

In this issue's interview, Daniel Drache and José Luis Valdés-Ugalde present the viewpoints of Canadian Robert Cox about the contributions different historians and social scientists have made to the humanist, scientific tradition, emphasizing the importance of the subjective in transforming the objective world, without for a moment neglecting politics or the economy.

The two essays we publish here are also part of this same line of thinking, one from the standpoint of history and the other from that of the social sciences.

The first, by Enrique Rajchenberg and Catherine Héau-Lambert, documents the representations of Mexico's North in the imaginary of Americans who migrated there during the first half of the nineteenth century: for example, their certainty that these were lands for colonizing contrasts with the views of Mexicans sent there for different official reasons. Implicit in the comparison is the search for explanations of the outcome of the Texas conflict and, later, of the 1847-1848 war. This essay demonstrates our journal's interest in publishing articles that take a deeper look at this historic topic and at the search for contemporary representations to resolve that conflict at least subjectively and thus contribute to healing Mexico-U.S. relations.

At first glance, the second essay, by Baltazar Arispe y Acevedo, Jr., differs greatly from the first in that it deals with a contemporary issue from the standpoint of the social sciences. However, it, too, underscores the role of the subjective in each of the steps toward the institutionalization of a U.S. region. It is worth noting that in this case, it is the Rio Grande Valley region, formerly part of the Mexican province of Coahuila y Tejas. Throughout the process of the region's institutionalization, so carefully documented by the author, we can see how the historical background both of Texas and the U.S. war against Mexico continue to influence the decisions made by different regional actors.

In our "Contemporary Issues" section, Marcela López-Vallejo Olvera's article about Ontario's strategies to deal with climate change makes an impression because it relates

the regional government and inhabitants' firm decision to transcend the federal government's limited agreements. Thus, this interesting provincial initiative turns into the driving force of real cooperation with bordering U.S. states and with those of Mexico's North. The author's focus on interpreting the significance of all these political decisions is that the actors are building a trans-bioeconomic region in North America.

In the same section, Elisabeth A. Mager Hois's article begins with a succinct review of the uneven, difficult relations between U.S. indigenous tribes and federal and state authorities from the eighteenth century on. This historic review, which stops at the point when different legal-administrative arrangements were made, frames a broader discussion about political-social issues and processes like the right to self-determination and sovereignty and the assimilation and integration of indigenous peoples based on the launch of casino operations in their territories. For the author, rather than benefitting those who have suffered from historic discrimination and exploitation, this has not increased the tribes' capacity for self-determination, despite marginally improving their economic situation after their integration into the dominant economic system.

As a "Special Contribution," we offer the second part of the article "America" from Diderot and d'Alembert's 1778 *Encyclopédie*, rendered into Spanish by Ignacio Díaz de la Serna. This is undoubtedly one of the many documents that founded what could be called "the idea of America," a European invention forged throughout the imperial, colonial process. This construct permanently and dramatically transformed the perception Europeans had of themselves at the dawn of what is known as modernity and their idea of the indigenous peoples of the hemisphere, beings—in their eyes—without a history of their own, "savages," who should be "given culture" to become "civilized." This second part of the article concentrates on the description and categorization of North American territory based on a wide selection of testimonies of different kinds. This gave rise to a cartography that incorporated the lands "discovered" into the maps of the world used in promoting colonialism, to a certain extent appropriating the lands with a territorial imaginary.

Our "Critical Notes" section, penned by Ernesto Carmona, analyzes the challenges to border transportation between the United States and Mexico, underlining its importance for bilateral trade, and recounting the programs and initiatives launched to facilitate the circulation of vehicles, and the difficulties Mexican truckers particularly have faced in trying to achieve freer, more fluid movement. Seemingly, one of the most developed initiatives in this sense is the transportation corridors that have operated regionally with unparalleled success.

José de Jesús López Almejo's contribution to "Bibliographical Notes" compares two marvelous books about diplomacy: one, which approaches it conventionally,

written by a career diplomat, and another, more recently published, about diplomacy in the digital era, analyzed from the point of view of academia. The author considers both ways of doing diplomacy complementary, since the new information technologies could be used to more efficiently link up official and unofficial social actors.

Lastly, as is our custom, this issue closes with a chronology of the main national, bi-national, and tri-national events in the region. We hope it will be useful for our readers.

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