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The U.S. Elections Views from the South

Articles by Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla, Patricia de los Ríos, Manuel Chávez and Mónica Vereá

The Debate on Mexico's Democratic Change

Articles by Víctor Alarcón, Rubén García and Roberto Gutiérrez

Is Mexico Losing U.S. And Canadian Markets?

Bernardo Olmedo

An Interview with Painter Jesús Portillo

Patricia Gómez Maganda

The Guerrero Codices And Their Stories of Power

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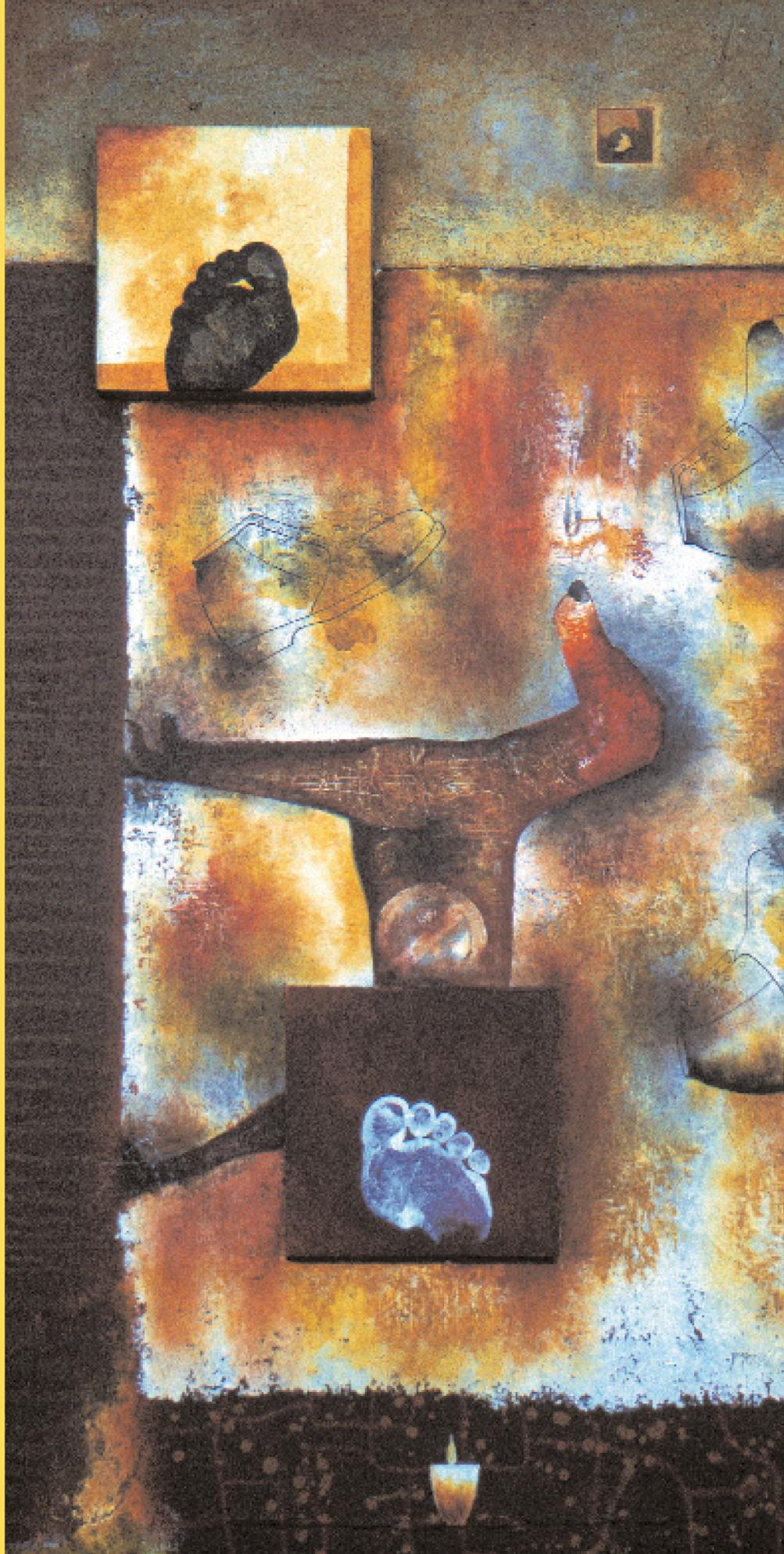
Guerrero State Highlights: Acapulco, Taxco and The Caverns of Cacahuamilpa

About Chicano Literature

Eduardo Santa Cruz



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ISSN 0186 • 9418

Voices of Mexico is published by
El Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, CISAN (Center for Research on North America),
Of the Office of the Coordinator of Humanities, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, UNAM
(National Autonomous University of Mexico).

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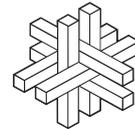
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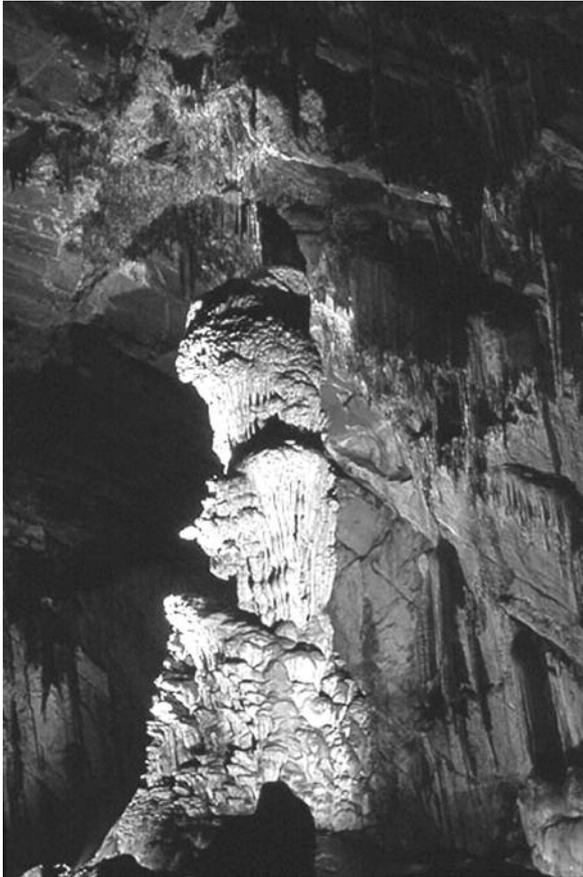
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Address letters, advertising and subscription correspondence to: **Voices of Mexico**, Canadá 203, Col. San Lucas, Coyoacán, 04030 México, D.F. Tel: 5336-36-01, 5336-35-95 and 5336-35-96. Electronic mail: voicesmx@servidor.unam.mx. Annual subscription rates: Mexico Mex\$150; USA U.S.\$34; Canadá Can\$44.80; other countries U.S.\$68.50, prepaid in U.S. currency to **UNAM**. **Opinions expressed by the authors do not necessarily represent the views of Voices of Mexico.** All contents are fully protected by © copyright and may not be reproduced without the written consent of **Voices of Mexico**. The magazine is not responsible for the return of unsolicited manuscripts. Publicación trimestral, año dieciocho, número 70, enero-marzo de 2005. ISSN 0186-9418. Certificado de Licitud de Contenido No. 2930 y Certificado de Licitud de Título No. 3340, expedidos por la Comisión Calificadora de Publicaciones y Revistas Ilustradas. Reserva al uso exclusivo del título No. 04-2002-060413383000-102, expedida por el Instituto Nacional del Derecho de Autor. Correspondencia nacional de segunda clase. Registro 0851292. Características 220261212. Correspondencia internacional de segunda clase. Registro Cri D F 002-92. Prerensa: Ediciones de Buena Tinta, S.A. de C.V., Insurgentes Sur 1700, 6o. piso, Col. Florida, Álvaro Obregón, 01030 México, D.F. Tels. 5661-66-07, 5662-28-3. Impresa por Editorial Offset, S.A. de C.V., Durazno No. 1, Col. Las Peritas, Tepepan, Xochimilco, México, D.F.

