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A Tribute to Writer
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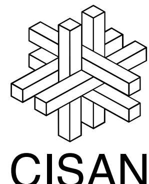

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Our Voice

During the first four-month period of 2014, Mexico's foreign policy agenda was criss-crossed with several particularly significant events. Among them were the twentieth anniversary of NAFTA coming into effect, the commemoration of seven decades of diplomatic relations with Canada, and Mexico's hosting of the North American Leaders' Summit.

Undoubtedly, all this caught the attention of the national media and public opinion, and in the background was the fact that on Mexico's domestic political scene, enormously important debates were already taking place in light of the reforms President Enrique Peña Nieto promoted in strategic spheres like education, telecommunications, politics, and energy.

While the central objective of all these reforms was to make a structural turn that would change not only laws but institutions, we will only be able to measure their efficacy in light of their implementation in the medium term.

This issue of *Voices of Mexico* brings our readers two magnificent analyses of the transcendent sides of the energy and political reforms. The experts' central arguments in dealing with the former are based on the constitutional changes that open up the country's hydrocarbon and electricity sectors to foreign capital and their consideration that the people of Mexico will be dispossessed of its energy resources. The article on the political reform, for its part, explains the changes in an electoral model that differentiated between the local and the federal, moving toward a more fully coordinated, national way of operating. In order to head this up, the national body in charge of elections has been transformed into the National Electoral Institute (INE).

For obvious reasons, our readers will note the profusion of articles in this issue about Canada or the links between Canada and Mexico. The mosaic of contributions selected by no means concentrates only on the history of our diplomacy, but rather includes the most up-to-date critical takes on Canada's political and social affairs, as well as issues like the common challenges both nations face such as migration and cultural diplomacy.

In my opinion, the relationship between Canada and Mexico will only become more profound as new generations multiply their interaction as the formula for understanding the "other," since our relations continue to be framed by the oscillating interests of the business community and political rhetoric.

Intensifying bilateral relations with Canada also will have to take into account the need to change our own image, as can be concluded from an article dealing with crime, drugs, insecurity, and violence, including that perpetrated against Canadians in Mexico, and how these topics take up 50 percent of the column space in several Canadian newspapers.

Different Mexican academic voices can be heard in this issue's "Special Section" about the conservative *Zeitgeist* in Canada, under the direction of Prime Minister Harper.

One outstanding characteristic of this are the significant changes that attempt to counter the effects of the economic crisis, but at the same time distance Canada from the principles that made it a haven for refugees and immigrants who sought better opportunities, as well as its defense of the environment and multilateralism.

Another article denounces the blow to Canadian studies, traditionally anchored in the cultural diplomacy that Canada's government successfully promoted as a pillar of its foreign policy. This soft power instrument unswervingly managed to project the diversity and richness of Canada's society and culture, and above all, position its image as a nation centered on the values of peace, order, and good government.

Yet another text conducts an interesting review of the situation of organized workers in Canada. From there, the reader can extrapolate a comparison with the United States and Mexico, which shows that Canada continues to head the group as the one that creates the greatest facilities for free unionization, countered by Human Development Index indicators, which situate it in frank decline regarding social well-being.

This is the place to invite our readers to peruse the articles that transport us to pleasurable, gratifying aspects of our reality. Women are today protagonists in the famous Mexican tradition of charrería, now a family pastime; with their relatively recent incorporation into the activity, they are able to display their perfect showmanship.

"We shall all disappear," is the iconic phrase on the first page of the article describing the festivity of the day of the dead that has traveled from Mexico to San Francisco, California. One of the richest pieces of baggage that our emigrants take into an increasingly globalized world consists of their ancestral traditions and the vocation to preserve them, even when forced to adapt them to new surroundings. Clinging to their primary identity through tradition is not only a mechanism to deal with vicissitudes, but also a series of elements to share in the web of multiple touching cultures.

One of *Voices of Mexico*'s aims is that readers unfamiliar with our country are tempted to get to know it. So, we bring you the reasons why we Mexicans miss our great writer José Emilio Pacheco. We also invite you to one museum worthy of a visit: the Museum of Memory and Tolerance, where you will encounter the pending issues we still have *vis-à-vis* Mexico's minority groups.

I have intentionally left until the end the testimonies of migrant children presented in this issue, and I have done it taking into consideration their message. Including their voices, but above all, paying attention to them, is a permanent task for all generations of adults. In these short lives, violence, mistreatment, abandonment, poverty and fear stand out, shaking our consciences and forcing us to close ranks in search of solutions that prevent these tragedies from being repeated. Let's hope that can be accomplished.

Silvia Núñez García
Director of CISAN

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The Energy Reform, Or Pushing the Mexican State Out Of the Energy Sector

Rosío Vargas*
Heberto Barrios**

Ángel Hernández/Cuartoscuro.com

This article deals with a historic event in Mexico: the 2013 energy reform, which will undoubtedly change the country's future and the daily lives of its citizens given the importance of the sector, both in terms of the generation of income and in the supply of energy sources and the economic impact of their operation.

The reform is a watershed since its implementation will dismantle the Cardenist model of managing the sector, based on guaranteeing the nation, through its public, decentralized bodies (Mexican Petroleum [Pemex] and the Federal Electricity Commission [CFE]), the direct exploitation of these resources, as well as the full, direct revenues accruing from oil rent by the state.

The new management model, which we could call the "indiscriminate, transnational opening model," leaves all the aforementioned principles to the play of the "market," divorced from the historical, legal, and economic bases that are the fundamental pillars of our energy industries. The international management models that its promoters are attempting to emulate (those of the United States, Brazil, and Colombia, among others) correspond to situations quite different from ours. That is why they have little to contribute, and, in some cases, are far from being as successful as publicized

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Both Pemex and the CFE will inevitably gradually lose their importance and see their resources reduced, as has already started in Pemex's zero round begun March 21, 2014.

The United States

Historically, economic and social dependence on hydrocarbons in the United States is very high. This is despite the fact that energy efficiency has managed to drop consumption by 2 MMb/d, in addition to promoting diverse forms of energy that will surely broaden out future supply. For the moment, the United States' supposed energy independence, based on the scope of the energy revolution due to lutite deposits, is a questionable goal since, according to recent Department of Energy estimates, in the best of scenarios, imports will cover a shortage of 32 percent by 2040. This clearly shows that domestic production will not be able to cover the country's monumental 19 MMb/d consumption.

Brazil

Brazil's success can be explained by its own level of technological and industrial development, the result of a historic geopolitical, strategic vision. This achievement is far from being based solely on foreign investment in the sector. This has been clear in the different rounds of bidding in which government earnings have been criticized as meager, while those of foreign multinationals have been very high, draining enormous amounts of resources from the country, reflected in the need for Dilma Rousseff's administration to make budget adjustments. On the other hand, increased production has far from met expectations.

Colombia

Another attempt has been to replicate the Colombian case, which involved the indiscriminate opening to foreign investment since that country is hydrocarbon-poor, which is very different from Mexico. In addition, as the director of Ecopetrol himself has said, after that country's so-called zero round,[1] the state-owned company's development capabilities were very limited because the best fields and reserves had been taken from it.

Norway

The Norwegian case is a successful model because of the oil fund it has accumulated; it represents a substantial intergenerational support equivalent to almost three percent of world gross domestic product (GDP).[2] Nevertheless, this success is based on its total managerial autonomy *vis-à-vis* the government, freeing it from pressure to funnel resources into government running expenses. In the case of Mexico, given the design of the constitutional reform, based on the transitory articles, although it talks about the determination that authorities not re-channel resources, this was not respected when the Mexican Oil Fund was created as a trust in Mexico's Central Bank. It is led by a committee presided over by the minister of finance, which we think will make it the prisoner of temptations and pressures to funnel funds into general running expenses and not into investment.

The Meaning of the Constitutional Energy Reform[3]

This reform consists of substantial changes to certain articles dubbed *fundamental political decision-making mechanisms* that negatively affect their strengthening or historic evolution.[4] Several constitutionalists, such as Diego Valadés, Ignacio Burgoa, Mario de la Cueva, Jorge Carpizo, and Jaime Cárdenas, agree that the permanent constituent assembly, like the one that amended the Constitution in 2013, does not have the power to make these kinds of changes. They argue that that power could only emanate from a completely original, full constituent congress, or it should have resorted to a plebiscite, a right established in the Constitution's Article 35. They do say, however, that this is inapplicable due to the lack of regulatory legislation to carry it out. However, as is well known, constitutional rights are applicable in and of themselves and cannot be suspended because there is no regulatory legislation; therefore, there should have been a national consultation before making the changes. Not having carried one out creates a situation of constitutional illegitimacy.

The changes in Articles 25, 27, and 28 constitute a completely new design of Mexico's economic and administrative law, since they redefine strategic areas and those where private investment can be made, and it creates as-yet-undefined legal categories such as those involving the state-owned productive corporations (previously known as decentralized public bodies). This administrative change in the state-owned productive industries is the result of a modification in the state's role,[5] all without having carried out thorough studies or analyzed its economic and social consequences.

The changes in Article 27 eliminate the ban on contracts for exploration and production introduced into the Constitution with the reform of 1960. Although the restriction for granting concessions from the 1940 reform remains, the transitory articles that establish licenses and permits, above all in downstream industry activities,[6] in fact constitute concessions.[7]

The reforms proposed by the executive put the nation's patrimony in grave danger. The amendment to Article 27 allows third parties to operate exploration and exploitation activities through shared-profit contracts, shared-production contracts, and licenses, with few explanations about how these contracts will work, leaving everything to the absolute discretion of the executive branch. If these contracts operate like those established for Pemex in the Law on Hydrocarbon Earnings, they will not even fulfill the objective of sharing the risk, as the media have erroneously and insistently reported, since the state will reimburse 100 percent of the operating companies' costs, effectively assuming all the risk.

The only risk these companies will run, then, would be waiting for the state to pay them. Private companies can only have profits, no losses. This is why their profits will directly be to the detriment of the state's oil rent. At current oil prices, this varies between US$70 billion and US$80 billion a year, and is the equivalent of Pemex's profit before the taxes that it currently pays into state coffers.

On the other hand, with these changes to Article 27, Pemex and the CFE will stop being the only operators in their respective sectors and become just two of several, thus disarticulating the Cardenist management model. The central part of the latter is granting contracts, since the federal executive, through the Ministry of Energy (Sener) will grant the big contracts in oil and electricity, while Pemex and the CFE will be able to grant contracts or partner up in the assignations that the Sener itself grants, with the pompously dubbed "zero round." Undoubtedly, in this zero round, both Pemex and the CFE will inevitably gradually lose their importance and see their resources reduced, as has already started in Pemex's zero round begun March 21, 2014. Suffice it to look at the statements by the Sener's Vice-ministry of Hydrocarbons to the international press offering foreign investors 75 percent of the country's prospective resources.[8]

With the energy reform,
the only risk private companies will run
would be waiting for the state to pay them.
Private companies can only have profits, no losses.

Despite the rhetoric about maintaining strategic areas under state purview, Article 28 was seriously limited,[9] since it

1. downgrades the state's stewardship, since today it is exclusively responsible for the ownership and central management and strategy of the oil industry;[10]
2. reduces the state's exclusive stewardship of nuclear energy generation, planning for the national electricity system, and the public service of transmission and distribution of electrical energy. These areas are no longer the exclusive domain of state activity in the generation, handling, and commercialization of electricity. Electricity planning will no longer be carried out by the CFE, but directly by the executive branch through the Sener. Also removed from exclusive state stewardship are the generation of electricity other than nuclear, and its sale, including its import and export;
3. cancels the obligation of ensuring that public companies or bodies operate in the oil industry, eliminating Pemex's constitutional status;
4. allows unlimited private investment and organizes the oil and electricity industries as markets open to foreign capital;
5. reclassifies, with the amendment to Article 28, the activities of refining, transport (pipelines), and basic petrochemicals from strategic to priorities; this means that they can be auctioned off to the private sector, making the risk of the loss of national patrimony very great;
6. eliminates the exclusive authority of the nation over oil industry downstream and upstream activities, creating a large bureaucracy in charge of the regulatory process and of setting up a supposed market as the coordinated

Mexico is subordinated to the elites
from around the world. This is in tune
with the moment of globalization we are going
through: capitalism based on accumulation
by dispossession.

regulatory bodies for energy issues (National Hydrocarbon Commission, Energy Regulatory Commission, and others in charge of managing pipelines, controlling electricity, and industrial security included in the law's transitory articles). The Mexican Oil Fund will be controlled by the Ministry of Finance without the intervention of the legislative branch.

The 21 Transitory Articles

In an unusual move, an attempt to delineate the regulatory legislation that would make the constitutional changes concrete and operational, 21 transitory articles were also passed. Outstanding among them are Article 2, about labor relations; Articles 4 and 11, about contracts; and several more about administration. The following bodies were also created: the Mexican Fund for Stabilization and Development, the National Center for the Control of Natural Gas, the National Agency for Industrial Security and Protection of the Environment of the Hydrocarbon Sector, and the National Center for Energy Control. This creates a huge bureaucracy without real coordination.

In addition, the legal character and structure of the National Hydrocarbon Commission (CNH) (which includes the National Center for Hydrocarbon Information), the Energy Regulatory Commission (CRE), Pemex, and the CFE have all changed.

Transitory Article 8 includes the idea that, given their strategic character, the exploration for and extraction of oil and other hydrocarbons, as well as the public service of transmitting and distributing electrical energy take precedence over any other kind of work involving the use of the land and the subsoil. This opens up the possibility of expropriating and utilizing private, public, and socially-owned property to the benefit of multinationals, overriding any other right.

Conclusions

The constitutional changes promoted by the energy reform constitute major surgery. They change ownership rights and push the state out of the energy sector industries. In the best of cases, they turn the state into an administrator and make it responsible for regulating bodies, which in practice will not have much power in the face of multinationals, which in turn will try to move toward a market model, confining the state to the areas that do not generate profits.

With this reform, Mexico is subordinated to the elites from around the world and North America, putting the pool of hydrocarbon reserves at the disposition of oil companies from around the world, as well as international financial capital. This is in tune with the moment of globalization we are going through: capitalism based on accumulation by dispossession, through the convergence of hoarding territories and raw materials in connivance with international speculative capital seeking a grip on fixed assets. VM

Notes

[1] The zero round is a process whereby Pemex presents a proposal to the Ministry of Energy with the information about the areas for oil exploration and fields to be adjudicated according to Transitory Article 6 of the December 30, 2013, reform of the Constitution.

[2] The fund is commonly referred to as "The Oil Fund" (in Norwegian, *Oljefondet*). As of the June 2011 valuation, it was the largest pension fund in the world, although it is not actually a pension fund as it derives its financial backing from oil profits and not pension contributions. As of December 31, 2013, its total value is NOK5.038 trillion (US$828.9 billion), holding one percent of global equity markets. With 1.78 percent of all European stocks, it is said to be the largest stock owner in Europe.

[3] "Decreto por el que se reforman y adicionan diversas disposiciones de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos en materia de energía," *Diario oficial de la federación* (DOF), December 20, 2013.

[4] The reform amends the Constitution's Article 25, paragraphs 4, 6, and 8; paragraph 6 of Article 27; and paragraphs 4 and 6 of Article 28. It also adds a seventh paragraph to Article 27 and an eighth paragraph to Article 28.

[5] Article 25 reads in part, "The public sector will have exclusive responsibility for the strategic areas defined in Article 28, paragraph four of the Constitution, with the federal government always maintaining ownership and control over any state productive bodies and companies that may be established. With regard to planning and control of the national electricity system, and the public transmission and distribution of electrical energy, as well as the exploration and extraction of oil and other hydrocarbons, the nation shall carry out these activities in the terms stipulated in paragraphs six and seven of Article 27 of this Constitution. In these activities, the law will establish the relative norms for administration, organization, functioning, contracting procedures, and other legal acts that the state-owned productive companies carry out, as well as the regime under which its personnel shall be remunerated, to guarantee their effectiveness, efficien-

cy, honesty, productivity, transparency, and accountability, based on best practices, and shall determine the other activities that they can carry out. . . .

"Using criteria of social equality, productivity, and sustainability, the companies in the social and private sectors of the economy shall be supported and fostered, being subject to the modalities dictated by the public interest and usage, to the general benefit, of productive resources, protecting their preservation and the environment. . . .

"The law shall encourage and protect economic activity by private citizens and shall provide the conditions for the development of the private sector to contribute to national economic development, promoting competitiveness and implementing a national policy for sustainable industrial development that includes sectoral and regional aspects, in the terms established in this Constitution." *Constitución política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*, amended December 20, 2013.

[6] Refining, petrochemicals, and the distribution and commercialization of hydrocarbons are considered down-stream activities; up-stream activities are exploration for and production of oil.

[7] Article 27 states, "In the cases referred to in the two preceding paragraphs, the nation's control is inalienable and has no statute of limitations, and the exploitation, use, or enjoyment of the resources involved by private citizens or companies established according to Mexican law is not permitted except through concessions granted by the federal executive, in accordance with the rules and conditions stipulated by law, except in the case of radio broadcasting and telecommunications, which will be granted by the Federal Telecommunications Institute. The legal norms regarding works or exploitation of minerals and substances referred to in paragraph four will regulate the execution and proof of those that are effected or must be effected starting from the moment they are in force, regardless of the date the concessions are granted, and if they are not conformed to, the concessions will be canceled. The planning and control of the national electrical system corresponds exclusively to the nation, as do the public service of transmission and distribution of electrical energy; no concessions will be granted for these activities, regardless of the fact that the state can sign contracts with private citizens in the terms established by law, which will determine the way in which private citizens can participate in the other activities of the electricity industry.

"With regard to oil and solid, liquid, or gaseous hydrocarbons in the subsoil, the ownership by the nation is inalienable and has no statute of limitations, and no concessions shall be granted. In order to obtain income for the state to contribute to the nation's long-term development, it shall carry out exploration and extraction of oil and other hydrocarbons through the assignation to productive state enterprises or through contracts with these or with private entities, in terms stipulated in the regulatory legislation. To fulfill the object of said assignations or contracts, state productive companies will be able to establish contracts with private entities. In any case, hydrocarbons in the subsoil are the property of the nation, and assignations or contracts shall so stipulate." *Constitución política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*, amended December 20, 2013.

[8] Jude Webber, "Mexico Opens Deepwater Oilfields to Tender," *Financial Times*, March 26, 2014.

[9] Article 28 reads in part, "The functions that the state exercises in the following strategic areas will not be monopolies: mail, telegraph services, and radio-telegraphy; radioactive minerals and the generation of nuclear energy; planning and control of the national electrical system as well as public service of transmission and distribution of electrical energy, the exploration and extraction of oil and other hydrocarbons, in the terms stipulated in paragraphs six and seven of Article 27 of this Constitution, respectively, and the activities expressly stipulated in the laws passed by the national Congress. Communication via satellite and railroads are priority areas for national development in the terms laid out in Article 25 of this Constitution; while the state oversees their management, it will protect the nation's security and sovereignty, and when granting concessions or permits, will maintain or establish its control over the respective means of communication in accordance with the respective legislation. . . .

"The state will have a central bank, autonomous in the exercise of its functions and administration. Its priority objective will be to ensure the stability of the national currency's purchasing power, thus strengthening the stewardship of national development that is an attribution of the state. No authority will be empowered to order the bank to grant financing. The state will establish a public trust called the Mexican Oil Fund for Stabilization and Development, whose fiduciary institution will be the central bank, and it will have as its object, in the terms stipulated by law, to receive, administer, and distribute the earnings derived from the assignations and contracts referred to in paragraph seven of Article 27 of this Constitution, with the exception of taxes. . . .

"The Executive branch will have coordinated regulatory bodies for matters of energy, called the National Hydrocarbon Commission and the Energy Regulation Commission, in the terms dictated by law." *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos*, amended December 20, 2013.

[10] Strategic activities are those carried out directly by the state in accordance with normative planning, which is obligatory for public bodies and organisms. By contrast, priority activities can be carried out by any institution or individual in the framework of an indicative government plan, which would not be binding for operators. See Enrique Peña Nieto, president of Mexico, "Decreto por el que se reforman los artículos 27 y 28 de la Constitución política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," mimeograph (Mexico City: Centro de Reflexión Energética Nacional [Cerena], August 12, 2013).

A New Political Reform: From IFE to INE

Carlos A. González Martínez*

María José Martínez/Cuartoscuro.com

In recent weeks, Mexico's Chamber of Deputies and Senate have debated the latest details of the electoral reform that would detail the procedures for the political-electoral reform of the Constitution carried out in late 2013. These are neither few in number nor minor issues, since they involve a series of significant changes to the logic and nature of the Mexican electoral system.

In compliance with the transitory articles of the constitutional reform,[1] a new General Law on Electoral Institutions and Procedures to replace the law in force was passed on May 15. Also slated for passage are a Law on Political Parties, the regulatory legislation for Article 134 of the Constitution (dealing with government publicity), and another on electoral criminal offenses.

It will be well worth taking several looks and making various assessments to discuss and analyze these issues since they will have an unprecedented impact on the electoral system before 2015 federal and local balloting. The legislation will attempt to systematically link up the spheres of federal and state elections for the first time in the country's recent history. In addition, the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), created in 1990, was replaced by the National Electoral Institute (INE). The change of name refers to a transcendental transformation that will lay the basis for a truly national electoral system if the latter can be materialized in new laws and practices, as is devoutly to be wished.

The Local, Federal, and National

The first issue to underline in the new set-up that the electoral reform implies —and this has even been the case since the 2007-2008 constitutional reform— is the relationship

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between federal and national aspects of the Mexican electoral regimen. Until now, the organization of federal and local elections has been clearly and emphatically different. There was no basic link between one and the other except the similarity of their procedures and institutions and whatever their respective administrative authorities might agree upon, usually regarding the use of the federal voter registration rolls and other spheres of activity dictated by holding elections at the same time. With the electoral reform, this will change radically: "With this reform, the way is opened up for what in the medium term could be a national electoral *system*," reads the introduction to the constitutional reform introduced in September 2007.[2] This has an impact on the entire existing *regime*, and is an attempt to make way for a new *system*, as we shall see later.

Since the 2007-2008 reform, a new and radical arrangement was created. Articles 41 and 116 of the Constitution, and Articles 118 and 122 of the Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (Cofipe) stipulated that at the request of "the competent state authorities" —later stipulating that these were the "administrative electoral authorities"—, the IFE could take charge of organizing local elections "in the terms established in the applicable legislation."

From that time on, and in an unprecedented fashion, the federal electoral institution was given the faculty of replacing the state electoral institutions (at the latters' request) in the task of organizing local elections. This radically changed the distinction between what was federal and what was local. But this never actually happened.

This faculty was deepened in the 2013-2014 reform, by including in Article 41 of the Constitution, Sections B, C, and D. Section B reiterates that "the National Electoral Institute, through an agreement with the competent authorities in the states that so request it, will organize local elections in the terms stipulated by the relevant legislation." This is in the same sense as the 2007-2008 legislation. However, Section C goes further, indicating that, in accordance with what is stipulated in the law and with the approval of at least eight votes in its General Council, the National Electoral Institute shall be able to

> a) Directly carry out the electoral activities that would usually fall to local electoral bodies;
> [. . .]
> b) Review any matter usually under the jurisdiction of local electoral bodies when its importance merits it, or to establish a criterion of interpretation.

> **The new legislation will attempt to systematically link up the spheres of federal and state elections for the first time in the country's recent history. In addition, the Federal Electoral Institute, created in 1990, was replaced by the National Electoral Institute.**

> It is the duty of the National Electoral Institute to designate and remove the members of the leading Direction body of state public bodies, in the terms of this Constitution.[3]

Meanwhile, Section D indicates that the IFE's current Professional Electoral Service will become national with the INE.[4] It will include officials of what were previously local institutes, commissions, or councils, which will now be generically named public local electoral bodies. With all of this, if local state administrative authorities request it or the INE's General Council decides it, the reforms could represent a severe overhaul of current electoral practices, in which federal and local electoral processes do not yet fully complement each other.

From the Regime of Redundancy to the National System

Article 40 of the Constitution stipulates that our form of government is a representative, democratic, secular, federal republic made up of free and sovereign states in terms of their internal regime, but united in a federation. That is why, when initially creating the public bodies for elections, a distinction was made between federal and state or local elections.

The president and federal senators and deputies are elected in federal elections. State elections are held for governors, state congressional deputies, and members of city councils. Two kinds of majorities are used in electing representative legislative bodies: a simple majority and proportional representation. In both spheres, organizing the elections has been a state function carried out by autonomous public bodies and ruled over by the principles of certainty, legality, independence, impartiality, the greatest publicity, and objectivity.

In addition, elections in Mexico have three spheres: the administrative, the judicial, and the penal, both on a federal

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level and for each of the 32 federal entities (the 31 states and Mexico City's Federal District).

The administrative sphere covers the organization and management of electoral processes: preparations, election day itself, and post-electoral activities. This sphere has its own law whose compliance is fundamentally an attribution of the electoral institutes, which are the administrative authorities both in the states and federally. This law is often a code of fully comprehensive aspirations that sets forth the norms for the citizenry's political-electoral rights; regulates the operation of electoral principles for making up the branches of government; establishes the functions, attributions, and structure of the electoral authority; defines the functioning and prerogatives of political parties, and any fronts, coalitions, or mergers they may initiate; details the procedures for acquiring registration as a political party or group; and establishes the entire administrative regime of sanctions. At the federal level, the law that has been in force has been the Cofipe, and the maximum authority has been the IFE. Until the 2013 constitutional reform and the regulations that will be in force in 2014, this same set-up had been reproduced in each of the 32 federal entities, which has meant that the country has had 33 electoral laws and the same number of administrative authorities.

The judicial sphere is for resolving litigation resulting from the different forms of challenges that can be brought at any time, particularly during the elections themselves. To regulate this sphere, laws are passed involving the means for challenging different aspects or demanding electoral justice to be dealt with by tribunals recognized as the maximum constitutional authorities on the matter. Federally, the law in force is the General Law on the System of Means for Bringing Electoral Challenges (LGSMIME), among which are trials for protecting citizens' political-electoral rights and the constitutional review. The maximum authority in this sphere is the Federal Judiciary's Electoral Tribunal (TEPJF).

This set-up is used on a federal level and in each of the states and the capital city. This means that the country has 33 laws and 33 electoral judicial bodies, including tribunals and specialized chambers of the state supreme courts. Except for a pair of more or less administrative changes, the 2013 left the TEPJF and the national electoral judiciary untouched. Further down, we will see if the reforms to the law really added any changes.

The penal sphere refers to specifying what actions are considered electoral crimes against the guaranteed right to a free and secret vote. At the federal level, these offenses have been specified in Title 24 of the Federal Criminal Code, and basically are defined as conduct that can be engaged in by any individual, electoral official, party official, organizer of campaign activities and candidates, deputies or senators elect, public servants, and members of the clergy. The authority responsible for prosecuting these crimes is the Special Prosecutor for Electoral Crimes (FEPADE), which is part of the Attorney General's Office (PGR), ranking as an autonomous Assistant Attorney General's Office. Although not all the states have prosecutors similar to the federal one, all of them do include electoral crimes in their local criminal codes or an applicable set of legal norms. The 2013 constitutional reform will change the PGR into the General Prosecutor's Office, and that will change the nature of the FEPADE as well as the way its head is designated.

In general, as already mentioned, this legal framework and institutional set-up is reproduced in each of the 31 states and Mexico City's Federal District, creating a regime that, in the long run, is inefficient: redundancy, which supposes that in the country there are 33 electoral administrative authorities (as well as potentially 33 jurisdictional and penal authorities) that all do practically the same thing, sometimes at different moments and in different ways, but always with different human, material, financial, and political institutional resources.

No coherent institutional system could withstand this; no society could, in the long run, justify it; nor could any public budget afford it without seriously breaking down. This is why it has been subjected to a broad, profound review that revealed the need to advance toward creating a true, effective national electoral system in Mexico. That is why I began by making a clear differentiation between the current *regime* of redundancy and the desirable comprehensive national electoral *system*.

The Spanish Royal Academy of Language dictionary defines a "regime" as "a series of norms that govern or rule a thing or an activity" and a "regular or habitual mode of producing something." A "system," on the other hand, is "a series of rules or principles about a matter or field that are rationally linked together" and a "series of things that, related to each other in an orderly fashion, contribute to a specific object." This means that, when both things refer to the way in which processes are organized and managed, a system is distinguished from a regime because of its rationality, versus its habitual nature.

Thus, the existence of the Mexican electoral regime supposes a state of things based essentially on redundancy, while the creation of a national electoral system supposes a rational ordering to organize and interlink federal and local elections, and, with that, their premeditated —and therefore, predefined— articulation. In all of this, the INE is called upon to play a fundamental and foundational role.

Toward a New National Electoral System

Now, what should the coordinates of the new system be? At least two premises should be considered, and we should always keep in mind that, for the moment, we are only talking about the administrative sphere of Mexico's elections. First, the national system must be *built* on the constitutional bases of our republican, representative, federal democracy, and must be *defined* by its attributions. Secondly, its character, functions, and attributions must involve the systematic articulation of the current redundancy regime.

This presupposes, above all, recognizing that the system will have to be defined and built for what is required: harmoniously and efficiently organizing Mexico's federal and local elections.

Consequently, we can say that our national electoral system should be planned taking into account the need to ensure it has attributions to deal with at least the following moments and items:

1. Electoral processes (preparation, voting day, and post-election activities);
2. Periods between electoral processes;
3. Educating the citizenry; and
4. Institutional development and management of the party and equity regime.

Thus, and derived from the attributions legislators decide to bestow on the system with the 2014 reform, its new specific functions could be categorized as follows:

1. *National/federal functions*, such as those involving putting together, updating, and checking the voters' rolls; issuing voters' photo-IDs; producing, storing, and distributing electoral materials; managing the electoral civil service; and monitoring day-to-day administrative sanctions, among others;
2. *Local or state functions*, such as those involving the direct administration of elections: ensuring the naming and operation of electoral councils; setting up polling place officials' committees; carrying out municipal, district, and state vote counts; issuing the respective certificates of vote-count validity; and in general, operational coordination of election organization and training, as well as the program for preliminary electoral results, among others; and
3. *Combined functions*, such as those involving electoral statistics and geography; financing and monitoring of political parties' resources; programs for public education and participation; electoral training as such; monitoring the sanction special process; and the operation of the new communications model, basically referring to equitable access to radio and TV time slots, among many others.

We can begin discussing the need and historic timeliness of moving forward to create a real national election system in Mexico by first defining its nature, attributions, and functions. We can then go on to consider its institutional architecture and the way current assets and human, material, and financial resources of the 33 existing administrative authorities can be melded into one.

Naturally, in all of this, the points of departure must be the constitutional bases in the reform published in the *Diario Oficial de la Federación* (Official Gazette) last February 10,

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2014. It identifies the two new electoral bodies (the INE and the local public electoral bodies), and mandates the development of new legislation, particularly the aforementioned general law that regulates electoral procedures. All of this, and specifically what has been called the "nationalization" of the Professional Electoral Service, will be the basis for creating the national electoral system I am arguing for here.

More specifically, there must be a legal mandate to change the institutional design of both the INE and the local public bodies, in order to make them responsive and efficient. The regulations must also include the appropriate articulation of the functions of the INE and the local public bodies, set out in the article's Sections A and B for all actions involved in federal and state processes.

A good re-design of the former IFE's semi-autonomous bodies and the new local bodies will be key for achieving the new link between the local and the national. Specifically, the role and functions of the local executive boards will have to be reviewed, as will the creation or not of local and even district councils that corresponded to the old IFE. Another central issue will be the appropriate design of the National Professional Electoral Service, which not only must deal with the functions assigned to it in Section D of the new Article 41 of the Constitution (the selection, hiring, training, professionalization, promotion, evaluation, rotation, tenure, and discipline of employees), but also the creation of the catalogue of positions, posts, and profiles of the national professional electoral employees, all of which will be key for the appropriate set-up of the new system. VM

Notes

[1] "Decreto por el que se reforman, adicionan y derogan diversas disposiciones de la *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos* en materia político-electoral," *Diario Oficial de la Federación* (Mexico City), February 10, 2014.

[2] Cámara de Diputados, "Dictamen de las Comisiones Unidas de Puntos Constitucionales y Gobernación con proyecto de decreto que reforma los artículos 6, 41, 85, 99, 108, 116 y 122; adiciona el artículo 134 y se deroga un párrafo al artículo 97 de la Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," *Gaceta parlamentaria* no. 2341-I, September 14, 2007. The emphasis in the quote is mine.

[3] "Decreto por el que se reforman, adicionan y derogan…", op. cit.

[4] The Professional Electoral Service is a civil service regime created for the IFE since its inception and which has been consolidated with the reforms to its charter since 1996.

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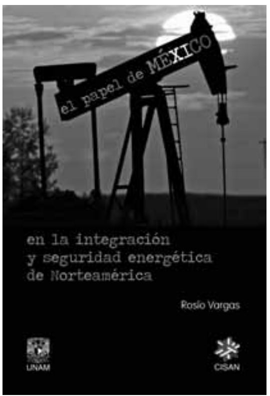

El papel de México en la integración y seguridad enérgetica de Norteamérica

Rosío Vargas

The study of oil in Mexico has centered on the national, when actually, the vectors of the most important policies originate abroad, mainly in the United States, the region's most powerful country and also the one with the greatest energy requirements. From that perspective, Mexico and Canada's oil policies are not gauged to their internal priorities and needs, but to those of the U.S. The author looks at this relationship through the prism of the concept of energy security.

Cien y frontera. Territorios ilimitados de la mirada

Juan Carlos Vargas and Graciela Martínez Zalce, coords.

Border studies were revamped in the 1990s, partially because of the transnational circulation of cultural products and globalization. In the field of cinema research, the concept of the border has also become very important. This book offers different fertile and heterogeneous visions of the field, opening the way for later incursions in the topic.

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Human Rights in Mexico after the Universal Periodic Review

Rubén R. García Clarck*

María José Martínez/Cuartoscuro.com

The universal periodic review (UPR) is a mechanism established by the United Nations Human Rights Council to evaluate its member states every four years. Mexico's situation was evaluated in 2009 and 2013. The most recent evaluation recognized that the Mexican state had advanced in the protection of the fundamental rights of individuals, especially in the legislative and judicial fields, by complying with the majority of the recommendations it had received in 2009. However, in 2013, it received almost double the number of recommendations as in the previous cycle.[1] This balance sheet suggests that in the last four years, the country made important strides in human rights issues, but that certain problems persist and others have emerged or were not noted during the previous review.

Given the alarming number of feminicides and murders of journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico in recent years, a considerable number of the delegates to the 2013 UPR agreed to recommend that the country make greater efforts to guarantee an existence free of violence, making effective use of the gender alert mechanism. The recommendation was also made that conditions be created so that those work-

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ing in the fields of journalism and rights defense be able to do so without putting their lives at risk. In addition, they recommended that the Mexican delegation fight against impunity when these social groups have their rights trampled, particularly their right to life and to the freedom of expression.

With regard to the right to live in freedom and to due process, in the case of persons detained and imprisoned, the recommendation to the Mexican state was that it eliminate the practice of preventive custody, known as *arraigo*, improve the prison system, and be more effective in the fight against forced disappearances, torture, arbitrary detentions, and human trafficking. The review also emphasized the grave violations of migrants' human rights.

Since some of these violations have been perpetrated by members of the armed forces, who generally go unpunished when judged in military courts, the review recommended that the amendment to Article 57 of the Military Code of Justice be completed to eliminate the ability of military tribunals to deliberate on cases of human rights violations by members of the armed forces against civilians. This recommendation is in agreement with the August 22, 2012 Mexican Supreme Court ruling that this practice was unconstitutional, after the Inter-American Human Rights Court handed down a decision in the same vein on the 2009 case of Rosendo Radilla, and ordering the article be eliminated from the Military Code of Justice.

According to the Ministry of National Defense, since 2009, 317 cases have been handed over to civilian investigators, and military tribunals have handed over 226 criminal cases to civilian courts to be tried. In any case, this limitation of military jurisdiction has not been enough to slow abuses by army and navy personnel against the civilian population. Proof of this is that between 2006 and 2012, the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) has received 7 441 complaints against the armed forces. At the same time, despite the large number of complaints, it should be noted that the CNDH has not been very efficient: it has only issued 113 recommendations.[2]

With regard to economic, social, and cultural rights, an important number of 2013 UPR delegates recognized the efforts of the Mexican state to foster government plans and programs to lower poverty and hunger levels, as well as to provide universal health care and basic education.

Outstanding among the recommendations about the rights of indigenous communities were those that favored actions to improve their indicators of well-being, particularly for the

The ostensible shortcomings of police forces and attorneys general in guaranteeing the rights of the population do not justify the armed forces' taking over policing and prosecutorial tasks.

women and children of those communities, as well as to respect their labor rights and the right to be consulted in the case of the creation of economic projects that would affect their natural surroundings, in accordance with International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 169. It should be mentioned that participants requested that Mexico eradicate discrimination against Afro-descendants.

The findings also recommend that the Mexican delegation withdraw its reservations *vis-à-vis* certain international instruments to protect human rights and ratify those that it still has not ratified, in addition to adjusting national legislation to conform to those instruments and local/state legislation to federal law. In this sphere, even if the Mexican state ratifies the few instruments it still has not ratified, or withdraws the few reservations it maintains regarding others, in a controversial September 3, 2013 ruling, Mexico's Supreme Court stipulated the limitation of the application of international human rights treaties in the country. While the nation's highest court has conferred constitutional rank to these treaties in accordance with the June 10, 2011 amendment to that effect, it has also decided to limit their scope when they contradict what is laid down in the Constitution. With that ruling, the Supreme Court has put to one side the *pro persona* principle, central to that amendment, which mandates the application of the broadest human rights protection recognized in the Constitution and international treaties.

As the review *Foro jurídico* (Legal Forum) put it,

> Initially, the proposal consisted of the idea that human rights established in treaties should prevail if they benefitted the individual, even if there was a contradiction with the Constitution, for example, around issues like preventive custody of alleged criminals, preventive forced incarceration, seizure of assets, or the prohibition of ministers of religion exercising their [passive] right to vote, acts that are internationally considered illegal. However, in the end, the conclusion was that this type of acts, expressly included in our Constitution, prevail over the human rights stipulated in the 171 international treaties that recognize human rights and that Mexico has signed.[3]

In this scenario, according to Supreme Court President Juan Silva Meza, it will fall to judges to integrate international norms into national law through a dialogue about jurisprudence, in order to understand and harmonize the legislation to create better protection for the individual.[4] It definitely will be up to the criteria of the judiciary to determine broad or restricted protection for Mexicans' fundamental rights since, on November 12, 2013, the Supreme Court threw out the proposal to try appellate judges for not complying with their obligation of applying the most favorable national and international legal criteria to protect the human rights of those on trial.

As can be noted, the progressive 2011 constitutional reform, which stipulates the broadest possible protection for human rights, has been limited through jurisdictional means. Parallel to this, as a corrective measure for judges' discretion or omission, on October 29, 2013, Article 97b of the Federal Criminal Code was amended to give Mexico's president the faculty of granting a presidential pardon "when consistent indications exist of grave violations of the human rights of the sentenced individual." Based on this new attribution, President Enrique Peña Nieto pardoned Professor Alberto Patishtán on October 30 of last year. Although this was a just act, since the Tzotzil teacher had been sentenced to 30 years in prison for a crime he did not commit, it is cause for concern that in human rights matters, the judiciary is supplanting the legislative branch, and the executive branch is replacing the judiciary. In this scenario of the invasion of attributions of one branch by another, it should come as no surprise that the armed forces have recently demanded to carry out the functions of police and investigative duties in cases involving their work in the fight against organized crime; these duties correspond, in principle, both to public security institutions and attorneys general, and not to the army or the navy.

