving, and birthday I have to make a Mexican dinner because my sons still enjoy it and my in-laws learn to make it. Now it is in fashion because you see it advertised on television. I am very proud of them because they have been very good with me. All my daughters-in-law are Anglos and they are from Minneapolis. When I am sick they come to visit me. I think that others treat you the way you treat them.

Barela: How about the language?

Bósquez: I have a grandson who has learned Spanish in high school. He is learning very fast. The other day I gave him a book in Spanish and I was surprised to see how much he knows. He says that there is a group of students going to Mexico City in the winter and that he is going to go. He is saving his money to go. I think he is going to learn Spanish well. The other two little boys come over and show off all the words they know.

Barela: Do all of your sons speak Spanish?

Bósquez: Yes. Only one of them does not write it but all the others do. My daughter, the one that works as a nurse, when they get any correspondence from Spain they send them to her to translate. She translates for people that come from South America. Some of the other offices send things to her to translate for them. The hospital received a lot of papers from Spain asking them to
Bosquez: explain their system as to the different duties of the personnel, she translated the whole thing. Her Spanish has been an asset to her. This is good. The other day a lady came into the hospital and she did not know my daughter's name because she uses her married name, but when she saw her she recognized her as Lupe Bosquez. She told her that she remembered her from a long time ago when her father was going around taking the census. I don't remember the lady. Now my husband can't even speak anymore.

Barela: Do you still maintain contact with the Mexican people on the West Side?

Bosquez: Well, only with my friends by phone because my husband can't walk and he is in a wheelchair. Jovita Ruiz and Felicitas Herrera are my very good friends. I haven't called Felicitas for a long time. Not since her husband passed away. I feel that the community was scattered because before I could go visit one person and see many others but now they all live very far away from each other.

Barela: If you had some advice to give to the youth of today, what would you tell them?

Bosquez: To the young people now? To the Mexicans or the Anglos?

Barela: First to the Mexicans?

Bosquez: Well, I would advise them to be friends and to help one another. Also to look up to their neighboring nations. That in all races there are good and bad people. That we should not see one race as being better or worse than another race, because being educated we can all live together and be brothers. Especially the nations that are neighbors. It is getting so hard for the parents, teachers, and priests to guide the children. This is the time that we should try extra hard. It is harder to raise children now than when I raised my children.

Barela: And for the Anglos, what would you tell them?
Bosquez: The same thing because our neighbors here are very nice to us. Not only with us but with everyone. There is another Mexican family that lives near here and they are also treated very nicely. We treat them the same way they treat us. I have never wanted to have bad feelings toward them. At home, in the neighborhood, at work and in the schools, they have never treated us badly. My oldest daughter still receives Christmas cards from a teacher that she had in first grade. So my family has never had to be treated differently. They treat us the same as if I had been born here. Even if we are another race they have always treated us the same as their own. I don't remember having to go to a person to ask why my child was treated differently. No, it has never been the case. I wish it could be like this all over.

Barela: Have you led a happy life?

Bosquez: Very happy. My husband has been good. My children the same. They have always had their jobs and schooling. I have a grandson who will be going to the University. He received a scholarship.

Barela: Do you still get homesick for Mexico?

Bosquez: Yes. We went for four years in a row. We went to see my mother. We were very happy. We were there for a month. If I could go now I would still go every year.

Barela: Do some of the other family members like Mexico?

Bosquez: Yes. My oldest daughter likes to go. She went three times when I went. She and her husband. She likes it a lot. This year they are going to Hawaii for their 25th Anniversary. And she says that next year, if God wills it, she will be going to Mexico. She loves it. She dreams about Mexico. They went to Mexico City, to the pyramids, "Bellas Artes", Ballet Folklorico, and to the bullfights and Xochimilco. One time we went with them by car. We went through the mountains. It was very high but it was magnificent. We also
went by "Lago de Chapala". My husband lived near the lake in the town of Jocotepec for a while and my daughter wanted to go see all the places where my husband used to fish. We went to see my mother and also to Guadalajara to attend some theaters and "Chapultepec Park". We came back a month later. She loved it. The year before, four of my sons went with us. One of my sons and his wife are planning to go next year. Oh yes, we all like it. Especially since we have relatives there.

What do you miss about Mexico the most?

Everything. The country and my family and relatives. Even though you are happy in another nation, you never forget your own country.

Do you miss the old Mexican community in St. Paul?

Yes, I felt sorry when they tore it down because all my friends were scattered and not only that but because they were forced to leave their homes. There was nothing we could do. I had a friend and up to now, I still don't know where she lives. I loved her very much but I haven't been able to locate her. I have asked around but no one knows. It has been so long that I don't even remember her last name. They told me that she lives in the Northeast. The only one that I have visited is Jovita Chavez.

Now would you like to tell me about the Revolution? Or whatever you remember?