VOICESTM of Mexico

Issue 70 January-March 2005



Elsie Montiel

Cover

Jesús Portillo, *Ironic Errant 2*, 120 x 60 cm, 2004
(mixed techniques on wood).

Back Cover

Jesús Portillo, *Botton of the Ladder*, 130 x 90 cm, 2001
(oil on canvas).

Contents

Editorial

- 4 Our Voice

Politics

- 7 Toward a New Political
Regimen in Mexico
Víctor Alarcón Olguín
- 12 Debating the Political Regimen
Rubén R. García Clarck
- 16 The Media in Mexico Today
Politics as Spectacle
Roberto Gutiérrez

Society

- 21 Mexican Nationalism in Times of Globalization
And Multiculturalism
Fernando Vizcaino Guerra
- 25 Civil Society Against Free Trade in Mexico
Part 2
Ariadna Estévez López

Art and Culture

- 33 Jesús Portillo
An Artist from the Heart of Guerrero
Patricia Gómez Maganda Bermeo
- 39 The Art of Olinalá
Elsie Montiel
- 44 The Codices of Guerrero And
Their Stories of Power
Gerardo Gutiérrez

Economy

- 50 Is Mexico Losing the U.S. and Canadian Markets?
Bernardo Olmedo Carranza
- 54 Ten Years of NAFTA and the New Labor Market
Part 2: Migration
Javier Aguilar García

North American Issues

- 57** Obstacles to the European Integration Model
For North America
Isabel Studer
- 62** Interpreting International Treaties
NAFTA, A Case Study
Stefanie Haeger

The Splendor of Mexico

- 65** Taxco
Capital of the Spirit
Miguel Alejandro Reina Gómez Maganda
- 70** Guerrero's Archaeological Patrimony
And Cultural Potential
Gerardo Gutiérrez
- 75** Twentieth-century Acapulco
Manuel Zavala Alonso

Museums

- 80** The San Diego Fort Museum
Julieta Gil Elorduy

Ecology

- 84** Legend and History
Of the Caverns of Cacahuamilpa
Sergio Santana Muñoz

United States Affairs

- 89** Toward the Consolidation Of
Neoconservatism in the U.S.
Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla
- 93** The 2004 U.S. Elections. A View from Mexico
Patricia de los Ríos
- 97** The Changing Influence of the Hispanic Vote
Manuel Chávez Márquez

- 102** Ten Years of NAFTA = Migration Plus
Mónica Vereá Campos

Canadian Issues

- 109** Quebec and Canada
A Definitive Union?
Carlos Iván Mendoza Aguirre

In Memoriam

- 113** Víctor L. Urquidí
A Model Life (1919-2004)
Roberto J. Blancarte

Literature

- 116** Chicano Literature
Mediator of Discordant Borders
Eduardo Santa Cruz
- 121** Mirage
By Kathy Taylor

Reviews

- 127** Estados Unidos: intervención y poder mesiánico.
La guerra fría en Guatemala, 1954
Alejandro Chanona Burguete



Elsie Montiel

OUR VOICE

The United States will probably have to pay attention to emerging issues that it does not consider a priority for expanding its agenda for the doctrine of preventive policy, the backbone of its foreign policy in the Bush administration's last period. Everything is prepared for the compact group headed up by Bush himself and reinforced with Condoleezza Rice as Secretary of State to once again take office. It is also a group that wants to consolidate the so-called hard U.S. power, which is why it maintains Donald Rumsfeld as Secretary of Defense since he has made a good team with Rice and Vice-President Cheney, a virtuous combination of renovating realists and neo-conservative hawks who casually aim to gather all the world's power for themselves.

In that context, what does it mean when other actors, like the South American countries who met at the Third South American Presidential Summit in Cuzco on December 8, mobilize, taking advantage of the transitional moment in the United States as well as Washington's apparent lack of interest in their plans and attempts at regional integration? Given the paralysis of the projects for Latin American cohesion, is it mere chance that two important Latin American actors like Mexico and Chile are both trying to field candidates for general secretary of the Organization of American States (OAS), or that Brazil has begun to seek a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council?

It is of note that at the Cuzco summit, the common values that make these countries sister nations and give them an identity of their own were remembered, as opposed to the image that has historically existed of a mythical character of the idea of Latin American unity. In the words of the general secretary of the Andean Community of Nations, Allan Wagner, "the South American community must be understood as part of a project of building an integrated Latin America. Thirty years ago, the notion of integration including all the countries of Latin America was fractured into several sub-regional groups....Today, these sub-regions and countries are once again articulating among themselves, which allows us to recover the vision of a great Latin American community." He added, "The South American Community of Nations will be the world's fifth power, with a trillion-dollar GDP, 361 million inhabitants and a territory of more than 17 million square kilometers." In effect, these are all very important reasons to think about new ways of how to channel integration efforts and attempts to preserve common interests. Despite good intentions, we must recognize that the 12 nations of the southern part of the hemisphere trade more with North American countries, especially the United States, than among themselves, that they export mainly raw materials, depend on the dollar and European and U.S. capital, and, lastly, lack the infrastructure necessary to achieve maximum efficiency in their trade relations, such as, for example, highway communications between the two South American coasts, something the United States has mastered.

Given the complex history of asymmetry that has dominated inter-American history and the dominant, interventionist role of the United States in Latin American life, it will be interesting to observe how these attempts—apparently counter to Washington's interests—bear fruit, avoiding being just one more regrettable chapter in the fervent voluntarism that has ruled relations among Latin American countries, or if they are blocked by the United States, which has declared that the creation of the South American Community of Nations is not a threat as long as its concrete results are trade liberalization without the creation of artificial barriers. That is to say, as long as this model of integration is functional as a link for successfully putting the Free Trade Area of the Americas into operation.