The ostensible shortcomings of police forces and attorneys general in guaranteeing the rights of the population, including those of migrants, to public safety within our borders, because of their inability to control organized crime or due to complicity with these organizations, does not justify the armed forces' taking over policing and prosecutorial tasks, much less the civilian population opting to form armed self-defense groups. Clearly, both phenomena are desperate reactions by the federal government and Mexican society, respectively, which, while understandable, are undesirable and even counter-productive. This is because, on the one hand, the idea is to legitimize what has already been shown to be the ineffective militarization of the fight against organized crime, often accompanied by constant human rights violations. On the other hand, the creation of armed groups of civilians brings into question the state monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, and also puts their members at risk, since they perform functions for which they are not prepared.

Outstanding among the recommendations about the rights of indigenous communities were those that favored actions to improve their indicators of well-being, particularly for the women and children.

Given this situation, the Mexican state must strengthen the national public security system and foster more effective collaboration with other governments to deploy on a regional, hemispheric, and global level a comprehensive fight against organized crime, which has expanded its illicit dealings from drug trafficking to contraband, human trafficking, kidnapping, and extortion.

As can be inferred from the recommendations to the Mexican delegation at the 2013 UPR, and as a result of the inconsistencies of the national strategy to protect human rights implemented until now, the challenges to the Mexican state in this field are diverse and of differing degrees of difficulty. Meanwhile, in response to those challenges, in October 2013, the president sent Congress five bills to strengthen human rights protection in the following areas: limiting state action in suspending rights, adjusting the crime of forced disappearance to international standards, avoiding discriminatory practices against military personnel with HIV/AIDS, withdrawing Mexico's reservations to different international treaties involving human rights, and regulating the procedure whereby the federal executive will be able to exercise its faculty of expelling foreigners from the country, restricting it to cases in which those individuals constitute a threat to national security or public order.[5]

Another bill sponsored by the president should be mentioned, sent during the same month, and which would establish equality in the electoral gender quota, by obliging political parties to ensure that 50 percent of their congressional candidates are women.

These bills are part of the 2013-2018 National Development Plan; it lists as its goal 1.5 the guarantee of respect and protection for human rights and the eradication of discrimination. To do that, it sets out the following strategies: imple-

The recommendation was also made that conditions be created so that those working in the fields of journalism and rights defense be able to do so without putting their lives at risk.

menting an over-arching, multi-administration government human rights policy; dealing with violence against little boys and girls and teens in all its forms; offering comprehensive services to victims of crimes, or those affected by them; and establishing a policy for equality and non-discrimination.

The very first line of action in the strategy to foster a multi-term government human rights policy consists of "establishing a program aimed at the promotion and defense of human rights, including civil, political, economic, social, cultural, and environmental rights."[6]

This comprehensive program will be developed and published in 2014, and it is to be hoped that the recommendations made to the Mexican delegation at the 2013 UPR will be accepted in due time, as well as incorporated into the specific goals of the program itself. If the 2013-2018 National Human Rights Program is coherently and effectively executed, Mexico can aspire to a substantive decrease in the rate of human rights violations and to guaranteeing a decent life for Mexican men and women. VM

Notes

[1] In 2009, the Mexican state received 91 recommendations during the first UPR round, of which it accepted 83. In 2013, it received 176, and in 2014 it will announce which ones it considers acceptable. The details of the recommendations to the Mexican delegation in October 2013 can be consulted in Spanish at "Examen periódico universal México. Recopilación de documentos sobre la segunda sesión del Examen periódico universal," http://epumexico.wordpress.com/, accessed November 27, 2013, and in English at http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/UPR/Pages/MXSession17.aspx.

[2] Yetlaneci Alcaraz, "México en Ginebra. El juego de la simulación," *Proceso* no. 1930, October 27, 2013, p. 50.

[3] "Otorga la SCJN rango constitucional a derechos humanos previstos en tratados internacionales," *Foro jurídico* no. 121, October 2013, p. 42.

[4] "Para proteger derechos humanos hay que armonizar leyes y convenios: Silva Meza," *La Jornada*, October 12, 2013, p. 11.

[5] "Envía Peña Nieto iniciativas de DH," *El Universal*, October 23, 2013, p. A14.

[6] Gobierno de la República, "Plan Nacional de Desarrollo 2013-2018," p. 110.

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Canada's Aboriginal Peoples Still a Pending Issue

Ruth A. Dávila Figueroa*

Chris Wattie/Reuters

According to James Anaya, United Nations special rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples, Canada is facing a crisis with regard to its aboriginal peoples. In October 2013, Anaya turned in a preliminary report on his visit to Canada, underlining the difficult living conditions they face.

> They live in conditions akin to those in countries that rank much lower and in which poverty abounds. At least one in five aboriginal Canadians live in homes in need of serious repair, which are often also overcrowded and contaminated with mould. The suicide rate among Inuit and First Nations youth on reserve, at more than five times greater than other Canadians, is alarming. Aboriginal women are eight times more likely to be murdered than non-indigenous women, and indigenous peoples face disproportionately high incarceration rates. The Canadian Human Rights Commission has consistently said that the conditions of aboriginal peoples make for the most serious human rights problem in Canada.[1]

Since 2011, Anaya has been very critical of Canada, pointing out that some peoples, like the Attawapiskat community, live without access to potable water, in windowless houses without sanitation, in conditions similar to those of a "Third World" country. It is difficult to imagine that in a country like Canada, positioned among the eight most prosperous and strongest economies of the world, with a long tradition of promoting and exercising human rights, equality, and demo-

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The Canadian Human Rights Commission has consistently said that the conditions of aboriginal peoples make for the most serious human rights problem in Canada.

cratic freedoms, these people live in conditions like those in Haiti, for example.

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis, The Aboriginal Peoples of Canada

In 2011, the aboriginal peoples represented 4.3 percent of Canada's entire population; the First Nations were the largest group, with 2.6 percent of the total population. According to Section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982, the aboriginal peoples are the First Nations, the Inuit, and the Métis. The First Nations are organized in 600 bands or communities. The Indian Act is the document that establishes the criteria about who has indigenous status. It stipulates that people can be indigenous with status or without status. The Métis are the product of the mixing of the first French and British colonizers and the indigenous peoples, although they have preserved their indigenous traditions and legacy. Lastly, the Inuit are the people pejoratively known as "Eskimos"; they live above all in Northern Canada and make their livelihood from fishing and hunting.

Most of the First Nations live in the province of Ontario and the Métis, in Alberta. Despite the fact that the First Nations only represent 2.6 percent of Canada's total population, this group is one of the most vulnerable: they are most exposed to violence, they have a hard time finding employment, and there is a growing wage gap *vis-à-vis* the rest of Canadians, etc. But the paradigmatic case is that of women and girls.

"We want some answers…"

In his recent visit to Canada, James Anaya expressed his concern about the homicides of aboriginal women in Canada and their vulnerability to violence. This is not a new issue for native women's organizations in Canada, nor for international human rights NGOs like Human Rights Watch (HRW) and Amnesty International (AI). In 2010, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) had documented 582 such cases nationally. Many happened between the 1960s and the 1990s, but 39 percent occurred after 2000, or about 20 a year.[2]

Aboriginal women are the most vulnerable to domestic violence and, in extreme cases, to homicide. Several reports by Canadian and international bodies that have studied the issue cite economic marginalization, prostitution, alcoholism, addictions, and racism as the causes of this risk.

One risk factor detected in these reports is that young native women frequently hitch-hike. In Northern British Columbia, a 724-kilometer stretch of road, known as the "Highway of Tears", has become infamous for the dozens of women and girls who have gone missing or been murdered in its vicinity.[3]

One interesting fact that these reports underline is the proclivity of law enforcement to abuse their authority, to drag their feet in looking for an aboriginal women or girl reported missing, and to have racist attitudes when handling complaints or requests for support by victims or their families.

> In ten towns across the north, in British Columbia, HRW documented Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) violations of the rights of indigenous women and girls: young girls pepper-sprayed and Tasered; a 12-year old girl attacked by a police dog; a 17-year-old punched repeatedly by an officer who had been called to help her; women strip-searched by male officers; and women injured due to excessive force used during arrest.[4]

The HRW report concludes, saying,

> the high rates of violence against indigenous women and girls have drawn widespread expressions of concern from national and international human rights authorities, which have repeatedly called for Canada to address the problem. But these calls for action have not produced sufficient change and indigenous women and girls continue to go missing or be murdered in unacceptably large numbers.[5]

Taking into account that since the 1970s aboriginal women and girls have been reported missing, we can say that Canadian authorities have shown a lack of determination to solve and vigorously respond to this situation. These cases evidence the racism prevalent in police institutions, but also those of both federal and provincial governments. They also show that the racism is not just systemic, but is also exer-

cised by one individual against another, and, in the specific case of attacks on aboriginal women, it is encouraged by the prejudice, for example, that says that these women are promiscuous.

The Colonial Legacy: Residential Schools and the 1960s Scoop

The Amnesty International report known as "Stolen Sisters" explains that the violence aboriginal women and girls are exposed and subjected to in Canada has strong roots in the colonial past. This legacy has resulted in the disintegration of families and identity crises, but also in the destruction of the mother cultures and tongues. "Colonialism, which has had a profoundly negative impact on Indigenous communities as a whole, has also affected the relations between Indigenous women and Indigenous men, and pushed many Indigenous women to the margins of their own cultures and Canadian society as a whole."[6]

The Canadian state has made efforts to maintain better relations with the aboriginal peoples through changes in the Indian Act. In addition, as James Anaya's preliminary report mentions, "Canada has adopted the goal of reconciliation, to repair the legacy of past injustices, and has taken steps toward that goal."[7] However, the road to the real exercise of rights and social justice still seems long.

The colonial legacy is mainly expressed in the residential schools and what in the 1960s was called "the 60s Scoop." In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Canada established what were known as residential schools. Their aim was the forced assimilation of the aboriginal peoples, more specifically of the First Nations, into Christian Anglo-Saxon culture. Many children were taken from their homes and culture and forced to adopt the lifestyles, language, and beliefs of the colonizers. Even today we can see the consequences of this loss of identity and feeling of belonging.[8]

In the 1940s and 1950s, the assimilationist model changed, turning toward integration. This new approach aimed at enrolling aboriginal children in provincial schools. In 1951, the federal government began a four-decade process of closing the residential schools.[9] However, in the 1960s, something happened called "the '60s Scoop": the highest numbers of adoptions took place in the decade of the 1960s, and in many instances, children were literally scooped from their homes and communities without the knowledge or consent of families and bands. Many First Nations charged that in many cases where consent was not given, government authorities and social workers acted under the colonialist assumption that native people were culturally inferior and unable to adequately provide for the needs of the children. Many First Nations people believe that the forced removal of the children was a deliberate act of genocide. Statistics from the Department of Indian Affairs reveal a total of 11 132 status Indian children adopted between the years of 1960 and 1990. It is believed, however, that the actual numbers are much higher than that. Of these children who were adopted, 70 percent were adopted into non-native homes.[10]

> Aboriginal women are the most vulnerable to domestic violence because of economic marginalization, prostitution, alcoholism, addictions, and racism.

First, through residential schools and a deliberate assimilationist policy, and later with integration policies in the framework of which indigenous children were placed in Anglo-Saxon, Christian "Canadian" homes, the identities, languages, and cultures of the aboriginal peoples then and now have been put in constant danger of disappearing and blurring. Nevertheless, in the 1960s and 1970s, the consciousness of Canada's aboriginal peoples began to undergo a change: mobilizations around demands for greater autonomy and the recognition of their identity, culture, and rights took on greater strength.

The 1960s and the Awakening of Indigenous Consciousness in Canada

Powerful social dynamics in the modern world stimulate the political mobilization of minorities. Three factors have made these tendencies possible. The first is demographic: in the past, many governments could hope or expect that minorities would simply disappear through death or inter-marital assimilation. Today, it is clear that that is not going to happen. To the contrary, they are the segment of the population that is growing the fastest in the countries where they live. The second factor is the human rights revolution and the development of awareness about these rights. Today, minority groups have the powerful conviction that they have the right to equality. The last

In the 1960s, in many instances, children were literally scooped from their homes and communities for adoption without the knowledge or consent of families and bands.

factor is that the consolidation of democracy limits the elites' ability to crush protest and dissident movements.

These three factors are linked to the increasing consciousness of Canada's aboriginal peoples and their constant demand for their rights, recognition, and respect for their traditions, culture, languages, and lands. But this is not something exclusive to them: it is a phenomenon visible the world over, and one result of it is that in 1989, Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in independent countries was signed. Canada did not sign and ratify it until 2007.

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples also came out in 2007, but Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia refused to sign it. It was not until 2010 that the Canadian state decided to sign, but at the same time making its position clear that the document was only aspirational, and, although it agreed with the spirit behind it, it did not share some of the stipulations on territorial rights, for example, arguing that they contravened Canada's constitutional framework.

The government of Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau responded to the mobilizations of aboriginal peoples and those of non-Anglo-Saxon or non-French migrant minorities in Canada with the Multiculturalism Act. In the 1970s, then, multiculturalism became official policy, but actually acquired legal status in 1982. Even though the aboriginal peoples were an important part of this process, the multicultural policies are more focused on channeling the demands for the recognition of the distinct identity of ethnic or "visible" minorities.

In 1990, the Oka Crisis took place: a 78-day standoff between Mohawk protesters, police, and army. At the heart of the crisis was the proposed expansion of a golf course and development of condominiums on disputed land that included a Mohawk burial ground. During the crisis, the federal government agreed to purchase the Pines in order to prevent further development. The golf course expansion and condominium construction were cancelled. After the crisis had ended, the government purchased a number of additional plots of land for the Kanesatake, but these Crown lands have not yet been transferred to the Kanesatake Mohawk.[11] This crisis showed that the tension between the aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state is ongoing. Its outstanding features are the demand for autonomy, sovereignty, the right to land ownership, and handling of natural resources in accordance with the interests of the aboriginal peoples.

James Anaya will not publish his final, extended report about the situation of the aboriginal peoples in Canada until sometime in 2014. What we can say now is that the situation of these peoples in one of the world's most prosperous economies is a matter for grave concern. When Anaya says that their condition is critical, it is sufficient to simply review the living conditions of any of these communities or glance through the AI and HRW reports on violence against women in them to see it. If Canada wants to continue being an example of democracy, freedom, and respect for human rights, it is time to take a moment and look at what it is doing and what it is not doing. That is why, as I point out in the title of this article, the issue of aboriginal peoples is still pending. VM

Notes

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[3] Human Rights Watch, *Those Who Take Us Away. Abusive Policing and Failures in Protection of Indigenous Women and Girls in Northern British Columbia, Canada,* 2013, http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/02/13/those-who-take-us-away, accessed in April 2013.

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[6] Amnesty International, "Canada's Stolen Sisters. A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence against Indigenous Women in Canada," http://www.amnesty.ca/sites/default/files/amr200032004enstolensisters.pdf, accessed in May 2013.

[7] Anaya, op. cit.

[8] See Carlos Gastélum, "Las escuelas residenciales para aborígenes desde una perspectiva sociológica," *Revista Mexicana de Estudios Canadienses* no. 011 (Summer), pp. 87-100, http://www.amec.com.mx/revista/011/04%20Las%20Escuelas%20Residenciales%20Para%20Aborigenes%2Desde%20Una%20Perspectiva%20Sociologica.pdf, accessed in February 2014.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Raven Sinclair, "The 60's Scoop," *Origins Canada. Supporting Those Separated by Adoption*, http://www.originscanada.org/aboriginal-resources/the-stolen-generation/, accessed in August 2013.

[11] See *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, "Oka crisis," http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/oka-crisis/, accessed in April 2012.

Seventy Years Of Mexican-Canadian Relations A Vision for the Future

Silvia Núñez García*

Following an Arabic proverb that says, "For every glance behind us, we have to look twice to the future," after 70 years it is imperative that Mexico and Canada take advantage of the opportunity to reflect on the journey we have taken together, pondering the achievements and difficulties that undoubtedly point to important commonalities between our two nations stemming from their vocation for peace and cooperation.

While the facts tell us that the economy and trade have been the areas that have concentrated our attention in our relations, from my perspective, the negotiations and entry into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) two decades ago show that the ties between us have become more complex because of the influence and visibility of new actors in the public sphere. These, together with government and business, have contributed since then to stimulating interaction in key areas like the academy and civil society organizations, not to mention the interaction among sub-national governments.

Allow me to mention that I am a hopeless optimist. This comes of working day to day with young people at Mexico's National Autonomous University, the largest public university in the country, with more than 300 000 students. This contact forces me to recognize the diligent critics of our bilateral relationship when they say that it has lost dynamism and to emphasize that the framework of institutional cooperation must go much further.

My comments will focus on looking at specific issues that illustrate a positive alliance between Mexico and Canada, as well as others that I think we should pay more attention to, regardless of any differences or those thrust upon us by the asymmetry in our development levels and the demographic contrasts between our countries.

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Larry Downing/Reuters

Everyone directly involved in strengthening relations between Mexico and Canada should be capable of "de-familiarizing the familiar and making familiar what is unknown."

In today's world, both our countries are known for their opposition to protectionism, their support for free trade, and particularly for their dedication to strengthening democratic governance. From this flows, among other things, the importance our respective governments give to access to information, and that we agree on the need to work together on issues of security and justice, to promote development, human rights, the protection of personal data, and cultural and educational exchange in order to achieve multilateral cooperation.

Based on constructive dialogue, it is important that all of us who are directly involved in strengthening relations between Mexico and Canada should be capable of "de-familiarizing the familiar and making familiar what is unknown," as the Polish scholar Zygmunt Bauman says. This means that, beyond agreements about the economy, trade, and politics,

deepening our social and cultural interaction is indispensable for continuing to cultivate trust between our nations.

The 2010-2012 Mexico-Canada Joint Action Plan has emphasized sustainable development of our economies as the model for fostering competitiveness (agribusiness, human capital, trade, investment and innovation, energy, the environment, and labor mobility). But clearly, given the relevance for improving the well-being of the population of both countries, issues like public health and gender equality should be pushed forward through many more actions than those carried out until now.

In this vein, Canada's collaboration can be particularly significant in helping to close the gender gap in Mexico. Just as an illustration, we should note that Canada occupied eleventh place on the 2012 Human Development Index and Mexico, sixty-first. In terms of the Gender Inequality Index, Canada is in eighteenth place and Mexico, seventy-second.[1] Our respective teen fertility rates were 11.3 for Canada and 65.5 for Mexico. In 2012, Canada's legislature included 28 women and Mexico's, 36. In terms of women in the work force, by 2011, almost 62 out of every 100 Canadian women had a job outside the home and in Mexico, that number was 44.3.

I would like to insert a parenthetical comment here: opening the way for promoting the study of Canada in Mexico has been a rocky, but highly gratifying road. At the Center for Research on North America, we have never ceased our efforts to broaden and strengthen our research projects about Canada, recognizing their structural weaknesses 19 years ago when we began. We have designed mechanisms to systematically evaluate our progress and have managed to carry out 25 academic activities over the last four years linked to initiatives that include the study of Canada as one of their crosscutting themes.

We came to understand how important our relationship with Canada is, and we are convinced that only with a long-term vision will the seed we have planted bloom.

The emphasis we have put on the study of Canada includes research, teaching, and dissemination. This has been thanks to several factors, among them our successful efforts to obtain funds from the Canadian government through the Development Program Grant during 2010 and 2011, which gave us the opportunity to enjoy the participation of several renowned Canadian academics. Another factor is the trust placed in us by the former Canadian ambassador to Mexico, Guillermo E. Rishchynski, and current Ambassador Sara Hradecky, who have participated directly in some of our activities. The CISAN was also favored with the collaboration of the film-maker, the Honorable Jean-Daniel Lafond, who headed the forum "The Importance of Art and Diversity in Contemporary Society," co-organized with the Canadian Embassy in late 2009 in the framework of the official visit to Mexico of then-Governor General Michaëlle Jean.

Opening the way for the study of Canada in Mexico has been a rocky, but highly gratifying road. At the CISAN we have never ceased our efforts to broaden and strengthen our research projects about that country.

Without any doubt, allowing our audience of professors and students to get to know these public figures has been very stimulating both for them and for all of us.

Based on our experience, we have been able to verify that, despite its contradictions, NAFTA sparked the interest of Mexico's researchers, professors, and students in learning more and thinking more about Canada in the framework of the agreement. This was decisive in multiplying intellectual exchanges with our Canadian peers, who felt the same way. It is in this context that, with the support of the Canadian Embassy, our institution created the Margaret Atwood and Gabrièlle Roy Chair in Canadian Cultural Studies. The chair has created a space of academic excellence to foster high-level teaching and interdisciplinary research, where literary issues and reflection about the transcendence of translation have been the outstanding notes. However, the sharpening of today's economic crisis has surprised us with Canada's distancing itself from the model of cultural diplomacy that used to characterize it. We think that both our governments should go back to that model as one of the strategic axes for re-launching our bilateral relationship.

Because culture includes language, for the new generations of Mexicans, learning English is one of our educational system's priorities, not only because of its importance in today's knowledge society, but also because speaking it will strengthen our ability to interact with our northern neighbors. Promoting the learning of Spanish based on our geographical proximity, together with the growing number of Spanish-speaking immigrants in Canada, gives us a glimpse of the horizons for bridging the language gap.

In a global world characterized by increasing insecurity, Mexico and Canada are forced to face the challenge of deepening our ties in the search of mutually beneficial answers.

It is here that it is essential to bolster education as a key for building the future. Today, Canada is one of the three main destinations for Mexican tertiary-level students, after the United States and Spain.

Let us not forget, however, that motivating young people is no simple task. That is why we should continually ask ourselves what capacities we must reinforce in teachers and professors at the secondary and tertiary level so that the young people of Mexico and Canada can grow to truly know each other. What tools do we already have to do this, and what others should we create together?

If we take into account that the dynamics of our era are stamped with the velocity of events, of the visual media, and with how we can not only move from place to place, but even communicate instantaneously, using a kind of micro-language (Twitter), we have to recognize that we are experiencing a scientific-technological and cultural revolution. Some thinkers today are already warning that the new generations tend to disregard the past, defining themselves mainly by the road they want to take, but without asking themselves where they came from and how it is they arrived where they are.

From this stems the importance of returning to the historical significance of our bilateral relationship, beyond these seven decades, taking the moment to propose that this task be carried out by a bi-national research team. With more joint educational, research, and dissemination projects, we will contribute to creating synergies among the new generations. Even though they come from different cultural milieus, they will be nourished through their interaction to move toward building empathy.

Reclaiming this shared history, regardless of its length, and knowing the history of the "other" situates us at the center of humanist thought. As a result, those of us who have the good fortune of being able to contribute to the formative education of young people interested in the study of international relations in general and, in particular, in the ties between Mexico and Canada, have the obligation to fight ignorance of the past, since it is not only the result of a lack of information, but of indifference. This makes it essential that we move ahead toward a future that must be better than what we have known before.

Mexico and Canada undoubtedly have unfinished business in terms of exploring new formulas and stepping up our commitments, forging a strategy so that the new generations of both countries can learn about the "other" and understand each other better. More scholarships for students or new internship programs will always be important, but never enough to solve the imbalances between the two countries if they are not accompanied by policies that encourage a larger number of young Canadians to go to study in Mexico and guarantee that Mexican or Canadian talent can swell the ranks of the human capital Mexico needs for its development.

Nevertheless any plan for continuing to positively broaden our relationship has to take into account the United States, since geography, trade, and human mobility have accelerated our interdependence in many ways, many of which are irreversible. However, it is worthwhile underlining the premise that the relationship that is celebrating its seventh decade has one fundamental attribute in this context: the boon of having arisen without being darkened by the shadows of power and domination of one over the other, or the shadows of resentment or discrimination.

Mexicans and Canadians share common values like hard work and solidarity and are foreordained by our proximity to be unable to turn our backs to each other.

Congratulations are in order because Mexico and Canada find themselves at a decisive moment to be able to deepen relations in the framework of such a significant anniversary. Regardless of the agreements that the leaders of both countries, Enrique Peña Nieto and Stephen Harper come to, Canadian and Mexican societies must demand firm steps forward toward the construction of prosperity. And we must also not forget, as Willy Brandt said, that "international cooperation is too important to leave it exclusively in the hands of governments." VM

Mexico and Canada undoubtedly have unfinished business in terms of exploring new formulas and stepping up our commitments, so that the new generations of both countries can learn about the "other" and understand each other better.

NOTES

[1] Table 4: Gender Inequality Index, UNDP, https://data.undp.org/dataset/Table-4-Gender-Inequality-Index/pq34-nwq7, accessed February 12, 2014.

Impacts of the Drug War On Mexico's Image in Canada

Camelia Tigau*
Berenice Fernández Nieto**

Peter Andrews/Reuters

Introduction

Mexico and Canada are celebrating 70 years of diplomatic relations in 2014. Official bilateral diplomacy concerns issues such as commerce, cooperation as NAFTA partners, and migration. Since 2004, the two countries have also been participants in the Canada-Mexico Partnership, meant to strengthen cooperation between the public and private sectors.

Approximately 1.8 million Canadians visit Mexico and 130 000 Mexicans visit Canada every year. Mexican residents in Canada are estimated to number 80 000, while around 50 000 Canadians live permanently in Mexico.[1] Due to the intense movement of tourists and working people between the two countries, it is important to analyze Mexico's image in Canada, something we consider influences the migratory flow between them, as well as their bilateral commercial relations and potential direct investment.

This article is based on a study of Canadian media in 2012 and 2013, in which we looked for news and features related to Mexico. To interpret the results, we will introduce the reader to the concept of the image of country of origin and recall the political events in Mexico that may help explain our findings, particularly government policy on the war on drugs. Our purpose is to reflect on the relationship between the Mexico's image abroad, its bilateral relations, and, possibly, the need to improve that image through public diplomacy.

State Branding

The image of the country of origin, a concept used in international relations since the 1960s, may be seen as a generic construction made up of general images not only of repre-

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sentative products, but also of the level of a country's political and economic maturity, historical background, foreign relations, culture and traditions, technological development, and level of industrialization, among other factors, according to Roth and Diamantopoulos.[2] The construction of the country-of-origin image includes a *cognitive* element, referring to consumers' belief in a certain country, but also to an *affective* one, referring to the emotional value that country has for the international public.

In an international environment where ordinary people are becoming more and more important,[3] there is increasing interest in networking people and territories. In this respect, the media are an important tool of soft power, and they play a vital role in building the image not only of people, but also of territories and countries.

In his work, Peter van Ham teaches us that in a world loaded with information, images and strong state brands are important for attracting foreign direct investment, recruiting talent, and exercising political power. Therefore, having a bad reputation or no reputation is a serious impediment for countries seeking global competitiveness. This results in an increasing importance of public diplomacy and image construction. According to Van Ham, in the short run, the state will have become ® *The State*.

If we understand a brand as the idea consumers have about a product, state branding refers to the international public's ideas about a certain country. According to Van Ham's state branding theory,[4] Mexico and Canada are no longer simply countries that one sees on a map. Mexico and Canada have now turned into "brand states," whose geographical and political contexts seem trivial when compared to the emotional resonance they produce in public opinion.

The War on Drugs in Mexico

Only 11 days into the Mexican presidency in 2006, Felipe Calderón Hinojosa initiated a most worrisome war on drugs. Calderón thought that this "fight for the security of the Mexican people" would solve the legitimacy problems he had when he took office.[5] While at the beginning of his term, his approval ratings rose from 54 percent to 64 percent in four months,[6] by the end, his drug policy was generally disapproved. This was due to the fact that not only did the "war" take place between drug dealers and the authorities, but it also involved an important part of the civilian population. As some drug dealers were displaced, the number of kidnappings and street fights rose. During Calderón's years in office, crime levels went up so much that some journalists compared Mexico to Iraq in terms of the number of deaths. After the first year of the "National Agreement on Security, Justice, and Legality" (2006-2007), 8 867 murders were reported, a number that grew to a total of 121 683 by the end of his mandate, according to the National Geography and Statistics Institute (INEGI).[7]

The war on drugs negatively affected Mexico's image, changing it from a country perceived as an important tourist destination to somewhere unsafe, where the rule of law no longer prevailed.

His strategy was widely criticized on a political and social level. The media reported about the consequences of his policy in terms of a climate of violence and insecurity nationwide. For President Felipe Calderón, this strategy was necessary to eliminate crime organizations in the country. Nevertheless, many regions saw severe changes in the population's life style in order to deal with the climate of insecurity, including the need to migrate domestically or abroad. As a matter of fact, it was in this context that Mexico became the first country of origin for asylum seekers in Canada, some of them truly based on this context of violence.[8]

The war on drugs negatively affected Mexico's image, changing it from a country perceived as an important tourist destination to somewhere unsafe, where the rule of law no longer prevailed. As a matter of fact, important international media considered the agreement a military failure.[9]

Therefore, we offer here an analysis of what we consider to be the impact of the war on drugs on Mexico's image in Canada, based on data from 2012 and 2013.

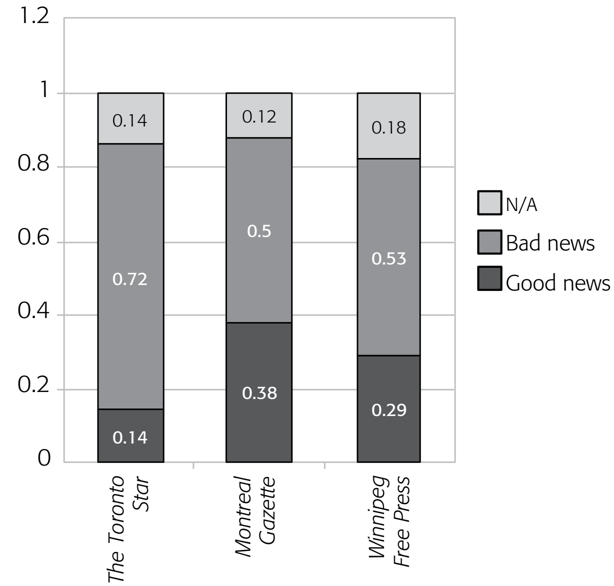
Media Study

Our study consists of a content analysis of three important Canadian newspapers, where we looked for articles involving Mexico between January 1, 2012 and April 31, 2013. We examined 68 articles found in three regional papers: *The Toronto Star* (43), *Montreal Gazette* (8), and *Winnipeg Free Press* (17). We analyzed the proportion of good vs. bad news about Mexico as well as the most frequent topics in these publications. In general bad news (65 percent) prevails over good news

(21 percent) (see Figure 1). Some opinion pieces, analysis, and news may also be interpreted as good or bad according to the readers' opinions; these categorized as "Not applicable" (N/A).

When analyzing the proportion of good vs. bad news, we found that *The Toronto Star* is the most negative of the three, with 72 percent of bad news (see Figure 1). The *Montreal Gazette* is the most positive, but also the one that publishes the least about Mexico, an interesting point, as this paper belongs to the Francophone region. The *Winnipeg Free Press* offers an intermediate position, with 53 percent of bad news versus 29 percent of good. This comparison could be interpreted as Mexico having a worse image in English-speaking Canada (Ontario and Manitoba) than in the French-speaking part (Quebec), a hypothesis that must be confirmed by other studies.

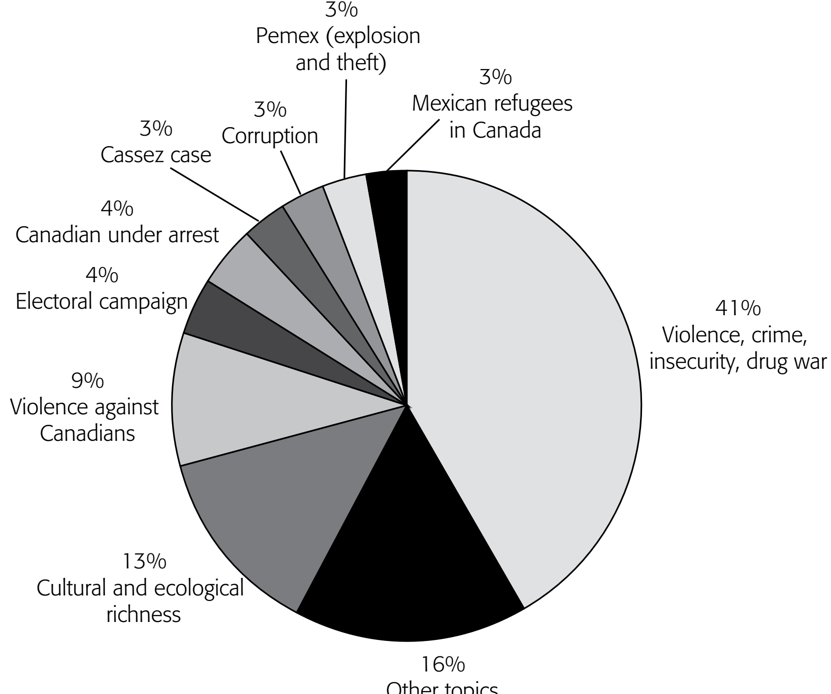
FIGURE 1
PERCENTAGE OF GOOD NEWS VS. BAD NEWS FOR EACH CANADIAN PUBLICATION



THE MOST COMMON TOPICS

Different regions in Canada seem to choose news in Mexico according to their particular interests. *The Toronto Star* emphasizes the issues of violence and the drug war; violence experienced by Canadians in Mexico; the violent political

FIGURE 2
THE MOST FREQUENT TOPICS ABOUT MEXICO IN CANADIAN NEWSPAPERS*



*__Note:__ approximate percentages.

atmosphere in Mexico; as well as the country's cultural and ecological wealth.

The *Montreal Gazette* focuses on Mexican refugees, and specifically on the deportation of drug-war refugees and the Harper policy in this area, but also on Mexico's cultural and ecological wealth.

Again, for the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the most important topics seem to be the same positive one (Mexico's cultural and ecological wealth), but also the case of a Canadian under arrest in Mexico and the war on drugs (see Figure 2).

We observe that almost half the news about Mexico in Canada, that is, 41 percent, refers to issues of violence, crime, insecurity, drug traffic, and the murder of journalists in the context of the war on drugs. If we sum up the news items that refer to the violence experienced by Canadians in Mexico, the third most common type, we see that half of the news refers directly to violence. This leads us to think that the sun-beach-and-mariachi stereotype that used to be Mexico's image has been replaced by the perception of it as a violent, unappealing place. Just to compensate for this general image, the second most important topic is Mexico's cultural and ecological wealth, an issue to be explored by Mexican government diplomacy.

Research on how this type of image affects the exchange of people and goods between Mexico and Canada is still to be developed. It is a topic worth discussing: Does image determine relations between countries, or is it the other way around? VM

NOTES

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[3] Peter van Ham, *Social Power in International Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 2010).

[4] Peter van Ham, "The Rise of the Brand State: The Postmodern Politics of Image and Reputation," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 80, no. 5, Sept.-Oct. 2001, p. 2.

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[9] "*Le Monde*: La guerra contra el narco en México es 'mortífera,'" ADN*Polí tico*, August 23, 2012, http://www.adnpolitico.com/2012/2012/08/23/le -monde-en-mexico-el-conflicto-mas-mortifero-en-el-mundo.

The North American Booklets

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Globalization and Other Acts of Violence
Power and Death in the Contemporary Mexican-Sinaloan Novel

Miguel A. Cabañas*

This essay analyzes how urban violence is depicted in two Sinaloan novels. Both *Efecto Tequila* (Tequila Effect) (Tusquets, 2004), by Élmer Mendoza (b. Culiacán, 1949), and *Mi nombre es Casablanca* (My Name is Casablanca) (Mondadori, 2003), by Juan José Rodríguez (b. Mazatlán, 1970) provide a local setting for the symbolic transnational globality that leads to an unexpected outcome of a conflict or enigma. These books analyze critically the "conventions of globalization," as defined by literary critic Jean Franco,[1] and establish collective symbolic metaphors about the dangers of the neoliberal order and its historical links to oppression in Latin America. As another critic, Néstor García Canclini, suggests with regard to recent Latin American films, these novels make us recall the daily fascism and social decay in Latin America;[2] and, while flirting with the crime and spy movie genre, they also show us how the commercialization of life has led to the commercialization of death.

Mendoza and Rodríguez are both writers comfortable writing about a regional space while clearly also renowned in national and transnational markets. In the early twenty-first century, regional literature has become transnational, perhaps in the search for readers who understand the north of Mexico as an in-between region for the cultural centers of Los Angeles and Mexico City's Federal District. This literature is located in the realm of collective conflicts involving several countries: in the case of *Efecto Tequila*, Argentina, Spain, and Mexico; in *Mi nombre es Casablanca,* Colombia, Mexico, and the United States.

These novels show how the normal existence of local spaces is disrupted by globalization, and how local spaces become globalized. Signs of neoliberal interventions in this space can be found in the tropes and plots that revive the "globalization thriller," a phrase used by Néstor García Canclini,[3] imbuing it with a new semantic meaning within new local micro-narratives. These novels could be said to constitute cultural experiments that criticize neoliberalism and raise our awareness, sometimes literally or metaphorically, of how this system rearranges local communities and how the apparent transparency of the socioeconomic model is murkier than commonly believed. As Francine Masiello explains,

> Art and literature . . . force us to think of interpretative resistance, interrogating the past and leading to a politics of cognition with which to move toward the future. Against the marketed package of "ready-made" cultural products and ideas that neoliberalism places at our disposal, the cultural experiment provokes forms of thinking that move toward alternative frameworks for apprehending social forms.[4]

In this way, Masiello rescues the value of art and literature —historically rejected by Latin American subalternists,[5] who belittle them and are overly zealous in their endorsement of testimony and its sociopolitical interventions. It can be said that in Mexico, at least, the emergence of genres of popular literature becomes stronger in neoliberalism with a view to solving current sociopolitical enigmas. The best examples would be in the detective or crime novel, as referred to by Tijuana writer Federico Campbell in his book *Máscara*

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negra: crimen y poder (Black Mask: Crime and Power),[6] with important authors such as Paco Ignacio Taibo II, Daniel Sada, Élmer Mendoza, Gabriel Trujillo Muñoz, and Eduardo Antonio Parra. Also, in Mexico there is an abundance of stories resulting from investigations that reflect on the past and present to disentangle the reality of impunity. One outstanding example of these texts is *Huesos del desierto* (Bones of the Desert), in which Sergio González Rodríguez denounces the deaths of the women of Ciudad Juárez. We also have the investigative journalism of Jesús Blancornelas and Anabel Hernández, as well as the anthology *Nuevas líneas de investigación: 21 relatos sobre la impunidad* (New Lines of Investigation: 21 Stories of Impunity), criticizing the justice system as well as the state's multinational policy and its consequences for citizens.[7]

Élmer Mendoza's *Efecto Tequila* tells the story of Elvis Alezcano, a Sinaloan spy with the Mexican secret service, the CISEN, who is dismissed with the end of the Cold War. Alezcano is involved in recovering stolen cars and dismantling networks of Mexican car thieves when he is enlisted by a former boss to help investigate the connection between the fraudulent collection of the "Single Vehicle Registration," or RUV tax, with an organization whose members include torturers and high-ranking officials from Argentina's Dirty War, and who are apparently on the verge of launching another coup d'état in their home country. The novel's title, *Efecto Tequila*, is the term used by Argentineans for the peso devaluation in 1995 during Ernesto Zedillo's presidency (1994-2000) and coincides with the deepest ever economic and political crisis to have hit Mexico, one that also affected Argentina. As a result, neoliberal agendas accelerated in both countries, resulting in the privatization of state companies, tax hikes, and reduced public expenditure. In Mexico, NAFTA entered into force on January 1, 1994, on exactly the same day as the Zapatista rebellion began, and was followed shortly afterwards by the assassination of Mexico's presidential candidate, Luis Donaldo Colosio, on March 23, 1994.

Another crisis also took root: people lost trust in the country's politics and economy. Subsequently Raúl Salinas de Gortari, brother of former President Carlos Salinas (1988-1994), was imprisoned for his involvement in illegal activities in the banking sector and for his ties to drug traffickers. For its part, the DEA accused Carlos Salinas of collaborating with his brother. This scenario of corruption and the PRI government's crisis provided the context of greater neoliberal deregulation, and Presidents Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado (1982-1988) and Carlos Salinas de Gortari could be said to be the masterminds behind this move toward market liberalization and privatization.