When I was two years old, my father came to the United States to the state of Michigan. He worked for a year. When he returned I could speak and used to remember him. He came to the door and knocked and I peeped out. He said, "Good afternoon, daughter." "No, you are not my father", I said. "Yes", he said, "it is I". "No, my father went up north". "I went, but I am back". "No, my father was lighter". He was very sunburned from working outside. Later he ran after me and he hugged me. I ran to my mother pleading with her not to let him hug me. "It is your father", she said. I could not recognize
Bósquez: I was very young. He was there for a year and he came back to work in Michigan. When we were in Mexico and I was around eight years old the Revolution started. The only thing I remember is that on the hill of Our Lady of Guadalupe the "Carransistas" and the "Federalistas" gathered to fight. I could hear the cannons and machine guns and the bullets would fall on people's yards.

Barelá: What town was this?

Bósquez: The town of Saqualco. An uncle and an aunt lived with us, he told us to lay on the floor so we would not get hit with a bullet. "Don't go to the patio", he said. It lasted for about two hours and soon the "Federalistas" went by. They had won. They were marching in files, and my mother told us to close the door because she did not want them to stop at our house. Some of them would stop at homes and beat the ladies so they would give them something to eat. The next day I went to school and they stopped at the store and took everything they had in the stores and would throw it out in the streets. Some of the poor people would gather the things and take them home. They would go through the stores and mess things up just to be troublesome. I remember telling my mother about the incident. She told me that if I ever saw the soldiers doing that to cross over to the other street because she did not want the people from the stores thinking that I took their things. There was a millionaire that lived in our town and he had an elegant home with marble floors. The soldiers took their horses inside and ruined the floor. They left his home in shambles. Another time there was another battle between the two sides at the train station on the outskirts of town. The people of the town also suffered a big scare over this. This is all I remember. Another time we went to visit some relatives in Zapotlán, Cuidad Guzman now, and on a hillside between Seyula and Zapotlán a train derailed.
Bóquez: When we went by, there were many bodies and skeletons. It was horrible. I was very young and I remember those things as though it was a dream. That is all I saw when I was Young. I think it must have been around 1917 or 1918.

 Barela: What are some of the things your husband saw?

Bóquez: In the year that I came to Minnesota, which was when I got married at 21, there was the War of the Cristeros. Did you ever heard of it?

Barela: No.

Bóquez: This war was a sort of guerrilla war. Something like that because they persecuted the churches. They were closed by the government. The towns were against it and they would go to the churches and there would be shots. It was awful. President Calles, and Obregon was Vice-President, ordered that all the priests that were caught saying mass would be severely punished. One time there was a priest that was saying mass and they cut off his hands. I was on the train, as a little girl, with my mother on our way to Guadalajara and there was a man dressed in black in the front seat. I could see that he seemed very weak and pale. I wondered why he would be out when they were being persecuted but I guess they were only persecuted when they were caught saying mass. Later they had to hide so they would not be caught. He was leaving because he had been caught saying mass and he had escaped. Another time we had a neighbor that was dying and he wanted to confess before dying but they could not find a priest. We went looking for one but could not find one. They had all left the town. So the man died. It was very sad, but what could we do at that time? During that time the people could not get married by the church because they had to wait until the churches were re-opened again. This was in 1927 and 1928 as I recall. That was the year that I came to Minnesota. Later I heard that President Calles was overthrown and
Bósquez: that he went to California. Later things were back to normal. The priest that was in our town, was the one that baptized me, and was a priest until I came in 1927. For the 21 years that he was there, and I don't know how many more he had spent there, he gave the church back to the town and left the town because they could not stay. I heard that he died later. He was a good priest. Our church is San Francisco, and is the same church where I was baptized. It is a church that was built during the Corregidora de Queretaro. It has been standing since then. It has a tall steeple and it is a very old building. I like it because it is old. The town is also in the history books. Half the town is made up of Indians. Some of them still speak their language. It is not half, it must be a fourth, because three other sections are made up of the mixture. You can tell when they speak their language because of the sounds. This town is very old, too.

Barela: Are you devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe?

Bósquez: Oh, yes. I am a follower. She is one of my favorite saints. The Queen of the Americas, that is Our Lady of Guadalupe. They consecrated her that about four years ago, maybe longer. I believe in her apparitions and all those things. I have the story that I am saving and I show it to my children. My grandchildren once asked me why I had a picture of the Virgin and I told her that she was Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of God, Queen of the Americas, and that she appeared in Mexico in the Mexican colors during the slavement to free us from the Spainards. Also I explained to her about the "Cura Hidalgo" and how he carried the Virgin's banner. Then later Morelos followed him until 1810 when the slavery was ended. Iturbide was of Spanish and Mexican blood and he became president.

Barela: Thank you for the interview.