It is certainly the case that in the framework of the U.S.'s proven profound lack of interest in the fate of Latin America, it is necessary to take steps that tend to create parity in the relationship with the United States and the European Union when discussing the rules of integration or of diplomatic relations. In that sense, this could be an initiative oriented more toward reducing these countries' protectionism, at the

same time that we put a priority on trade relations with both blocs, as seems to be the position of Argentina, Chile and Colombia, or toward going against the current of Washington, as Venezuela has declared, or toward aspiring, as Brazil does, to consolidating its leadership and using the community to push through accords with regions as diverse and as important as China, India, Russia or the Arab world.

In consequence, the diversity of positions and the strategic incoherence clear from the beginning of this undeniably important regional initiative and that have also been included in the campaigns surprisingly waged by Chile and Mexico to head up the OAS are a matter for concern. What do our governments want when they try to head up institutional or regional efforts that in the framework of globalization are fundamentally dominated by Washington?

* * *

The obstacles to integration that the nations of South America face are similar to those that North America has had to deal with. In our “North American Issues” section, specialist Isabel Studer analyzes the reasons why broad sectors of the U.S. political and economic elite oppose a European-Union-model future for the region and why they prefer a strictly economic and trade agreement. Stefanie Haeger closes the section with a reflection about the influence that private and national interests have on the negotiation and interpretation of international treaties, including, of course, the North American Free Trade Agreement.

The best proof that the regional trade agreement does not necessarily benefit Mexico is to be found in Bernardo Olmedo’s text in the “Economy” section, which studies the reasons why our country has been losing ground to new competitors like Brazil, the emerging economies of Eastern Europe and particularly China in the U.S. and Canadian markets. Quite contrary to expectations, one of the consequences of NAFTA has been the increase in illegal Mexican migration to the United States. In the second part of his analysis of the effects of regional trade integration on employment in Mexico, researcher Javier Aguilar takes on the issue of migration, which he sees as an escape valve to the country’s terrible unemployment and economic inefficiency.

Despite globalization, different kinds of nationalism continue to exist. In “Society,” social scientist Fernando Vizcaíno looks at the changes in Mexican nationalism influenced by three factors: globalization itself, multiculturalism and the transition to democracy in Mexico. The section concludes with the second part of an article by Ariadna Estévez about Mexico’s nongovernmental organizations that have gone from articulating their discourse around the question of democracy to structuring it around human rights, understood as including economic, cultural and social rights. In particular, she analyzes civic opposition to NAFTA.

Undoubtedly the recent U.S. elections, which consolidated the power of the country’s most conservative political groups, will have important effects on all these processes. In “United States Affairs,” political scientist Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla delves into what she calls the neo-conservative revolution in the United States, which brings with it the strengthening of the ideology of manifest destiny with its greater-than-ever doses of unilateralism, preventive security and Latin America as an exclusive area of interest. Political analyst Patricia de los Ríos also contributes an article about the elections, reviewing what the probable foreign, environmental, economic, social and trade policies of the second Bush administration will look like, based on the exercise of force and the waging of war. Both experts agree that the half of the electorate that did not vote for the Republicans will have to be capable of creating a movement to put a stop to this situation. It is often said that Latinos are a hard core Democratic vote, but as Manuel Chávez shows in his article, in November’s elections they voted very similarly to the population in general, perhaps in response to Republican efforts to capture swing voters and Democratic over-confidence. The section closes with an article by Mónica Vereá, who reviews migration in North America in the last ten years, showing that illegal migration from Mexico to the U.S. has intensified while migration of highly skilled professionals to the U.S. under the aegis of NAFTA has benefited Canada much more than Mexico.

Carlos Iván Mendoza contributes an interesting reflection to “Canadian Issues” about the external and internal consequences of the creation of an independent Quebec. One of the reasons Quebec has not separated from Canada is that nation’s multicultural outlook, which means that Quebec, as a province, can speak its language, enjoy its cultural traditions and even deploy its own diplomatic corps abroad.

In this issue, we have dedicated our “Politics” section to three articles dealing with different aspects of the consolidation of democracy in Mexico. Víctor Alarcón Olguín presents us with the need to ask how institutional reform in Mexico should be oriented focusing on discussing the centrality of the president to the political system and the mechanisms for achieving effective, democratic governability. Rubén García Clark reviews the stances taken about the presidential regimen by the country’s political actors, including the president himself, Congress, the judiciary, the parties and some of Mexico’s important political figures already vying as presidential hopefuls. Roberto Gutiérrez delves into the fundamental role of one of the main actors in the transition to democracy, the media. He warns about the danger for the political system of the media going from complete subordination to the authorities to a situation in which political actors, including the government, pay homage to the media, arguing for the need to regulate media coverage.

* * *

In this issue, our “Art and Culture,” “The Splendor of Mexico,” “Museums” and “Ecology” sections are all dedicated to Mexico’s southern state of Guerrero. “Art and Culture” begins with an interview by Patricia Gómez-Maganda with painter Jesús Portillo Neri, a young artist who in a very short time has reached undoubted maturity and skill in his work. We continue with an article about Olinalá, a town nestled in the mountains of Guerrero, famous for its production of lacquered articles, a centuries-old craft tradition that most of the town’s inhabitants follow. Lastly, we look at part of the state’s pre-Hispanic history as painted by the ancient Tlacuilo in their codices. Gerardo Gutiérrez explains their function before the conquest and during the transition from the pre-Hispanic to the colonial world.

“The Splendor of Mexico” looks at pre-Hispanic, colonial and cosmopolitan Guerrero through its great archaeological wealth and two of its main cities. Taxco, a mining city *par excellence*, is warmly described by Miguel Ángel Reina in a journey through its steep, cobblestone streets and colonial architecture. Gerardo Gutiérrez introduces us to a little-known aspect of Guerrero: its vast archaeological wealth. Lastly, Manuel Zavala looks at cosmopolitan Guerrero in his article about the world famous port of Acapulco, classified as an earthly paradise during the twentieth century. And it is in Acapulco where one of the most interesting site museums of colonial Guerrero is located: the San Diego Fort Museum. Julieta Gil explains how the museum reveals the intense trade and cultural relationship that existed during the colonial period with Asia thanks to the trips of the Chinese Nao. Sergio Santana contributes an article to our “Ecology” section about the imposing Caverns of Cacahuamilpa, mixing legend and history.

In our “Literature” section, Eduardo Santa Cruz offers an interesting analysis about the perception that communities of Mexican origin in the United States have of themselves as reflected in Chicano literature, and the acceptance that it has won in literary circles both in the U.S. and our country. In this section, we include “Mirage,” a short story by Kathy Taylor that delves into the horrors that so many undocumented Mexicans face in their attempts to cross the border.

To conclude, our “In Memoriam” section pays homage to Víctor L. Urquidi in an article by his friend and colleague Roberto Blancarte. Urquidi was a dedicated Mexican intellectual, committed like almost no one else to national education, founder and director of many of Mexico’s most important educational institutions.

José Luis Valdés-Ugalde

Toward a New Political Regimen in Mexico

Víctor Alarcón Olguín*



Eunice Adorno/Cuartosuro

The role of Congress is one of the central issues in Mexico's democratic reforms.