> Through a kitsch parody,
> the injustices of Mexico, here embodied
> by the vehicle registration tax, are interwoven
> with networks of global meanings for
> the reader to reflect on neoliberal realities
> from an ironical and satirical perspective.

With his title, therefore, Élmer Mendoza inserts the narrative in the period of Carlos Salinas's rabidly neoliberal rule, and the novel recreates elements applicable equally to Mexico and Argentina. In *Efecto Tequila*, the group that tortures and escapes justice by committing crimes against civil rights are the owners of neoliberal capital. I quote a passage describing the military assassins: "They're all filthy rich. They own fleets of merchant vessels, car dealerships across the hemisphere, car-theft insurance agencies in 18 Latin American countries, restaurants, hotels, three factories of military uniforms, gas stations."[8] Mendoza sets most of the novel in Argentina, revealing the connection between the military, responsible for the murder of 30 000 people who resisted the repressive dictatorial policy, and magnates, both legal and illegal, in control of transnational businesses.

Former agent Elvis Alezcano is in charge of finding evidence against them to put an end to their plotting in Argentina and Mexico. Therefore, the destinies of both countries appear linked. This crossover between illegitimate power and economic power at a transnational level lays bare the irreconcilable irony of neoliberal capitalism. As Jean and John Comaroff have remarked, "Neoliberal capitalism, in its millennial moment, portends the death of politics by hiding its own ideological underpinnings in the dictates of economic efficiency: in the fetishism of the free market, in the inexorable, expanding 'needs' of business, in the imperatives of science and technology."[9] Therefore, one could say that Mendoza's novel exposes the overlapping mechanisms of the repressive past in the hemisphere (dirty wars and military dictatorships) and the "benign" present —quote marks intended— of neoliberal trade liberalization.

Through a kitsch parody of this *culichi* James Bond —"*culichi*" is a nickname for people from Culiacán—, the injustices of Mexico, here embodied by the RUV tax, are interwoven with networks of global meanings for the reader to reflect on neoliberal realities from an ironical and satirical perspective. We have,

therefore, a parody of the investments made by Mexicans in Argentina, a contemporary reality at the time of the novel and applicable to present-day Argentina as a result of the crisis.

While Alezcano is working undercover, as a "trade and investment officer" for the Mexican embassy in Argentina, another character tells him, "I'm glad you were posted here, there are lots of *paisanos* looking to invest in Argentina and who need up-to-date information." This is his reply:

> Information is my thing, Alezcano said with a smile, We'll fill the pampas with factories producing tamales and candied sweet potatoes, and install cannabis irrigation systems; we'll plant fields from Córdova to Río Negro, it grows like a weed. It's good that you're not losing your sense of humor, but seriously now, big money in Mexico is ready to invest in Argentina. . . . [Argentina] is a nation with a history of consumption.[10]

Elvis's joke refers to the export of local and historical Mexican industries, particularly the *culichi* specialty of marihuana. The image of the tamale factory and fields in the pampa planted with cannabis is not only for comic effect: it unveils the mechanisms of neoliberalism and the lack of market logic.

Mendoza introduces our main character with expert knowledge of commercials or ads that crop up throughout the novel when least expected. While spying on a Spanish judge in Madrid, Alezcano reads the newspaper and thinks, "Tell me which ads you like, and I'll tell you who you are: you wear a Patek Phillipe, drink Soberano, wear Armani or Carolina Herrera, whoa! whaddaya know, Vargas Llosa, I've read that dude."[11] Our consumption defines our identity. This eliminates history from the discourse that clashes with the unofficial history which in turn progressively unravels as the novel progresses, through the connection between the dirty war and neoliberal capitalism.

The insertion of advertisements at surprising moments in the narrative also draws our attention to the presence of multinational capitalism in Mexico and in the Americas. Other examples in the novel include the slogans: "Soy totalmente Palacio" (I'm totally Palacio);[12] "De Tijuana a Yucatán usan sombreros Tardán" (From Tijuana to Yucatán, everyone wears Tardán hats);[13] "La línea aérea que va donde quiera" (The airline that goes where ever it wants);[14] "Todo mundo tiene un Jetta, al menos en la cabeza" (Everyone has a Jetta, at least in their head);[15] "Con Pepsi sí" (With Pepsi, *sí*);[16] "A que no puedes comer sólo una" (Bet you can't eat just one);[17] "Tómalo con calma, tómalo con leche" (Take it easy, drink milk);[18] "Nacidos Ford, nacidos fuertes" (Born Ford, born strong);[19] "Yo sin Klínex no puedo vivir" (I can't live without Kleenex);[20] "Esta navidad, Presidente estará presente" (This Christmas, Presidente will be present);[21] "Es caro, pero creo que lo valgo" (It's expensive, but I think I'm worth it).[22] These and other advertising slogans appear with an underlying tension given the background of repression. They set the scene of a utopian consumer community, since these products apparently confirm the individual's life and freedom, at the exact same moment that the Dirty War is being waged. In that sense, the mention of the document *Nunca más* (Never Again), unstitches the fabric of utopia woven by multinational companies both in Argentina and in Mexico:[23]

> While Mendoza's novel intertwines the Dirty War with the neoliberal order, Rodríguez's book tackles the issue of drug trafficking, something that cannot be disassociated with the capitalist development of our era.

> Sharing's good. Do you remember Up With the People and their ad for Coke?: "I'd like to build the world a home and furnish it with love, grow apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtle doves," Elvis clambers up onto the cornice, "That's what you get for running around with fundamentalists. . . . Running away is the best thing about spying, having someone chasing you to save the world or to destroy it. And you with balls like the Uyuyuy bird. Dying in Madrid is not part of my plan".[24]

The timing of this image of the Coca-Cola advertisement of a peace-and-love-filled world makes the situation heavily ironic, since Elvis is being hunted down to be killed. The slogan juxtaposes and exposes the deceit. It should be pointed out that the novel has no communist or Marxist bias, however. Irony is used by contrasting the advertising and narrative discourses, although everything takes place in the hippie world inhabited by Elvis's parents, portrayed as a less formulaic, alternative space of cultural consumption (drugs, music).

While Élmer Mendoza's novel intertwines the Dirty War with the neoliberal order, Juan José Rodríguez's book tackles the issue of drug trafficking, something that cannot be disassociated with the capitalist development of our era. As Adalberto Santana has stated,

> I consider that the premise of the demand for drugs in our consumer economy of the late twentieth century and at the start of the third millennium is a particular feature of the capitalist development of our era. To me, it seems that the use of drugs around the world, and particularly in developed countries such as the United States, has prompted a form of capital accumulation in a globalized world and marketplace.[25]

As suggested by sociologist Luis Astorga, economic and political power is not disconnected from the creation of illegal trade networks; hence in Mexico we have "narco-liberalism."[26] According to Astorga, this "narco-liberalism is sanctioned by the legal structure with the legitimate monopoly over establishing the rules of the game," but is not eliminated because of its economic, "entrepreneurial" power.[27] Federico Campbell has also reached the conclusion that "the mafia is a system of informal, secret government within the state, and its tolerated existence and complicity give cohesion to the whole power structure and oil its machinery."[28] Therefore, it is hardly surprising that Rodríguez presents us with the ambiguous position of the Mexican drug trafficker in a society with free-market values.

In *Mi nombre es Casablanca*, after the murder of a number of close associates of an important drug trafficker from Mazatlán, the novel develops along the well-known plot lines of a series of revenge killings by rival narco groups. However, the story radically changes track when it turns into a struggle over the control over drug markets by a major league Colombian drug trafficker who plans his killings using chess moves as a metaphor for control and power. He starts by killing the daughter of the Sinaloan narco, then the racehorse of another, then two bricklayers, or pawns, and so on. The murderer's character is based on a real-life drug trafficker

If we look at some of today's cultural offerings, we realize that popular aesthetic and sociological reflections are inspired by this dark world of legal and illegal magnates.

nicknamed "The Chess Player,"[29] who embodies the greed of the neoliberal market with the resulting network of metaphors: the Mexican kingpin is a businessman or, as he says later, "The Wall Street of drugs," equating the illegal drug trade to lucrative free-market enterprise. This is the context in which the Colombian drug lord strategically sparks a bloody conflict between his fellow Sinaloan drug traffickers to take them out of the global game.

The novel begins with a sketch of the game being played in the drug war and in corruption. According to detective Luis Marsella, "A thief who steals from thieves has been a son-of-a-bitch for a hundred years. Right then my instinct told me to move my pieces. You don't need to move every piece you touch. In this business, you need to know when to back off. You've got to make the right moves in this game."[30] Of course, the detective is incorruptible, although he does occasionally think about taking part in the illegal game.

From the outset, events are compared to the story of the Italian mafia. In the first chapter, the police talk about *The Godfather* and one of them tells Marsella that "Sicily is not that different from Sinaloa."[31] The detective inserts a paradoxical story of Elliot Ness and Al Capone in the narrative, saying that while Ness "died of alcoholism and racked with doubt . . . Capone knew that only a tiny fraction of his liquor had been confiscated and he felt quite safe with his connections with politicians and the police. In fact, he was only in prison a short time. Syphilis was his real enemy; that's what sent him to his grave."[32] This reflects an attitude that runs counter to the hypocrisy observed in the so-called War on Drugs. The book shows how drugs are caught up in a tangled web of legality and illegality, politics (not only including politicians but also the Church, the media and the police) and poverty, the economy (tourism, agriculture, construction, table dance bars, etc.), and crime.

The Sicilian mafia therefore provides a perfect historical template with which to explain this complex scenario: first, Marsella receives a death threat that will be carried out unless he abandons his investigation, and then when they kill

Many novels or pieces
of investigative journalism place drug trafficking
within a broader context of the disappearing
role of the national state, transnationalization,
and the disintegration of citizen ethics.

a table dancer he is involved with, solving the crime becomes personal for him.

A Sort of Conclusion

If we look at some of today's cultural offerings, including literature, *narco corridos* or drug ballads, and Mexican films, we realize that popular aesthetic and sociological reflections are inspired by this dark world of legal and illegal magnates. In other words, the *narco corrido*, as in many novels or pieces of investigative journalism, gives rise to readings, interpretations, and complexities that place drug trafficking within a broader context of the disappearing role of the national state, transnationalization, the disintegration of citizen ethics, and its replacement by the principles of the marketplace, the commercialization of life and death, and the negotiation of transnational power. In these novels, spies find global meanings and local detectives learn to live with the ambiguities of drug traffickers who live their lives in and out of "glocal" legality —to use the term coined by García Canclini.

Both Élmer Mendoza and Juan José Rodríguez show Sinaloa as an in-between area among the global spaces through which power and money flow. These novels show how external and internal forces transform local or marginal areas and also how, on a more powerful level, the local or marginal, once centralized, become that counter-hegemonic narrative that rediscovers the "interweaving" and flows between the legal and illegal world in the neoliberal shadow. The conventions of globalization, as suggested by Jean Franco, not only comprise hired assassins or *sicarios*, but also neoliberal magnates, assassins embedded within the state's monopoly of force, and drug traffickers with global ambitions. VM

Further Reading

Monsiváis, Carlos, "El narcotráfico y sus legiones," *Viento rojo: diez historias del narco en México* (Mexico City: Plaza y Janés, 2004), pp. 9-44.

Palacio Castañeda, Germán, *Globalizaciones, Estado y narcotráfico* (Santa Fé de Bogotá: Universidad Nacional de Colombia/Facultad de Derecho, Ciencias Políticas y Sociales, Universidad de Investigaciones Jurídico-Sociales y Políticas "Gerardo Molina"/Instituto para el Desarrollo de la Democracia "Luis Carlos Galán," 1998).

Notes

[1] Jean Franco, *The Decline and Fall of the Lettered City: Latin America in the Cold War* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[2] See Néstor García Canclini, *Latinoamericanos buscando lugar en este siglo* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2002), p. 80.

[3] Ibid., p. 13.

[4] Francine Masiello, *The Art of Transition: Latin American Culture and Neoliberal Crisis* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 13.

[5] The subalternists are a group of cultural critics who support post-colonial theories and their stance on issues such as power, literature, and the West. In his book *Against Literature*, John Beverly refers to literature as an institution that oppresses the subaltern.

[6] Federico Campbell, *Máscara negra: Crimen y poder* (Mexico City: Joaquín Mortiz, 1995).

[7] Martín Solares, comp., *Nuevas líneas de investigación: 21 relatos sobre la impunidad* (Mexico City: ERA, 2003). [Editor's Note.]

[8] Élmer Mendoza, *Efecto Tequila* (México: Tusquets, 2004), p. 126.

[9] Jean and John Comaroff, eds., *Millenial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2001), p. 31.

[10] Mendoza, op. cit., pp. 116-117.

[11] Ibid., p. 50.

[12] Ibid., p. 13. This refers to the prestigious Mexican department store, El Palacio de Hierro. [Editor's Note.]

[13] Ibid., p. 16.

[14] Ibid., p. 18. In allusion to an Aeroméxico slogan in the 1970s, the text of which was actually "La línea aérea que va para arriba" (The airline that's on the way up). [Editor's Note.]

[15] Ibid., p. 46.

[16] Ibid., p. 52.

[17] Ibid., p. 58. Slogan of a well-known brand of potato chips. [Editor's Note.]

[18] Ibid., p. 67.

[19] Ibid., p. 80.

[20] Ibid., p. 90.

[21] Ibid., p. 132. "Presidente" refers to the trade name of an extremely popular Mexican brandy, with political overtones referring to the supposed omnipotence of the PRI presidents prior to the 2000 transition. [Editor's Note.]

[22] Ibid., p. 205. Advertising slogan for a hair dye. [Editor's Note.]

[23] This refers to the document produced by the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (Conadep) about the victims of the dictatorship in Argentina. See http://www.desaparecidos.org/arg/conadep/nuncamas/nuncamas.html. [Editor's Note.]

[24] Ibid., p. 75. "Hay que compartir" (Sharing's good) is the refrain of this slogan in Spanish version. [Editor's Note.]

[25] Adalberto Santana, *El narcotráfico en América Latina* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI, 2004), p. 9.

[26] Luis Alejandro Astorga Almanza, *Mitología del "narcotraficante" en México* (Mexico City: Plaza y Valdés, 1995), p. 31.

[27] Ibid., pp. 31-32.

[28] Federico Campbell, *La invención del poder* (Mexico City: Aguilar, 2001), p. 112.

[29] Gilberto Rodríguez Orejuela, who belonged to the Cali cartel, was known as "El ajedrecista," or The Chess Player. He was captured in 1995 in Colombia and extradited to the United States in 2004.

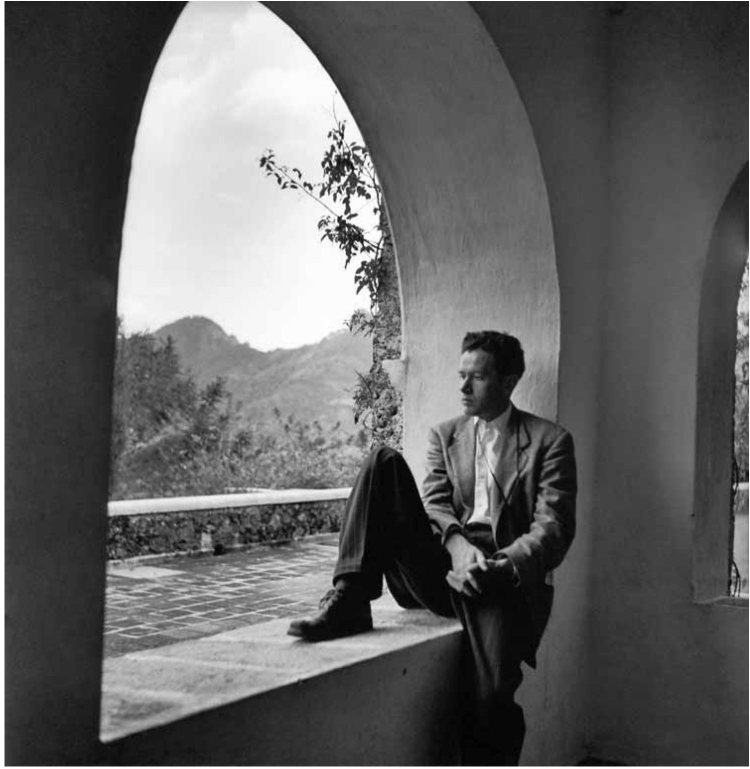
[30] Juan José Rodríguez, *Mi nombre es Casablanca* (Mexico City: Mondadori, 2003), p. 22.

[31] Ibid., p. 16.

[32] Ibid., pp. 109-110.

Juan Rulfo

Elena Poniatowska*



Rulfo goes through daily life like a sleepwalker, waiting for the precise message that will set him writing again.

"My father died when I was six years old, and my mother when I was eight. When my parents died, I was still scribbling little zeros, nothing but little balls, in my school notebook. I was born May 16, 1918, in Sayula, but they took me later to San Gabriel. I am the son of Juan Nepomuceno Pérez and María Vizcaíno. I have many names: Juan Nepomuceno Carlos Pérez Rulfo Vizcaíno. My mother was named Vizcaíno and in Spain there is a province called Vizcaya, but no one, no Spaniard is named Vizcaíno. That name doesn't exist, which means that it was invented in Mexico.

"My parents were *hacendados*. One had a hacienda, San Pedro Toxin, and the other, a place called Apulco, which was where we spent vacations. Apulco is on a cliff and San Pedro on the shores of the Armería River. In the story, 'The Burning Plain,'[1] that river of my youth reappears. That's where the highwaymen holed up. A gang of highway thieves that hung around there killed my father when he was thirty-three. It was filled with bandits, pockets of men who had joined the Revolution[2] and who later felt like keeping up the fighting and the looting. Our hacienda San Pedro was burned four times while my father was still alive. They murdered my uncle, and they hung my grandfather by his thumbs, which he lost; there was much violence and everyone died at the age of thirty-three. Like Christ. Thus I am the son of moneyed people who lost everything in the Revolution…

"When he went to fight in the Cristero Revolt,[3] the priest of my town left his library in our house because we lived across the street from the rectory converted into a barracks, and, before leaving, the priest moved everything. He had a lot of books because he passed himself off as an ecclesiastical censor

* Mexican writer.

Photos in this section, courtesy of DGCS, UNAM.

and he gathered volumes from people's houses. He had the Papal Index and with that he would officially ban the books, but what he really did was keep them because in his library there were many more profane books than religious ones, all of which I sat myself down to read: the novels of Dumas, Victor Hugo, Dick Turpin, books about Buffalo Bill and Sitting Bull. All of that I read when I was ten years old. I spent all the time reading because you couldn't go out for fear of getting shot. I heard a lot of shooting, and after some confrontation between Cristeros and Federales, there were men hung on all the posts. That's for sure, the Federales looted as much as the Cristeros. It was rare that we didn't see one of our own people hung by the feet on some post on some road. They stayed there until they got old and they hung them very high; there they would sway in the breeze for many days, sometimes months, sometimes only the tatters of their pants billowing out with the wind as if someone has put them out to dry there. And you felt that things were really serious when you saw that."

* * *

Rulfo always seems possessed, and at times one discovers in him the lethargy characteristic of mediums: he goes through daily life like a sleepwalker, reluctantly fulfilling the vulgar tasks of waking existence. With his ear tuned, he lets the worldly noises go by, waiting for the precise message that will set him writing again, like a telegrapher waiting for a code. In his stories, many individual souls have spoken, but in his novel *Pedro Páramo*, he made a whole people talk. The voices mix with one another, and you can´t tell who is who, but it doesn't matter. The connected souls form one: alive or dead, Rulfo's men come in and out of our own souls as if they were in their own houses.

It would not be rash to say that the literature of Juan Rulfo is based on rancor. Or rancors. The land surrenders only its leathery surface; the sun bakes bald plains and hallucinating heads, the women burning pestles, their flesh quickly warmed by the heat of the earth. Rulfo's men, or rather, his souls in limbo travel across the burning plains looking for a father who disinherited them at the moment of conception. They are the just sons of a mother who left them with the onus of avenging her and who died on time, because otherwise they would have been the butt of jokes for the others, for those who drink beer that is as warm as burro piss in the cantinas. VM

NOTES

[1] Juan Rulfo's "The Burning Plain" was included in his 1953 collection *El llano en llamas* (The Burning Plain and Other Stories).

[2] The Mexican Revolution, which began after President Porfirio Díaz fixed the 1910 election results, was led by Francisco Madero, and sparked several subsequent revolts, including those led by Pancho Villa and Emiliano Zapata.

[3] The Cristero Revolt, in which a rebel army made up largely of peasants fought in defense of their faith and the power of the Catholic Church in Mexico, erupted in 1926, after the archbishop of Mexico declared that the clergy would not recognize certain anti-clerical articles of the 1917 Constitution.

Elena Poniatowska Wins Cervantes Prize

Voices of Mexico congratulates Elena Poniatowska, a distinguished member of our Editorial Board, whose work has been translated into many languages, and who is the recipient of many awards. The most recent are the prestigious 2013 Cervantes Prize, considered the Nobel for Spanish-language letters, and the Fine Arts Medal 2014, one of Mexico's highest distinctions for artistic creation. In 2007, the Mexico City government created the Ibero-American Prize for the Novel and named it after her.

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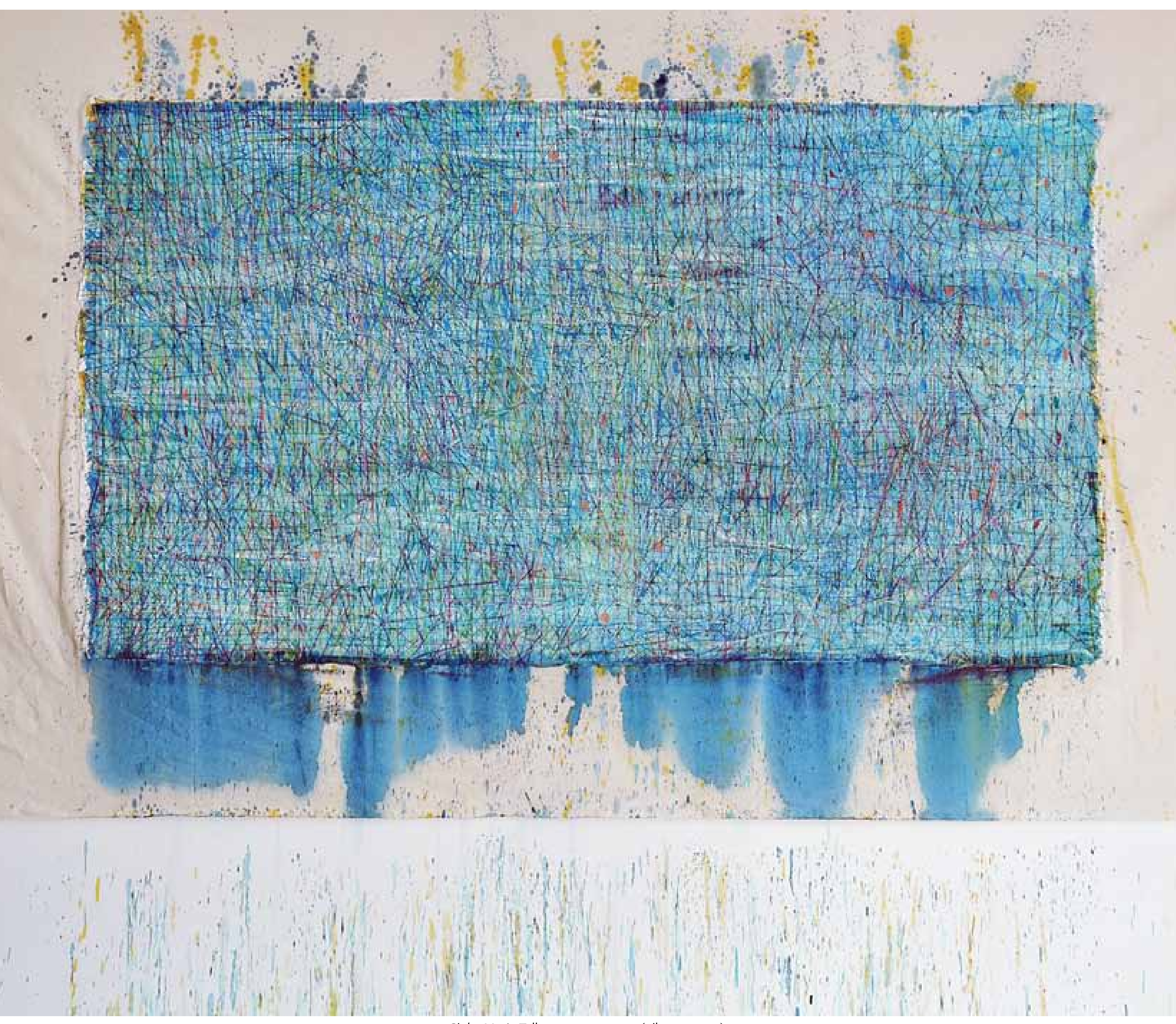

Cielo, María Tello, 150 x 120 cm (oil on canvas).

Traditions, like women in Mexico's *charreadas*; everyday objects changed by a visual artist; social phenomena like migration expressed through art; the cultural heritage of Mexicans in the United States and children's testimony about crossing the border; a visit to the El Triunfo biosphere reserve: this is what this issue's cultural sections bring our readers. All together, they are one more example of the splendor of Mexico.

Charrería's Feminine Side

Leslie Mazoch *

The *charro* mounted high on a horse, shaded by a broad *sombrero*, and swinging a lasso, is a Mexican icon. It's no surprise that Mexican rodeo riding, or *charrería*, is the country's official sport, and for many the national pastime. But most people are taken by surprise when they hear about *charrería*'s flourishing feminine side: the *escaramuza*.

Impossible to miss, the women riders wear colorful Revolution-era dresses over petticoats and wide sombreros with braids hanging past their shoulders. Balancing on sidesaddles, they gallop their horses into the arena to wow the audience with a choreographed routine set to music bellowing over the sound system.

"It's like rain on a field that's been dry. When the *escaramuza* comes, it refreshes," reflected Guadalupe "Coco" Camacho Elorriaga, one of the riders from the first *escaramuza* team, formed in 1953 in Mexico City. She was 10 years old then, and is now in her early 70s.

Teams of eight women on horseback, each rider known as an "*amazona*," maneuver their horses with precision. They make patterns across the dirt, much like a drill team, but on horseback. Two *escaramuza* teams compete at each *charreada*, with routines that last 12 minutes.

The female precision equestrian sport does not share its beginnings with *charrería*, rooted in the day-to-day work on the haciendas of colonial Mexico. *Charros* from different haciendas would get together to determine who was the best executing different herding techniques, like roping horses and pulling a cow down to the ground by its tail. The Mexican Revolution broke up the large landed estates in the early twentieth century, prompting the *charros* to formalize their teams into what are today's *charrería* associations, which operate like rodeo clubs. Through these clubs, cowboys across

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Mexico continue to learn and prove their ranching skills, but in a circular arena instead of the countryside.

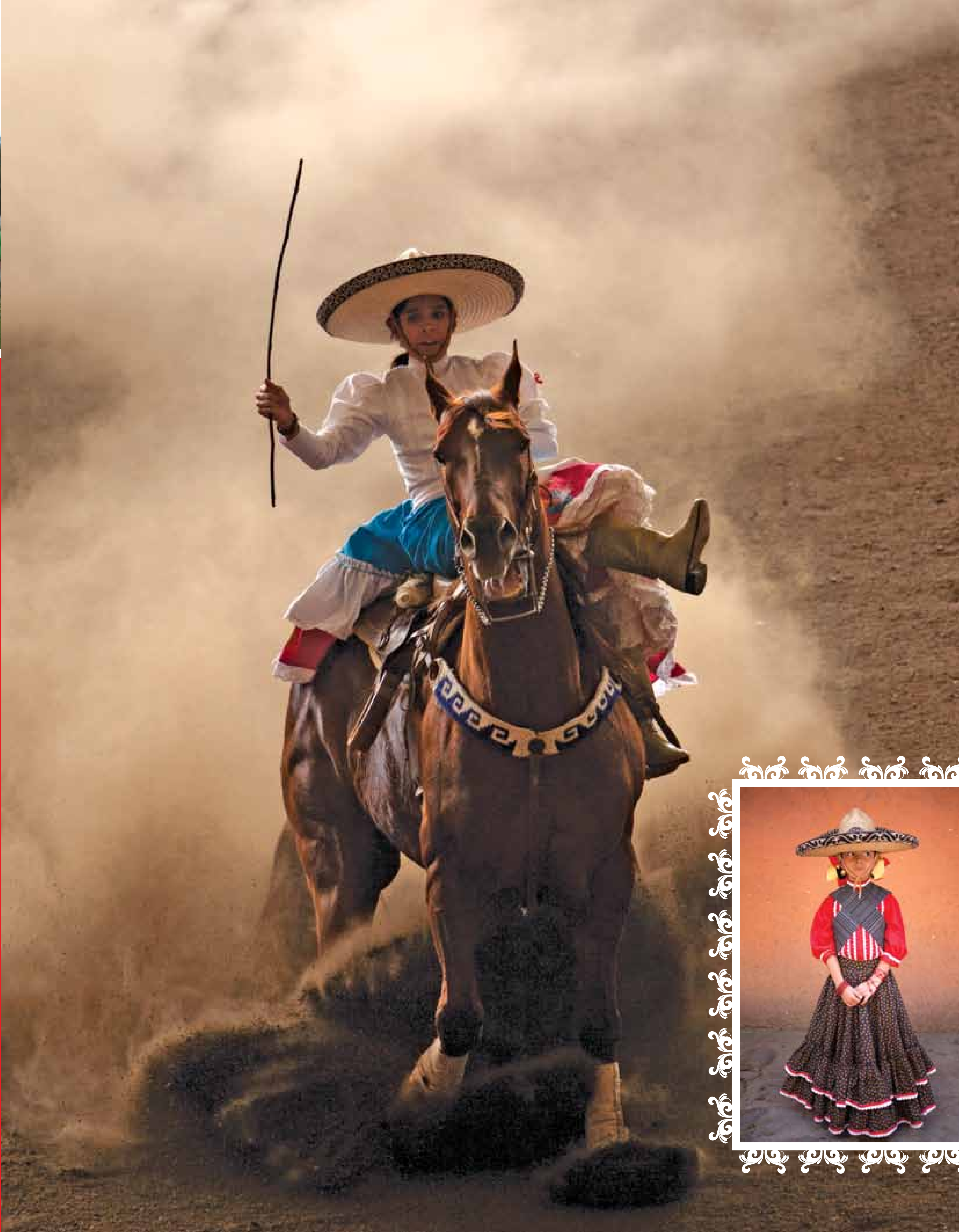
The *escaramuza*, on the other hand, evolved by accident from the horse-riding lessons of six little kids in Mexico's capital city. Three girls and three boys, ages six to twelve, took instruction from well-known *charro* Luis Ortega Ramos at the National Association of Charros. It was 1953, when the arena was located in the capital's Polanco neighborhood. The rodeo club later relocated to Constituyentes Avenue, where it still stands today. Ramos decided to show off his students' skills at a *charreada*, or rodeo, by choreographing a routine that featured what he'd taught them. A live military band played the song *Las coronelas* (The Women Coronels) as the children trotted out their slow-paced moves. The crowd loved it. For a few years, the co-ed children's team toured the routine all over Mexico and as far away as Canada.

"The *escaramuza* was not a preconceived idea; it wasn't an idea that any particular person had, who said 'we're going to do this and that,' something planned. The *escaramuza* came about like life," reflected Arturo Ruiz Loredo, who rode on that first children's team with Camacho when he was six years old. He's now in his late 60s and trains horses.

Ruiz Loredo remembers that the term *escaramuza* was taken from the Bible. "My father got the name *escaramuza* from a paragraph in the Bible where it mentions a war between Jews and other tribes, where it says that before warring they were '*escaramuzeando*'" (skirmishing).

The *escaramuza* became an exclusively female endeavor when the three boys left the team to learn the various sports of *charrería*. Other girls quickly took their places, and generations of horsewomen have developed the *escaramuza* into what it is today: a fantastic show of horsewomanship that

"It's like rain on a field that's been dry. When the *escaramuza* comes, it refreshes."



unites Mexico's *charro* families and just may have saved *charrería* from decline.

Female riders who rode on the early *escaramuza* teams, from the 1960s to the 1980s, wanted their sport to be included in *charrería*. Cristina Álvarez Malo remembers when she would wait until the end of a *charreada* to perform with her team, sometimes very late into the night.

But for the women to have a specific slot for competition at a rodeo, the all-male council of the Mexican *Charrería* Federation needed to declare the *escaramuza* an official *charrería* sport. Times were beginning to change for the nation's pastime.

"For us women, it was very important, first to be integrated as athletes, with our families, men, society, with the sport," reflected Álvarez Malo, an *escaramuza* rider since the 1960s and today a team trainer and *escaramuza* judge. "Then to demonstrate to ourselves that we could do it. Little by little we won ground."

One of the strongest supporters of the *escaramuza* who sat on the federation council arrived in the late 1980s: *charro* Enrique Pascual López. He believed his nation's beloved sport was losing ground to sports like soccer and tennis. Pascual wanted arenas full of families instead of half full of "machos" shooting off their guns. "As long as that is going on, no woman was going to come, much less bring her children," Pascual said. He was sure that if women and children were included in the competition, *charrería* would rise to a new level.

Pascual was elected president of the federation in 1988 and used his position to push for a vote on the status of the women's sport. One *charro* was so opposed to the idea that Pascual got a death threat. But most men supported the measure, and one year before his tenure was over, the council

The *escaramuza* evolved by accident from the horse-riding lessons of six little kids in Mexico's capital city.

voted to include the *escaramuza* and assigned it a spot in the rodeo line-up: after *colas*, or tails. The age of the *escaramuza* had come. It was 1991.

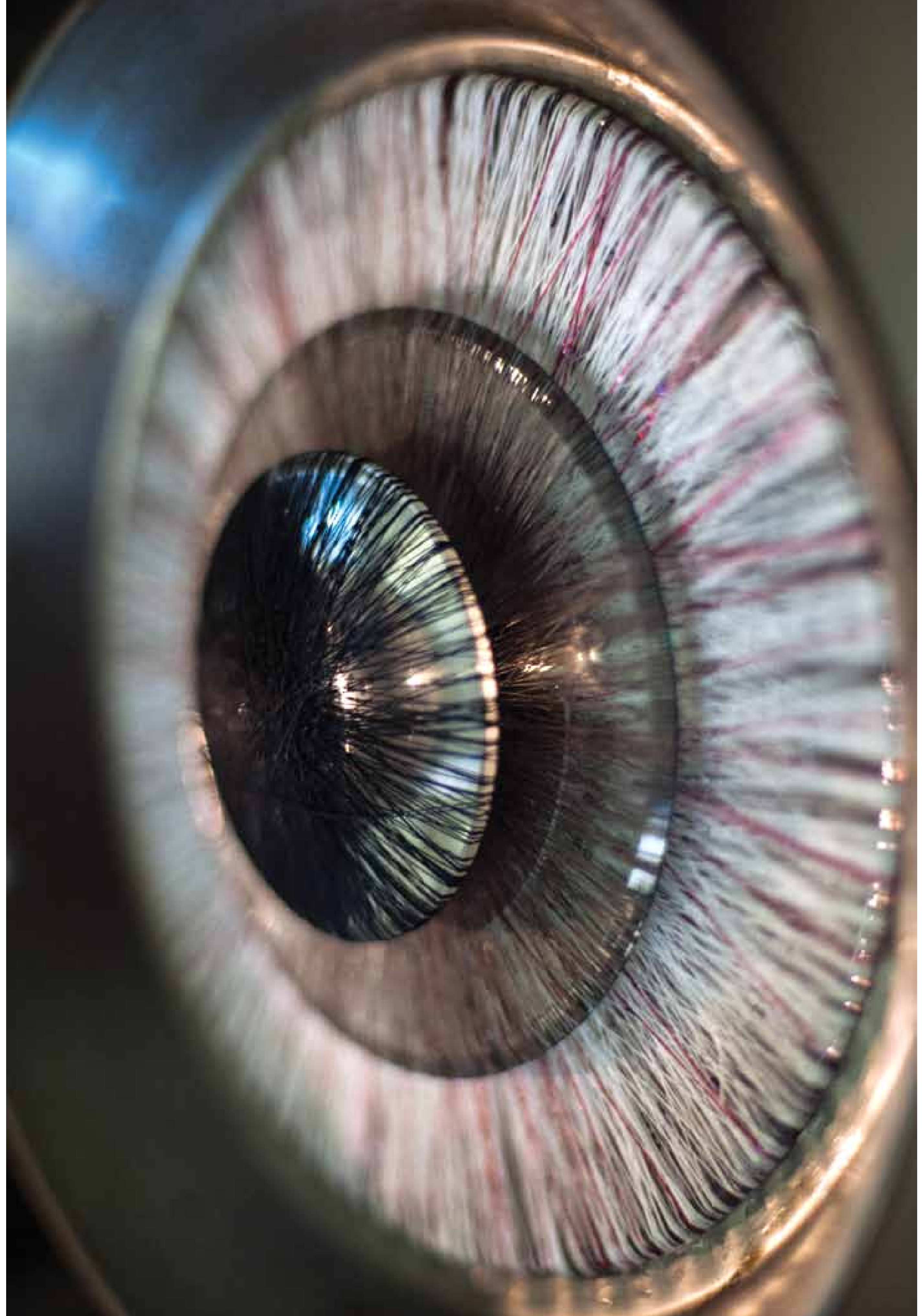
"If I hadn't made these changes, first the women and second the children, today the same old men would still be directing their teams, not accepting change, and *charrería* would be in decline," Pacual said.

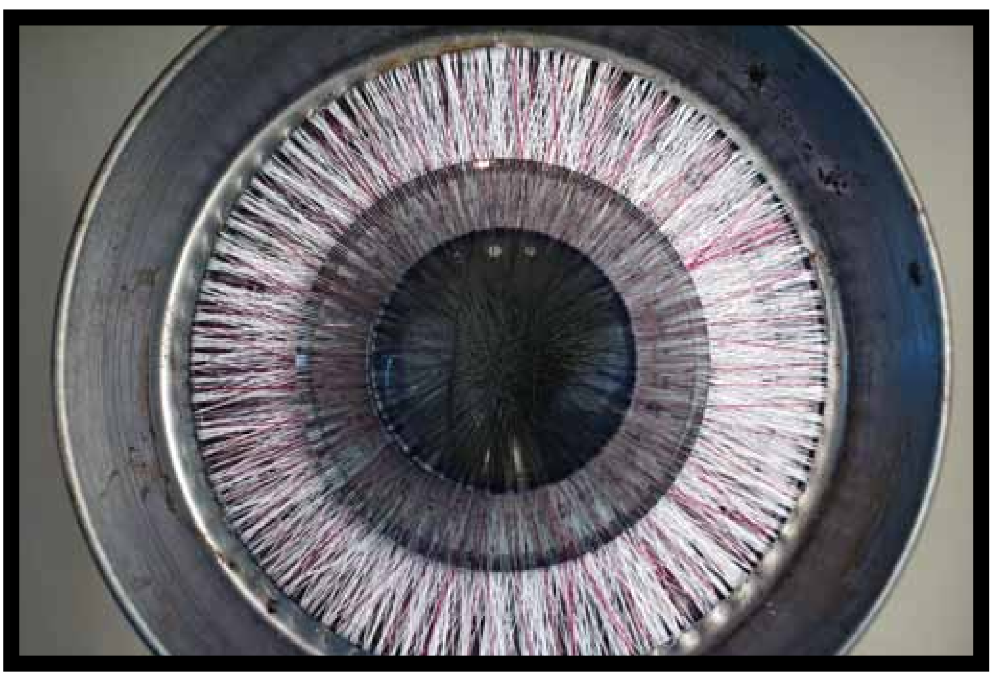
Today, thousands of female riders from hundreds of *escaramuza* teams perform across Mexico and the southern U.S.

The *escaramuza* forever changed the face of Mexico's national sport by uniting men, women, and children in one of the country's oldest traditions. The most impressive time to witness these horsewomen in action is during an *escaramuza* fair, where dozens of teams perform all day. Arenas are packed with families and friends to cheer on the teams, and tasty food and live music are in good supply.