Among the basic premises for studying the construction of a new Mexican political regimen, in addition to dealing with the partisan electoral aspect as the main variable for understanding what English academic Lawrence Whitehead has called the progressive dynamic of a “transition by stealth,” we should pay more attention to the functioning of the different branches of government, and particularly to the role played by the president.

After a quick —but not exhaustive— review of the specialized literature produced in the last three decades, we find that there has been a clear consensus around the need to lessen the central nature and the political capabilities and reach of the president, to the point of adopting some form of parliamentary government accompanied by a new Constitution. However, this cannot be confused with the need for the legal and administrative powers assigned to the branches of government and the different political actors to be performed effectively and expediently in the framework of a democratic dynamic that respects the separation

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and checks and balances among the branches of government.

As a result, I should point out that the differences about the extent of institutional reforms in Mexico center on establishing the decision-making powers of the presidency, and on proposing or not that it and the other institutions of the executive branch be capable of self-negotiating their own repositioning and permanence vis-à-vis the different political forces, or whether the reforms that lead to a limitation of presidential power should emanate from external bodies.

Although there is an increasing tendency to value leaving behind the presidential regime completely to create a semi-parliamentary system headed by someone in the cabinet—a move motivated by the slim results of the Fox administration and even promoted from the Ministry of the Interior itself—undoubtedly it is the case that it is the dynamic of authoritarian governability, in transition toward a democratic model, which makes it difficult to adopt mechanisms that make us think that the Congress and the judicial branch (in its role of arbiter in constitutional and/or electoral controversies) could in the short term be the new centers of power in the Mexican political system. However, the Mexican presidency today faces different factors that are the result of a long series of constitutional and electoral reforms made over recent years that force us to visualize a way forward:

a) Changes must be made to encourage the forging of a majority inside a Congress whose current structure and productivity have created a poor model of consensus that always requires at least two parties—which can even be different from the party in office—to

pass constitutional reforms or simple legislation.¹ One positive thing that cannot be denied is that the traditional logic of imposing the administration's agenda on the Congress is now a process that requires continual negotiations and potentially could even include its submitting to an agenda set by the legislature. An interesting item is that until now the two chambers of Congress have maintained a dynamic of responding to the administration's legislative agenda, mainly based on the bills sent by the executive. This is very important if we recall that for the last three Congresses, no single party has

We should situate three basic issues in a possible reorganization of the branches of government: their method of election, the duration of their mandates and the possibilities for continuity.

had an absolute majority in either chamber.

b) We are faced with administrative and budget structures that have diminished in recent years and require substantial investment and reforms to function appropriately. In that sense, it should be said that no one has assimilated the fact that presidential omnipotence no longer corresponds to the economic capabilities with which the administration can respond to the public's needs in general, despite the fact that the new regimen has a neo-entrepreneurial logic reminiscent of the discourse and political practice of the Alemán administration, based on the concession of a wide range of political and econom-

ic freedoms to the private sector, with the difference that the administration can no longer be the means whereby that process is actually put into practice.² It is interesting to note the similarity to the Alemán way of operating, above all in the significant change in the composition of the political elite, which now includes businessmen heading up the main ministries and parastate companies. The prospect of a public administration not riddled with corruption in which quality reigns as a criteria has not managed to prompt the passage of the fiscal, labor or agricultural-industrial reforms required to substantially decrease poverty.

c) Paradoxically, this incompatibility in political-economic traits and perceptions about what the presidency should do shows us the remains of a authoritarian, centralist, corporatist dynamic that has not been assimilated into the formal conditions of a modern liberal democracy in which a blossoming civil society would take into its own hands the reins of indicating to the government how and in what spheres it should act, without limiting its own creative capabilities. To a great extent, the real practice of a subsidiary, functionally limited, balanced and long-term state is out of step with a cultural perception that today demands short-term action by a politically strong presidency, above all in matters of security and leadership.

d) It is clear that no value is yet given to reformulating the judicial branch's capabilities with regard to its tasks of arbitrating constitutional and electoral controversies. Strengthening the Supreme Court as the ultimate decision-making body for discrepancies between the executive and the legislative branch as well as among the different govern-

ment bodies and the federal government is a move of crucial importance in decentralizing power in Mexico. Equally, we can mention the action and autonomy of the Electoral Tribunal of the Federal Judiciary, advances that should be compared to those achieved by the separation of the executive from the organization, judging and authorization of elections, also taken out of the hands of the legislature by the creation of the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE). We can hardly consider these institutions solid if they are not complemented by important actions to strengthen the citizenry, through the protection of human rights, the guarantee of access to information and accountability, which have barely begun to be glimpsed as the new arenas for the construction of democracy.

Seen in perspective, these four manifestations of the process of restructuring Mexico's political regimen would force us to take another look at a basic question: Have we come to the end of the institutional reform of the executive branch? Must we continue to speak of a strictly functional reform, not a political one, of the president's role in the political system? If the answer is that the reforms should continue, what political and administrative functions must be reviewed?

These questions could be answered as follows: the change in the political centrality of the president has practically concluded in the strictly legal-constitutional sphere if what is desired is to continue maintaining a purely presidential system. If what we are aiming for is to reduce his powers more without pushing through the corresponding reforms in the legislative and judicial branches, social and political conditions would worsen, possibly leading to un-

governability and the economic instability of the system, whose performance has been precarious, but manageable. In this fashion, we should situate three basic issues in a possible reorganization of the branches of government: their method of election, the duration of their mandates and the possibilities for continuity.

With regard to the method of election, experience tells us that holding elections with two rounds (including run-off elections) would only be feasible with a strong, moderate, consolidated party system, with minimum thresholds of electoral participation in

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the first and second rounds. Participation would have to be the same or greater in the second round (at least by one vote) in order to not legitimize a president with fewer votes than those won in the first round, thus overcoming the general criticism of this form of election.

With regard to the length of the mandate, those who support reducing and synchronizing the presidential terms with those of governors and municipal authorities (like jurist Diego Valadéz, among others) would only be right if we also accept adjusting legislators' terms and allowing for reelection for an additional term (except in the case of the president who would continue

to not be subject to reelection). At the same time, we would rely on a political system that would have the maximum possible compatibility in executing government programs. It could only happen in this way because it would be very complex to increase or reduce federal and local legislative and mayoral mandates. Neither does it seem attractive to create a system like the U.S. Senate's, where one-third of the senators are elected every two years, above all given the recent failure of renovating half the Mexican Senate at a time.

In that sense, the impact of the possibility of immediate (but not unlimited) reelection in all elected posts would propitiate increased competition inside and among the political parties to put forward their best candidates who would then remain in office based on performance. Another advantage of this proposal is that it would reduce the criticisms of the idea that it would produce sclerosis inside the political, parliamentary class.

Otherwise, the lack of coordination caused by continual but non-synchronized elections for different government posts will only continue to create a dynamic of the sterile reinvention of the systems of coordination among the federal government, the states and municipalities. This would undoubtedly lead us to attrition and strong pressures on all levels of government since they would be in constant political negotiation with few moments of repose. It is crucial to solve this problem if we aspire to the current government being able to still design a long-term reform of the state.

Despite all this, the permanence and influence of the institution of the presidency means that it is still not very appropriate to talk about having

effectively reformed the federal administration since each presidency has tried to maintain structures parallel to the ministries which have contributed little and, on the contrary, have been obstacles to the correct way of decision making about public policies. This situation seems to have become more serious in the most recent administration since without appropriate discussion with the legislature, a series of offices and posts were created outside the procedures established by legislation about the organization of the federal administration, particularly in such sensitive areas as the press office, national and public security or foreign relations.

In that sense, a general balance sheet of Mexico's political regimen must take on the challenge of evaluating what its budgetary cost must be, in addition to fixing the number of employees needed for the appropriate functioning of first-level institutions. Current data tells us that the executive branch is continuing to shrink, but without narrowing the wage gaps between high- and low-level public officials. We should point this out as evidence of the high degree of vulnerability to corruption and the resulting inefficacy that this branch of government may show vis-à-vis such central matters as promoting a culture of accountability or comptroller's offices that should be in the hands of the legislature and even in tandem with the judiciary.

Of course, it is not only a matter of a reform exclusively oriented to controlling the presidency. However, this is the dimension that the public most often sees as needing urgent changes. In matters of dialogue and checks and balances among branches of government, it is sufficient to specify the for-

mat and dynamic of the reports by ministers of state, and even the mechanics of presidential reports to the nation. Until now, they are strictly a matter of protocol: actions are simply reported, and no broad discussion about the big national issues is initiated. With regard to this, a clear strengthening of the legislative and judicial branch is warranted.

The kinds of review and observations that the executive branch can or cannot make (a de facto veto) about laws or bills created or modified by the legislature when the executive sends proposals (such as in the case of the recent

It is not only a matter of a reform exclusively oriented to controlling the presidency, but this is the dimension that the public most often sees as needing urgent changes.

budget discussions) should also be analyzed. It is tempting to govern by accord or decree, as President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-1994) did during the first three years of his term when he lacked a two-thirds majority to pass the constitutional reforms he needed to push through his administration's economic reforms. For that reason, the government's proposal of so-called "preferential bills" is important, in which the branches of government would give priority to approving the bills urgently needed by the nation.

It should be mentioned that general reforms to the political system have fostered the de-concentration of many of the political controls previously used

by the executive branch: for example, permitting workers' voluntary affiliation to unions; creating the possibility of more than one union existing in a single company and guaranteeing people's individual—not collective—affiliation to the political party of their choice; relaxing government control over publications (breaking the monopoly on newsprint);³ and, in the media, opening up content and lines of information. Also, the law on chambers of commerce and industry has been liberalized to allow every businessman to decide to join or not without threat to his business. The same can be said of the new relationship between the government and the country's churches.

All these actions, which tend to eliminate the corporatist nature of Mexico's political regimen, together with the aforementioned reforms to electoral law, show us little-appreciated facts about how that "transition by stealth" was made. We can situate there a good part of the political change and the repositioning of the spheres of influence of the executive branch in particular.

Finally, we should evaluate a substantive aspect derived from all these changes: the break with the classic relationship between party and government and the presidential succession in the year 2006. The recent transformations in the executive branch have minimized the benefits that caused social organizations' dependence because they were basic extensions necessary for implementing the government programs and actions that might directly support the party in office.

Seen in this way, what has happened shows that in Mexico there has been a "de-partisan-ization" of public actions. The weakness of Mexican political parties is a matter for concern.

Abstentionism, a dearth of legislation, administrative inefficacy and superfluous spending are some of the issues that generate the most diverse criticism from society of their performance and force us to also think of ways of limiting their functioning. It is clear that without a credible party system that attracts public participation, it will be of little or no use to change the size of the houses of Congress or the methods of election.

A few years ago, the dilemmas of the Mexican political system in its transition from authoritarianism to democracy were rooted in being able to link up the means of access to political representation, that is, the origin and the

legal-constitutional functions of the parties, with the real efficacy of their action (regarding the legitimacy of their acts). Under authoritarianism, people questioned the absence of institutions, but not authority itself. Curiously, today, we discover an incompatibility that must be completely overcome within the democratic framework. Paradoxically, we have authorities elected with practically no questioning of their legal origins, but we ask ourselves how far their authority goes. Today, we have no doubts about the institutions, but we do have doubts about the kind of authority who should lead them. For that reason, the debate about the configuration and immediate future of the

political regimen is a substantive issue for the efforts to consolidate democracy in Mexico. ■■■

NOTES

- ¹ A case in point: the two opposition parties, the Party of the Democratic Revolution and the Institutional Revolutionary Party, joined forces to create a majority to change the president's budget proposal. [Editor's Note.]
- ² The author refers to the administration of President Miguel Alemán (1952-1958), a member of the PRI. [Editor's Note.]
- ³ For many years in Mexico a single government company, the Industrial Paper Producer (PIPSA), produced more than 95 percent of the paper for the country's newspapers, giving the government absolute control over information in the printed media. [Editor's Note.]


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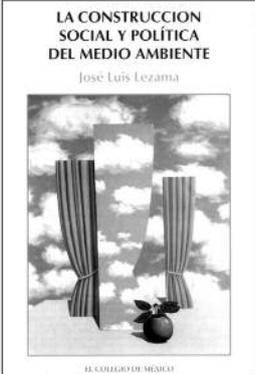
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Debating the Political Regimen

Rubén R. García Clarck*



Eunice Adorno/Cuartoscuro

Electronic voting board in Mexico's Congress.

One of the main challenges that the democratic transition in Mexico has brought with it is building governability in a framework of a divided government. The party of the president has not had a majority in the Chamber of Deputies since 1997, and in the Senate since 2000. This has been considered a positive expression of political pluralism. However, both inside and outside the country, the difficulties the parliamentary caucuses have in coming to agreements among themselves have been cause for concern. No less worrying have been the frequent differences between the executive and the legislature in

determining and passing the legal instruments and constitutional reforms needed for national development.

The most visible, recurring disagreement between the president and Congress has been around tax issues and the budget. The debate between the executive and the Chamber of Deputies about projected federal spending for 2005 has become so polarized that in late November 2004 it was proposed that the Supreme Court intervene. The problem lies in the fact that the executive does not accept the changes that the lower chamber made to its original proposed budget, and the Chamber of Deputies does not want to incorporate the president's observations into the modified bill. There are two possible outcomes in this controversy: 1) negotia-

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tion and agreement between the two parties, or 2) the court finding in favor of the deputies, based on Article 74 of the Constitution, which gives the Chamber of Deputies the exclusive right to approve the budget proposal sent by the executive branch after examining it, discussing it and, if it deems necessary, modifying it.

Parallel to this, a fertile debate is raging about the possible alternatives to the current relationship between the president and Congress. However, it has not been very constructive since it is plagued with mutual recriminations and prone to conflict. In this debate, different proposals about reforms of the country's current political regimen have been made.