The *escaramuza* just might be the key to raising *charrería's* visibility within Mexico and abroad. Not only is it good, clean, affordable fun for Mexican families, but foreign tourists are wowed when they see women riding sidesaddle in billowing dresses that hark back to the "Adelita," the icon of Mexico's revolutionary woman soldiers. Watching an *escaramuza* performance feels like a step back in time, but Mexico's women on horseback are pushing *charrería* forward. VM

The *escaramuza* forever changed the face of Mexico's national sport by uniting men, women, and children in one of the country's oldest traditions.





Eye.

Homemade, by María Tello

Manuel Andrade*

María Tello's artistic career traces a journey from thought to image that, for the moment, has ended in poetry. A philosopher by training and a self-taught visual artist —first figurative and then abstract—, her most recent explorations, collected in the book she is preparing, *Hechos en casa* (Homemade), yield the fruits of maturity and contemplation, where the full exercise of her creative powers, which goes beyond definition of what she does, combine with having long lived with words that are resolved in poetry and a way of life.

Her poetry is outside conventions, and its starting or ending point is the word, but that she leaves aside when she begins by building metaphors through the discovery of the secret links between things that seem alien to each another. An exploration that actually starts off with a process of pure introspection. I mean a process that originates in the occurrence of thought, and through which, thanks

* Mexican Poet.

Photos by José Armando Canto.

María Tello's artistic career traces
a journey from thought to image that, for the moment,
has ended in poetry.

to contemplation, reflection, and enthusiasm, reveals those never obvious relationships to us, as much as her own ways of finding them, to produce a work that is open to meaning, full of hidden crannies and profundities.

Her very diverse concrete works are authentic tangles in which the thing in itself that is the artistic object, produced and productive, turns out to be just as important as everything intangible that makes it up: the mental process that conceived it, the physical movement required to anchor it, or rather, to synchronize it, the ways in which skill or chance contribute to creation, or the time into which creation has been flung and that it needs to mature or grow old —like ourselves—, and, only then, end by weaving its nexuses and speaking, from what it is, of what we are.

Amidst all of this, time is fundamentally involved; time, which is the true matter María Tello works with. Time and its diverse manifestations, whether in the energy that allows her to look at life that way, with a sidelong glance, to be able to sketch it; in the comprehension and organization of space and matter with which she approaches art, as though she were playing, but also as a going, little by little, unhurriedly and without an apparent destination, entering into putting into play her interior, her thoughts of the spirit. Time, shucked into routine and unforeseen discovery, collaborates with each realization and ends by being in many ways the great artifice of this poetry-making that presupposes the wait, more reflexive than contemplative; the different contacts with the elements that make it up; the patience to formulate a technique that is different every time and only effective in hitting the nail on the head; the development of a discourse through which what is new —and not only what is thematic— is

▲ *Humanity.*

constructed; and that final act that implies putting things into the world, as one who flings them into the elements so they may live their fabulous lives full (again) of time and vicissitudes.

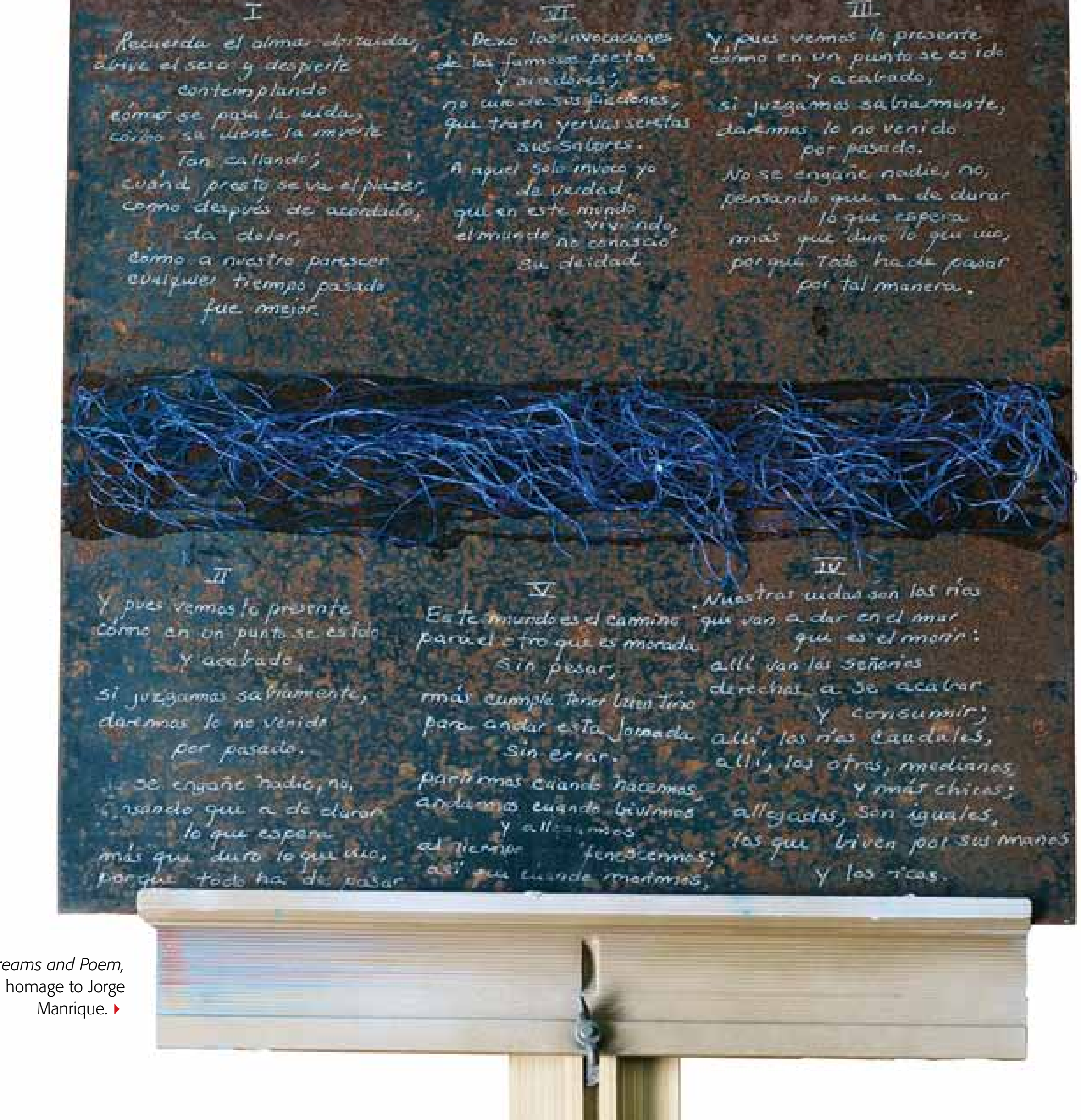
Thus, she establishes her prodigious dialogue with the viewer, who by discovering her pieces, discovers him- or herself, while observing them in detail, leaving to one side the surprise of the first time to move on also to different degrees of proximity and wonder. Whether through the patient photography of José Armando Canto, who fixes them and gives them a new look, or exhibited in the show "Windows," at the Mario Rangel Faz space, or situated around her study, home, and temple in the Roma neighborhood, in an environment that induces creation, where more than anywhere else, it is possible to understand, as good as gold, the quote from Emmanuel Kant with which she opens the book *Hechos en casa*:

Her very diverse concrete works are authentic tangles in which the thing in itself that is the artistic object turns out to be just as important as everything intangible that makes it up.

Stomach.

The house, the domicile, is the only bastion in the face of the horror of the nothing, the night, and the dark origins; it holds within its walls everything that humanity has patiently accumulated for centuries upon centuries; it opposes evasion, loss, absence, since it organizes its own internal order, its sociability, and its passion. Its freedom unfolds in stability, what is closed and not in what is open or undefined. Being at home is the same as recognizing the slowness of life and the pleasure of immobile meditation. (Free translation)

More than a private space, encapsulated in its internal, domestic, feminine order, in its counter-position to the public, individuality, the personal seal of thought dedicated to contemplation and reflection about the day-to-day, to a slow and often ironic proposal of alternatives to the ordinary use of objects and ways of recreating matter, in a constant approach from her own being, to the



Dreams and Poem, homage to Jorge Manrique. ▸

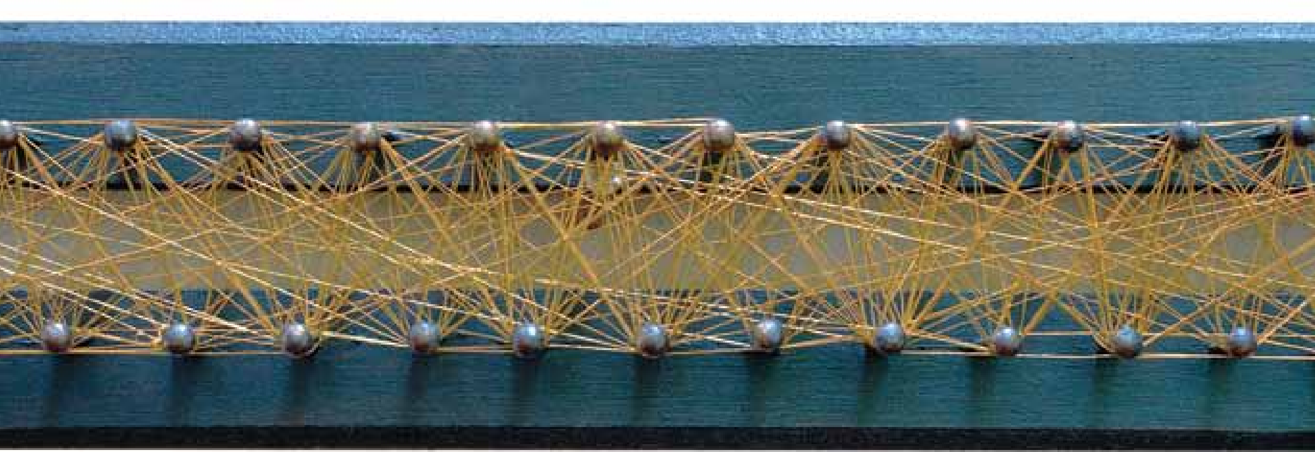
▲ *Threading Dreams.*

María Tello brings things together, dreams, clouds, words, diverse materials that life disdains.

dynamic of that other space and world, the world of the public and the external that, even if it stays outside, always returns through revelation, metaphor, the word: all this can be recognized in the work of María Tello.

This work, also described as a painstaking pause to experiment with the most diverse materials and the most profuse elaborations, consists not only, however, of moving through the house, but mainly of being alert to her own answers; of reading and imagining people, things, events, like emotional occurrences; of affirming, through constant intervention, ways of life; of asking and knowing, in the end, what we are and what we're like, how we react, and how these objects subjected to all kinds of variations and experiments describe parts of our being, and even achieve the miracle of supplanting us and speaking about and for us.

With that aim, with that unlimited curiosity, with that unwholesome and enjoyable taste for discovering herself, whether in the vigorous sky, in an enclosed body, in pain or in want, María Tello brings things together, dreams, clouds, words, diverse materials that life disdains; she brings together the prodigious ingredients that she finds in the scattered day-to-day as well as art's common tools, and waits for the moment in which, from her journey through the house (which is actually a way of living internally, of feeling and ordering her internal life, full of clouds, images, stories, words that are occurrences), she sets herself to discovering (also helped by the words of others, by photographs and pictures, by old and new stories, by images) the relationships among the different elements that compose her metaphors; and in revealing them, she invents the way to do it, whether a traditional or novel artistic procedure, and an action that can be knitting,



Nocturnal.

▲ *The Holy Family.*

Tello's work puts us
on the road to connect with what is real,
that is, with what we really are.

embroidering, tatting, hooking, sketching, gluing, or ripping; and, along the way, she discovers the way to experience all of that, to face down the procedure that often keeps her occupied for a long time, and that offers her long periods where, curiously, she finds clues about herself, news and certainties about herself, primitive signs that unlock the code of childhood memories or renew her words, or that bring her face-to-face to other words with which she clothes her discoveries. It is as though the work, as it is made, as it-is-being-made, begins to take on a life of its own and also moves through the house even better than the gaze that discovered it, to link up with everything else that stirs there, in a process that does not stop in the seemingly finished object, since the process now demands photography and also dialogue, always renewed with the other things that populate her poetic universe in an interminable origin.

Her world, presided over by her *Family Portrait*, sinks its roots in dreams, uncovers its known face in the form of something new: just like that, it situates us face-to-face with the works of the poet and the tasks of the rain. By describing precisely what it evokes, like all poetry, Tello's work puts us on the road to connect with what is real, that is, with what we really are, with that interior full only of images and letters, that feels the mere passage of time slipping by as a natural, gradual process of change that implicates us, and where those artistic objects become productive, outside of any game, isolated, detoured, reconstructed, disassociated from their old guarantee of inert beings, and begin to seem first familiar to us and then alive, until they take our place. So, in the end, they experience us: they talk to us about what we are more frequently without our having noticed, since, just like ourselves, they have been built with time and flung into the time that defines and envelopes them, that weaves them new relationships, that rusts them, ages them, and discovers them, mere changing elements in the hands of no one. VM

▲ *Warrior.*

Immigrants' Intangible Cultural Heritage

MEXICANS AND THEIR CULTURE ABROAD

Paola Virginia Suárez Ávila*

This is how we are, we are mortal . . . .
We all must leave
We all must die in the earth . . . .
Like a painting, we will all fade
Like a flower
We will wither
Here on the earth . . . .
Think about it, lords,
Eagles and tigers,
Even if you were made of jade
Even if you were made of gold
You would also go there
To the place of the fleshless
We shall all disappear
No one will be left.
"Percibo lo secreto" (I See the Secret)
(fragments)

The concept of intangible cultural heritage was defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to explain the preservation and safeguarding of cultural diversity in the framework of globalization. In recent years, globalization has generated the mobility of numerous cultural groups who have undergone a process of international migration moving their wisdom, values, thinking, and idea systems to other places that become new cultural and identity spaces.

Mexico, as a UNESCO member, participated for the first time in discussions on this topic, proposing in 2003 that the indigenous festivity for the dead be a candidate. The National Council for Culture and the Arts (Conaculta) argued before the UNESCO that this festivity was celebrated by 41 of Mexico's ethnic groups in 20 of 31 states, that non-indigenous populations also participated, and that the practice has even spread to the Mexicans residing in the United States.[1]

Altar.

The Day of the Dead is a Mexican tradition that combines medieval Christianity with Mesoamerican roots.

Mural in the Mission District.

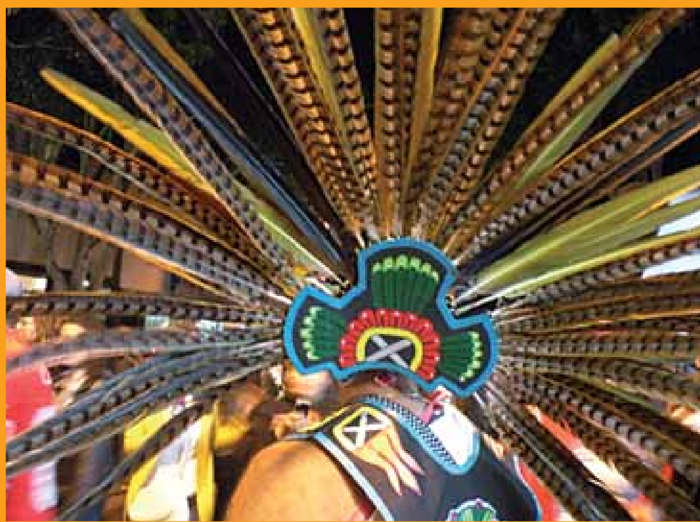
Our Day of the Dead

The Day of the Dead is a Mexican tradition that combines medieval Christianity with Mesoamerican roots, and the result of the lobbying is that it has been recognized as part of Mexico's intangible cultural heritage.

In San Francisco's Mission District —or "La Misión," as it is known in the Mexican community there—, for more than three decades, every November 2, the dead are celebrated, as is the beginning of another life cycle. This is a cultural refer-

*Post-doctoral fellow at CISAN and professor at the UNAM School of Philosophy and Letters. Photos courtesy of the author.

Mission District mural by Homies Organizing the Mission to Empower Youth (HOMEY), 1997.



Mexica dancers in Mission District, 2013.

San Francisco's Mission District is a place where different cultures coexist, although Mexican culture predominates and shapes the neighborhood structure.

ence point for immigrants living in the city's Mexican neighborhood, but the lack of a local cemetery makes the celebration different from the Mexican tradition. In Mexico, on November 1 and 2, families gather in cemeteries to pay homage to their dead.

The Mission District was founded in the eighteenth century when the viceroyalty of New Spain expanded and missions were built in new regions of Upper California. In 1847, these territories stopped being part of the nascent Mexican nation and became part of California. During the Gold Rush, its economic and social development exploded, and with time, it has become very prosperous in the sphere of business and services.

Today, San Francisco's Mission District is a place where different cultures coexist, although Mexican culture predominates and shapes the neighborhood structure with businesses, venues for entertainment and leisure, schools, and cultural centers that are more involved in Mexican day-to-day living than U.S. American. So, when you walk through the neighborhood, you can see places that sell Mexican-style sandwiches-on-a-bun, or *tortas*, tacos, bakery goods, and murals that re-signify Mexican culture. Spanish is also the dominant language and most inhabitants have ethnic Mexican and Latino features, even though there is also an important U.S. American and European population.

The Festivity

In the Mission District, the visit to the cemetery on the Day of the Dead is replaced with a ritual that begins with the prayer of fire, dedicated to Huehuetéotl, the Mesoamerican god of fire. Then, participants are invited to join together in invoking the five directions, beginning with the North, the place of the Lord and Lady of Mictlán, the underworld of Aztec mythology, so they will grant wisdom. Then, they honor the East, fire, the place where the sun rises, and that represents childhood, youth, and passion, ruled by the feminine/masculine duality of Xoquiquetzal and Xochipilli, the protectors of love, the arts, and poetry. Then, all participants look to the South, or the land of rain and Mesoamerica; and then the West, or the wind, the place where the sun goes down. Finally, they invoke the fifth direction: the Center, which represents the Mayan mantra *In lak'ech* ("You are my other I.").[2]

This festivity in the Mission District is a cultural phenomenon made up of an infinite number of expressions and practices. In addition, Mexican and Central American migrants add elements that reflect their own experience, like the proximity of death during the border crossing and the loss of identity in the migratory process due to the cultural immersion in their new places of residence.

Richard Bauman considers performance a form of collective communication with two artistic phases: the action and the event. The action, from the perspective of folk art, helps bring together different cultural elements at a specific moment, which in turn becomes an event that envelops the performer, the form of art he/she expresses, and the audience in a present that joins the unfolding of the ephemeral and the constant.[3]

Therefore, it is interesting to analyze the Day of the Dead in San Francisco's Mission District from the perspective of performance art, because this manages to differentiate it from other communication phenomena that are also expressed as events. In it, communication is intense and allows the actors

Mexican and Central American migrants add elements that reflect their own experience, like the proximity of death during the border crossing.

Opening of the Day of the Dead procession, Mission District, 2013.

and audience to join together for an instant. That is, each of those present can participate in diverse ways to recreate a Mexican tradition expressed differently from what takes place in Mexico.

Dialogue Between Cultures

At the same time that the celebration takes place in two languages, it also springs from two cultural currents and traditions, the U.S. American and the Mexican, and manages to consolidate an authentic form of local expression that is popular, multicolored, and disjointed, all at the same time. In this sense, it should be underlined that U.S. American cultural tradition has an attached and abstract interest in the concept of death. That is, even though the ritual, festive atmosphere is permeated by the Mexican idea that the dead return on that day to accompany their loved ones, the U.S. American participants center their interest on the figure of death and his dark, sinister side, which is why they dress and disguise themselves in a way that alludes to it; however, they are also interested in joining the festivities and understanding the Mexicans' beliefs, which they find very attractive. And that is why they are invited by the Mission District community to participate.

It should be emphasized that San Francisco is one of the United States' most liberal cities, expressed in its inhabitants' openness to communicating with diverse cultures and social groups. That is how the Latino, white, Asian, and Afro-American communities create spaces for living and playing together, like this event that is no longer exclusive to the Mexican community. There, they all collaborate, contribute, and dialogue about what death and the dead mean to everyone.

Discovering the immigrants' intangible cultural heritage is an interesting way to analyze and understand the make-up of the identity of Mexicans, Mexican-Americans, and Chicanos, given that it forces us to think about the social uses that immigrants make of traditions, ideas, values, and world views inherited from their cultures of origin, and about the fact that in the context of migration, they re-create them in a different space. This new territorialization of culture implies a different practice of that heritage.

Altar to Harvey Milk, Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, 2013.

Mission District mural.

The experience of Mexicans in the United States goes far beyond just crossing the border and sending remittances to their families.

A Multicultural Vision of Migration

Mexicans' experience in the United States goes far beyond just crossing the border and sending remittances to their families at home. The process of creating the identities of Mexicans, Mexican-Americans, and Chicanos brings with it feelings of oppression, inequality, and poverty, and is intimately linked to the passage between life and death: anyone who crosses the desert and does not die must withstand the next step, which is the racism and social and cultural segregation in their destinations, whether it be the United States or Canada.

Globalization has transformed culture in local, national, and transnational spaces, as well as practices, customs, and traditions, like in the case of the Day of the Dead. A multi-culturalist vision of migration helps us understand the concept of immigrants' intangible cultural heritage as a broadening out of cultural diversity, because it focuses on the convergence of cultures that promotes the creation of diverse identities, as well as new uses and practices of cultural heritage.[4] VM

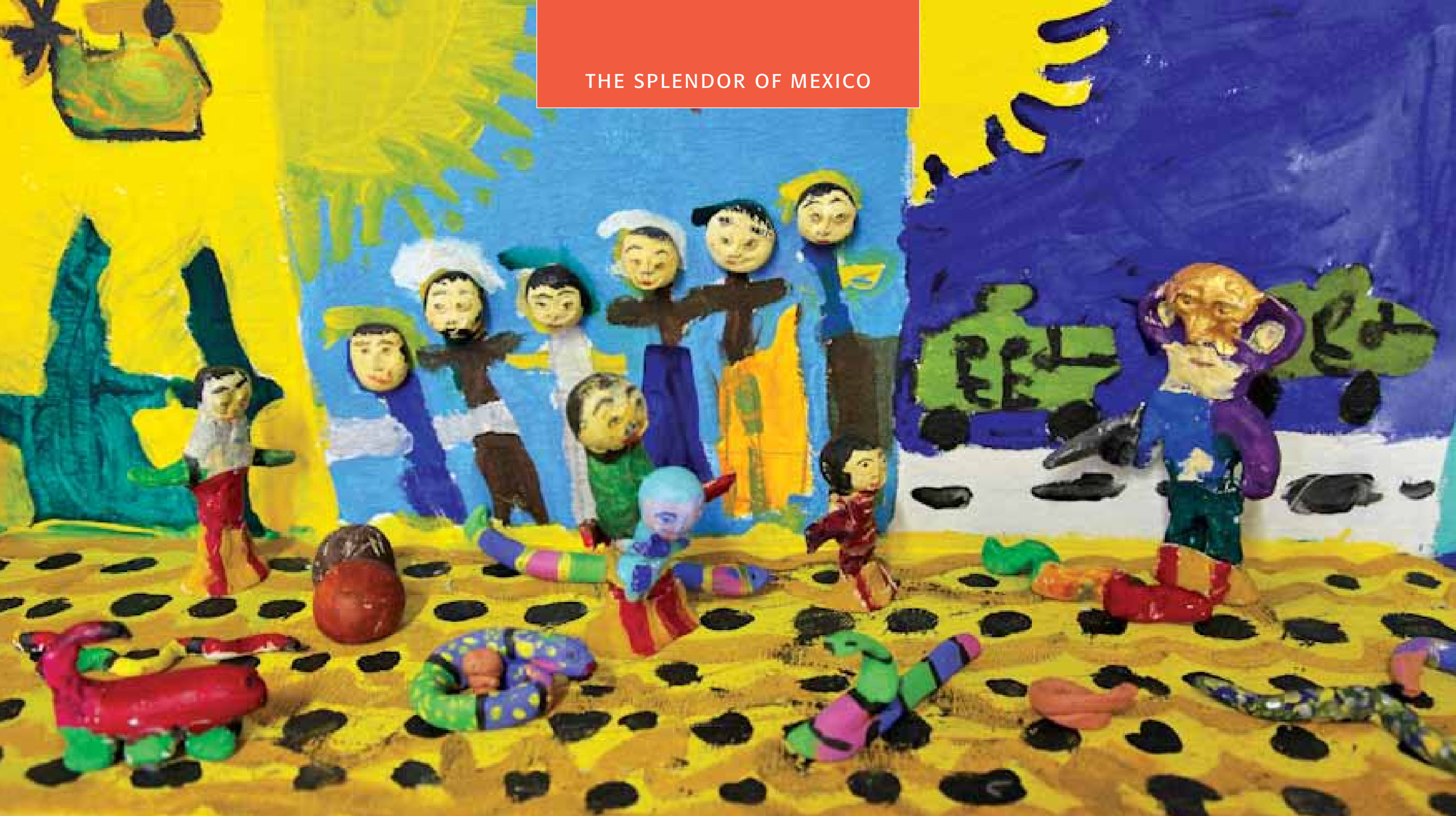
Notes

[1] *Patrimonio de la humanidad. La festividad indígena dedicada a los muertos en México* (Mexico City: Conaculta, 2003), http://www.conaculta.gob.mx/turismocultural/cuadernos/pdf16/articulo1.pdf.

[2] Francisco X. Alarcón, "Ritual Procession," author's archives, August 26, 2013, on line at http://mbasic.facebook.com/notes/francisco-x-alarcon/tahui-poems-for-the-day-of-the-dead-ritual-procession-of-san-francisco-california/10151941541980734/.

[3] Richard Bauman and Charles L. Briggs, "Poetics and Performance as Critical Perspectives on Language and Social Life," *Annual Review of Anthropology* vol. 19 (1990), pp. 59-88.

[4] Will Kymlicka, *Ciudadanía multicultural* (Barcelona: Paidós, 1996).



The Journey
A Visual Testimony of Migration

Having lived on both sides of the border may have been what gave Mexican artist Nora Hiriart the vision and sensitivity to establish a dialogue with the past of a group of Mexicans living in Philadelphia, almost all of whom are undocumented. Hiriart, who has lived in the United States for more than two decades, says that whenever she comes to Mexico on vacation, she questions the effects of migration to one place and the other. Harboring that concern, she began the project of El viaje *(The Journey), to motivate people to express through art the emotions caused by the complex, painful experience of leaving your country of origin, emotions that are often long held inside. She repeated the same experience in* El viaje de los niños *(The Children's Journey).*

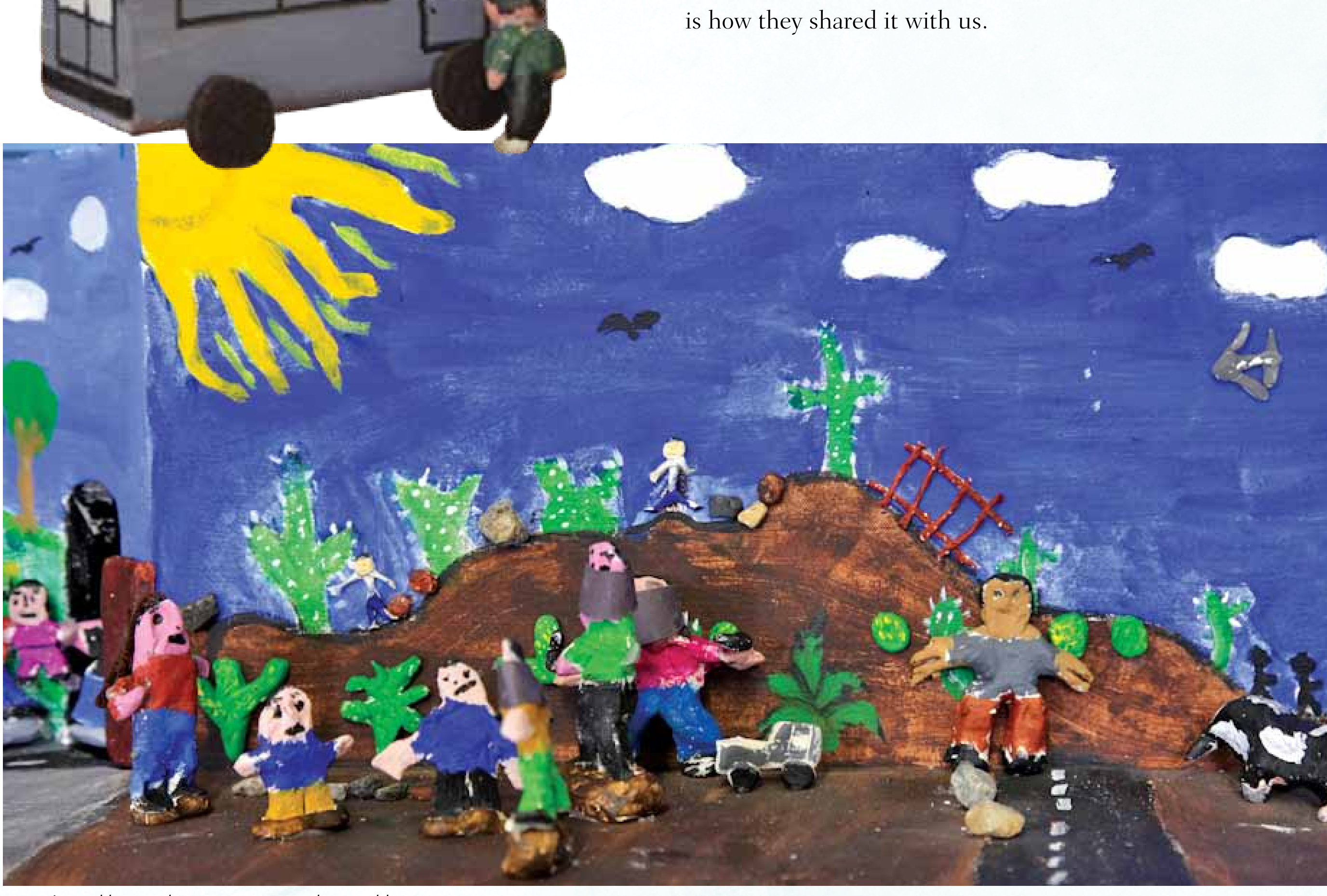
Photos courtesy of Nora Hiriart.

Voices of Mexico (VM): How did this project come about?

Nora Hiriart (NH): When I used to come to Mexico on a visit and go on vacation to the mountains, I would see how certain communities had fewer and fewer people, and how some children were left in the care of their grandparents, without their parents. People used to live in the mountains, and so many of them didn't live there anymore, and you used to see only children and old people. But in Philadelphia, I would also see the conditions in which the migrants who had left their country behind in search of a better future lived. How, somehow, these people who in their towns were "somebody," here were just invisible. So, I started looking for a way to do some kind of work on this, and I got funding through a foundation in Philadelphia. Through the Philadelphia archdiocese, we formed a women's group and began doing this work called *El viaje* (The Journey).

VM: Was the idea to work with children, too?

NH: No, actually, the children's project came about spontaneously. They would go with their mothers because there was no one to leave them with at home. And, so the mothers could participate in the workshop, we adapted a little children's Mexican, Mayan, Huichol art program so they could paint and make little figures out of clay. So, while their parents developed their experiences, a Chilean friend of mine would tell the children about the history of the Huichol, the creation story, their wanderings through the desert. And that was when three children, brothers, said "We've been in the desert." And they began to talk about how their parents had sent them with a *pollero* [smuggler] to bring them on a less dangerous path, and all the ups and downs they had on the way. And that's where the idea came from of putting strips of paper on the floor so they could draw their experience. Sometimes, the children would tell stories or talk about feelings that even their parents didn't know about. This is the children's journey, and this is how they shared it with us.



Anita and her mother, San Mateo Ozolco, Puebla.

Carlos

from San Martín Texmelucan, Puebla

"I lived with my aunt, and when I was about five, my mamá went to pick me up. She brought me toys and told me she was going to take me to meet my other brothers and sisters. At first I was happy with the toys, but a little while later, I wanted to go back to my aunt's. My mamá fought a lot with her husband and he wasn't good to me. And besides that, I didn't get along with my brothers and sisters. My stepfather said that I couldn't eat for free and if I wanted to eat, I had to help him in his workshop. When I didn't do the work right, he would hit me. An older sister told my mamá that she wanted to take me so my stepfather wouldn't hit me anymore. A little while later, I got some money and said goodbye to my mother and my friends. We took the bus to the airport; when we got to Tijuana, my sister called her husband in New York, and he was mad because she had brought me and he told her to forget about him. With the little money we had, we rented a room. I called a friend in Philadelphia, and he told me he could help out for a month. My sister couldn't get any work, but I got a job in a restaurant and then in a lathe workshop.

"We spent almost two months in Tijuana and from there we went to Mexicali. I called a number a friend had given me, and they went to pick us up that night. We walked all night; we slept on some rocks where there were animals, spiders, ants. . . . Like about four hours after we got there, the Migra showed up and took us to jail. The next day they let us go and we tried again and again. And the fourth time, we got to the border. The first two hours weren't easy at all. It was very dark and there were lots of weeds and animals. My sister and I were very tired and we had to keep walking. Suddenly I saw clothing thrown on the ground and when I went to look, it was a dead man. We kept on walking; then they covered us over with a piece of canvas and when they took it off they said we should run toward a pick-up, that we were in the United States."

Damara

from Mexico City

"First my papá went off and left us. I was about four. The year after he left, he sent for my mamá and she left us with my aunt and my grandmother. One day my papá came for us. I was eight. We went to Tijuana and stayed on a ranch close to where there were a lot of people waiting for the *coyotes* [smugglers]. We walked two nights and a day to cross. We saw the helicopters; I was scared because I didn't know what was going to happen, but I wanted to see my mamá. They caught us once and took us to one of the jails on the U.S. side. That night they sent us back to Mexico. The next day we tried to cross again; we walked a day and a night; we were hidden under a rock, about eight of us, and then a van came to pick us up. We drove about an hour until we got to a hotel in the United States, and they took us to another house where we stayed for a week, and then we came to Philadelphia. When I got out of the car, it was snowing and everything was white. Then I saw my mamá; she didn't look the same as when she left me.

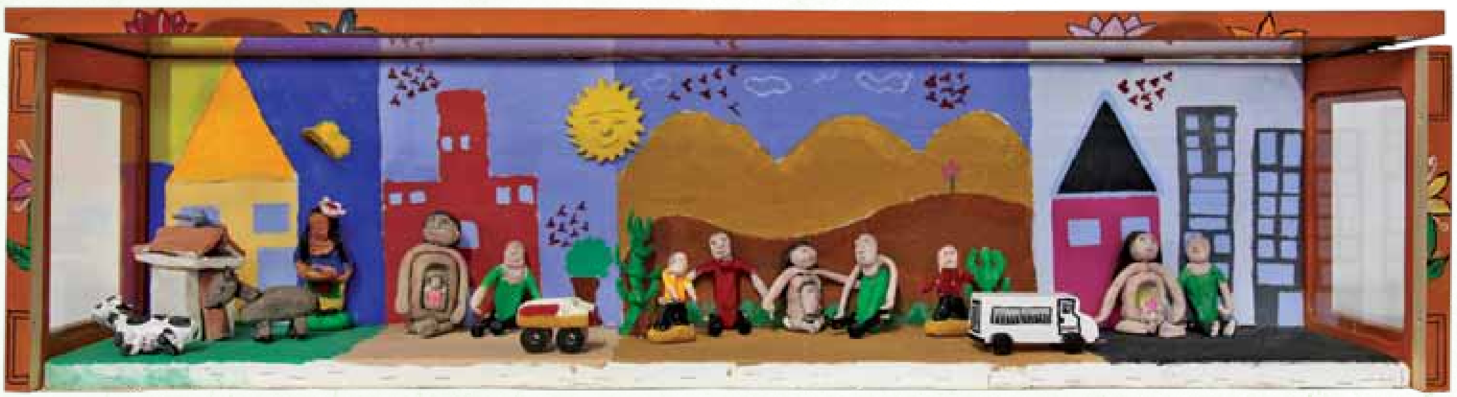
"I couldn't remember anything that had happened to me. I never wanted to talk about it because of how terrifying it had been and I just erased it from my mind until I came to the workshop and the project helped me remember what had happened to me."

Edith

from Philadelphia

"My family is from Domingo Arenas, in the state of Puebla. They say it's very pretty, but I've never been because I came in my mom's belly when she was pregnant. We left the town and went to Nogales, Sonora. We waited there until the weather was right to go into the desert. It was hard for my mom because she was pregnant and it was really, really hot. Besides, when we were walking, some men stole my dad's shoes and their money. After a lot of suffering, they finally got to Arizona and then Philadelphia.

"My parents came because they wanted something better for us, because when they were little they didn't have shoes or money. It's nice here; we have clothes; I have a family that loves me; we have shoes; something to eat, school, a house, and an education. My parents work a lot so we can have everything we need because they couldn't [when they were kids]."



Javier

from the state of Hidalgo

"I came to the United States because not everything in Mexico was good. I had a bad relationship with my stepfather. When I was 13, they asked me if I wanted to come; they told me it was really nice here, and that you could earn a lot of money. I went with my uncle; this was an adventure I wanted to go on, but it was only a dream because the reality is very hard. We left Nogales, Sonora, and the same people who were leading us offered me drugs. They took us into the desert; from there you could see the wall separating Mexico from the United States. We walked and walked until we got to some caves. We slept there until somebody yelled, "la migra!" I ran really fast through the brush and they didn't catch me, so I hid with some friends. Finally they did catch me; they cuffed me and they took me away in a van. They asked me how old I was and I lied; that's why they didn't send me to a center for children. They had me there for about three days and it was really hard. Later I tried again, 'til I was able to get across. I'm happy I came here to Philadelphia and I'm trying really hard because I want to be somebody in this life."