Despite how difficult President Vicente Fox's relationship with an opposition Congress has been, his actions have favored the maturation of the presidential regime Mexico arrived at in 2000. As he recently stated, "For the first time, we are experiencing a presidential system, not authoritarian presidentialism. Let us allow this system to mature and produce for us. Let us improve it, yes, but let us give it time to bear fruit."¹ According to Fox, today, that process of maturation requires the political determination of the legislators to ensure that the balance of powers is respected and the right of the executive to direct economic policy is recognized.

What would some of the ways to improve our presidential regimen be? Santiago Creel, minister of the interior and one of the front-runners for the 2006 National Action Party (PAN) presidential nomination, seems to have the answer. In a forum about democratic governability hosted by the Special Commission for the Reform of

the State last September, Santiago Creel proposed a package of reforms to favor cooperation among the different branches of government, the formation of majorities and making legislative work more agile. Among his proposals were a) consecutive reelection of legislators, thus increasing their accountability to their constituents, fostering their professionalization and specialization and allowing them to forge more long-term agreements; b) creating the post of cabinet head, to be ratified by Congress, who would make the work of the executive more ordered and negotiations with the different congressional caucuses more

Despite how difficult President Vicente Fox's relationship with an opposition Congress has been, his actions have favored the maturation of the presidential regime Mexico arrived at in 2000.

fluid; c) a "preferential" legislative mechanism that would obligate Congress to legislate on certain reforms considered urgent for the nation, without detriment to congressional rights to deliberate on, modify and pass or vote down bills.²

Creel's second proposal, as he himself emphasizes, points to a semi-presidential regimen, a government-by-cabinet. Although the minister of the interior does not stay within the bounds of his boss's recommendation of letting the current presidential regimen mature, he does share, together with the other two proposals, the spirit of improving it.

Other PAN presidential hopefuls like Minister of Foreign Affairs Luis Ernesto Derbez and former Minister of Energy Felipe Calderón have made their own proposals which coincide in emphasizing forming government coalitions. Minister Derbez talks about what he would do as president with a divided government, saying, "It is very probable that in 2006 no one will have a majority and that therefore we continue with a three-party structure.... I don't have the bi-partisan system of the United States. I will therefore have to come up with a system very similar to the Chilean one, in which a multi-party system has managed to create a structure that provides incentives for creating what in reality is two poles made up of the left and the right, like what happens in France."³

For his part, Felipe Calderón proposes sharing the government with other parties, but without falling into President Fox's mistake of incorporating figures from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) without a vote. In that sense, Calderón is willing to negotiate including other parties in the cabinet with the prospect of creating a government coalition. This inclusion would be possible as long as it brings votes with it. To complement this, he proposes promoting a leadership that "would allow the government to partner up with and gain support from society to jointly take on the responsibility for problems and solve them," which he dubbed "adaptive leadership."⁴

Together with these political operating strategies, Calderón foresees a series of institutional reforms to favor the legislative experience, legislators' accountability to their constituents, the coordination of public policies, co-

responsibility of the executive and legislative branches and the forging of congressional majorities. These reforms would include: a) consecutive reelection of legislators and mayors; b) a cabinet chief; c) run-off elections for legislators, and d) the reduction of the number of legislators elected proportionally.

In the ranks of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the main opposition party in the Congress, some of its legislators like Enrique Jackson and Manlio Fabio Beltrones agree with Santiago Creel that making the political regimen semi-presidential is a good idea. Beatriz Paredes, president of the PRI's Colosio Foundation, the party's main think tank, has come out in favor of two rounds of voting for the presidency to give the office more legitimacy in the context of a multi-party system in which it is improbable that any presidential candidate get an absolute majority in the first round.

Since there have been no statements by PRI presidential hopefuls, who have only very recently begun to surface, we should make reference to some proposals by PRI member Miguel Ángel Núñez Soto, the governor of Hidalgo who also participated in the September forum. Núñez Soto replied to the proposal of creating the figure of cabinet chief with the argument that according to current legislation, the functions of that post should be fulfilled by the minister of the interior. Instead, he proposed that the president's cabinet be ratified by the Senate. In addition, he demanded that the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies both decide the national budget, arguing that everywhere else, both chambers of the legislature decide about the budget. Lastly, to contribute to the for-

One of the main challenges that the democratic transition in Mexico has brought with it is building governability in a framework of a divided government.

mation of a majority, he came out for reducing the number of legislators elected proportionally since they represent their parties more than their states, and increasing the minimum percentage needed for a party to retain its legal status to five percent of the popular vote.⁵

On the left of the political spectrum, the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) presidential hopefuls Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and Andrés Manuel López Obrador say a social consensus must be forged about institutional reform or agreements among the different branches of government before they are actually implemented. For Cárdenas, any transition to democracy requires, among other things, the approval of the broadest possible sectors of society, that is, "arriving at clear, general consensuses about the new rules that are to govern relations in society."⁶ He also warns against the risks of a presidential regimen in which the executive is incapable of "establishing and fostering expeditious dialogue and close communication with Congress," or a semi-parliamentary system in which legislators "turn their endeavor into a permanent assembly, disrespectfully riding roughshod over the other two branches of government."⁷ In either type of regimen, the

important thing for the founder of the PRD is true collaboration and balance among the branches of government.

In his controversial book *Un proyecto alternativo de nación* (An Alternative National Project), Andrés Manuel López Obrador, current mayor of Mexico City and the front-runner in all the polls, proposes the following about the relationship between the executive and legislative branches in Mexico:

Today, the Congress is a very uncertain space, without a definitive course because of the diversity of its members and the balance among them, but with the capacity fundamentally to oppose, mediate or change presidential bills.... In this context, although there will always be conflicting interests, room for negotiation must be sought to come up with common policies together with the legislative branch. The executive must ensure that its bills enjoy broad support in society and that basic agreements be reached beforehand with deputies and senators.⁸

Another presidential hopeful who should be mentioned is Jorge G. Castañeda, the Fox administration's former minister of foreign affairs. In his book *Somos muchos: Ideas para el mañana* (We Are Many: Ideas for Tomorrow), Castañeda has made an interesting comparison between the presidential regimes in the United States and Mexico.⁹ For Castañeda, the factors that have historically made the U.S. regime function are its political actors' spirit of compromise and its society's exclusionary homogeneity. By contrast, in Mexico and Latin America, these factors have not existed, and, in addition, the presidential regime has been created in an authoritarian context.

We should add the party system as a third factor that contrasts the two country's regimens. The two-party system in the United States, as Minister Derbez says, favors the presidential regimen, while the multi-party system makes it more difficult in our countries.

As an alternative to dysfunctional presidentialism, Castañeda proposes the semi-presidential option, which combines a strong presidency (the guarantee of national unity when faced with centrifugal forces), reinforced by a second round of voting, and a governing majority in Congress, which would be a democratic brake to any temptation of authoritarianism. This majority would also be favored by a second round of voting in legislative elections and the reduction of proportionally elected legislators, without under-representing minority parties. But in Castañeda's proposal, the parties would have to be reformed to compete with independent candidates.

The proposals we have presented have stirred up a commotion in public opinion, particularly among academics, spurring a wide gamut of opinions that go from agreement to total rejection. Perhaps the greatest consensus is around the matter of consecutive reelection for the legislature.¹⁰ Opinions vary about the other proposals. For example, there are those who consider the semi-presidential option inviable,¹¹ and others who defend the cabinet government in the presidential system.¹² The second round of voting is seen as a double-edged sword when it is used only for presidential and not legislative elections as well since while it legitimizes the president, at the same time it fragments Congress, which could lead to an authoritarian presidency, which would be even worse if combined with

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between the executive
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an independent candidacy (remember the cases of Collor de Mello, Fujimori and Bucaram).¹³ On the other hand, some analysts consider invoking the popular will as the ultimate criterion for the executive in its relations with the legislature as a way to undervalue institutional reforms.¹⁴

Certainly, the debate about Mexico's presidential regimen has not been completely played out with the positions and opinions presented here, but these are a sample of the importance the matter has been given in Mexico. We can expect greater interest in this issue as well as a deepening debate and, above all, the inclusion of different proposals for reform, enriched by forums of consultation with the public, both for today's legislative agenda and the 2006 electoral platforms. These tasks are the responsibility and inescapable commitment of the political actors for creating the conditions that will allow us to create—unhurriedly but without pause—an efficient relationship between the president and Congress, a matter key to democratic governability and the consolidation of democracy in Mexico. ■■■

NOTES

¹ *La Jornada* (Mexico City), November 28, 2004, p. 9.

² Santiago Creel Miranda, "Reforma del Estado. Una democracia eficaz," *Reforma* (Mexico City), October 10, 2004, p. 6.

³ *Reforma* (Mexico City), November 28, 2004, p. 5A.

⁴ *Reforma* (Mexico City), December 5, 2005, p. 9A.

⁵ Boletín 1211 de la Cámara de Diputados, September 30, 2004.

⁶ *La Jornada* (Mexico City), November 26, 2004, p. 14.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Andrés Manuel López Obrador, *Un proyecto alternativo de nación. Hacia un cambio verdadero* (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 2004), pp. 123-124.

⁹ Jorge G. Castañeda, *Somos muchos: Ideas para el mañana* (Mexico City: Planeta, 2004). See particularly Chapter 4, "Instituciones" (Institutions).

¹⁰ See the book compiled by Fernando Dworak, *El legislador a examen* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 2003). Also of note is Pedro Joaquín Coldwell's observation in the sense that "qualified academics and researchers...have said that consecutive reelection of senators and deputies is the ideal means for contributing to, among other things, the professionalization of legislators, to increasing their relations with their constituents and their accountability as public representatives." See Pedro Joaquín Coldwell, "La reelección inmediata de los legisladores mexicanos," José Luis Hernández and Cuicatláhuac Bardán, comps., *La agenda electoral en la consolidación democrática* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana/LIX Legislatura del Senado de la República, 2004), p. 91. Coldwell refers to authors like Alonso Lujambio, José Woldenberg, Benito Nacif, Diego Valadés, María Amparo Casar, Federico Estévez, Jaime Cárdenas, Alejandro Poiré, Juan Mollinar, Miguel Carbonell, Luis Béjar, José Antonio Crespo, Jean François Prud'homme and Benjamín Hill.

¹¹ This is the opinion of the former electoral councilor and IFE member, Alonso Lujambio. *Reforma* (Mexico City), November 7, 2004, p. 15.

¹² Diego Valadés, "El gobierno de gabinete en el sistema presidencial mexicano," *Este País* no. 164, November 2004, pp. 18-20 and 22.

¹³ See the opinions of Gabriel Guerra in *Reforma* (Mexico City), November 7, 2004, p. 14, and Xihui Guillermo Tenorio, in *Reforma* (Mexico City) October 24, 2004, pp. 8 and 14.

¹⁴ See the opinions of Luis F. Aguilar and Jorge Alcocer in *Reforma* (Mexico City), October 24, 2004, pp. 8 and 14.

The Media in Mexico Today

Politics as Spectacle

Roberto Gutiérrez*



Jorge López/Cuartoscuro



Eunice Adorno/Cuartoscuro

Joaquín López Dóriga (Televisa) and Javier Alatorre (TV Azteca), two of the Mexican media's most influential anchormen.

In light of the growing influence of the media in Mexico today, one of the central questions in the national academic and political debate is how to guarantee freedom of expression and the right to information without detriment to the notion of public responsibility as a basic coordinate of the action of public and private forces in a democratic order.

More than 25 years after the first attempts to modernize the legal framework for radio and television operations, in the Senate, Mexico's political class is once again discussing a bill aimed at reducing discretionary powers and increasing society's participation and accountability in the handling of the media.

This warrants looking into the causes of the prolonged legislative paralysis that has shown, perhaps as in no other case, the inconsistency between the intentions of reform explicitly espoused by a good part of the political elite and its inability to come up with specific agreements.

In this sense, it seems necessary to understand the reasons behind the actions of those involved in the process (parties, administration, media entrepreneurs and civic bodies) from the point of view of their interests and their ideological convictions, as well as the socio-political effects derived from the lack of democratic "rules of the game" vis-à-vis communications. We need to refer, then, to two fundamental factors that have blocked the reforms. The first is the existence of a political culture deeply rooted among the Mexican elites in which pragmatism and specific,

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short-term objectives constantly subordinate strategic aims linked to structural reforms that do not have sufficient incentives to be agreed upon and implemented. Parallel to this and complementing it is the *de facto* power of the owners of the electronic media, capable of pressuring and blackmailing the entire political class enough to block the reforms.

The combined strength of both these factors has been proven at many different political moments, but the power of the media owners is constantly on the rise. In effect, what could have been a virtual circle of legislative reform, the acceptance of responsibilities and discipline by those legally involved and the generation of positive socio-cultural effects from the point of view of constructing citizenship became a pernicious downward spiral in which the weakness of the regulatory framework facilitated the progressive economic and political empowerment of the pressure group in the National Radio and Television Chamber of Commerce and the degradation of national political culture. Certainly, the uninterrupted increase in this power unleashed a multiplicity of negative effects for the functioning of the political system and for the quality and pluralism of the messages broadcast to society.

In fact, time has shown that the media subordination to the government has changed to complicity and then to government subordination to the media. In that context, the events that followed the alternation in office that began with Vicente Fox's 2000 victory are crucial for weighing the magnitude of the change in that relationship. The agreements between Fox and the sector's entrepreneurs embodied in the decree about the payment of taxes "in

kind" and the changes to the regulatory legislation for the Federal Radio and Television Law showed, both in their content and in the way they were processed, that the relationship between the government and the media was already qualitatively different from before: the media had gone from a defensive stance to setting the rules according to their strategic perspective.¹

Thus, without democratic rules to limit the media, in recent years—but especially in 2004—political life in Mexico has been a constant, growing example of how the way the media deals with information and editorializes about different political process-

One of the central questions in the national debate is how to guarantee freedom of expression and the right to information without detriment to the notion of public responsibility.

es and events has become a matter for discussion, clashes and even political persecution. Thus we have phenomena as distinct as information leaks from one institution, organization, actor or another to the media with a specific intention (the famous "video scandals" have been one of the most pernicious examples of this)² and the media's setting itself up as the legal authority responsible for deciding the culpability or innocence of a public figure or the popularity or unpopularity of different political initiatives. The hegemony of this kind of discourse has become a practically generalized, permanent component of media activity.