Myrna

Here I am the worrier, nostalgic and weeper

There I am the *Tampiqueña* fresh with
goldfish (or swarms ofcolorful fish)

Here I am the good people, *cumbiera?*
with problems in paying the rent

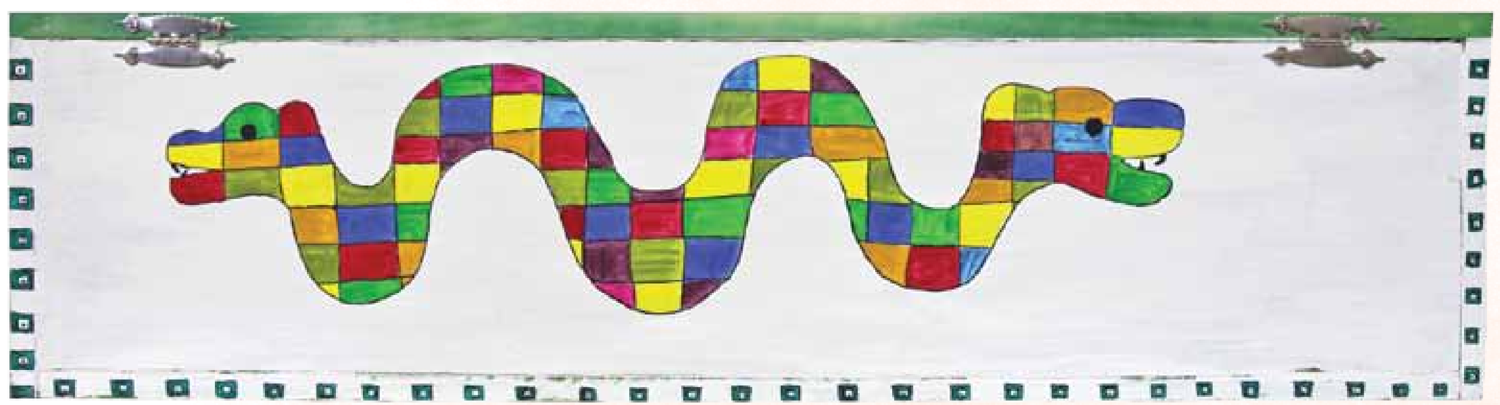
There I am as free as the wind and as poor
as a leaf that falls from a tree

Here I am the inveterate Dreamer
in an unbreakable crystal

There I am the butterfly as red as the tulips,
yellow like fresh mangoes and purple as the
ornaments of the day of the dead

Here I am the sober' discolored
by the urban environment

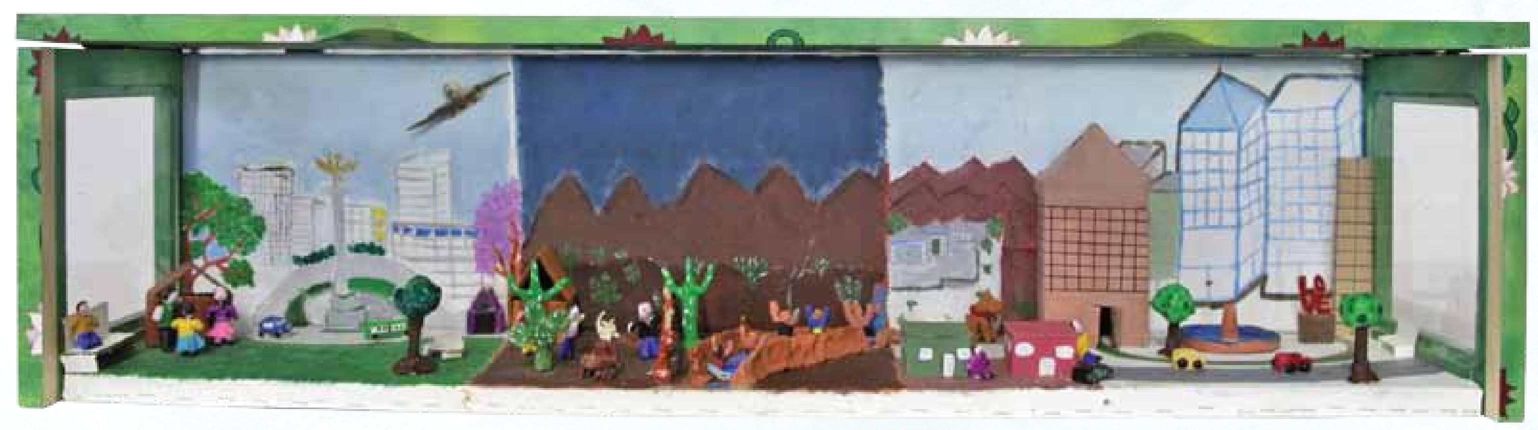
There I am the aroma of *cempasúchil*
with mud between my fingers and
the scent of wet earth



Susana
from San Mateo Ozolco

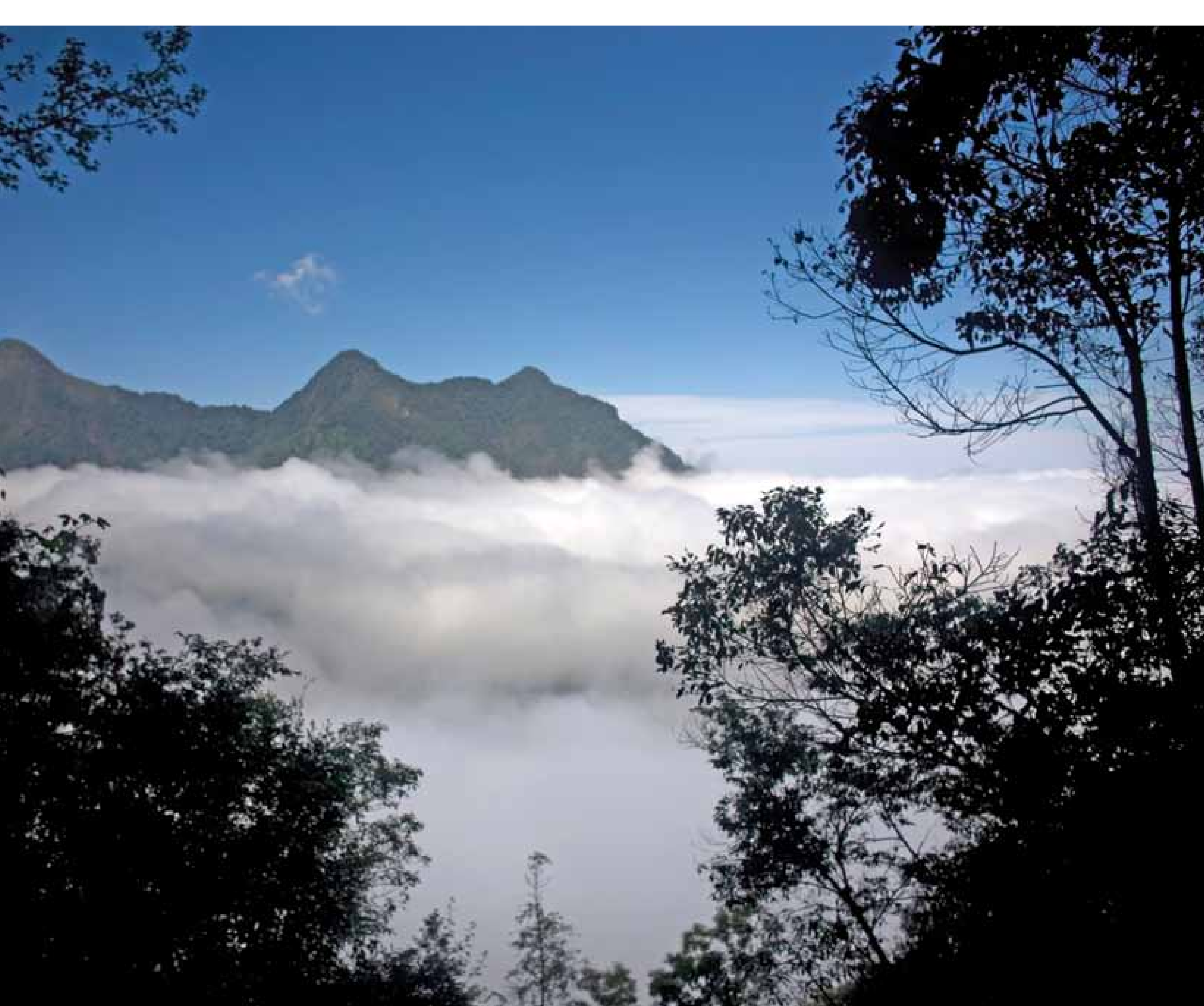
"First my papá came so he could give us a better life. My mamá, my sister, and I stayed behind for a year, alone, living with my grandparents. Then my papá came for my mamá and they were there eight months, until my mamá heard that my grandma was sick. So, then she came back. But after a year, the four of us went. We started our adventure, leaving behind our family. We said goodbye, and I still remember their faces when we said that someday we'd be back. It was the first time I had ever been on a plane; I was so excited, but scared, too. We stayed in a house for three days, and we went to another town to meet up with somebody else. We spent two days in a hotel. In the afternoon the *coyote* came and took us to the desert in a truck. We started off at about six in the morning. That night it rained really hard and instead of walking seven hours, we walked for 17. We got to a tree to get out of the rain and pretty soon a Migra truck came up. We ran to get away; we had to cross a river that was running really strong for two hours. I got stung by a scorpion, and my papá decided it would be better if we gave ourselves up to the police because we just couldn't go on. But some people took us into their home, and gave us food, and asked their sister to help us cross. After two hours on the road, some men were waiting to take us to Philadelphia. The trip took three days and three nights. When we got here, I was surprised to see how pretty it was." VM

Teresa Jiménez Andreu
Editor



EL TRIUNFO
HOME TO A THOUSAND WONDERS

Chico Sánchez*



The El Triunfo Biosphere Reserve is located in the Chiapas Sierra Madre mountain range in Mexico. Established March 13, 1990, it extends over 119 177 hectares and protects some of the last areas of cloud forest left in Central America and of evergreen tropical forest on the Pacific coast. Sadly, El Triunfo has also become the haven for many animals and dozens of endemic endangered species, including birds like the spectacular resplendent quetzal (*Pharomacrus Mocinno*), the azure-rumped tanager (*Tangara cabanisi*), the horned guan (*Oreophasis derbianus*), the emerald toucanet (*Aulacorhynchus prasinus*), and mammals like the tapir, the mountain lion, and the spider monkey. The reserve has registered 378 birds, 55 reptiles, 112 mammals, and more than 2000 species of flowering plants. Fleeing from urban sprawl, deforestation, and mining, many species have found in El Triunfo a last refuge where they are fighting desperately to survive.

* Journalist and photographer.
All photos by Chico Sánchez.

One of the endangered species that lives in the reserve is the quetzal. Before going to the reserve, in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the people in charge of its conservation and our guide had already told us how difficult it often was to catch a glimpse of this mythical animal. They told us that some people go up the mountain and might even spend days or weeks there without seeing one. I'm thankful because I saw not only one, but many. One afternoon, one of them allowed us to come very close to him, making it possible to photograph him. Their camouflage is so good that even though it was right in front of me, it took a few moments to be able to distinguish it. Every encounter with a quetzal is magical and unique.

But, one of the lessons that these forests taught me was the importance of water. In nature, trees act as giant nets that retain rainwater and then distribute it, protecting the soil from erosion and regulating the temperature. Then, the water that these forests gather flows down in the rivers, carrying with it dried leaves and other organic matter that feed the valleys below and the fish living at the river's mouth. Water is also vital for producing electricity, a form of energy that is much cleaner than coal- or oil-based energy. Our society seems to have forgotten these forests' importance. When the trees are uprooted, temperatures become extreme, bringing droughts, heat waves, and cold nights; catastrophes also occur that our society then calls "natural disasters," but that we should call "human disasters." Da Vinci said, "Water is the vehicle of nature." Life blooms thanks to water, thanks to humidity. Taking this shot, I learned that El Triunfo, like us human beings, is made up mainly of water, of humidity.

The story of the fox in the photo is a great example of the survival instinct in nature. Its family had been attacked by a jaguar and he was the only survivor. Because he was weak and he knew that jaguars don't come near places where humans are, he risked his life approaching the shelter. But that decision saved him, since the people in the shelter love nature. But many others like him aren't as lucky. Because of hunting, the poisoning of smaller animals by chemicals used in the areas surrounding the reserve, and the loss of habitat due to mining and deforestation, the forest animals have less and less food; many, like this fox, desperate and spurred by hunger, creep close to towns where the humans kill them.

Hidden behind the light and shadows, the browns and greens, the reserve is a world of color. A lavender-colored leaf shows up against a green fern. El Triunfo taught me that inside something apparently uniform, like a green landscape, is hidden enormous variety. When you look at the forest up close, it changes and explodes into colors.

Despite all the efforts to protect it by Mexicans and foreigners, El Triunfo is seriously threatened. One of the many problems this forest's inhabitants face is the hunt for and capture of exotic species for sale. The hunt, which some have even called a sport when it is not done for survival, should be banned so that the animal populations can recover. Nature gives us much more if we admire its beauty, if we contemplate it. Fortunately, even though many of the visitors to these forests today are wearing camouflage suits, they've replaced rifles and death with cameras and life, spending their time capturing the beauty of the animals in freedom and not killing or trapping them.

One of the best known inhabitants of the reserve is the *dragoncillo* (*Abronia lythrochila*), an arboreal alligator lizard. This little dragon comes out of its home in a tree near the shelter to bask in the sun every day. When we arrived, he let us come within a few meters and watched us for a good long while and, then, slowly disappeared into the darkness of his home. This tree, so important for the little lizard, is nothing more than a piece of wood for our consumer society. Oblivious to the danger, this little alligator suns himself tranquilly without knowing that the machines are surrounding the reserve, just waiting for somebody ambitious to order its destruction in order to accumulate wealth that he will never be able to spend.

Coffee is one of the products raised in the area around the reserve. The cultivation of organic coffee has been one of the solutions that the people in charge of the reserve have found for trying to achieve a balance between agriculture and conservation. When we drink organic coffee, we're taking care of ourselves, too, since it has been shown that certain agrichemicals used today like poisons and herbicides also endanger our health. Consuming organic products not only strengthens your health, but also that of the planet. VM

MUSEUM OF MEMORY AND TOLERANCE

LEARNING SO WE NEVER FORGET

Isabel Morales Quezada*

"The bright side of human beings will not be shown, but rather the dark, less pleasant side." This is the warning to those beginning a visit to the first room in the Museum of Memory and Tolerance, whose architecture gives the phrase meaning: in contrast with Mexico City's springtime sunlight passing through the huge windows to the exterior areas, once inside, the light is reduced to shadows that will transport the visitor to another time and place. But, though the time and place are different, they are no more alien.

* Staff writer.
Photos courtesy of Museum of Memory and Tolerance.

Against Oblivion

Many faces surround the visitors, visible through little windows covering the walls. I recognize some of them: Franz Kafka,

The images of the prisoner transport trains and of the camps mix with the imagination, with the need to identify, to understand people's suffering despite their distance in time and space.

Albert Einstein, Anne Frank. In the entryway, at the top, a screen broadcasts a video that situates us: while World War II was raging, in Mexico, Agustín Lara was composing his most famous songs, and Mario Moreno, "Cantinflas," was making audiences laugh.

Despite its being called a "world" war, the conflict did not seem to touch Mexico; it was something seen from afar. It was happening in Europe; but Mexico would play an important part by offering asylum to those persecuted by the Nazi regime. Gilberto Bosques was the Mexican consul for the Lázaro Cárdenas administration, who saved thousands of Jews by giving them visas to enter Mexico and creating two shelters in France where he fed them and made their lives easier, even risking his own freedom until he lost it for a year when he and his family were confined to a hotel in Germany by the Gestapo. Lillian Liberman's documentary film *Visa to Paradise* is testimony to that counterpart that can always be found amidst tragedies like this one.

The Jewish Holocaust or "shoah," as the Jewish community prefers to call it, demonstrates what human beings are capable of. A large-scale photograph of a snow-covered concentration camp and a model of the gas chambers and crematoria are displayed in this room. Sometimes, feelings make us comprehend certain events in history and brings us closer to them. The images of the prisoner transport trains and of the camps mix with those sensations and the imagination, with the need to identify, to understand people's suffering despite their distance in time and space.

After World War II, one of the most shameful events in human history, other cases of genocide took place: the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda, Guatemala, Cambodia, Darfur, and Palestine. These are all examples and reminders of what continues to happen and remains to be resolved and changed. The battle against racism and discrimination has not been won.

Respect for Diversity

In the Tolerance Section, which emphasizes respect for human rights, one of the rooms is dedicated to Mexico. The first exhibit displays the country's great diversity of indigenous peoples and their languages. A video shows images of these people's

CAMINANDO HACIA
LA TOLERANCIA
EDUCACIÓNPAZ

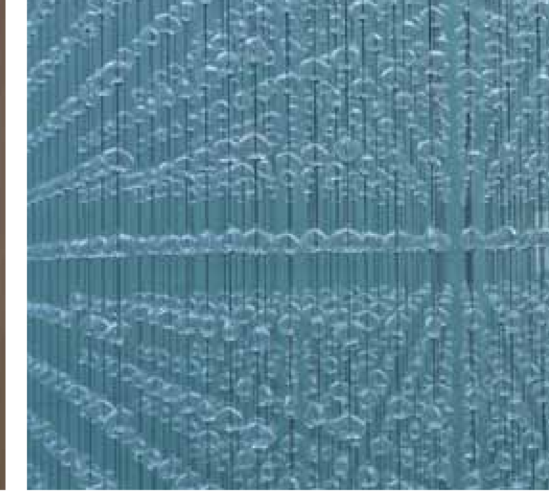
daily lives today, their culture and traditions. The conditions of poverty are emphasized, but particularly underlined is the fact that these are surviving peoples of pre-Hispanic origin.

Mexico owes a great deal to these peoples: neither governments nor the rest of the general populace have recognized them or restored them to their rightful place in the cultural mosaic that is our nation. They have been pushed to one side, and for centuries, they have been victims of attacks and discrimination. The massacres in Aguas Blancas of peasants in Guerrero (1995) and in Acteal, Chiapas, of Tzotzil indigenous (1997) are examples of these attacks, both acts in which the government was a main perpetrator.

Movements such as the Zapatista National Liberation Army (EZLN) in 1994, which has managed to establish an autonomous system of government, independent of the federal and state governments that respects the first people's traditions, customs, and languages, throws into stark relief the mistreatment, repression, and exclusion the indigenous communities have been the victims of. They have been segregated to such a point that few Mexicans are familiar with or would want to learn any of their languages; in addition, the indigenous have been forced to stop using their mother tongues and to learn and use exclusively or primarily Spanish. No educational plan exists to favor the preservation of the indigenous languages, and some of them are in danger of disappearing. We also must remember that the loss of a language accompanies the loss of an entire culture.

Historian Miguel León-Portilla has said that the indigenous are the true owners of the country, but that they live, impoverished and exploited, without the lands that are rightfully theirs.[1] However, they are not the only ones who have been mistreated and discriminated against. Among some of the violent events that have left their mark on Mexico and have not been resolved or for which no justice has been achieved is the student massacre of 1968, in which an unknown number of students were murdered during a demonstration of thousands in one of Mexico City's most emblematic spaces, the Three Cultures Plaza in Tlatelolco, ironically, to demand that repression against young people be stopped.

Neither governments nor the rest of the general populace have recognized indigenous people or restored them to their rightful place in the cultural mosaic that is our nation.



Other Alarm Signals

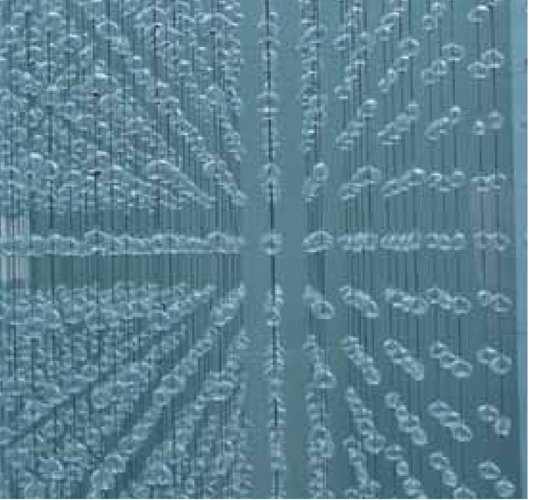
The museum also mentions what have been called the "dead women of Juárez," women who have been murdered in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, simply for being women; the perpetrators of these murders have never been punished and these feminicides have not been stopped.

Another unresolved problem is that of Central and South American migrants in transit through Mexico toward the United States. Once the migrants enter our territory, there is no guarantee of their arriving at their destination alive, since along the way, they are often attacked or murdered by gangs like the Mara Salvatrucha or other members of organized crime. The cases are ignored, as though having entered the country without documents meant that they stopped being human beings with the rights that this confers.

The museum also touches on the topic of journalists who do their jobs without any kind of protection, risking their lives. In recent days, the number of journalists murdered or attacked with impunity has increased noticeably. The statistics are overwhelming: 52 percent of the cases involve the government; 14 percent, organized crime; and in 17 percent of cases the perpetrators of the crimes are unknown. These figures situate Mexico as one of the most dangerous countries in the world for exercising this profession.

The Memory and Tolerance Museum can be, then, a spark that lights the flame of reflection in visitors.

Lastly, a video is projected in which different Mexican artists denounce the disappearance of citizens in different parts of the country due to the existing insecurity and impunity and organized crime's control over society. Disappearances have become more and more common throughout Mexico; families are missing some of their members and those who



disappear are never heard from again; and those who took them remain anonymous.

Indigenous people, peasants, young people, women, journalists, children: we can all be victims of attacks and discrimination. That's why a journey through the history of human rights violations and the atrocities committed both during World War II, and in later decades in different places on the planet, and finally in Mexico, even today, represent a global vision of the consequences of not putting into practice a value that seems simple, but sometimes becomes impossible to accomplish on a day-to-day basis: tolerance and respect for human rights, justice, and a rejection of violence.

"Tolerance is not putting up with something," says a sign at the start of the Tolerance Section. And it makes you think about other ways to define it. To me, tolerance could mean accepting, respecting, knowing how to co-exist with the other and different ways of being and living in this world, recognizing yourself in difference; because at the end of the day, we will always be the "other" to somebody.

Still a Way to Go

It is true that legislation has been passed about some issues related to intolerance, and advancements have been made in several aspects. However, there is much pending on matters of discrimination and racism, migration, gender violence and homophobia, as well as on the rights and recognition of Mexico's indigenous peoples as living peoples and not cultures that can just be admired in a museum.

The Memory and Tolerance Museum can be, then, a spark that lights the flame of reflection in visitors, after recognizing that the atrocities of the Holocaust are not very different from those that have been committed and continue to be committed in many countries, that the reality suffered by the Jews can be identified with that of the indigenous and other citizens discriminated against up until today.

This is a place where children or adults unfamiliar with these cases can be informed and become sensitized to them so that a memory of them can be created, one that reminds us that, as has happened in many cases, intolerance can take us down the road to de-humanization and barbarism. VM

Notes

[1] For more about this important Mexican researcher, see http://www.historicas.unam.mx/investigacion/leonportilla.html. [Editor's Note.]

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JEP: Internal Inventory

Miguel Ángel Quemain*

José Emilio Pacheco was not afraid to be considered a cultural journalist as part of his literary efforts. He described his extensive work this way, as a disseminator and interpreter of the international and Mexican literary tradition.

In the national sphere, he is not the only one who made journalism into a space for invention and imagination in the field of language. He is, however, the author with the most diverse and richest body of work, striving to make journalism an art, a piece of literature, without losing the solidity and density that would allow it to run along the tracks of history. He understood history as an inquiry based on a documentary axis to construct atmospheres, show intellectual, political links, and social and administrative determinations about those involved in the construction of cultural evolution, particularly that of literature.

The Road toward the "Inventory," Or Retelling World

His penchant for correspondence between writers, photographs, interviews, and autobiographies are elements that appear in that form of writing that has become a genre of its own: the literary column. This is a way of constructing a world crisscrossed by a history whose elements are neither obvious nor perceptible at first glance. Many writers have been interviewed about his death. One of them, Marco Antonio Campos, recognized that his work is a fresco of Mexican literature spanning several decades.

*Essayist and cultural journalist, quemainmx@gmail.com.

Photos in this section, courtesy of DGCS, UNAM.

His column "Inventario"
is one of the most important in our language
because of his vocation for documenting our literary
history and the themes that define
the twentieth-century tradition.

Pacheco had already tried several styles of literary column before writer Ignacio Solares convinced him to at least put his initials on his column "Inventario" (Inventory), carried in the *Excélsior* newspaper's supplement "Diorama de la cultura" (Cultural Diorama), which first appeared August 5, 1973. It is one of the most important in our language because of his vocation for documenting our literary history, the trajectory both of authors and works, and the themes that define the twentieth-century tradition. The precedents for this new genre called inventory can be found in his initial columns: "Simpatías y diferencias" (Sympathies and Differences), in the *Revista de la Universidad de México*, from 1960 to 1963; "Calendario" (Calendar), in "La cultura en México"; followed by a brief experience in the supplement of the newspaper *El heraldo de México*.

A column dedicated to literary, cultural criticism always has strict space limitations. Generally, the lay-out designer establishes an outline where very few words fit. Only in very few cases is that restriction resolved by writing a long essay on the topic, which will in turn be limited by being published in a magazine, but whose end goal is to become part of a book. At least that is how Raquel Tibol, the art critic for *Proceso* magazine, and Jorge Ayala Blanco, one of the most important film critics in Latin America for the last 40 years, both in "La cultura en México" and in *Revista mexicana de cultura*, have operated.

José Emilio Pacheco did not experience that lava that circulates in igneous veins for organizing events in a chronicle in the way that Carlos Monsiváis and then José Joaquín Blanco did. Neither did he go out onto the street to gather testimonies or interview all kinds of people like Elena Poniatowska and Cristina Pacheco, herself a felicitous combination of interviewer, chronicler, and reporter, have.

Pacheco proceeded to create the illusion of an inventory with the certainty that the universe of retelling was inexhaustible and the task infinite. But what is fascinating today is that this enormous body of work, inventoried with the meticulousness more of the collector than the administrator of wealth, has its counterpart in the mental vastness of the one who does the retelling and the classifying. To the point that the classification itself is part of an invention whose branches are more due to a personal labyrinth than the known, predictable well-known strains of our tree of knowledge, that form of genealogy by materials that orders archives and libraries to make them legible for everyone.

In this retelling of the world, this cultural journalist learned to arm himself, like Monsiváis, with magical scissors that pruned contents that generations of young writers preserved obsessively to satiate their curiosity, their hunger for the literary world.

If we trace the origin and development of this inventory, we perceive that the genre of the column itself was enriched by a series of approximations that involve not only the information disseminated and the specialized account of literary novelties. Little by little, the modesty of anonymity had to be swept aside, and Pacheco accepted signing his column with his initials, JEP.

In issue 1944 of *Proceso* magazine, poet and editor Rafael Vargas presented a very complete review of the literary columns that form the context for "Inventario," and that show the relationship between readers and literary criticism. He also shows the development of magazines and supplements as the natural places where literature is discussed, reviewed, and considered as the interest *par excellence* of Mexican intellectual life. He includes the exemplary, inspiring columns by Jaime García Terrés and Octavio Paz. The first had published "La feria de los días" (The Fair of Days) in the *Revista de la Universidad de México* for eight years, beginning in 1963. Octavio Paz, in the university's magazine, published the excellent column that he later used as the title of one of his books of essays, "Corriente alterna" (Alternate Current).

For many years, various authors born in the 1950s have attempted to "rescue" this journalism Pacheco published from 1973 to July 8, 1976, and which he continued to publish from 1976, the year *Proceso* magazine was founded, until the day of his death, when his last article was published, dedicated to the memory to a fellow poet, Juan Gelman.

He began the column when he was 34, and it is the work of a mature writer, who by then had published three very significant books of stories (*La sangre de Medusa* [The Blood of Medusa], 1959; *El viento distante* [The Distant Wind], 1963; and *El principio del placer* [The Pleasure Principle], 1972), and some volumes of poetry that defined him as a great creator who ushered in the 1980s to the sound of applause. That is, he was a writer who did cultural journalism, not a cultural journalist turned writer. This characteristic creative

maturity situates José Emilio as an indispensable guide for coming generations.

What was it that made José Emilio Pacheco refuse to publish his inventories in the definitive form of a book? I would venture to field a hypothesis that might seem uncomfortable: perhaps it was because he always considered that the space for his contributions was minimal, and he was always unsatisfied with the limited exposition of his ideas; he might have promised himself he would develop and complete them *when he had more time*.

jep's Polygraphy

Pacheco, always surrounded by books; Monsiváis, by newspapers; Monsiváis, always in the street, at marches, in salons; while Pacheco stayed home, since he made his reading and writing a permanent exercise, perhaps the longest and most incessant of his life. He did not hide his affiliations; his work is an exhibition of *sympathies and differences*; he makes an effort to show his reading, to introduce authors that would take years to arrive in Mexico translated to "Madrid Spanish," and his commentaries made it possible to anticipate their reading and criticism. In short, he is a journalist who reads and shares readings.

Pacheco represents what a lot of cultural journalists of today cannot achieve: that quality of being a polygraph, that is, of being a prolific writer on so many themes, which makes him one of the Mexican journalists with the broadest range in our language, an enormous merit, since Latin American journalists often shine only in the sphere of the local.

Welcome to the banquet of the world, of the contemporaneous and the universal. José Emilio Pacheco had a very broad horizon of knowledge about literature and international cinema that included the possibility of reading in several languages all the magazines, supplements, and newspapers that fell into his hands and which he shared with friends truly erudite in the topic like Sergio Pitol, Margo Glantz, and Carlos Monsiváis, who was always up on the popular culture relatively unfrequented by the intellectuals of the time. The Portales neighborhood, where Carlos lived, was that referential world that also formed José Emilio.

In that search, he also included what was ours, buried under tons of indifference, but also tons of dust, of oblivion, of everything that paralyzes our past for such deplorable reasons as bureaucratic disdain dominated by ignorance and

Pacheco represents what a lot of cultural journalists of today cannot achieve: that quality of being a polygraph, that is, of being a prolific writer on so many themes.

personal interests, until the natural death that overcomes the works that do not tell the person of today things about him/herself that he/she did not know or did not know that he/she knew.

Inventory of the Abode

If his literary career had only consisted of writing "Inventory," it would be enough to put him in the same imaginary territory where Guilles Deleuze put Michel Foucault, as the great archivist of the city, the city of the imagination, invisible cities, royal city, putrid and indispensable city that has the word as the axis of its existence; the documented, imagined, described city, chronicled in literature and its peripheries.

Pacheco is a writer who, through an inventory of emotions, or the registries of friendship —but also of abjection, envy, forgetfulness— shows in his work a face similar to the one Proust and Balzac did for the Paris of yesterday.

I think the conditioning factors of this fruitful dialogue that characterizes his writing are, among many, the way of understanding and exercising journalism and literature seamlessly without separating their strategies and imaginations. All of this is marked by an ethics regarding language, social life, and politics, due to his ability to cover pain, to fictionalize day-to-day misfortunes and show those trans-historic forms of the self: an inventory of a world with the rigor of monitoring and imagination.

One aspect that has come to light in these very emotional moments is the profound tenderness and goodness that framed his family relationships, with his daughters and his wife Cristina Pacheco, one of our indispensable journalists, whose enormous human qualities, I can only imagine, made him fall into abiding love.

I did not have the good fortune of knowing him personally, but I did hear firsthand accounts of his honor regarding his work, his discipline, and his generosity. While he was a very reserved man, his was the isolation not of a man terrified of the world, but of its banality. VM

Continually Reread

Fernando Serrano Migallón*

Writing is a privilege, not only a creative act that is later published and multiplies the dialogue, originally designed to operate among equals, but rather the fact of turning thought and the voice into graphic signs able to retain memory. There is something magical in writing; for that reason, cultures have idolized and feared it. Someone who writes is looked at differently, as if he/she knew a different mystery, as though he/she knew other arts that overcome time, as though he/she had at the tip of the pen the ability to make us happy or to make us pass through the ring of suffering. That is why, in his time, the French poet Stéphane Mallarmé said that the poet was the custodian of the words of the tribe. That is why for countries that like Mexico have always admired their writers —writers they need now more than ever—, the death of those guardians moves us deeply.

How pleasant it would be if, whenever we had a space to write in, we noticed the passage of time, its teachings, and its joys. How pleasant it would be to always talk about friends and the way they have made our world friendlier. That cannot always be; it is unfortunate to have to put letters together to say something that we would prefer never to have to mention: José Emilio Pacheco has left us. In his pen, he embodied the idea of a temporal conscience beyond time; from the beginning of his lyrical work, he said —not without malice— "Don't ask me how the time goes by," because its passage is inevitable and his literature is a sample of that constant passage.

In a certain way, what makes us human is having this awareness of the passage of time, of knowing that unacceptable and inexplicable death has to be accepted as something natural, but at the same time turned into a dialogue with the dead, just as Quevedo said 400 years ago. It would be better if we did not have to say that José Emilio Pacheco has died, particularly now when we need him the most, him, like other prudent pens, brave and intelligent. It would be better if it did not have to be now, these years when, like bad fortune, the generation that showed us universality and well-crafted letters seems to be leaving us. It's true it had to be sometime, but not now that they were in the maturity of their expression

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and their genius. So, starting with the simple way of saying it, the friend has left, the poet has left, and we are left without that generation that we trusted as our own voice and our conscience.

The poet of the passage of time is no longer among us, but he remains in his literature. That dialogue must be kept alive; he continues to be the guardian of the words of the tribe from the other side, and we must continue listening to him. Pacheco was not an ivory-tower poet; he was a brilliant journalist: just remember his activity as an editor in the 1960s at the magazine *Estaciones* (Seasons), in *Diálogos* (Dialogues), in "La cultura en México" (Culture in Mexico), his constant contributions to the *Revista de literatura mexicana* (Magazine of Mexican Literature), to the *Revista de la Universidad de México* (Magazine of the University of Mexico). His column "Inventario" (Inventory) is a classic of research and dissemination of literature and constitutes a public diary of his readings, interests, and ideas. Pacheco never scorned the less visible work of the reviewer, the bookworm, the proofreader, and with time, his readers began to understand that for him —and now for us— that work is as important and exalted as his best poems.

Pacheco worked until the very last moment; his final "Inventario," published the day of his death in *Proceso* magazine, about his friend Juan Gelman who had died only a few days before, will be remembered as a masterwork, a goodbye letter to a friend that, without intending to, became a goodbye to himself, a song to friendship and respect between creators. Gabriel Zaid pertinently commented on the column "Inventario" that Pacheco created unexpected contacts, that he united themes, authors, seemingly unrelated issues, and —I would add— when he linked them up, their relationship seemed obvious to us. How many absolutely unexpected topics did he leave for us on the page to see if anyone would be interested enough to follow them up? And with generosity and absolute open-handedness, with no pretention of ownership or of being a literary landlord. We could not understand our literature without his anthological work (about modernism, the nineteenth century, *Poesía en movimiento* [Poetry in Movement]), and without his translations.

We have to add to this his attitude toward his readers; he liked to be read and recognized by the public, particularly by young readers, although he knew it could be a mirage. In several lectures and essays, he asked himself, for example, about the fate of Eduardo Mallea, the Argentinean writer considered that country's greatest novelist in the 1960s. And he seemed to lower his voice when he would ask himself, "Who reads Mallea today? Who remembers him?" And he liked to be read not because of any vanity of the public man, but because, regardless of his skepticism about the world, Pacheco always trusted literature.

Pacheco had the good judgment
to be a man without dogmatisms,
who always put respect before differences,
opposite ideas, affirming a vocation for intelligent
dialogue, for conversation among friends.

We Mexico City dwellers cannot experience the city in the same way after having read Pacheco. He found in it the stage not only of young loves and day-to-day nostalgia, but also of a mythical universe, with innumerable and possibly infinite mythological strata: our indigenous past, our yearning for the future, our innumerable and amazing cultural syntheses. He knew how to see in the successive mixtures an enormous source of expressive wealth, and he had the good judgment of being a man without dogmatisms, who always put respect before differences, opposite ideas, affirming a vocation for intelligent dialogue, for conversation among friends. And in that idea of friendship, he accepted all his readers without distinction.

He recovered for us an entire city, multiple, conflicted, this city where millions of us live, and he turned it into a central character not only in his famous and beautiful *Las batallas en el desierto* (Battles in the Desert), but in all his prose and in all his poetry, letters crafted on the margins of the metropolis and of the interior space of its inhabitants. He restored to us the simple things of poetry, with which he built enormous edifices of comforting space and magnificent vistas of the universe. He has gone, and together with other builders of our literature who have already left us, enriches the history of our letters and our daily lives in many ways.

Perhaps as a result of love of country and city —there's a poem in which he makes this very clear, "Alta traición" (High Treason)—, Pacheco wanted to make his poetry a kind of emotional, intellectual, and sentimental seismograph, advise us of what was happening, warn us against misfortunes, and propose a way of overcoming them. He never thought that his individual voice, connected to his person, was unrelated to the circumstances that allowed the self to be an "us."

He also knew how to notice the totalitarian temptations hidden beneath the earth, the dangers that threatened a

regime dominant for several decades, and from the apparently de-contextualized spheres of literature, he was able to observe and be a biting critic of his time, that present, which, once again, don't ask me how the time goes by, how it becomes the past, but in any case, how it becomes the future. Pacheco was surprised every day when he found that *Las batallas en el desierto* had stopped being a secret little novel and became a best-seller, adapted for the screen, read by teenagers, constantly reprinted. And the sentimentality of the text is counterposed to the dissection with a sharp scalpel of the fascist impulses that he had described in *Morirás lejos* (You Will Die Far Away).

If his literature brought him the affection and kind regard of Mexicans, the quality of his writing also earned him international fame. He received the most important awards in the Spanish-speaking world, and his books were translated to different languages. In Colombia, in Argentina, in Spain, in Peru, in Cuba, in Venezuela, he was read with fervor and attention. The reaction in the international press to his absence is proof.

We historians, for example, have benefitted from his attitude and findings. He knew how to locate and share a concrete fact and propose a new interpretation of essential events in our history, in an era (the Mexican Revolution, for example) in which letters and politics were intimately linked. His affection and admiration for Alfonso Reyes led him to write splendid pages about the polygraph from Monterrey, and like him, he practices an enormous number of genres and expressive forms.

I want to expressly mention his translations. One of his last works is his exhaustive, obsessive revision of his version of T. S. Elliot's *Four Quartets*. The first version, published 20 years ago, was already greatly praised, and Octavio Paz called it unsurpassable. Pacheco, as though to contradict him, decided to surpass it himself. In the weeks before his death, parts of the new version had already been published in different places, and great expectation surrounded its appearance as a book. It was not the first translation of Pacheco's that caught the public's attention; many years before, his version of Oscar Wilde's *De Profundis, Epistola in carcere et vinculis* (From the Depths, Letter in Prison and in Chains) had been highly praised.

When a writer of the stature of Pacheco translates, it tells us clearly that literature is everyone's and that, therefore, and as Lautréamont wanted, we all write it together. He, Pacheco, only serves as a scribe. There is one well-known

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anecdote that he didn't like to remember, but that is a clear example of his generosity as a man of letters: concerned about a deadline that his teacher Juan José Arreola was working toward with a publisher, he took dictation of some of the stories, which we now know as *Bestiario*, from the writer from Zapotlán el Grande.

Among the innumerable writings upon his death, I have the temerity to add these words, moved by my admiration and gratitude to the poet. Pacheco had gotten us used to not believing him when he said he was ill. How we would like to not believe him now that he has passed away, but death does not allow for incredulity given that it always seems unbelievable to us. The thing is that death always leaves us a little more alone.

José Emilio is quoted, of course, but above all, he is read a great deal. His is a voice that we became accustomed to and that does us good in times like these when culture seems bereft in his absence. José Emilio Pacheco was a great person, a great human being, a good man in the sense of Antonio Machado, as Enrique Krauze remembered in his goodbye speech at the National College.

There are commonplaces that language invents to fulfill those things that are difficult to express. Resorting to them is to run in search of the aid of proven formulas that are quite right in pointing out what it costs a great deal to say: that the oeuvre of José Emilio Pacheco, even without his presence, makes him remain forever; that we will pay homage to him constantly in the future, when new generations of readers are moved by his books; that he is and always will be a protagonist of the history of our letters. All of this is fair to say; however, nothing makes up for his absence, his simplicity, that bonhomie that did not trust his own fame and didn't take it seriously, in his kind sincerity that honors swept over toward the past with rare velocity; for the absence of his sharp intelligence and his poetic sensibility. Cristina Pacheco already said it, and now we say it with her: we will have to learn to speak in the present tense of someone who is no longer here, but, without a doubt, we will speak a great deal of him, in the present tense and forever. VM

The World as Agora

Miguel Ángel Flores*

In the world of functional illiterates, books are distributed less and less. After half a century of economic development and its resulting middle class, half a century of speeches insisting on the importance of reading and spending on public and private education, most publishing runs of novels continue to be 1 000 copies. Poetry has suffered an even worse fate, descending into the catacombs.

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Without his presence in journalism, José Emilio Pacheco would not have achieved the recognition he did in life, but his greatest feat was that this recognition was the result of cultural and not political journalism. Although he understood perfectly well that cultural production cannot be dissociated from its political circumstances, and took the side of those who write as a service to the readers and make their writings an agora where the author and his readership converse, he never wrote with the intention of guiding the Prince and thus winning sinecures. Power represents a comedy of errors and trickery, of simulations and half-truths, or complete truths.

Politicians have their principles, but, as Groucho Marx remarked with barbed irony, if they don't adapt to the circumstances, they can always be replaced without the least

hesitation or scruple. Unmasking the gesticulators was one of Pacheco's aims.

If our craft is making texts, the healthiness of our actions begins by honoring our means of expression.

Journalism was always José Emilio Pacheco's center of attention. His swift reading ability and his interest in everything around him, together with his prodigious memory, translated into solid erudition in literary, political, historical matters. His capacity for understanding and summary allowed him to process information and give the reader the essentials of a reading. His talent for putting together an article without losing sight of where the readers' center of interest lay and the importance of facts won him a multitudinous readership. To this, we would have to add a sharp sense of humor that always hit its mark.

From the start, José Emilio reviewed the literature of the day, and more broadly, the culture of the day. It all started at the magazine *Estaciones* (Seasons) and ended with *Proceso* magazine. Dr. Elías Nandino, who added to his professional practice a vocation for poetry, showed signs of enormous generosity and an authentic interest in disseminating literature by using his own funds and the scant advertising that he could get to breathe life into what is now the legendary *Estaciones.* He created a section, "Ramas nuevas" (New Branches), which he put in the hands of two young men with literary aspirations, José Emilio Pacheco and Carlos Monsiváis. Pacheco began writing most of the literary reviews and took charge of the section titled "Escolio de revistas" (Scholia of Magazines). Later, "with arms and letters," both of them went over to the supplement "México en la cultura" (Mexico in Culture), founded by Fernando Benítez. And there they continued —particularly Pacheco— to review the literature of the day. By then, José Emilio had acquired great skill in the genre. His reviews fulfilled the rules that should sustain them: informing about the content of a book, underlining its positive values and pointing out courteously —and Pacheco never strayed from courtesy— its weak points: the author of *Las batallas en el desierto* (Battles in the Desert) used to say that it was never his intention to besmirch the triumph of an author or make his/her failure more bitter. Restraint, anchored in solid knowledge of the themes he dealt with, distinguished his journalism.

Due to his warm friendship with Jaime García Terrés, who always appreciated his ethical rectitude, broad cultural knowledge, and excellent prose, José Emilio became part of the writing staff of *Revista de la Universidad de México* (Magazine of the University of Mexico). In 1960, he began his column "Sympathies and Differences," the forerunner of all his columns, though it changed names to "Calendar" in "La cultura en México" (Culture in Mexico), the supplement of *Siempre!* where Fernando Benítez and his collaborators found a new home when Ramón Beteta, editor of the *Novedades* daily, expelled them because of their sympathies for the Cuban Revolution. When he finished working at "México en la Cultura," Julio Scherer García invited Pacheco to enrich the editorial page of the daily *Excélsior*. In that newspaper's cultural supplement, "Diorama de la Cultura" (Diorama of Culture), edited first by Pedro Álvarez del Villar and then by Ignacio Solares, the last page offered a column called "Inventario" (Inventory) that appeared anonymously, as "Calendar" had before it. José Emilio continued with the same format as his other columns: miscellaneous content on occasion, obituaries, commentaries on books and authors of the day, translations of short poems, curious reports on politics and science, and every time the occasion merited it, Pacheco would launch a barb of irony or point with acute humor to foolishness, above all in those who evidenced their ignorance or recklessness. Those were the years of the Cold War, of the ferocious response of international power groups to the decolonization of Africa and Asia, of the fierce struggle in the arena of political propaganda between the United States and the Soviets with their outmoded morals. Mexico was experiencing a dynamic cultural life in the midst of authoritarianism that forbade innocent plays, tried to wage smear campaigns against writers who did not sympathize with the regime, and repressed expressions of social discontent with unnecessary violence, while new authors made novel proposals both of themes and technique. Our recent past in politics and letters was being examined more professionally.

José Emilio paid attention to all of this, and he chronicled it all, armed with surprising erudition and direct, precise prose, with turns that revealed his domination of narrative technique. He knew how to trap readers and keep their at-

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of guiding the Prince and thus winning sinecures.
Power represents a comedy of errors
and trickery, of simulations and half-truths,
or complete truths.

tention. He invented didactic, surprising shadow dialogues based on his profound knowledge of the works of conversants who had already died. His monographic columns were true essays, but always pleasant. The sum of the *inventarios* (inventories) could be read as an encyclopedia of everything that went on in José Emilio's public life. Or, they can be read as the sum of voices that made up the face of the era. "Inventario," once in the pages of *Proceso*, is the consummation of an unrepeatable style in the genre of the journalistic column. While Novo wrote the chronicles of life in Mexico in the newspapers, we owe José Emilio for having enriched that chronicle from the cultural angle.

Once again, we have to emphasize José Emilio's precocity and great intellectual energy. The prose, notes, and comments from the column "Sympathies and Differences" are more the characteristics of a mature writer than those of a 22-year-old who seemed to know everything at such an early age. The inaugural article for the column dealt with André Malraux on the occasion of his visit to Mexico, summarizing the stellar moments of his biography: his participation in the Chinese Revolution of the 1920s, his membership in the World Anti-fascist Committee and the league against anti-Semitism; it mentions that he was the author of seminal books of contemporary literature; and it reproaches the mature man for turning his back on his past to become an inoffensive imaginary museographer. A miniature biography, with nothing wasted. Then, he focused on Cesare Pavese on the tenth anniversary of his suicide; praising him for having written the most valuable novels of his generation, among them *El diablo en las colinas* (The Devil in the Hills), Pacheco underlines the discovery of an unpublished novel, *Fuoco grande* (Great Blaze), whose theme is the suicide of the heroine, an older sister of Nabokov's Lolita, the angelical and diabolical little girl who was Humbert's perdition. The next theme is the news of an award for the as-yet-little-known Martin Luther King for his fight against racism; this article shows Pacheco's humanistic tone, which always characterized him. The devourer of information not only heard about the vicissitudes of politics abroad, but was a regular reader of the magazine *Cuadernos* (Notebooks), edited by Germán Arciniegas, where, after the recent death of Alfonso Reyes, he found the testimonies of his colleagues, great figures of other times: Octavio Paz, Germán himself, Mariano Picón Salas, and Eugenio Florit. Florit considered "Reyes's work one of the most impressive spectacles that Spanish letters can offer the world this century so far." Later, he read in *Esquire* magazine the "devastating" comments by critical-critic —as he calls him— Dwight McDonald, an illustrious example of the heights of foolishness reached by anticommunist propaganda. Dwight unmasked Sergei Eisenstein, a covert homosexual movie maker, which was easy to see because in *Ivan the Terrible* there were no women. Pacheco wrote, "Using that criterium —we don't know if naïve or ironic— it would be a good idea to review the good intentions of war movies, which transpire in submarines, jungles, or deserts, in which the only woman is the script-girl." In *L'Express*, Pacheco read about low rates of reading in France, where novels are 72 percent read by women and 51 percent by men. José Emilio asks himself, "Can anyone explain the best sellers?" Then, he briefly breaks the news of the publication of a translation of a short story by Juan Rulfo in *Chelsea* magazine, and he thinks it is biased that they mention that he was a two-time recipient of the Mexican Center for Writers fellowship.

> He knew how to trap readers and keep their attention. He invented didactic, surprising shadow dialogues based on his profound knowledge of the works of conversants who had already died.

Later, he read an article by Georges Markov in *Mercure de France* about the relationship between Joyce and Gide, who was indifferent to the novel *Ulysses* and made no effort to understand how innovative it was, despite the fact that the Frenchman had always recognized the Irishman as someone of great talent. Later, he announces George Pilement's French translation of *La sombra del caudillo* (The Shadow of the Caudillo), Martín Luis Guzmán's great novel, in Gallimard's La Croix du Sud collection. And he concludes his column quoting François Mauriac about Jorge Luis Borges from his book *Mémoires intérieures* as saying, "My knowledge of the Argentinian author Jorge Luis Borges is from yesterday as well as from today. It is too soon to say anything of value, but that reading has given us French writers of my generation the singular image that almost all of us are very clumsy."

Amazing. He was 22. It was 1960. He had reviewed the world of his day and had condensed it in a few pages. And he went on like that until the next-to-the-last week of January 2014.

The same words that he used to characterize Malraux could be applied to him: be no one to be all men. **VM**

Poets Don't Die

Hernán Lavín Cerda*

I

Does he who leaves not come back even if he returns? Who knows. I suspect that poets that still emerge from the bottom of our souls toward our skin, like José Emilio Pacheco, do not die: they just resuscitate. In any case, the doubt arises, and suddenly, half whispered —an increasingly soft whisper— you ask yourself, "Who gave life to death?" The author of fundamental works for the development of Latin American poetry in the second half of the twentieth century, among them *No me preguntes cómo pasa el tiempo* (Don't Ask Me How the Time Goes By) (1969), had just written and sent in his usual contribution to *Proceso* magazine entitled "La travesía de Juan Gelman" (The Voyage of Juan Gelman), about the poet who had recently died in Mexico City. Once again I say those initial words, "Real poets, like José Emilio Pacheco, don't ever die: they just resuscitate." In any case, you have the right to ask yourself, "What is going on? How is it possible? What does this mean? Where are we going?" Undoubtedly the ancient question is useless, but that doesn't mean we're going to stop asking it: "Where are we going? What does all this mean? How is it possible? What is going on? Is there a stairway over there? What is a stairway good for, at the end of the day?" Undoubtedly, the question may sound like the unforgettable Eugène Ionesco. It had also become very difficult for José Emilio Pacheco to walk, even inside his own home. Falling off of oneself inside oneself, then, is no longer impossible. We all fall down or will fall down at some point, outside and also inside. His beloved wife Cristina, also dedicated to journalism and literature, says that José Emilio had difficulty moving around the house. Suddenly came the fall and even that loss of the power of speech. He did not recover. Did he leave this world, perhaps without even knowing that he was leaving? But not forever. His work remains, his integrity and ethical strength —a fundamental value—, his magnificent example.

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After receiving the Vicente Huidobro Prize in Santiago de Chile for a book of short stories *La crujidera de la viuda* (The Creaking of the Widow) (1971), I came to Mexico City for the first time in 1971. It was the poet Efraín Huerta who gave me some books that I still have in my library. Among them, *Ladera este* (East Slope), by Octavio Paz, and *No me preguntes cómo pasa el tiempo* (Don't Ask Me How the Time Goes By), by José Emilio Pacheco. Two essential works, without a doubt. Another fundamental poet for the development of our literature in Latin America, Enrique Lihn, born in 1929 and one of our teachers in Chile, was the first who praised Pacheco to us. When we talked to José Emilio, he always asked us about Enrique Lihn. I remember that Pacheco was one of the members of the panel that gave Lihn the 1966 Casa de las Américas Prize for his book *Poesía de paso* (Poetry Passing By). The other members of the panel of judges were also very exalted figures: Jorge Zalamea, Gonzalo Rojas, and Pablo Armando Fernández. On the flyleaf of that Casa de las Américas publication, José Emilio Pacheco writes that Enrique Lihn developed a very original accent

> in the context of a tradition that he changes and enriches. The testimony of a unique experience in the world of man, this book conciliates the intimate with the collective, lyricism and prosaicism, passion and reflection. Therein lies the unity in its diversity and that these poems, whether descriptive, loving, or political, are not very similar to what is being written today in our language. The "space lived" by each man does not fit the words that others conceived of, no matter how precise they are. And yet, he seems to tell us between the lines, more than a break, ours has been a (critical) period of examination and utilization of the national and continental poetic heritage, incorporated into new situations and other necessities.

Undoubtedly these words were the poetic project of those years. José Emilio Pacheco refers to Lihn, but also to himself. *Poesía de paso* was published in May 1966 in Havana, and *No me preguntes cómo pasa el tiempo* in Mexico City in August 1969. This moving book is dedicated to Cristina and has an epigraph that says a great deal because of its author: Ernesto Cardenal. This Nicaraguan poet and priest contacted some English-speaking poets after a long conversation with the unforgettable José Coronel Urtecho. Cardenal had his romantic-modernist period, and then he moved away from that. In his way, Pacheco also went through those changes, not to mention Enrique Lihn and Nicanor Parra, among others. Observe and listen to these lines of Cardenal that Pacheco used as the general epigraph for his 1969 work, published by Joaquín Mortiz:

Did he leave this world,
perhaps without even knowing that
he was leaving? But not forever. His work remains,
his integrity and ethical strength,
his magnificent example.

> Like figures that cross a television screen and disappear, that's how my life has passed
> Like the cars that passed swiftly on the highways
> with girls' laughter and music on the radio…
> And beauty passed quickly, like the models of the cars
> And the songs on the radio that went out of style.

We can see in these lines that they no longer have the romantic-modernist aesthetic that valued so highly figurative meanings based on the use of the metaphor. However, the rhythm does not disappear. There's an approach to certain lines of development that we can see in English-language poetry.

And, having touched on that, I want to pause here at the poem that José Emilio Pacheco called "Declaración de Varadero" (Cuba) (A Manifesto from Varadero [Cuba]) on the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Rubén Darío. The heavenly poet himself, that unforgettable modernist, wrote an epigraph for his text "Armonía" (Harmony):

> Crawling on the carpet I watch the golden tortoise go,
> tracing through the shadow
> a stigma,
> the marks of an enigma,
> we cannot name, or know.
> When sometimes I think of it,
> the mystery never grasped,
> it clings there, singing yet
> between the bow and violin.[1]

And José Emilio Pacheco writes, and through his words, we can see how the poets of the 1960s open up gradually to other alternatives. I cannot resist transcribing his text in free verse:

In his beginning lies the end. Returning to Nicaragua
he takes on the power of death.
A lighting flash between two darknesses, a little stone
returning to the sling.
He shuts his eyes and sees himself dead.
Then begins on that other death, the bitter
hacking through jungles of paper, wringing the neck
of an old swan like eloquence,
setting fire to the piles of dead leaves,
the rhetorical masquerading, and the dressing-up room:
that high attic with its name "modernism."
It was time / for spitting on the tombs.

Water always gathers in a pool;
the country round draws on
a thousand time-honored rites, beliefs, conjurations.
Rightly turned the earth
lets in other crops to thrive.
Words / are lodestones of dust / that draw down
the yellow rhythms off the tree,
charm music / from the seashell
and inside, the sleeping tempest
turns out a jingle or broad harmony,
thick and municipal, or worn away as waltzes
by brass bands on a Sunday.

What is met is met to be split apart
We are ephemeral —only trees
touched by lightning
hold the force of the fire in their wood,
and friction frees that energy.

So now a hundred years have passed:
we can pardon
and call down Darío.

II

We are now in Mexico City, and we can see José Emilio Pacheco's full development, both in poetry in verse and in prose, as well as in the essay and narrative. An untiring artist of multiple registers. We will always repeat it: an authentic, faithful artist of the word in its aesthetic dimension. We were able to appreciate his works starting with *No me preguntes cómo pasa el tiempo*. He went from the novel to the short story to the essay, although his real center was Poetry. Everything starts and returns there. He always loved his country, even when his love was often a kind of open sore. How can we forget the image and legacy of José Revueltas? Love and pain for Mexico. A complete intellectual who had the virtue of not forgetting others. We're not saying it now that he's no longer with us. The truth is we have said it always. I saw him with the students in the UNAM School of Philosophy and Letters main auditorium, where not even a humble pin could have fit —to use the common [Spanish-language] phrase that may be on a par with the significant poverty of pins— and I ask your pardon for this not-too-fortunate reference.

José Emilio Pacheco went from the novel to the short story to the essay, although his real center was poetry. Everything starts and returns there.

I remember the time that he gave me one of his beautiful books, *La arena errante* (The Shifting Sands), published by ERA in 1999. It was at the Guadalajara International Book Fair. Maturity can be seen in its pages. Reflexive, very human writing. Let's look at his poem "Ages," as an example:

A sad moment of age arrives
When we are as old as our parents.
And then we find in a forgotten drawer
The photo of grandmother at fourteen.

Where does time go, where are we? This girl
who lives in memory as an old woman,
dead half a century ago,
in the photo is the granddaughter of her grandson
the life unlived, the entire future,
the youth that always renews itself in others.
History has not passed by that instant.
Wars and catastrophes don't exist yet
And the word *death* is unthinkable.

Nothing is experienced before or after.
There is no conjugation in existence
except the present tense.
There, I am the old man
And my grandmother is the little girl.

How his most recent sensibility reminds me of that of Émile Cioran or Nicanor Parra, and —why not say so?— of my little books *Neuropoemas* (Neuropoems) (Santiago de Chile, 1966) or *Cambiar de religión* (Change Religions) (Santiago de Chile, 1967). The fact is that we were at a similar temperature. Is it perhaps because we were born in the same year, 1939, that year of the world war? Observe how categorical his text "En el camión de la basura" (In the Garbage Truck) is. It appears in his book *Como la lluvia* (Like the Rain) (Editorial ERA and the National College, 2009):

> Everything goes into the garbage truck:
> Useless objects, plastic containers,
> The ruins of a life, deserted tributes
> Paid to death of the days,
> The papers, the letters that will never
> Be written again
> And yesterday's photographs.
>
> Everything of ours is made
> To end up in the garbage.

What can we brag about, then? As you see, the function of a true poet is to dynamite false pride and human stupidity. Nothing lasts forever, friends. Even the word "forever" does not last forever. Understood? Do we agree or not? What can we brag about, then? Don't make me laugh too hard because it'll make the teeth of Your Insecure Servant fall out the teeth that I hardly have anymore! The truth is that José Emilio Pacheco came, comes, and will always come back. You have to dare to dare, but with knowledge aforethought of the craft. I suspect that he was always a true artist of the word. A total poet at every moment, minute by minute, while he wrote and while he didn't write. That is, never. That's the real truth. Almost never. Of course, he loved his country and Mexico's pains —Our Daily Mexico— pained him to the depths of his soul.

I cannot resist the temptation to transcribe several of José Emilio Pacheco's very brief poems. They appear in that stupendous volume, *Como la lluvia* (Like the Rain). But before that, allow me to touch the unheard-of chord from his poem "Realidad virtual" (Virtual Reality), from the volume *La arena errante*. (The title for this volume comes from Federico García Lorca's line "the shifting sand will turn yellow"):

> We have to say it even if people laugh:
> virtual reality was invented in Mexico,
> in the Del Valle neighborhood,
> around 1950.
>
> My cousin Juan's telescope
> —a toy bought
> second- or third-hand in the Lagunilla market—
> was capable of reinventing the Moon
> as a UFO base and the home
> of creatures from another galaxy.
> It drew three-headed Martians
> where we now know that everything is stone.
>
> And in the height of mysticism,
> It discovered Heaven on Venus
> And Hell on Saturn.

Undoubtedly, the reality of the world affected José Emilio Pacheco. He did not think the birth of a more fraternal and loving world was close.

The poems grouped under the general title "Astillas" (Slivers) are brief and very bare. They go right to the chin. They win the battle by knock-out or they lose pitilessly. Here are some of them:

Fundaciones (Foundations)

When a city is founded
The first thing they put up
Are the places of power:
The palace, the seat of commerce,
The Market, the church, the barracks,
The court, the jail, and the execution yard.
Then they put up
The brothel, the graveyard, and the slaughterhouse.

Cortesía (Courtesy)

How kind the ogre is.
With his unpunished claw
He destroys my face.
After slitting my throat
He said to my cadaver, "Excuse me."

Consejera del aire (Counselor of the Air)

Every time I think I'm important
A fly comes by and says, "You're nobody."

A los poetas griegos (To the Greek Poets)

Yes, Cavafy,
Wherever I go I will take the city with me.
Yes, Seferis,
Wherever I go, Mexico continues to wound me.

Quevediana (Quevedian)

May is gone
And June has not arrived.
Today is falling
And the past is over.

As Pablo Neruda would have said, José Emilio Pacheco fell from the skin to the soul, perhaps without completely perceiving the height of the fall.

Canción (Song)

I continue holding you in that song
That is sometimes suddenly heard again:
The corniest, the most vulgar,
The most beautiful song in the world.

Pabellón de incurables (Terminal Ward)

Somber is this theater of pain,
Life, cruel, absurd, inexplicable.

Ciudad de México (Mexico City)

I pass by a place that's not there anymore.
I abandon myself to the ephemeral, I'm going
With the stones…where do you suppose they've gone?

Plegaria (Prayer)

God, who are in the No,
Bless this Nothing
From where I come and where I shall return.

El fin del mundo (The End of the World)

The end of the world has already lasted a long time
And everything gets worse
But it doesn't end.

Undoubtedly, the reality of the world affected José Emilio Pacheco. He did not think the birth of a more fraternal and loving world was close, a world where Man is not the wolf of Man —I hope the wolves forgive me; they're not always as depicted. Human cruelty seems to have no limits in this world of ambitions and inequality where inclemency reigns. Our very dear poet, whose life and work merited widespread, significant recognition beyond the borders of Mexico, left

this world after writing about the life and work of Juan Gelman. And so, you ask yourself: What does all this mean? And even though it sounds like a sickly sensibility, why are our poets dying, the ones whose work make up the absolutely free song of the other voice, to use Octavio Paz's idea? Will better times come? For now, destitution not only of the moral type? Let us for the moment remember the verses of José Emilio Pacheco in his poem "De sobra" (Not Needed):

> As the planet is
> It doesn't need me.
>
> It will go on without me
> As before it could
> Exist in my absence.
>
> It didn't invite me to come
> And now it demands that I
> Go in silence.
>
> My insignificance matters not to it.
> I'm not needed because everything belongs to it.

As Pablo Neruda would have said, José Emilio Pacheco fell from the skin to the soul, perhaps without completely perceiving the height of the fall. A fall toward Nothing where the only thing that can be heard, drop by drop, are the beats of the Art of Resurrection? I don't know. Perhaps no one knows yet. Everything is yet to be seen, and the unforgettable José Emilio inhabits, almost immobile, though not completely, the luminous dimensions of Mystery. VM

Notes

[1] The translations of this poem and "A Manifesto from Varadero," included in this article, are by George McWhirter, *José Emilio Pacheco, Selected poems* (New York: A New Direction Books, 1987). [Editor's Note.]

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A Mexican Look at Canada

Chris Helgren/Reuters

IT IS UNDENIABLE THAT Conservatism has consolidated in Canada. This move to the right, personified in Prime Minister Stephen Harper, seems to be a trend in that society. His three consecutive federal electoral wins (2006, 2008, and 2011) could not have happened without the vote of confidence of a considerable part of the electorate. However, beyond the hard Conservative vote and Harper's own strategies to stay in power and consolidate his position, it is clear that his government has launched an ambitious political program to reformulate many of its traditional values. This affects social programs that had been part of the proud national identity; seemingly, these values have been displaced by the need to reduce the deficit, regardless of whether this creates profound social imbalances or not.

The materials presented here serve as an updated frame of reference for some of the most polemical and controversial topics among Canada's best informed milieus in recent years. At the same time, it will be of help for better understanding the dimension of the changes in that country so far in the twenty-first century. Some of the most active dynamics in the Canadian-Mexican relationship in the cultural and social spheres in recent years are also analyzed. This section culminates with an article that studies the position of "North America" as a trade entity, and its impact in the region, seeking to update Mexico's perception of Canada. All this is aimed at achieving better understanding between the two societies right when they are commemorating seven decades since bilateral diplomatic relations began.

Oliver Santín

Conservative Canadian Government Actions since Consolidating Its Majority in 2011

Oliver Santín*

The Conservative Party of Canada with Stephen Harper at the helm consolidated its position as a majority government in the House of Commons after the May 2011 elections and has since taken a series of government actions. The opposition has not been able to prevent them, above all because the New Democrats and the Liberals are minorities and divided. This had made it possible for Conservative precepts to gradually gather strength from being in power; the first impacts of this are tangible today, both inside Canada and in its diplomatic relations abroad.

This article will look at the most significant events that give meaning to Harper government actions since the beginning of the forty-first Parliament, which began sessions in June 2011, precisely when the Conservative Party achieved its parliamentary majority.

Geoff Robins/Reuters

Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

Canada's Exit from the Kyoto Protocol

Canada's December 12, 2011 announcement that it was withdrawing from its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol is one of the paradigmatic events that reveal the new majority character of the Conservative government. However, it should be pointed out that the announcement was not unexpected, since Harper himself had already said in 2007 that the Kyoto accords are a socialist scheme to extract money from the wealthy nations and that their only effect in Canada would be to gradually paralyze the national energy industry, particularly oil.[1]

In that context, exploiting Alberta's tar sands takes on particular importance. From them is extracted a bitumen whose mix is turned into a kind of synthetic oil, but during extraction and exploitation, it emits high levels of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.[2]

It should be pointed out that Canada has the world's most important oil sand reserves. This means that this kind of extraction has increased the country's levels of greenhouse gas emissions, which, according to the Conservative government, has forced Canada to pay US$14 billion in sanctions for not fulfilling its commitments under the Kyoto agreements.[3] One of the big problems was that Canada didn't reduced its emissions to less than 6 percent, its 1900 level; however, by 2011, its emissions were around 17 percent, seemingly as a result of the intense exploitation of oil sand deposits.[4]

Canada's exit from the Kyoto Protocol has brought harsh criticism of the Harper government from the international

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community, since with it, Canada is breaking with a tradition that identified it as an open promoter of environmentalist causes in multilateral forums.

The Purchase of the F-35 Fighter Planes

The decision to acquire 65 F-35 fighter planes was announced in summer 2010, when Harper headed up a minority government. However, the fact is that the issue has been central to Canadian domestic politics and one of the detonators of the call for elections in May 2011. This involves the Conservative administration, as a minority government, repeatedly refusing to make the information about the purchase public. This created disgruntlement among the opposition parties, which, worn out and divided, were already without sufficient maneuvering room, so they voted to censure Harper and his government, precipitating the elections, which in turn gave the Conservative Party its majority status.

This is why the purchase of the F-35 fighters continues to be one of the central debates in the House of Commons. The size of the purchase is disputed by government, opposition, general auditors, and diverse specialists in the area, with the figures varying from Can$14 billion (payable in 20 years) to Can$30 billion (payable in 30 years).[5]

The whole situation has forced the Harper government to request external analyses to determine the real cost of the fighter jets. This does not mean, however, that it might back down, since Harper's administration has insisted through different media that the plan to modernize Canada's air fleet continues to be on the books, thus bringing into question the fiscal prudence that Conservative governments usually exercise.

Having said this, and regardless of the results from the different internal and external commissions' investigations, the fact is that Ottawa's Conservative government has programed the debut of the F-35 for 2016.[6] The fact that in the United States, final testing and development of the jets are not slated to be completed until 2019 has added more questions for the Harper government precisely at a time of general budget cuts.

Canada's exit from the Kyoto Protocol is breaking with a tradition that identified it as an open promoter of environmentalist causes in multilateral forums.

Approval of the New C-31 Refugee Law

In June 2012, right at the end of the parliamentary sessions before the summer recess and after harsh debates in the House of Commons between Conservative and opposition members headed by the New Democratic Party, a majority passed the new C-31 refugee bill. With the new law, the Canadian Conservative government changed the criteria for granting refugee status to immigrants from other countries.

In addition, the law drastically reduces the time limits for authorities to hand down their decisions (under the previous legislation, they could take up to 1 000 days to rule). With the new criteria, this has been reduced to only 45 days, with periods for appeal that are so short that they do not allow for preparing a new brief, thus facilitating immediate deportation of both applicants and their families.[7]

These new migratory measures have sparked polemics among the politicized sectors of Canadian civil society, who consider this dynamic part of a plan to drastically reduce the entry of new migrants under this category. It should be pointed out that, since the Conservatives are the majority, the bill was approved practically intact as originally sent; it also gave Citizenship and Immigration Canada the discretional ability to create a list of "safe countries" with a reputation of being human rights promoters. This would allow it to reject applications from citizens from those "safe countries." In addition, the new Protecting Canada's Immigration System Act denies all medical benefits for refugee applicants while they await the final resolution of their cases.[8]

It is precisely this health care clause that has generated the greatest indignation: not only does it deny refugee applicants health care, but also their economic dependents. This has led independent law firms, supported by opposition members of Parliament, to promote a new version of the law in which refugees ill with HIV-AIDS or with sick children could get their cases reviewed for humanitarian reasons.[9] Meanwhile, applicants with these needs can request permanent residence for "humanitarian reasons" as long as they can show that they are families that have lived in the country for years and that they have a good financial situation with stable jobs.

Federal Budget Cuts

Just before finishing up the 2012 first-half parliamentary session, it became known that the Canadian government was preparing millions in federal spending cuts that would impact diverse public sectors. It announced its plans to cut Can$5.1 billion a year out of the federal budget until 2015; among other things, this would mean the disappearance of around 19 200 federal public service jobs.[10] This measure would naturally lower the quality of public services in different sectors including medical care, services to pensioners, unemployment insurance, education at all levels, research projects for sustainable development in all the provinces, and many other areas of public interest. So, the main objective of the fiscal package presented in March 2012 by Minister of Finance Jim Flaherty is to create profound changes in the pension system, in industrial research, immigration, the energy sector, and in the size of government.[11]

It is important to point out that the Conservative government's fiscal measures are framed in Stephen Harper's political strategy centered on not increasing taxes. This issue was one of his most successful political slogans during the 2008 and 2011 federal campaigns, thanks to which Harper improved his public image, proffering him electoral victories in both contests. However, clearly, the need to have more funds for his governmental action has led his Tory government to implement a new strategy that would tend to reorganize public spending just before the next federal elections, slated for the summer and autumn of 2015.

In this sense, and in the framework of government cuts to educational programs internationally, the cancelation of the prestigious Understanding Canada program was of particular note.[12] This program promoted Canadian studies worldwide with the aim of positioning Canada as one of the most dynamic topics in academic debates in many countries.

Breaking Diplomatic Relations with Iran

Perhaps one of the international events that has attracted the most attention in the 18 months of majority Conservative government is precisely the announcement of the country's breaking off diplomatic relations with Iran, made official September 7, 2012. However, like Canada's withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol, it comes as no surprise, above all if we consider the Harper administration's close relationship and agreements with the Israeli government. In October 2010, this situation would be to a great extent the cause of Canada's defeated bid for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council.

> The health care restrictions sparked the most indignation: not only do they deny health care to refugee applicants, but also to their dependents.

This was possible precisely when it became known that countries of the Arab League and from Latin America (among them Brazil, Venezuela, and Cuba) were lobbying very actively against the Canadian candidacy and in favor of Portugal, the other aspiring member, arguing that a vote for Canada was a vote for the United States on Middle East and Israeli issues.[13]

In this sense, the Harper administration's arguments for breaking relations with Iran were very revealing: among the reasons they offered were the statements that Iran was a country that threatened the existence of Israel and that it was a serious threat to world peace. At the same time, Ottawa pointed out that Iran gave military support to the Syrian regime, which was refusing to follow UN dictates about its nuclear program, maintained anti-Semitic positions inciting to genocide, and harbored and trained terrorist groups, among other things.[14]

Despite initial protests from the Canadian parliamentary opposition, then, Canada's diplomatic mission closed its doors in Iran, a decision that has brought Canada even closer to the Israeli government.

Final Thoughts

The facts and data presented in this article show how the decisions made by the current Conservative Canadian government are gradually changing the physiognomy of a country that until recently was considered a firm promoter of environmental causes, a country with a pacifist vocation, that was fair and benevolent *vis-à-vis* immigration, generous in its federal budgets in guaranteeing the quality of social services offered by the state, while internationally, it was traditionally recognized as able diplomatically and a guarantor of multilateralism. The fact is that things are changing little by little in

Canada. This is special, above all if we consider that Liberal and Conservative administrations, alternating in office in recent decades, did not previously express sharp differences.

Thus, Stephen Harper's Conservative government has more less one and a half years to go until the next federal elections in 2015. This gives it sufficient maneuvering room to deepen even more the changes planned, which, if concretized, could also modify one way or another the common Canadian collective imaginary in the medium term. In any case, right now, Stephen Harper has time on his side. VM

NOTES

[1] *CBC News*, "Harper letters dismisses Kyoto as a socialist scheme," http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2007/01/30/harper-kyoto.html, accessed October 9, 2012.

[2] It is important to mention that to obtain one unit of this kind of oil, a mixture of sand, clay, asphalt/bitumen, and from 2.5 to 4.5 units of water is required. This makes for extraction and polution of the entire area's aquifers. For more detailed information, see James E. McMahon and Sarah K. Price, "Water and Energy Interactions," http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev-environ-061110-103827.

[3] *The Guardian*, "Canada pulls out of Kyoto Protocol", http://www.guardian.co.uk/environment/2011/dec/13/canada-pulls-out-kyoto-protocol.

[4] Reuters, "Canada to pull out of Kyoto Protocol," http://mobile.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE7BB1X420111212?irpc=932.

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[12] *Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada*, "Understanding Canada: Canadian Studies," http://www.international.gc.ca/studies-etudes/index.aspx?view=d.

[13] *The New York Sun*, "Support for Israel Cost Canada Seat on U.N. Security Council," http://www.nysun.com/foreign/support-for-israel-costs-canada-seat-on-un/87110/.

[14] *El Economista*, "Canadá cierra embajada de Irán y expulsa diplomáticos," http://eleconomista.com.mx/internacional/2012/09/07/canada-cierra-embajada-iran-expulsa-diplomaticos, September 7, 2011.

The Harper Government, The End of Cultural Diplomacy And Canadian Studies Around the World

Delia Montero C.*

In the past, the Canadian government exercised very dynamic, open cultural diplomacy based on funding cultural, educational, and exchange programs to promote a good image and familiarize people around the world with its country. However, that policy ended when Stephen Harper's Conservative government took office.

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Open or cultural diplomacy made it possible for Canadian embassies to grow closer to universities and institutions of higher education in many different countries. It was an opportunity for people throughout the world to know more about Canada and to create networks of academic exchange. It also made the difference in managing its image *vis-à-vis* that of other countries, particularly the United States.

Along these lines, in 1981, the International Council for Canadian Studies (ICCS) was created, a decentralized, not-for-profit body made up of 22 international associations and

The International Council for Canadian Studies (ICCS) became a strong institution recognized in Canada and the rest of the world: this cultural diplomacy seemed to be creating the hoped-for results.

6 associate members in countries of Latin America, Europe, and Asia, and in the United States. ICCS representatives exist in 28 countries, among them Mexico.[1] Each association and associate member has as its mission the development and strengthening of Canadian studies, plus reporting annually about all the activities related to Canadian studies in its country.

The ICCS was born at a time when some called Canada the society of abundance. Prosperity spurred unprecedented cultural growth, both for popular culture, which became something consumed massively, and for "high culture." Artists had broader, more numerous audiences, while Canadian literature, particularly Francophone literature, experienced a veritable boom.[2]

In this scenario, the ICCS's aim was to support research, teaching, and publications related to Canada on several continents. From the beginning, its activities were funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade, and Development Canada (DFATD), whose policy was part of a research development plan.[3]

The ICCS seemed then to be an exceptional place for encounters, offering multiple perspectives for international collaboration for anyone who wanted to learn about Canada. So, it was consolidated as a powerful instrument in the exchange of communications among researchers from different parts of the world, facilitating the multiplication of contacts with other colleagues and the creation of networks for research and the exchange of information about work related to Canada worldwide in all fields.

Little by little, then, an international community of researchers interested in Canadian studies was created and consolidated. In a short time, the ICCS became a strong institution recognized in Canada and the rest of the world: this cultural diplomacy seemed to be creating the hoped-for results.

By the end of the 1980s, important debates began to be waged about its future, its functions, the role of the international community of Canadianists, and how to best continue its development. This put on the table its relationship with the DFATD, which at that time considered its relationship with the ICCS very close and, therefore, favorable for managing a series of academic programs abroad. By that time, the ICCS was already a solid, stable, durable institution that Canadian scholars could count on; this is why the management of the ministry's programs made it possible for the council to become a major stakeholder.

The ICCS's highest body is its Board of Directors, made up of an Executive Committee and one representative of each association and associate member. One of the board's tasks is to plan annual activities, as well as to guide and determine general policies. This body has a series of written and unwritten rules aimed at maintaining good governance. One of the

Andy Clark/Reuters

Prime Minister Harper on an official visit to Peru.

written rules is that all documents and meetings must be written or held in Canada's two official languages, and that all representatives and members must speak and read them. However, the unwritten rule was that the dominant language in the meetings was that of whoever was president at the time; this meant that the unwritten rules prevailed for a long time in the board's operations, since not all the members spoke both languages.

Two groups could be distinguished inside the ICCS: the Anglophones, represented mainly by the United States, the Nordic countries, Great Britain, Ireland, Israel, India, and Australia, among others; and the Francophones, made up mainly of the Latin American countries, France, Belgium, and Poland. These linguistic differences presented tensions between Anglophone and Francophone unity and diversity, tensions that in turn characterize the existence of Canadian society itself.

The ICCS administered funds received by the MAECI; it designed a budget that gave each association and associate member monies for activities aimed at developing the study of Canada. In the 1990s, Canada's parliamentary committee in charge of reviewing foreign policy decided that it was the right moment to continue with international cooperation; therefore, the projection of Canadian culture continued to be a top priority. In this order of things, it was recommended that international cultural, scientific, and educational issues be dealt with as a fundamental dimension of Canadian foreign policy.[4] This allowed the ICCS to manage some additional MAECI programs and establish itself as a stakeholder of major importance in the field of Canadian studies internationally.

Since then, the ICCS coordinated the promotion of research and specialization scholarships for Canada, as well as the aid program for international research networks, whose aim is to collaborate among working groups from Canada and the rest of the world. These MAECI financed initiatives fostered the development of comparative studies and a higher profile of ICCS internationally.

The ICCS operated through contracts with MAECI, renewed annually, which were its main source of income. On occasion, it sought out other financing to implement its own programs, but without very favorable results.

By the end of the 1990s, the ICCS began to run into difficulties: it lost some of its contracts and little by little, the members of its Board of Directors began to age. In addition to the oft-mentioned loss of programs awarded by the ministry and the resulting drop in budget, another difficulty the board faced was the need to modernize itself by adjusting its structure. However, the ICCS was not able to overcome the strong inertia created over 30 years of functioning.

The lack of structural modernization and the aging of board members —the average age was 60— as well as the lack of vision and foresight about the changes that were approaching, made it impossible for this organization to find new sources of income in the face of a Conservative government uninterested in promoting culture. In addition to this, it had to deal with the rules of the game imposed by Stephen Harper's administration.

In 2006, the Conservative Party leader took office with a minority government. One of his objectives was to reduce government participation in order to put an end to the fiscal mismatches between the federal and provincial governments. With regard to foreign policy, the new government's directives emphasized trade and investment and became very similar to those of its neighbor to the south. With that, cultural diplomacy was practically discontinued.

This changed the rules of the game completely for the ICCS: all systems of incentives disappeared, leaving Canadian studies worldwide in a state of uncertainty. In April 2012, Stephen Harper's by-then-majority government decided to completely cut the ICCS system of scholarships and subsidies, and therefore that of Canadian studies. The amount cut, previously earmarked for these programs, came to Can$1.9 million of the MAECI budget, a figure completely insignificant in the government's overall objective of reducing the budget deficit.[5]

Canada is a country that enjoys "good economic health" despite the severe crisis that has battered its main trade partner, the United States, since 2007. This is why a budget cut like the one described here is not justifiable on its own. For example, in the G-7, Canada's impeccable economic performance despite the 2007-2008 world economic contraction has stood out. This allowed it to emerge unscathed from the recession, in contrast with the majority of the developed economies. In 2009, the year of sharpest crisis, Canada's GDP suffered a -2.5 percent contraction.

With regard to foreign policy, the new government's directives emphasized trade and investment and became very similar to those of its neighbor to the south. With that, cultural diplomacy was practically discontinued.

Fortunately, by 2010, it once again registered 3.1-percent growth, more than twice that of France (1.5 percent), Italy (1.3 percent), and even the United States (2.8 percent). By 2011, the Canadian government reported a budget deficit of Can$33.4 billion, 40 percent less than the previous year (Can$55.6 billion).[6] These results show that the Canadian economy has progressed in cleaning up its finances.

So, why put an end to a program that was successful for more than 30 years? Why end a program that helped people understand Canada and Quebec, and thus contributed to the development of research networks about this country?

Conclusion

Since 2008, the Stephen Harper government has suspended programs and incentives for Canadian artists, eliminating the Prom Art Program (Can$4.7 million), which allowed Canadian artists to promote their work abroad. Others also disappeared, like the National Program for Education in Film and Video, the Canadian Independent Film and Video Fund, and the Trust for the Preservation of Music (Can$9.7 million), among others.[7]

So, Canadian diplomacy is now oriented toward emerging markets, and, as I mentioned, a new global strategy that reinforces trade and investment. The ICCS will hold its next meeting in July amidst a great deal of hopelessness, since it is dying. To prevent its disappearance a series of important structural changes would be required.[8] However, everything seems to indicate that the Harper government is not considering changing its cultural policy, nor is a change in administration expected in the short term. This means that, in order to continue its work of more than 30 years, the ICCS will have to use its savings and all its inventiveness to survive. VM

Notes

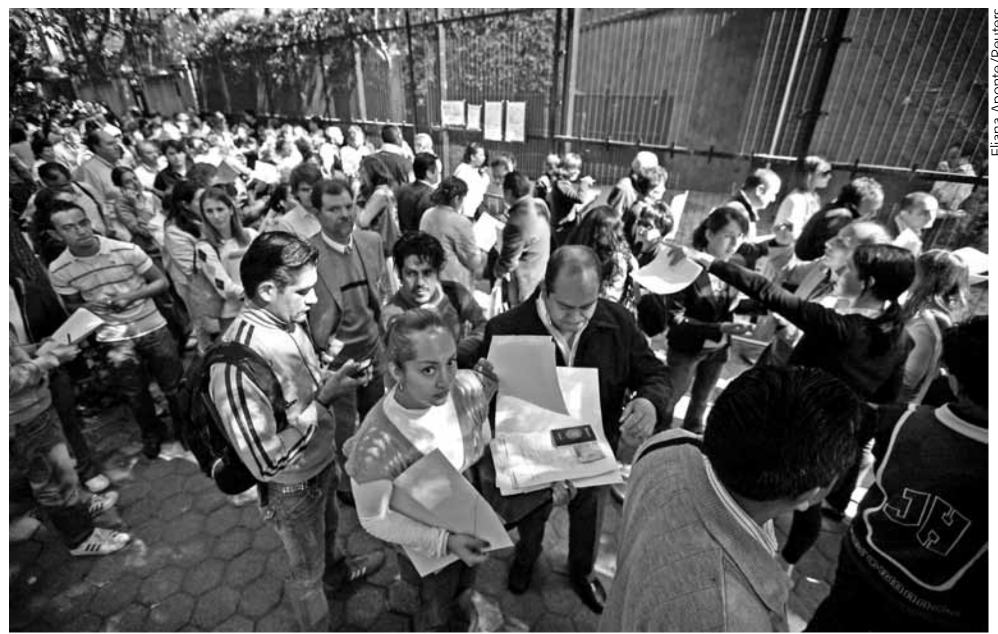
[1] For more details about the ICCS, see http://www.iccs-ciec.ca.
[2] Paul André Linteau, *Histoire du Canada* (Paris: PUF, 2010), p. 111, Que sais-je? Collection.
[3] Serge Jaumain, *The Canadianist. The ICCS/25 Years in the Service of Canadian Studies* (Ottawa: International Council for Canadian Studies/Foreign Affairs Canada, 2006).
[4] Canadian Council for International Co-operation, "Canada's Foreign Policy: Principles and Priorities for the Future. A Report of the Special Joint Committee Reviewing Canadian Foreign Policy," Ottawa, 1994, p. 3, https://idl-bnc.idrc.ca/dspace/bitstream/10625/30370/1/114733.pdf.
[5] Ginette Chenard, "Études canadiennes aux États-Unis-Une autre décision regrettable," *Le Devoir*, May 25, 2012, http://www.ledevoir.com/politique/canada/350826/une-autre-decision-regrettable.
[6] Department of Finance Canada, "Annual Financial Report of the Government of Canada Fiscal Year 2010-2011," http://www.fin.gc.ca/afr-rfa/2011/index-eng.asp.
[7] "La fin de la diplomatie culturelle? Les attachés culturels sont de plus en plus rares dans les ambassades du Canada," *Le Devoir*, July 19, 2012, http://www.ledevoir.com/politique/canada/354921/la-fin-de-la-diplomatie-culturelle.
[8] This article was given to the editors before this ICCS meeting was to be held. [Editor's Note.]

Mexicans and Canadian Immigration Policies Less Exile, More Undocumented Migrants and Deportations

David Rocha Romero*

In the last decade, migration to the United States and Canada has grown considerably. The largest number of immigrants arrived in the United States; this group grew slightly over one percentage point compared to the overall population.[1] Slightly fewer than a million and a half people arrived to Canada. The 7.2 million migrants who were living there in 2010, 21 percent of the total population, represented one of the highest percentages among migrant-receiving countries (see Table 1).

September 11, 2001 was a watershed in the development of migratory policies in North America: as a result, more selective and restrictive laws and policies were created to contain and decrease undocumented immigration.



Eliana Aponte/Reuters

Visa applicants in front of the Canadian Embassy in Mexico.

Little is known about the measures the Canadian government is taking in the case of Mexicans beyond the imposition of visa requirements in mid-2009. This means that fewer persons travel there to ask for asylum, and that therefore the requirement is having the desired effect: migration is being contained from Mexico itself.

From 2001 to 2008, the number of Mexicans entering Canada demanding asylum increased from 1 704 to 9 527.

This figure dropped to 1 221 in 2010.[2] According to Jason Kenny, until July 2013 the minister of citizenship, immigration, and multiculturalism, before the visa requirement went into effect, between 1 400 and 1 500 asylum requests from Mexicans were received per month; after the visa requirement was put in place, only 30 were received a month.[3] It should be noted that Mexicans are the most numerous of all asylum applicants, more than those from Haiti, Colombia, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Republic of Somalia, Zimbabwe, Guyana, etc. International asylum applicants jumped from 3 645 in 2001 to 20 858 in 2009, and dropped again in 2010 to 15 770.[4]

Mexican applicants have given different reasons for requesting asylum: public insecurity, gender violence, poverty, repression by the Mexican state, and organized crime, among others. However, fewer and fewer reasons are being accepted as valid for remaining in Canada, and the requests are seen more and more as attempts to abuse the generosity of the immigration system, to benefit from traditional Canadian social advantages, like its health system.

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On February 14, 2013, Mexico was included on the list of safe countries drawn up by the Canadian government, called the Designated Country of Origin List, which includes, for example, the United States, Denmark, Finland, Belgium, Luxemburg, Spain, and the United Kingdom, among others.[5] Therefore, applicants from those countries do not have the opportunity to appeal a negative reply from the Canadian Ministry of Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism and can be deported more quickly than before.

It should be mentioned that while the hearing process lasts, refugee applicants will not have access to basic health care or permission to work before being accepted or for 180 days after making the application. The new immigration system and the way asylum requests are dealt with include tougher measures like Law C-31.[6]

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Table 1
Total Immigrants in Main Receiving Countries (2000 and 2010) (thousands)

	Total Population		Number of Immigrants		Percent of Total Population	
	2000	**2010**	**2000**	**2010**	**2000**	**2010**
United States	283 230	310 384	34 988	42 813	12.4	13.8
Russia	145 491	142 958	13 259	12 270	9.1	8.6
Germany	82 017	82 302	7 349	10 758	9.0	13.1
Saudi Arabia	20 346	27 448	5 255	7 289	25.8	26.6
Canada	30 757	34 017	5 826	7 202	18.9	21.2
France	59 238	62 787	6 277	6 685	10.6	10.6
Great Britain	59 415	62 036	4 029	6 452	6.8	10.4
Spain	39 910	46 077	1 259	6 378	3.2	13.8
Ukraine	49 568	45 448	6 947	5 258	14.0	11.6
Australia	19 138	22 268	4 705	4 711	24.6	21.2
Italy	57 530	60 551	1 634	4 463	2.8	7.4

Source: Conapo estimates based on United Nations, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, "International Migration 2002," October 2002; "International Migration 2006," October 2006; "International Migration 2009," December 2009; and "World Population Prospect: The 2010 Revision," April 2011.

People from the countries on the list have a 75-percent rejection rate.[7] This means the deportations of Mexicans can be expected to increase, as well as the number of undocumented persons. However, Minister of Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism Chris Alexander has the capacity to change this list at any time.

In recent years, deportations have increased in Canada. This is due in part to the fact that more and more asylum requests are being rejected, thus increasing the number of undocumented migrants.

It is important to point out that the Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) approved in 2001 authorized the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA), created in 2003 as the equivalent to the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), to arrest foreigners suspected of non-compliance with immigration law. These detainees can be held in correctional facilities or detention centers.[8] The IRPA also authorizes federal authorities to sign agreements with the provinces to facilitate coordination and implementation of immigration policies and programs. It is important to underline that, today, U.S. and Canadian public security systems are very similar and include the idea of the potential danger represented by the presence of foreign criminals on their soil (see Table 2).

These data are only a brief summary of the laws and government actions that have led to the deportation of a growing

number of Mexican citizens. It should be pointed out that in the United States, Barack Obama's Democratic administration has deported more Mexicans than Republican George W. Bush's. ICE deported 291 060 immigrants in 2007[9] and 409 849 in 2012.[10] By 2010, 70 percent of deportees were considered non-criminal, but 75.8 percent of those classified as criminals were Mexican. Increasingly, detentions leading to deportation were carried out by local police and not immigration authorities.

In recent years, deportations have increased in Canada. This is due in part to the fact that more and more asylum requests are being rejected, thus increasing the number of undocumented migrants. It is believed that more than 250 000 people are living in the country under these conditions, 40 000 in Montreal.

The judges at the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada have a marked tendency to refuse asylum. For example, between 2004 and 2009, of a total of 135 cases of women who requested asylum due to domestic abuse, only three were resolved favorably. That is, 98 percent of cases were rejected because the applicants could not convince the judges that the state in their country of origin was incapable of protecting them from their abusers.

Of all the asylum applications from Mexicans between 2011 and 2012, only 19 percent per year were granted. This means that more than 6 000 people who were rejected are facing deportation orders. Nevertheless, Mexico continues to be one of the three countries with the greatest number of applications granted.[11]

It is difficult to know how many undocumented Mexicans are residing in Canada if we take into account that some have arrived from the United States and the Canadian government does not have them registered as applicants for refugee status. The Mexicans United for Regularization collective

TABLE 2
LAWS AND ACTIONS THAT HAVE INCREASED DEPORTATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

	Law	Program	Agency	Actions
United States	• Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA, 1996 reform) • Section 287 (g). • U.S. Patriot Act, passed in 2001	• Safe Cities	• DHS ICE, 2003	• Section 287 (g) of the law allows state and local law enforcement to partner with ICE, which can delegate to them authority in immigration matters within their jurisdiction. • The possibility exists for apprehension of undocumented immigrants, with a priority placed on deporting all the "deportable" immigrants.
Canada	• Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) 2001	• Keeping Canada Safe	• CBSA, 2003	• The law authorizes the federal government to sign agreements with the provinces to facilitate the coordination and implementation of immigration policies and programs. • CBSA agents are authorized to arrest foreigners who may have broken immigration law, if they pose a danger to society, or if their identity is in doubt.

Source: Developed by the author with data from Khalid Koser and Frank Laczko, eds., "World Migration Report. The Future of Migration: Building Capacities for Change" (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2010), http://www.ice.gov/about/overview/ and http://www.ice.gov/287g/, and http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/media/facts-faits/055-eng.html.

It is difficult to know how many undocumented Mexicans are residing in Canada if we take into account that some have arrived from the United States and the Canadian government does not have them registered as applicants for refugee status.

thinks there are between 20 000 and 25 000 undocumented Mexicans living in Canada, mostly in Montreal.[12]

Precise data do exist on the number of Mexicans deported since 2006: 21 637, deported for having presented refugee applications that the Canadian government considered fake. In 2012 alone, on average, seven Mexicans a day were deported.[13]

It is also necessary to remember that the Canadian government has been encouraging temporary migration of Mexican workers. To do this, it has adjusted its immigration policy to the requirements of the capitalist system, designing it according to each province's labor and population needs. In 2003, 10 595 Mexican agricultural workers went to work in Canadian fields; in 2012, that number climbed to 17 626. That is, the number of workers and the length of stay increased. Thus, the Ottawa government stimulates controlled, temporary immigration to satisfy above all the specific needs of the labor markets, with return practically assured.

Final Comments

Despite the increase in temporary laborers, a result of a bilateral agreement, Canada's response to Mexican immigration has been harmonizing with that of the United States over the last decade: unilateralism moving toward a re-borderization policy; and increasingly restrictive laws that tend to greater control or over-protection of the border through costly operations or actions to deport the largest possible number of immigrants. VM

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Notes

[1] I want to thank Romina Hernández, a member of the Mexicans United for Regularization collective in Montreal, for information and her collaboration in writing this article.

[2] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010/temporary/25.asp, accessed March 1, 2013.

[3] Pablo A. Ortiz, "Ministro de Inmigración habla sobre el sistema de refugio, el caso de México y la lista de países seguros," http://noticiasmontreal.com/83240/ministro-de-inmigracion-habla-sobre-el-sistema-de-refugio-el-caso-de-mexico-y-la-lista-de-paises-seguros/, February 13, 2013, accessed March 2, 2013.

[4] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/statistics/facts2010/temporary/26.asp, accessed March 1, 2013.

[5] Interview by Romina Hernández, a member of the Mexicans United for Regularization collective in Montreal, which fights for immigrants' rights, April 1, 2013.

[6] A series of measures that close the door to thousands of people who want to request refugee status.

[7] "Canadá revela lista de 27 países seguros en el marco de nuevas reglas para refugios," http://noticiasmontreal.com/75369/canada-revela-lista-de-27-paises-seguros-en-el-marco-de-nuevas-reglas-para-refugios/, December 14, 2012, accessed March 14, 2013.

[8] Canada Borders Services Agency, http://www.cbsa-asfc.gc.ca/media/facts-faits/007-eng.html, accessed March 1, 2013.

[9] U.S. Department of Homeland Security Seal, http://www.ice.gov/doclib/about/offices/ero/pdf/ero-removals1.pdf, accessed February 15, 2013.

[10] U.S. Department of Homeland Security Seal, http://www.ice.gov/removal-statistics/, accessed February 15, 2013.

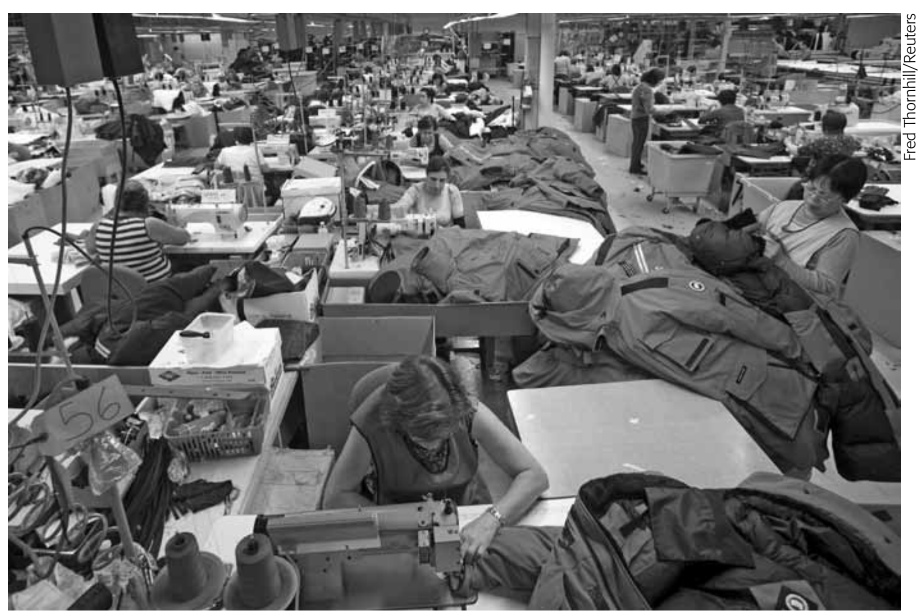
[11] Canadian Council for Refugees, http://ccrweb.ca/en/one-five-mexicans-found-be-refugees, accessed March 10, 2013.

[12] According to Romina Hernández, a member of the Mexicans United for Regularization collective, a Montreal-based group that fights for migrants' rights, the number of undocumented Mexicans in Canada is increasing due to the system's legal restrictions and increasing numbers of them are going underground. This collective is proposing the regularization of the thousands affected who are facing deportation proceedings. Interview with the author on April 1, 2013.

[13] Víctor Hugo Michel, "A diario siete mexicanos son deportados desde Canadá," http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/noticias2011/a47f9a2ae3be54c547c84ed3e9baa7ff, August 30, 2012, accessed March 2, 2013.

Unions, Labor Relations, and Political Parties in Canada Under Neoliberalism

Roberto Zepeda*


Fred Thornhill/Reuters

Since the 1980s, neoliberalism has reconfigured the economic model, impacting working conditions and the relations among unions, political parties, and government.[1] Although Canada has not escaped this dynamic, four characteristics that make it an exception internationally should be underlined.

First, despite the fact that living standards have been dropping, Canada still offers broad benefits to labor, such as, for example, unemployment insurance. The unionization rate in Canada is the highest in the Western Hemisphere, and Canada is second only to the United States on the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI).

Second, the Canadian union movement is heterogeneous and the political party system seems disperse and shifting compared to Mexico and the United States. No close relationship between unions and ruling governing parties has existed like in other countries.

Third, labor relations in Canada are decentralized and allow for greater democracy in the workplace, particularly in terms of organizing unions, which explains the higher unionization rates.

Fourth, the New Democratic Party (NDP), linked to the union movement, has become the second force in Parliament; the Conservative Party has been in office since 2006, while the Liberal Party has lost representativeness since the May 2011 elections.

Quality of Life and Working Conditions

For seven consecutive years in the 1990s, Canada was the best place to live in the world, according to the HDI, which measures different indicators like quality of life, income, and

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TABLE 1
UNION DENSITY IN CANADA (2011)
(%)

Total	**29.7**
Public Sector	71.1
Private Sector	16.0
Manufacturing	24.9
Public and Private Services	30.4
Women	31.1
Men	28.2
Full-time Workers	31.1
Part-time Workers	23.6

Source: Developed by the author with data from Sharanjit Uppal, "Unionization 2011," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* vol. 23, no. 4, Statistics Canada, 2011, http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=75-001-x&lang=eng, accessed January 15, 2013.

education. However, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, its ranking dropped, and by 2005, it was in fourth place.[2] By 2012, it had fallen to eleventh place in the hemisphere, even below the United States; however, although it continues to rank one of the best places, Canada has been surpassed by other countries over the last 12 years.[3]

At the same time, Canada's unemployment insurance, one of the most important benefits a worker has, has also been eroded. In 2011, only four out of every ten unemployed workers had access to it, and the number of weeks of coverage and the amount paid have also declined. In 1996, the maximum benefit per week was Can$604, while in 2012, the top payment was Can$435, and the average, Can$335 a week.[4] Despite this, coverage is still greater than in the United States, and in Mexico, it is non-existent.

Unionization is higher in Canada than in other developed and developing capitalist countries. Recent data show that from Canada's 14.5 million workers, about 4.3 million are unionized; that is, 30 percent of the employed work force in 2011.[5] This is more than double the U.S. rate (11.8 percent), and higher than European countries like the United Kingdom (26 percent), Germany (18.5 percent), and France (9 percent).[6] Canada is even the most unionized country in the Western Hemisphere, more than Argentina (25 percent), Brazil (17 percent), and Mexico (10 percent), the main Latin American economies, which have enormous working populations.[7]

In the last 30 years, this union density in Canada declined from 40 percent to 30 percent. In 1982, unionization was 38 percent, the highest since 1973. However, by 2003, it had dropped to 30 percent, where it remained until 2011 (see Table 1).[8] Different factors contributed to the loss of union membership in the 1980s and 1990s, such as the de-industrialization linked to neoliberal globalization, deregulation, privatization, public sector cutbacks, the growth of the private sector, and the casualization of labor (regular workers are laid off and rehired temporarily). All these factors have had differing degrees of influence on the fall in unionization in Canada.[9]

Union membership is significant since it is linked to higher earnings, job benefits, and social security. For example, according to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), unionized workers earn more than their unorganized counterparts. On average, the hourly wage is Can$6.80 higher for unionized workers than for non-union workers; for women, the difference is even greater (Can$7.94).

It has been shown that, on average, those belonging to a union earn 26 percent more than other workers. In general, unionized workers are three times more likely to get a pension from their company than non-unionized workers and have double the medical coverage.[10] The average income of Canadian workers rises as a result of unionization, and this is clearly an advantage.

Canada's most representative unions are affiliated to the CLC, which grouped 3.2 million workers in 2011, 70 percent of all unionized employees. The CLC exists in every region and in most industries (public sector, transportation, auto, communications, energy, paper, construction, education, and health care, among others). It includes 184 national unions and 39 international unions headquartered in the United States.

Another important organization is the Confederation of National Unions (CSN), which represents the most combative unionism in Canada. Its political action is different from that of the CLC, and there is absolutely no link between the

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> In Canada the close link between the organized labor movement and the social-democratic-leaning NDP has strengthened the political influence of Canadian unions.

two, not even to join forces and defend their interests as workers. The CSN is headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, and represents 316 313 workers, that is, 6.7 percent of Canada's union members,[11] and almost all its members live in Quebec province. It has become the most radical and politicized union in North America, having actively supported the independence of Quebec and assumed left political positions.

In addition, a large number of local, independent unions exist that do not belong to any union federation, as well as an important number of international unions, something that differentiates it from union organization in Mexico and the United States.

Work Relations

The legal system that regulates labor relations is more decentralized in Canada than in Mexico; provincial laws are more important in labor regulation in Canada. In general, Mexico has protective labor legislation and benefits for the worker on paper that are not enjoyed in practice.

An analysis of the systems that regulate the forms of unionization and the guarantees for union operation in North America shows that the most favorable conditions for organizing a union exist in Canada. In the United States, union organization drives begin with a consultation of the workers to see if they want to belong to a union through what is called a card check. If a two-thirds majority agrees, then an election is requested from the labor authorities and the employer is notified of the process. However, during the period between the card check and the election, which is often more than a month, the employers pressure the workers to abandon the unionization process.[12] In Canada, labor institutions guarantee unionization through a system that respects the workers' decision to join or create a union. This is important for explaining the high union density rates in Canada, while in the United States and Mexico, workers face obstacles in the voting and registration phases, respectively, during the unionization drive. The difference in union density between Canada and other countries is explained by factors linked to the unions' opportunities to recruit members.

Political Parties and Unions

Despite the fact that in different countries unions still maintain strong ties to left, socialist, and social democratic political parties, it is evident that they do not continue to enjoy the strategic position they used to have in the ranks of those parties. That is, the social groups and sectors have changed, and the parties that previously based their strength on alliances with the unions now seek to attract new social sectors that do not feel represented and make up a very important mass of people.

In the case of Canada, the union movement has not been the base of support of the ruling parties in recent decades. However, the close link between the organized labor movement and the social-democratic-leaning NDP has strengthened the political influence of Canadian unions.[13] The institutionalization of the NDP within a highly federalized parliamentary system has facilitated the passage of collective bargaining legislation favorable to the unions.

Canada has been characterized by a multi-partisan parliamentary political system. The first decade of the twenty-first century brought with it a change at the top of the power structure, a switch from the Liberal Party to the Conservative Party of Canada, although this transition has been moderate. Canadian voters' support for a single party has not been clear-cut: the last four elections put three minority governments in office since no party received enough support to get an absolute majority. This has brought with it instability for the political and government agendas. In addition, voter participation in federal elections dropped from 75 percent in 1988 to 60 percent in 2011.[14]

The CLC is closely linked to the NDP, which has recently become the largest opposition force. This has made it possible for it to formulate legislation favorable to the union movement, although this party has never had a majority in Parliament and therefore never had a prime minister.

The United States has a presidentialist, bi-partisan political system. The political link between the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and the Democratic Party has not been as close as those that exist in other countries. In Mexico, both the Confederation of Workers of Mexico (CTM) and the Labor Congress (CT) were closely linked to the Institutional Revolutionary Party

(PRI) in the last century, through the participation of union leaders in political and government posts. The unions' political power has decreased, however, due to the democratization that has eroded the existing corporatism.

Final Thoughts

The existence of a social democratic party in the Canadian political system has had an impact on the design of legislation favorable to unions and the working class. Also, the legal guarantees for workers' organizing facilitate the existence of a high unionization rate in Canada, which fosters higher wages and benefits like unemployment insurance for workers. These factors, taken together, have contained the decline of the working class and unions in Canada seen in other countries around the globe derived from the implementation of neoliberal policies. VM

Notes

[1] Neoliberalism proposes that the well-being of humanity can be achieved best by giving free rein to entrepreneurial freedoms and the individual's abilities within an institutional structure characterized by strong rights to private property, the free market, and free trade. See David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

[2] Scott W. See, *The History of Canada* (Amenia, New York: Grey House Publishing, 2010).

[3] Índice de Desarrollo Humano 2012, http://hdr.undp.org/es/estadisticas/, accessed March 15, 2013.

[4] Canadian Labour Congress, "Unemployment Insurance," Ottawa, Ontario, 2012, http://www.canadianlabour.ca/issues/unemployment-insurance, accessed March 1, 2013.

[5] Sharanjit Uppal, "Unionization 2011," *Perspectives on Labour and Income* vol. 23, no. 4 (2011), Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 75-001-XIE, http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/bsolc/olc-cel/olc-cel?catno=75-001-x&lang=eng, accessed January 15, 2013.

[6] OECD, *Society at a Glance 2011 - OECD Social Indicators*. *OECD Social Indicators*, 2011, http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=20167, accessed January 20, 2013.

[7] For the cases of Brazil and Argentina, see Adalberto Cardoso, "Industrial Relations, Social Dialogue and Employment in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico," Employment Strategy Papers (Geneva: International Labor Organization, 2004).

[8] Different instruments gather and systematize statistical information about union membership in Canada. The most complete is the "Unionization" report derived from the Labour Force Survey published annually in the magazine *Perspectives on Labour and Income* by Statistics Canada. However, in 2012, this topic was eliminated from the publication.

[9] Geoff Bickerton and Jane Stinson, "Challenges Facing the Canadian Labour Movement in the Context of Globalisation, Unemployment and the Casualization of Labour," in A. Bieler, I. Lindberg, and D. Pillay, eds., *Labour and the Challenges of Globalization: What Prospects for Transnational Solidarity?* (London: Pluto Press, 2008).

[10] Andrew Jackson, "Rowing against the Tide: the Struggle to Raise Union Density in a Hostile Environment," in Pradeep Kumar and Christopher Schenk, *Paths to Union Renewal* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

[11] Ibid.

[12] J. McKennirey, L. A. Compa, L. Lara, and E. Griego, *Plant Closings and Labor Rights* (Dallas: Commission for Labor Cooperation, 1997).

[13] J. B. Rose and G. N. Chaison, "Unionism in Canada and the United States in the 21st Century: The Prospects for Revival," *Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations* vol. 56, no. 1, Winter 2001, pp. 34-65.

[14] Elections Canada, http://www.elections.ca/home.aspx, accessed February 1, 2013.

Canadian Culture For the Mexican Public[1]

Graciela Martínez-Zalce*

In the Manner of a Rough Introduction

As a researcher in Canadian studies who teaches in the School of Spanish Letters, I am always aware of the translations of works by Anglo-Canadian and Quebecois authors (both men and women) that I can offer my students. So, in December, while looking for an entertaining read, I bought the Aleph publishing house, Spanish-language edition of Douglas Coupland's latest novel, *Generation A*. Imagine my surprise when, on getting home and taking off the book's cellophane wrap-

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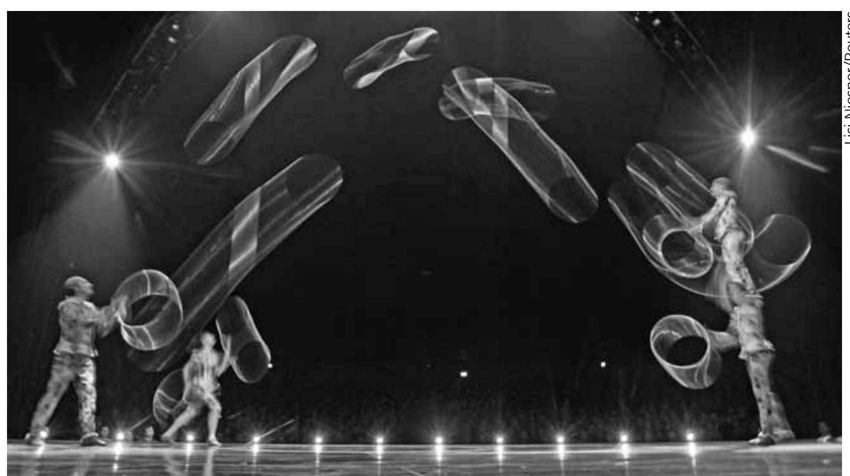
Lisi Niesner/Reuters

Cirque du Soleil has continuouslly performed in Mexico.

Despite their excellent production, recognized worldwide, this is characteristic of Canadian films: they do not get the screen time they deserve either at home or abroad.

per, I discovered that for the illustrious Spanish publishers, this resident of British Columbia is "one of today's most prominent U.S. American authors." Like any reader concerned with this kind of mistake, naturally, I immediately wrote to the publishing house, making an irate clarification —something writer's agent should already have done—, to which, of course, I received no answer.

My surprise was linked to how seriously we fetishists take books, since in autumn 2011, the morning TV news broadcast —with similar confusion, though more explicable because of the source— announced that "North American" musician and poet Leonard Cohen had received the Prince of Asturias Prize. In media-speak, "North American," as all we North Americans know, generally functions as synonymous with U.S. American.

I have told these two short anecdotes to underline the importance of serious dissemination of Canadian culture in Mexico and how the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) has been a very significant part of it.

Literary Prizes and Other Not-Very-Effective Kinds of Dissemination

In July 2008, Canadian poet and essayist Margaret Atwood was also given the Prince of Asturias Prize. What we Mexican readers, not too familiar with her work or the context in which she has produced it, would expect is that the country's cultural supplements would publish a few articles on Canadian literature (which is actually made up of two literatures, one written in English and the other in French) or that Atwood's books would have been placed on bookstores' "recent arrivals" displays. Except for one good article by Mónica Lavín in the "El ángel" (The Angel) section of the *Reforma* daily paper, nothing else happened.

Canadian Cultural Entertainment And Its Presence in the Media

Sixteen years ago, when NAFTA's signing was still recent, I sent a questionnaire to the Cirque du Soleil to find out if the signing of the agreement had facilitated the export of a show that, despite having been born as a provincial cultural product, had already turned into a company with a clear global focus.[2]

My questions revolved around Mexico's inclusion in the North American cultural industries market.

The questionnaire was the following: 1) Have you scheduled a tour to Mexico in the future? If not, why not? 2) Do you have an official distributor for your products in Mexico? 3) Has NAFTA facilitated the export of your products to Mexico? 4) Is Mexico an important market for you? If not, are you thinking of exploring it in the future? 5) When you promote the circus, do you present it as a Canadian or a Quebecois product? 6) Is there an explicit intention to identify the circus as a national or regional company? 7) Is there an explicit intention to identify yourselves with Canadian multiculturalism, given the many ethnic nuances in the design of each show?

The brief response I received was the following: "Dear Graciela, We wish to thank you so much for your interest in Cirque du Soleil and extend our apologies for not responding sooner. [The] South American market is currently being

> We can note that Mexican academics seem more interested in the economy in general, and NAFTA in particular, as well as in the areas of Canada's domestic and foreign policies.

evaluated by Cirque du Soleil. However, the project is still at a very early stage. More information will become available in the upcoming years as the project progresses. Once again we wish to express our gratitude for your interest." Actually, for my research purposes, the note only told me that NAFTA was so foreign to this itinerant company that the person who responded had not even noticed that Mexico is part of North America.

But in the last decade, things have changed. Cirque du Soleil is one of the most famous, profitable shows in the world, and, of course, it performed its *Allegria* spectacle here, but not until October 2002. It put up a yellow and blue tent with 2 500 seats in the Santa Fe neighbourhood, and, since then, each time with similar success, it has played its *Dralion*, *Saltimbanco*, and *Quidam* seasons to full houses. The Mexican reviews did identify the company as Canadian. So, at least once a year, a Canadian cultural product is present in the mass media, and therefore, in the daily lives of Mexican audience members.

It could be argued that the case of the circus is exceptional worldwide and that, in fact, its national origin is what is least important. However, another strange phenomenon took place from January to April 2008 in Mexico City's Zócalo Square. The exhibition "Ashes and Snow" by Gregory Colbert, born in Toronto in 1960, also curiously displayed in a tent, called the Nomadic Museum, managed to beat all records for similar events. By March 5, 2008, with more than a month still to go, 1 589 776 people had already visited it after waiting in line for hours.[3] Regardless of aesthetic considerations or why there were such crowds —we could explain the latter both because of the museum's fantastic location and because admission was free, to venture just a pair of hypotheses—, what is certain is that without the exhibit's content including any other Canadian reference except the photographer's origin, his nationality was mentioned both in reviews and in his presentation. Does this simple fact count, then, as sufficient for it to be considered "Canadian content"?

In this essay, I will review what has happened in the last decade with less massive phenomena, closer to what is called "high culture," to see if the dissemination of Canadian content has increased in Mexico as the twenty-first century has advanced.

The Case of Quebecois And Anglophone Canadian Film

For the more than 30 years that the International Film Exhibition has been carried out in Mexico, fewer than 20 Francophone and Anglophone Canadian films have been part of it. Despite their excellent production, recognized worldwide, this is characteristic of Canadian films: they do not get the screen time they deserve either at home or abroad.

In recent years, the Canadian presence at the exhibition has almost disappeared, which is a shame because the advantage of the exhibition is that it sends the films to different cities around the country where they are shown not only in cultural institutes, but in commercial movie houses.

Apparently, this situation seems to have levelled off with the annual film festival organized by Mexico's National Cinematèque and the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City. Despite showing a large number of significant productions, this has the disadvantage of showing only in one theatre at the Cinematèque and another art cinema in Mexico City. In general, the films selected have been relevant ones, since they include work by important movie makers, but whose work has not yet been very well known abroad: film makers as diverse as Léa Pool, Guy Maddin, or Deepa Mehta, and productions that have been very successful domestically, like *C.R.A.Z.Y.*, or even documentaries, which are never as widely distributed as full-length fiction films. However, since very often no sub-titled copies are available, the mainly Spanish-speaking audience gets discouraged. So, the festival turns into an event for the cognoscenti, more than a real activity of mass dissemination.

In June 2003, the festival honoured David Cronenberg with a retrospective that was very important for Mexican audiences because, despite being the best known of Canada's film makers, his work has not been the most widely exhibited in the International Film Exhibition in Mexico.[4] The selection was complemented with a series of round table discussions at the National Cinematèque. Cronenberg's films are distributed internationally, and some of them have been shown in

our country beyond the restricted space of the so-called art cinemas. It is very interesting that he was picked as the most representative Canadian film maker, and that the audience identified the Anglophone and Francophone film production of that country through a body of work that was rather difficult to digest due not only to its thorny subject matter, but also the visual impact it has on the screen.

To conclude this brief panorama, it is fundamental to keep in mind the importance of animated film, which has always made its presence felt at the annual children's film festival also organized by the National Cinematèque, focused on a different audience, in training. A large part of the list of films shown by the Cinematèque is of this genre, which, while not commercial, is successful, and which has earned Canada worldwide recognition.

Margaret Atwood and Gabrièlle Roy Chair for Canadian Studies

In Canada and other countries of the world, most of what is called Canadian studies goes on in the field of cultural studies. Curiously, in Mexico (above all at the congresses organized annually by the Mexican Association of Canadian Studies), we can note that Mexican academics seem more interested in the economy in general, and NAFTA in particular, as well as the areas of Canada's domestic and foreign policy.

The idea of creating a chair came out of a series of meetings called Canadian Autumn that had brought together renowned writers, academics, translators, and journalists both from Mexico and from Canada. The meetings were held under the auspices of the UNAM, the Canadian Embassy, and the Mexican Association for Canadian Studies (AMEC), three institutions that have worked together for years to foster Canadian studies in Mexico.

The National Autonomous University of Mexico, through the School of Philosophy and Letters and the Center for Research on North America, in collaboration with the Canadian Embassy in Mexico, set up the Margaret Atwood and Gabrièlle Roy Chair for Canadian Studies on November 22, 2002. Present at the inauguration were Atwood herself and Marie-Claire Blais, among other prestigious Anglo-Canadian and Quebecois writers.

The aim of the chair is to foster and stimulate academic exchange among professors, researchers, and eminent artists dedicated to the study of the different humanities disciplines of Canadian culture through joint research projects, courses, seminars, cycles of lectures, colloquia, and publications, among other activities.

> The Margaret Atwood and Gabrièlle Roy Chair for Canadian Studies has been the most productive chair in the UNAM in recent years, and, to celebrate its tenth anniversary, Margaret Atwood herself gave a reading of her poems.

It was decided to name it after Margaret Atwood and Gabrièlle Roy because their prestige makes them two pillars of Canadian letters. The first, English-speaking, is an inescapable reference point in her country's contemporary literature. The work of Roy, who died in 1983, has been a landmark in the evolution of Canada's French-language letters. Both have outstandingly reflected and conciliated the diversity and cultural wealth of their people.

In recent years, the chair has favored interdisciplinary exchange both in teaching and in research and dissemination. It has brought together Mexican and Canadian writers, academics specializing in different aspects of Canadian culture, and has made it possible for students to deepen their knowledge about it through such diverse but complementary disciplines as the theory of translation and history, poetry, and documentary cinema. In addition, it has fostered knowledge and an appreciation of direct sources, the reading of novels and essays, and discussion with their authors.

Translations for the Mexican public have continually brought writers to the chair, which, in turn, has fostered translation and the publication of texts, showing the existence of a true dialogue not only between the texts and their readership, but also between the Canadian and Mexican intelligentsia. Symptomatically, this has been the most productive chair in the UNAM in recent years, and, to celebrate its tenth anniversary, Margaret Atwood herself gave a reading of her poems translated in Mexico at the School of Philosophy and Letters.

The website of the Association for the Export of Canadian Books curiously points out the importance of the flowering of university Canadian studies programs for disseminating Canadian literature. Although in this extremely brief article, I have not had the opportunity to talk about reading, translations of Anglo-Canadian and French-language Cana-

dian literature can be found for Mexican readers. Both the UNAM's libraries and certain bookstores have shelves lined with titles not only by Atwood herself, Leonard Cohen, and Douglas Coupland, but also Alice Munro, Nicole Brossard, Michael Ondaatje, Mordecai Richler, and Miriam Toews in translations done in Spain or in Mexico.

In the absence of a bachelor's program or specialization in Canadian studies, spaces such as the UNAM chair, the film festivals, or the book launches, and authors' presentations serve as effective means of disseminating a culture that seems increasingly near because they allow us to view it from closer up, through its best exponents, and without the need for tents. VM

NOTES

[1] The author wishes to thank Claudia Lucotti and Dr. Laura López Morales for their generous contribution of information that made this text possible.
[2] See Graciela Martínez-Zalce, "Cirque du Soleil, a Canadian Product?" *Voices of Mexico* 41, October-December 1997, pp. 85-91.
[3] Sergio R. Blanco, "La cultura como diversión, las musas mediáticas," in "El ángel," cultural supplement of *Reforma* (Mexico City), March 9, 2008, p. 6.
[4] This is not the case for film makers of other nationalities, whether European, U.S. American, or Mexican.

The Humanities, a Door for "Temporary" Agricultural Migrants to Canada[1]

Aaraón Díaz Mendiburo*

Mathieu Belanger/Reuters

Men and women, like all living beings, do not have a single territorial base; their "seeds" move; they "travel" to different places. We can summarize why by saying they are looking for more favorable conditions for their lives and development. So, at the core of men and women's territorial movements, whether as nomads or migrants, is the search for survival and/or better living conditions than the ones they currently enjoy. The corollary of this statement would be that the basis of migratory movements —if not the need— is dissatisfaction with current conditions

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and at least a hope of improving. This is why Mexico's high emigration rates speak to a country lacking in conditions for satisfying its inhabitants' basic necessities or expectations. Undoubtedly, this is a matter for concern.

But moving from one place to another does not imply radically abandoning the place of origin. For different reasons, mainly cultural ones, we men and women develop an attachment to our place of origin. One way or another, physically or mentally, we stay in contact with our roots. What often happens is that the searches, struggles, and encounters of better material living conditions are accompanied by loneliness, absences, lack of understanding, and estrangement. That is why living inside each migrant is often a dissatisfied person who leads him/her to feel far away and excluded from the social and political world. His/her actions are often limited to responding to his/her most urgent needs and those of his/her family. These migrants almost never reflect about what society owes them or what they can do for society. The problem, then, is what society do these migrants belong to?

The feeling of belonging is a demand for sociability. When that feeling is questioned, given their condition as migrants, undoubtedly living like that brings with it problems for integrating into the society in which they live as well as the society they are from. In fact, migrants who travel year after year to Canada as part of the Seasonal Agricultural worker Program (SAWP) frequently suffer from psycho-social problems because migration tenses their feelings of identity with regard to that of their belonging.[2] This tension makes it difficult for them to move from "I" to "we," which is necessary for the actions they take to go beyond the immediate and the sphere limited to their individual circumstances and be situated in the sphere of society and the public.

Cornelius Castoriadis wrote, "There cannot be a society that doesn't mean anything to itself, that does not represent itself as something. . . . This implies that every individual must be the bearer, sufficiently regarding his/her need/use of society's representation of itself. . . . The individual's "I am this" . . . has no meaning except by reference to the imaginary meanings and constitution of the natural and social world created by his/her society."[3]

With regard to the social representation of "what is Mexican," today, many Mexican citizens *need* to emigrate. In the 1980s, when this country was going through the economic crisis that gave rise to structural changes accompanied by the abandonment of the ideals of the Mexican Revolution, as well as a change in the identity of the state as a welfare state, the hegemonic representation of the country both to Mexicans and foreigners was directly linked to poverty. "Being Mexican" became synonymous with living in precarious circumstances, conditions of want, with no hope of things getting better. In this context, many Mexicans' "I am this" statements turn into "I am poor . . . and I'll continue to be poor unless I do something." Many associate that "something" with the option to emigrate, but the truth is that, generally, wherever they go, they are often accompanied by the representations of poverty and need. This situation of uncertainty, hopelessness, and frustration is put forward clearly by Ramón:

> In Mexico, nothing is fair. If we had the same opportunities, perhaps we would have developed like you [Canadians], but we were already born like this because of corruption. Perhaps my future is already determined; they see me as a worker who goes there. Sometimes the future is in our hands, but dreams have a limit; you can't develop more than that. If you stay in a town like this one, you're not going to have a great future. Education is for being a worker, not for developing yourself more. You have a big dream of having things or money; maybe you can sort of achieve it, but sometimes, seeing reality as it is, I don't know if it's possible to achieve it.[4]

Ramón reflects very clearly the loss of the revolutionary ideal of education of a free man; just as he sees it, education seeks to sustain the economic and social regime that only favors those in power; and the last thing they want is developed, reflexive, autonomous beings. Today, in the midst of globalization, the construction of human beings is not permeated by a humanist education, but by training that seeks to incorporate individuals as soon as possible into the work force, so they can do their jobs better and increase production and product quality. Education has become an instrument that no longer humanizes, but de-humanizes, that no longer constructs persons, but *homo economicus*.[5]

With regard to the social representation of "what is Mexican," today, many Mexican citizens need to emigrate, carrying with them the burden of their self-representations and the social meanings of poverty.

Migrants who travel year after year to Canada as part of the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP) frequently suffer from psycho-social problems because migration tenses their feelings of identity.

Thus, carrying with them the burden of their self-representations and the social meanings of poverty, many Mexicans "hook up" with the SAWP to go to Canada seeking to minimally satisfy their needs in an *honorable* way, building and projecting their being from the identity of a worker. This way, their human identity is subsumed and they become the bearers of the representation of the *worker in need,* or, what amounts to the same thing, workers without social rights. In this context, the relationship established between capital and labor is backed up by a memorandum of understanding; but in the day-to-day, working conditions offered to migrants are precarious and for all of this, they often feel grateful.

The truth is that often, the conditions of exploitation that Mexican SAWP participants experience are seen as legitimate, even if risk and vulnerability scenarios are configured that become fields conducive to corruption and human rights violations. Thus, the importance of their contributions to the Canadian economy —not to mention Canadian culture— are not often recognized or valued. That is why they even come to be seen as a threat and the "Latino invasion," as Samuel Huntington presents them in his theory.[6]

Under these circumstances, the Freirian category of "the oppressed" can be used to refer to "temporary" agricultural workers in Canada: the oppressed are those who fear freedom and are seeking "life security," inserting themselves into "security circles." The only thing this does is to maintain the *status quo*. By conceiving themselves this way, clearly the problem resides in the fact that emigration brings *dehumanization* with it, which translates into feelings of impotence in the face of adversity, the acceptance that things cannot be any other way, and the adoption of the oppressors' values and points of view. With this, the poverty and need of "what is Mexican" are consolidated, and, therefore, migrants' destiny is submission to the rich.

To deal with this situation and change conditions to relations that are more just, it is necessary to transform the representations of poverty that Mexican day-workers carry with them and that make them see themselves as just workers in need. For this to happen, education is necessary, but that education must go beyond mere training or education understood as a means of socialization, that is, what Durkheim refers to when he writes, "Education is the action exercised by adult generations on those who are not yet mature enough for life in society. Its aim is to provoke and develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual, and moral states that political society as a whole and the specific milieu to which he/she is destined demand of him/her."[7]

The education I am referring to is the kind based on *paideia*, understood as synonymous with comprehensive education and defined as Plato did: "Certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes. . . . The faculty of sight . . . exists already, but has been turned in the wrong direction, and is looking away from the truth."[8]

At first, the idea of taking the humanities to those who consider themselves "poor" might seem absurd. In fact, those who have already proposed this —this idea is not new— are thought of as idealists and unpractical since, it is said, the poor have urgent needs to resolve and they do not want to —nor can they— study philosophy, literature, art, or history for example. However, concrete experiences exist, like the Clemente course, that show that the humanities have transformed the context of poverty in which men and women had remained for years.[9]

I am convinced that opening up educational opportunities in the humanities for the men and women who migrate to Canada using the SAWP program would contribute to solving problems of poverty and, above all, frustration, lack of expectations, and the lack of participation in the construction of the future. I am convinced that migrants are fundamental historic actors who must be supported in order to increase their capabilities for intervening and combatting the inequalities and injustices that define capitalism.

Final Thoughts

Sowing education and reaping humanity is by no means simple. It is a painful process in which its participants must struggle against innumerable elements buried in the feelings, thinking, and actions of the oppressed. One of the most difficult elements to deal with is self-esteem, since these migrants

are constantly constructing themselves and are constructed not as people but as workers, as beings who do not know the world and know only how to work. They do not dialogue with this construction; they do not say a word; they do not free themselves; they repress stating their existence as humans. They are afraid of expelling the shadow of the oppressor, of not knowing what to fill that vacuum with, afraid of reflection, of questioning, of the question itself; they are afraid of recognizing their own wisdom. VM

Notes

[1] This article is the result of the research done for the master's program in social work titled "Propuesta educativa en humanidades para los hombres y mujeres que migran a Canadá como parte del Programa de Trabajadores Agrícolas Temporales" (Mexico City: UNAM, 2008).

[2] The SAWP is an agreement between Canada and several countries that send men and women to work in Canadian fields from two to eight months a year. The program currently functions in nine provinces; Ontario, British Columbia, and Quebec are the ones with the greatest demand for foreign labor. Mexico has been participating since 1974, and in 2012, it sent 17 626 people there under this program; most of these came from the State of Mexico, Tlaxcala, Puebla, Guanajuato, Morelos, and Hidalgo. Source: Interview by the author of personnel from the Dirección de Movilidad Laboral de la Secretaría del Trabajo y Previsión Social (STyPS) (Office of Labor Mobility, Ministry of Labor and Social Services).

[3] Cornelius Castoriadis, *El avance de la insignificancia* (Buenos Aires: Editorial Universitaria de Buenos Aires [EUDEBA], 1997), pp. 28-29.

[4] Interview by the author with Ramón (fictitious name), a 20-year-old seasonal worker from the state of Puebla.

[5] "This expression [*homo economicus*] describes a conceptual abstraction or, better said, a model and a prediction that the science of economics makes about the perfectly rational model of human behavior, which is defined by three basic characteristics: the individual is presented as a 'maximizer' of options, rational in his/her decisions, and selfish in his/her behavior. The rationality of economic theory rests on the existence and the calculating 'virtues' of that individual, who acts in a hyper-rational way at the moment of choosing among diverse possibilities." See "*Homo economicus* o idiota moral," www.alcoberro.info/V1/liberalisme5.htm.

[6] Samuel P. Huntington, *¿Quiénes somos?: los desafíos a la identidad nacional estadounidense* (Mexico City: Paidós, 2004).

[7] Émile Durkheim, *Educación y sociología* (Mexico City: Leega, 1990), p. 76.

[8] Felipe Martínez Marzoa, *Historia de la filosofía* (Madrid: Ediciones Istmo, 1973), p. 141, Fundamentos 21 Collection, quoting Plato (English translation by Benjamin Jowett, *The Republic*, Chapter VII, http://classics.mit .edu/Plato/republic.8.vii.html).

[9] In 1993, Earl Shorris created the humanities-based Clemente Course. Its main characteristic is to offer high quality education to those who had not had the opportunity to study. Since its beginnings, it has targeted vulnerable individuals who live in a circle of poverty. The aim is to fight poverty and social exclusion, and create reflexive, critical beings capable of strengthening democracy. The seeds of the course, seeds of freedom, are taken from Greek culture. In ancient Athens, which for many was the site of the first space in which freedom found its clearest expression, it was impossible to separate the humanities from public life; the humanities and the polis needed each other to exist. The course usually lasts eight months and is given in two-hour sessions twice a week. The teaching method uses maieutics, the Socratic Method whereby knowledge is achieved through dialogue between teacher and student. It reviews texts by Plato, Aristotle, Sophocles, and, of course, the most outstanding literati linked to the culture to which the participants belong. It has been given in various countries, languages, and cultures. Earl Shorris, *Riches for the Poor. The Clemente Course in the Humanities* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2000).

Mexico and North America: Regional Limits and Priorities[1]

Rafael Velázquez Flores*

Introduction

Since the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) entered into force in 1994, Mexico has been considered part of this region, promising dynamic trilateral relations. But now, over 20 years later, we can see the reality has been different.

This article is based on two premises. Firstly, North America lacks the expected trilateral relationship, and instead has two bilateral relations. On the one hand, the United States and Mexico have a very close relationship, and on the other, equally strong ties exist between the United States and Canada. In other words, the Mexican-Canadian relationship has a low profile despite NAFTA. The second premise is that, in the

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short and medium terms, conditions do not exist for a trilateral relationship. The argument is that Mexico has foreign policy priorities focused on the United States, and this limits the possibility of a more intense relationship with Canada.

The essay has three parts. The first part analyzes the relation between Mexico and the United States from a historical perspective to identify Mexico's priorities and limits; the second examines the profile of Mexico's relations with Canada; and the third and final part assesses the efforts made by the three actors to foster trilateralism in the region.

Mexico's Relationship with the United States: The Burden of History

Historically, Mexico's relationship with the United States has been intense, complex, asymmetrical, and massively interdependent. The United States is the global superpower; Mexico is a developing country. The relationship began dramatically in 1848 when the United States grabbed almost half of Mexico's territory. The signing of the Guadalupe Hidalgo Treaty, ending the war between the two countries, left a deep mark on Mexico's history and social psyche, and the country has since adopted a defensive foreign policy based on guiding principles mainly directed at the United States.[2]

The end of the nineteenth century was marked by a period of bilateral cooperation, with high levels of trade and large U.S. investments in Mexico thanks to Porfirio Díaz's trade liberalization policy; however, this phase ended in the early twentieth century with the start of the Mexican Revolution, a turning point in the bilateral relationship. Since then, Mexican nationalism was translated into anti-U.S. feeling, due to Washington's interference in Mexico's internal affairs. Starting with the revolution, the United States became a matter of utmost importance for Mexican foreign policy.

The bilateral conflict created in the revolutionary period made it difficult to develop a cooperative relationship; the wounds were still fresh and public opinion in Mexico saw any cooperation with the United States as tantamount to a betrayal of the nation. Nevertheless, both countries needed to work together openly during World War II to stave off the Nazi-fascist threat in the Americas. During the Cold War, Mexico worked discreetly with the United States to prevent Soviet expansionism, even though the Party of the Institutional Revolution (PRI) administration referred to a distancing from Washington; internal politics required autonomy

> Both Mexico and Canada recognized NAFTA's important regional role in terms of trade and finance; it was even seen as an opportunity to strengthen the relationship with the United States.

from the United States and Mexico's PRI governments found it useful to confront its northern neighbor —albeit rhetorically— in order to create internal consensus.

These historical events showed how the United States was a major factor in Mexico's foreign policy. Washington even became a point of reference in Mexico's relations with other regions, especially with the rest of Latin America and Cuba.[3] As Mexico's neighbor and given the countries' bilateral history, the United States became a priority in the formulation of Mexican foreign policy.[4] This historical tendency was confirmed by developments in subsequent years.

During the 1970s and up until the mid-1980s, Mexico maintained a healthy distance from Washington, at least in its public discourse; however, in the mid-1980s, it had to make a sharp turn in its economic policy given the financial crisis that hit the country in the early 1980s. After implementing a protectionist policy, Mexico moved toward a development model based on trade liberalization and this caused a significant change to its relationship with the United States. Formerly distrustful neighbors, both countries were to become strategic partners and the signing of the NAFTA agreement consolidated their new relationship. Since then, Mexico and the United States have entered into a phase of cooperation especially on trade and financial matters when bilateral trade boomed.

In the 1990s, both trade and financial relations were cooperative, although it was occasionally soured by issues like migration and drug trafficking. In 2000, the arrival of two conservative presidents seemed to promise a period of broad understanding. It started off well when Vicente Fox suggested to George W. Bush to deepen economic integration and they began negotiating a possible migration agreement. However, 9/11 ruled out any possibility of implementing the proposal, and bilateral tensions were even exacerbated when the Fox administration did not offer its open and unconditional support to President Bush in his war in Iraq in 2003. Nevertheless, the presidents smoothed things over to such an extent that when the Mexican administration changed, the

Henry Romero/Reuters

United States offered a sweeping cooperative scheme to help combat drug trafficking: the Mérida Initiative. This instrument, unprecedented in the countries' relations, re-launched bilateral ties.

When Barack Obama took office in 2009, the cooperation agreement was expected to remain on a strong footing. However, this cordial relationship was beset with its own problems. In 2011, President Felipe Calderón declared his distrust of the U.S. ambassador to Mexico, and Washington was forced to replace him to prevent harming the relationship that was then focused on the fight against drug trafficking. In short, the United States has been and remains very important to Mexico's foreign policy, and this has reduced the possibility of developing a closer relationship with Canada.

Mexico's Relationship with Canada: Between Indifference and Unfamiliarity

Relations between Mexico and Canada are essentially all about trade. Specifically, diplomatic relations began in 1944 within the framework of World War II.[5] From the outset, a mutual lack of awareness, a lack of shared objectives and interests, and the heavy weight of the United States limited the importance of the relationship; however, in the early-1990s the ties between the countries were boosted with the start of the NAFTA negotiations.

Both Mexico and Canada recognized NAFTA's important regional role in terms of trade and finance; it was even seen by both countries as an opportunity to strengthen bonds and to counterbalance the relationship with the United States. And indeed it did enhance bilateral relations, but mainly in

In certain spheres, Canada has cooperated closely with Mexico. For example, since 2004 the two countries have operated a temporary worker program.

trade and investment. For example, in 1993 Mexico and Canada did US$2.9 billion in trade; by 2003, this figure had risen to US$8.7 billion, an almost 200-percent hike. Canada also showed its interest in investing in Mexico, mainly in mining, raising the presence in Mexico of Canadian companies.

Diplomatic and political relations improved when the two countries foreign policy objectives overlapped. In the 1990s, both openly rejected the Helms-Burton Law, which punished companies doing business with Cuba. Both Canada and Mexico considered this legal framework to be extra-territorial and requested the United States not enforce it in the case of Mexican and Canadian companies. Also, in the early twenty-first century, both countries once again agreed on international issues when they were members of the United Nations Security Council. Both Ottawa and Mexico City were dubious about openly supporting Washington's war in Iraq in 2003.

In certain spheres, Canada has cooperated closely with Mexico. For example, since 2004 both countries have operated a temporary worker program. In other sectors there have also been important areas of cooperation, especially in forestry and environmental work, on human rights issues, and in other areas.

Bilateral relations advanced with the strategic association between the countries in 2006; however, any progress made in diplomatic relations was reversed when in 2009 the Canadian government decided to impose visa requirements on Mexicans traveling to Canada. This sudden unilateral decision vexed the Mexican population and government.

In the academic sphere, meanwhile, Canada has sparked interest among Mexicans, and various institutions and programs now offer courses on the North American region;[6] there is evidence that public opinion in Mexico considers Canada a friendly and trustworthy country,[7] even though this is not reflected in public policy.

For example, Mexico's most recent National Development Plan (PND) does not place any emphasis on developing relations with this trade partner, nor does it explicitly encourage

Although Canada has historically and institutionally been an important partner for Mexico, it has never been a foreign policy priority.

a trilateral relationship,[8] although the institutional framework includes the bureaucratic structures needed to directly handle matters related to Canada. In the executive branch, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (SRE) has a North American Department that includes a special office for Canada; however, this structure is weakened by the fact that approximately 80 percent of Mexican consulates are in the United States and only six are in Canada.

In short, although Canada has historically and institutionally been and remains an important partner for Mexico, it has never been a foreign policy priority, and this limits any possible development of a short-term trilateral relation in North America.

Toward Trilateralism

Over the course of history, various attempts have been made to formalize a trilateral relationship. The first serious effort came at the end of the 1970s with Washington's proposal to set up a North American Common Market among the three countries, but the proposal lacked support from a nationalist Mexico and from Canada's government.

Steps toward trilateralism were only taken in the 1990s, when the three countries decided to inaugurate a new era by initiating negotiations for a free trade agreement. NAFTA did indeed produce trilateralism, but largely focused on trade and finance. Even so, there are marked differences: the United States receives almost 80 percent of Mexico's exports, and is the source of 50 percent of foreign investment in Mexico. Although Mexico's bilateral trade with Canada has increased, it still only accounts for 3 percent of Mexican foreign trade, while Canada only provides 3.5 percent of foreign investment in Mexico.[9]

Apart from finance and trade, attempts have been made to encourage trilateralism, mainly in the area of security. After 9/11, the United States launched a program for a shared defense against international terrorism thus strengthening trilateralism. In 2005 the three countries agreed to set up the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP), but this program, given its original objective, was short-lived: by 2010, it had practically fizzled out due to Canada's lack of interest in the partnership and the arrival of Mexico's new administration in 2006. However, the SPP left a legacy of meetings of the two presidents and the prime minister during the first years of the twenty-first century, organized with the aim of relaunching trilateralism in the region. But it has limited scope given the scant interest and different priorities of both Mexico and Canada, even though the priority issue on which they agree is the United States.

Final Thoughts

Several attempts have been made over the years to construct a trilateral relationship, but progress has remained limited. NAFTA gave shape to completely asymmetrical trilateral financial and trade relations. In other spheres, such as security, no real link exists. Instead it is a case of two bilateral relationships. This is mainly because Mexico and Canada have different foreign policy priorities, different levels of development, and are largely unfamiliar to each other. These factors limit the construction of a North American trilateral relationship in the short and medium terms. VM

Notes

[1] The author wishes to thank Cristian Castillo for his help in writing this article.

[2] An accurate description of bilateral relations can be read in Lorenzo Meyer and Josefina Vázquez's *México frente a Estados Unidos* (*Un ensayo histórico 1776-1988*) (Mexico City: FCE, 1992).

[3] Mexico supported the Cuban Revolution to reduce internal protests in the 1960s and to show a degree of autonomy from the United States.

[4] For a more detailed analysis of this issue, see Mario Ojeda, *Alcances y límites de la política exterior de México* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1976).

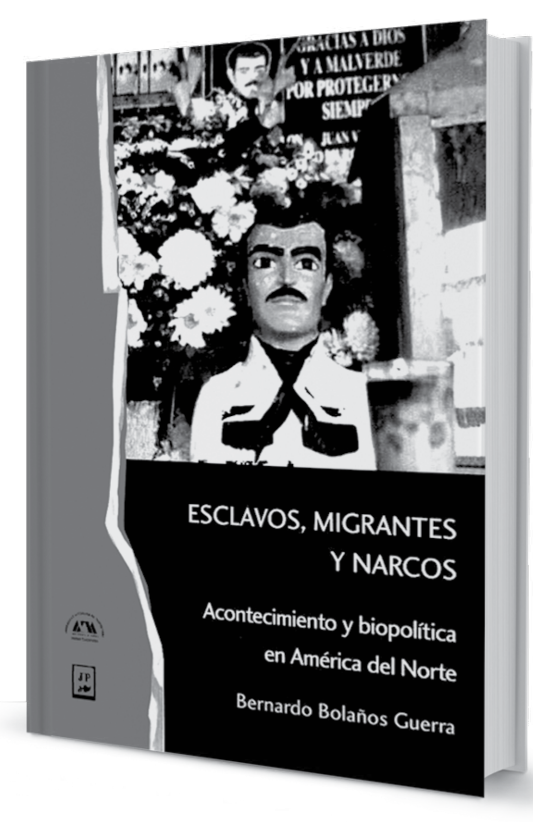
[5] See Pedro Castro, "Las relaciones México-Canadá: su evolución reciente," *Foro internacional* vol. 41, no. 4, October-December 2001, p. 761.

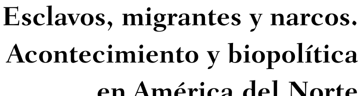
[6] Examples of this include the Center for Research on North America (CISAN), the Mexican Association for Canadian Studies (AMEC), the Interinstitutional Studies Program on North America (PIERAN), and the Program for Mobility in North American Higher Education (Promesan).

[7] See the survey *Mexico, the Americas and the World 2010*, Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas (CIDE), http://mexicoyelmundo.cide.edu/2010/reporteingles10.pdf.

[8] The National Development Plan (PND) is the document that sets out Mexico's foreign policy priorities.

[9] Mexico's foreign trade statistics, January-August 2012, http://www.inegi.org.mx/prod_serv/contenidos/espanol/bvinegi/productos/continuas/economicas/exterior/mensual/ece/ecem.pdf, accessed May 5, 2013.





Esclavos, migrantes y narcos. Acontecimiento y biopolítica en América del Norte

(Slaves, Migrants, and Narcos. Event and Biopolitics in North America)
Bernardo Bolaños Guerra
UAM-Cuajimalpa/Juan Pablos
Mexico City, 2013, 147 pp.

Bolaños Guerra bases himself on two premises to explain and analyze the emergence of three subaltern subjectivities that have marked the historic unfolding of biopolitics in North America: slaves, migrants, and narcos. The first premise is French philosopher Alain Badiou's idea of event, referring to facts that acquire visibility through the active role of subaltern subjects. The event dislocates the hegemonic system of signifiers and throws into relief new subjectivities. For Bolaños Guerra, at the heart of the biopolitics of the United States toward Mexico there are three fundamental events that give rise to the three subjectivities in question: the abolition of slavery, which eliminates the possibility of exploiting Afro-Americans at no cost and begins temporary work programs; the end of the Bracero Program, which began the "illegalization" of the "undocumented" Mexican worker; and Felipe Calderón's war against drug trafficking, which replaces the racist trope of the "undocumented Mexican" with that of the "Mexican narco."

The second premise is the idea of biopolitics of another French writer, Michel Foucault. Biopower changes the sovereign objective of disciplinary power from "letting live" and "causing to die" and inverts it: now power has the aim of "causing to live" and "letting die." While disciplinary power centers on individual bodies as object, biopower centers on the processes that are specific to life itself, like birth, death, reproduction, migration, and illness; and therefore, the rationality, apparatuses, strategies, and struggles or resistances they generate are also different. As Foucault says, this is an "indirect murder" because without intentionally killing, entire populations die as a result of the fact that the state is not doing something for them. The biological field controlled by biopower is fragmented into a hierarchy of races, and those at the bottom are left to die.

Based on empirical data, investigative journalism, and academic literature on the topic, Bolaños Guerra analyzes how the United States is the greatest biopower in history. In U.S. liberal and neoliberal governance, the fundamental goal is the reproduction of the system, which is why it takes measures to regulate the population favoring the preservation of the dominant groups. Recently, Canada has acted similarly, and Mexico subordinates itself completely to their biopower. For the author, the aforementioned events are spatial-temporal moments in which the biopolitics of North America has led to, facilitated, molded, and incited the emergence of the sub-

> The book's most important contribution is its critique of academic work that hides the functioning of biopower and its domination of migrants.

jectivities of the slave, the migrant, and the drug trafficker. The following is my more detailed analysis of the emergence of these identities.

Slaves

Primitive capital accumulation in the United States required the over-exploitation of the work force in inhuman, brutally violent conditions. To do that, the Founding Fathers trafficked thousands of people from Africa, giving rise to the subjectivity of the "slave." After the abolition of slavery in the nineteenth century, the United States began to seek similar mechanisms of exploitation that would allow it to maintain the rhythm of the reproduction of capital that it had achieved with the African slaves. This event was the detonator of temporary work programs like the Bracero Programs, which ended at the same time as the recognition of the civil rights of U.S. Americans descended from slaves. At that moment, the undocumented worker emerged who, technically free, does not have the rights African-Americans won through their civil resistance.

Migrants

Beginning with the end of the Bracero Program, the successive immigration reforms have developed strategies aimed at taking advantage of the vulnerability of the labor power of undocumented migrants. These successive biopolitical technologies, which included regularization of legal migratory status, prevention by dissuasion, and making migrants invisible through criminalization, have also now been adopted by Mexico and Canada. Bolaños Guerra says that while Canada does not criminalize, it does make migrants invisible by limiting the rights of temporary workers. He adds that Mexico, through the public policy to manage and count migrants' remittances and Central American migration, hides the biopower that acts on Mexican and Central American migrants in the United States and Canada. The author reflects on the teachings of the past, suggesting that an event similar to Afro-Americans' fight for civil rights must occur for contemporary migrants to claim their civil rights, so they can —at least legally— escape from subordination.

Narcos

Bolaños Guerra criticizes academic, journalistic, and political analysis that attributes the crisis of criminality in Mexico to the lack of a "culture of legality" and to "loyalty to mafia bosses," supposedly common to Latin America. The way these images are constructed is a caricature functional to U.S. and European biopower.

For the author, what has caused this crisis are the successive immigration laws and legislation banning the sale and use of drugs, which constitute technologies of power of those societies over ours. He gives the example of the emergence of the Mara gangs through the deportation of Latino gang members from the United States and the training of soldiers in the U.S. who eventually became Zetas. Categories like "illegal worker" and "dangerous narco" are the result of these technologies of power, and today, one is linked to the other. Nevertheless, Guerra Bolaños warns that biopolitics is insufficient as a concept to analyze the function of control and regulation of death —not of life— in contemporary capitalism.

The Book's Analytic Contribution

This book is novel in three ways. First, through an analytic sequence, it tells the story of the over-exploitation of labor in North America through the subjectivities and categories produced by different technologies of biopower. In particular, situating the Negro slave and the narco as the most extreme past and present of undocumented migrants is a contribution that allows us to see the partnership of policies that could be seen as isolated from each other, such as immigration and anti-drug policies.

Secondly, Bolaños Guerra recognizes that biopolitics is insufficient for analyzing violence and its consequences in Mexico because it is designed for examining the regulation of life, not of death. The author points to the limitations of biopolitics for analyzing the most recent history in Mexico of this chain of subjected subjectivities, similar to the limitations in analyzing the politics of death in other regions rav-

aged by violence like Africa. Achille Mbembe and Sayak Valencia, whose work is quoted by the author, recover precisely this analytic insufficiency in the African and Mexican cases.

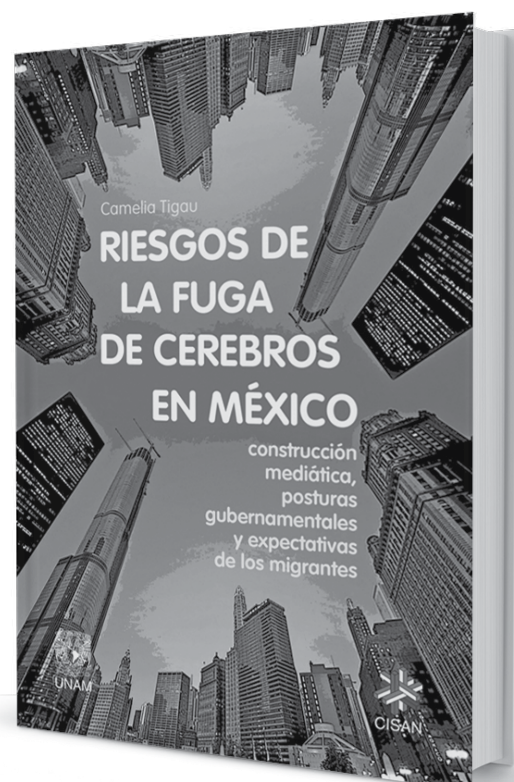
Finally, the book's most important contribution —but perhaps also its most polemical— is its critique of academic work that hides the functioning of biopower and its domination of migrants. This is research aimed at producing "public policy," a technicism that disguises the way the exploitation of Mexicans in the United States and Canada is administered and managed, rendering them invisible and putting them in conditions of complete vulnerability. The management of remittances and government programs to help them "invest" in "productive" projects are technologies just as functional for biopower as the company store or life on a tobacco plantation. This denunciation is lost a little in the discussion of the construction of the migrant, but it is fundamental to recover it to practice a stronger critique of the academic work that legitimizes technologies of biopower.

In general, the book *Esclavos, migrantes y narcos. Acontecimiento y biopolítica en América del Norte* is a global, critical analysis of a series of phenomena in the region that are frequently examined separately and only descriptively. This is a book rich in data, but also in critical analysis, which makes us read the integration of North America through its dystopias and subjected subjectivities, something quite uncommon in studies of the region. VM

Ariadna Estévez
Researcher at CISAN

Riesgos de la fuga de cerebros en México: construcción mediática, posturas gubernamentales y expectativas de los migrantes

(Risks of Brain Drain in Mexico: Media Construction, Government Positions, and Migrants' Expectations)
Camelia Nicoleta Tigau
CISAN, UNAM
Mexico City, 2013, 172 pp.



International migration is a dynamic and complex phenomenon that is undergoing sweeping changes, linked to the increase of its volume, new directions (now from developing to advanced countries), the levels of participation of women, and more and more highly skilled migrants. It is precisely the last phenomenon that occupies Camelia Nicoleta Tigau in a work whose very title invites us to think about whether it limits national development (brain drain) or can push it forward (mobility of talent).

The book contains a valuable, intriguing analysis of international migration of highly-skilled Mexicans based on a questionnaire answered on line by 148 migrants. It also uses 60 in-depth interviews with talented Mexicans in the

The author considers highly-skilled migrants members of a new social group emerging with global capitalism.

United States, Canada, Europe, and Japan, plus an analysis of 141 articles published between 2009 and 2012 in three Mexican national newspapers (*La Jornada*, *El Universal*, and *Reforma*) about government programs and the opinions of some high-level public officials.

In the first chapter, Tigau offers a theoretical reflection about the phenomenon in light of its international dimension. It is worthy of note that she considers this kind of migrants part of an international elite linked to the world market of competencies, not to any particular country, and members of a new social group emerging with global capitalism. This analytic perspective situates her far from the old understanding of the phenomenon as something bad for national development (brain drain) and brings her closer to recent approaches that argue that this constant movement of highly-skilled individuals is a game that in the end benefits both the countries of origin and of destination. However, it is important to mention that the book does not gloss over the asymmetries in development among nations and posits that, given the absence of active policies in the less backward countries, it can become a drain of resources or make for disappointing results; therefore, the notion of "risks" in the title.

In the rest of the chapters, Tigau looks at the voice of the migrants and offers fascinating opinions that enrich our hypotheses about the causes of migration, the conditions in which migrants have integrated into their destination societies, the different opportunities for men and women, their opinions about our country's current situation, their desires to return, and what could be done to improve national development. In addition, this book has the merit that the interviewees live in different countries, not just the United States. While the latter is the main destination, experiences in other countries offer new possibilities for analysis and the construction of expectations.

The book shows that highly-skilled Mexicans' international migration is an issue on which both the migrants and the media have reasoned opinions. The author offers a provocative analysis of the media, reviewing the three aforementioned national dailies, about how a traditional vision that stigmatizes migrants ("brain drain," a view that did recognize the government as being responsible for the lack of a clear, effective policy) morphs into one in which informed reporting and analysis prevail, at the same time noting the risks of brain drain and recognizing the potential benefits for Mexico if it became part of the global circulation of talent.

The responses to the questionnaire and the in-depth interviews contribute important information about how migrants are perceived and their assessment of their home and destination countries. Let us concentrate only on a few aspects of the rich information and the diligent analysis offered by the author. It is very important to note that highly-skilled Mexicans living abroad do not consider themselves "brains" and much less "drained" from Mexico: only nine percent accept the use of the term "brain drain." They do, on the other hand, claim their right to look for conditions for professional development and a better quality of life abroad. Among those conditions, they cite infrastructure and equipment in scientific and technological research centers, and security and peace. They put the latter at the top of the list of the reasons for deciding to migrate, which is understandable given the ratcheting up of violence in the last decade.

In *Riesgos de la fuga de cerebros en México*, Camelia Nicoleta Tigau interviews Mexican government officials, noting the transition from the previous "the-best-policy-is-no-policy" position to another that makes explicit both the interests of Mexico *vis-à-vis* the United States and the commitment of all levels of government to migrants. She even reproduces a statement by a former Mexican ambassador to the United States who optimistically expresses his agreement with the circulation-of-talent approach. However, both the migrants and the author are right in thinking that this is a change in the sensibilities of a governing elite more than in effective policies. This is because we are still far from having a comprehensive policy that attacks the different sides of the issue, from the stigmatization of migrants to an effective attack on the risks that skilled migration brings with it for the development of science, technology, and innovative capabilities in Mexico, the underpinnings of all nations' international competitiveness.

And in this regard, I would like to draw the reader's attention to two issues: the first is the need to broaden Tigau's research to include both institutions of higher learning and research centers and business circles in Mexico. This would create the widest possible panorama of the positions and practices of the relevant actors in the area of highly-skilled Mex-

icans' international migration and would assess the possible alternatives for a national policy in this field.

Specifically, it would be important to know the perceptions and practices of Mexico's scientific community, as well as its strategies for connecting with the international circulation of talent. It is also extremely important to sound out Mexico's business elite about the risks they see in highly-skilled migration and their opinions about how to deal with them. This is where doubts might arise about the value businessmen place on growth strategies and the internationalization of their companies, as well as whether in the future they are going to venture into areas of greater value added in the knowledge economy or they are going to limit their actions to incorporating innovations made elsewhere.

This issue is related to the second concern motivating the book: the need to place value on our national capacity to apply policies and programs suggested by the migrants themselves for returning or linking up to the innovation needs of Mexico's productive apparatus.

With regard to this, Tigau systematizes four broad lines of action for proposals that migrants think could help successfully deal with brain drain and firmly place the country in the international circulation of talent. The first is to "link up current programs for the return of, liaison work with, and scholarships for Mexicans abroad, as well as scholarships for foreigners." The second consists of forging "unity in the Diaspora," promoting the image of Mexico in that community —the book makes it clear that many migrants are resentful of and disappointed with the government—, and creating policies to attract talent from abroad. A third line of action involves creating a national system of science, technology, and innovation, and lastly, a fourth is to activate the international mobility of researchers and graduate students.

The issue, focus, and conclusions of *Riesgos de la fuga de cerebros en Méxco* are undoubtedly transcendent for national development. We hope that the Special Migration Program (PEM) 2014-2018, the first of its kind, soon to be unveiled by the federal government, has a policy on skilled international migration that is up to the challenges Mexico faces. VM

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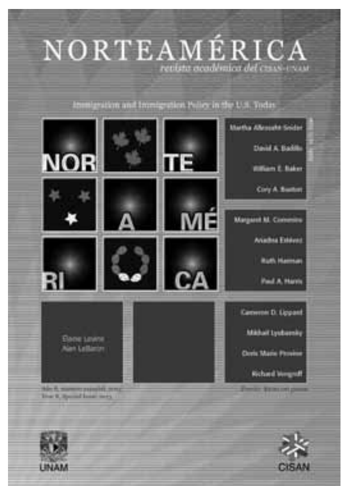

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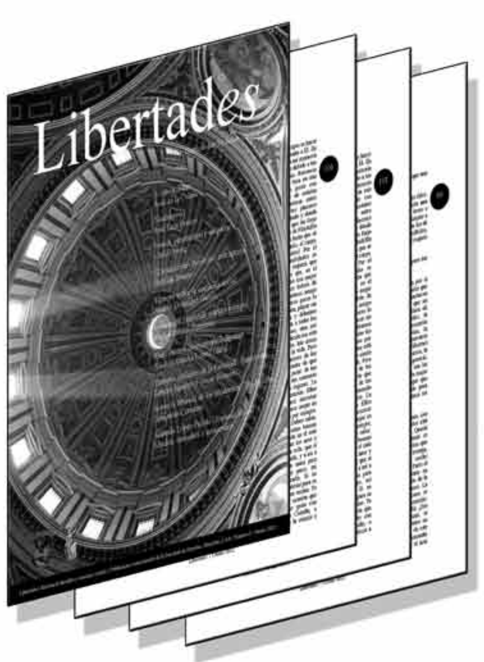

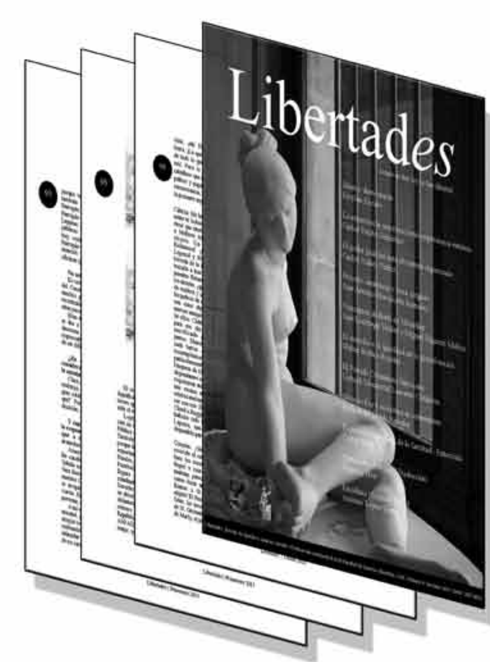

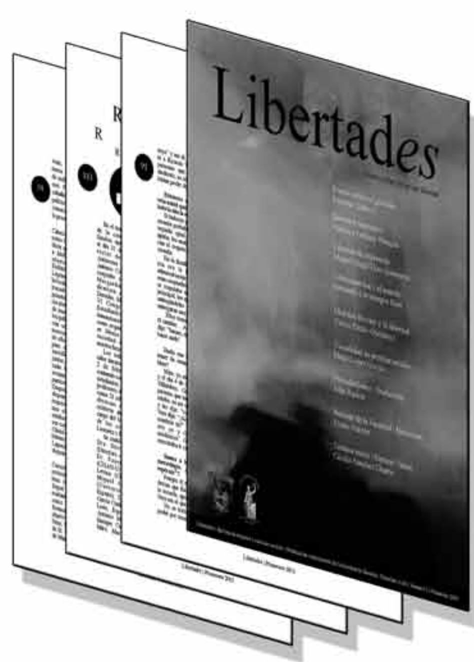

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