As Edmundo Berumen writes, "Every day we hear on the radio, we see on television, we read in newspapers, magazines or reports the results of the most recent poll about the most diverse issues. Based on that, institutions, bodies, administrations, programs, projects, officials, groups, political parties, public figures or entire societies are compared, praised, defended, justified, reproached or attacked."³ All of this goes on, of course, with pretensions of representativeness that are seldom founded on acceptable methodologies.

The licentious way that the media has tended to present and disseminate its messages, opinions and intentions shows the margin of discretionary power with which it acts. At the same time this is capitalized on opportunistically by one or the other of the competing forces which, as has been clearly seen in recent months, can also become the victims of media condemnation, depending on the circumstances and interests at play which, of course, are always evaluated by the media itself.

From this point of view, the fact that the media enjoys a privileged, legally exceptional status should actually be a reason for concern for all political actors and sufficient reason to foster a modern productive regulatory framework. On this level as on many others, having that framework would make it possible to considerably increase the margins of certainty, predictability and trust so necessary for political dealings and competition.

In effect, in a scenario such as the one that has predominated in recent years in this country, strongly stamped with competition, tension and political convulsions, as well as the fragility of the democratic values inherited from the dynamic of the post-Revolutionary

state, we cannot help but point out that the communications media has played a role that is not altogether civilizing and co-responsible. Finally, it is through the media that much of the information and social judgements about politics and politicians are constructed and consolidated. And although undoubtedly the trivialization and schematic treatment of what is really at stake in political discussion, competition and decisions can frequently be attributed to the irresponsibility of the elites themselves, it is also true that the media contribute effectively to modeling an unclear and unfounded vision of this in society.

Just like a large part of the political class, acting in the interest of short-term success, media apparatuses tend to turn public activity into a spectacle in which strident discourses and scandalous news predominate over analysis and informed comparison of available options. Perhaps we should insist that the role of the media with regard to processes of political socialization is inherent in its own logic, permanently strained because of the public function they have as privileged agents in the spread of information and analysis and because of the quest for profits derived from their nature as private businesses.⁴ For these businesses, the obsession with novelties and the extraordinary as crucial factors for attracting an audience point away from the “normalization” that democracy aspires to. This dimension is the one which, from my point of view, has had the greatest weight in the general dynamic of the media, a phenomenon linked, of course, to the lack of a modern regulatory framework.

It is not surprising, then, that the interpretations constructed by the me-

dia are entirely faithful to the logic of spectacle or entertainment. That is, they are based on a dramatic structure in which polarization, moralizing, personalization and simplification play a determinant role. The conflicts, leaderships, alliances and aims of the actors are most often systematized within that structure.

The political spectacle we have witnessed in Mexico in recent months represents a media product that emphasizes the emotional over the cognitive.⁵ Illusions, frustrations, expectations, fears, uncritical sure things and recognition displace arguments (by definition complex and finely shaded) and promote simple, primary political

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identities. What is more, the “successful” functioning of this spectacle is anchored in the audience’s primordial need for being situated, understanding and recognition. The structure of the spectacle produces a clear demarcation between its active pole (its actors) and a passive expectant audience.

Based on the implications of this iron-clad structure of the relationship between the senders and the receivers of ideological and political messages, it is not difficult to understand why the “spontaneous” functioning of the media runs headlong up against the cultural requirements of a democratic political system. It promotes, rather, the

reinforcement of conceptions inspired in the classic “friend-enemy” dichotomy proffered by Schmitt, as well as the effective distancing of the citizenry from a sphere of strident, vilified activity through simplified scandals which, therefore, do not encourage direct participation.⁶ Even though this is not solely the responsibility of the media, it is relevant to remember here how disreputable political activity is and how scant interest is in participating in it.⁷

On the other hand, it cannot be ignored that, as the most recent media scandals have reminded us, what is sought in the logic of spectacle is to establish a conflict in which the polarities between friends and enemies, the just and the unjust, or, in general, good and evil, can be easily perceived. In this style of political communication, the incessant search for scapegoats and the disagreements and criticisms about the form or content of public administration are frequently presented dressed up with a moral connotation that operates to justify rapid condemnations and value judgements not open to discussion. There are always exceptions, of course, but we should make a note of it in order to cushion its effects.

Evidently, the phenomenon popularly known as sensationalism operates based on this mechanism, which because of its own internal coherence is not easily deconstructed. The attempt to introduce a different rationality in communications has to begin by understanding the magnitude and nature of the problem we are facing, taking on board the fact that we are swimming against the current of a powerful cultural inertia which is also backed up and stimulated by extremely versatile power groups with notable capacity for manoeuvre and adaptation.

In fact, it is precisely this diagnosis that makes it possible to situate the importance of the existing proposals for regulation in two senses: on the one hand, the one that touches on the promotion and generation of substantive alternative contents, and on the other hand, the one linked to the modification of the structure of the communications media industry to make it pluralistic. Although for the purposes of clarifying the remaining tasks along the road to making the media socially responsible it is important to distinguish the two issues, obviously they are intimately linked.

In the first case, we should emphasize that in Mexico the absence of guidelines (not the censorship and surveillance of non-democratic systems) promoting the dissemination of content that is constructive and contributory to civilization has blocked the possibilities of consolidating forms of public perception of social and political reality based on the components of democratic culture. In that sense, undeniably there have been efforts to introduce legal and institutional formulas that contribute to stimulating the construction of social identities based on an appreciation for tolerance, respect for the law, co-responsibility, informed citizens' participation and a rejection of discrimination and the violation of human rights.

It seems evident, then, that because of the intensity of society's relationship with the media, particularly television and radio, the meaning of its messages is of capital importance.⁸ In many ways, their quality and intentions will determine whether the media becomes part of the country's process of democratic construction or not, contributing to the consolidation of the culture that should accompany it.

In the interest of objectivity, it would be desirable to reduce doubts about the veracity and objective nature of information, that what happens in the public sphere be treated in a more balanced plural way and that violence and intolerance, values pertinent to socio-political relations, be eliminated from media messages.

In summary, faced with the pernicious effects of making public life a spectacle through the media, with the industry's growing participation in partisan competition and fixing the public agenda, and, in general, in the cognitive, value-based and emotional construction of reality, it would be a great achieve-

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ment if we could move forward in legally regulating the matter, since on this will depend to a great extent the future quality of Mexican democracy. ■■■

NOTES

¹ In Mexico, the electronic media pay their taxes in kind, that is, providing air time to different government agencies that use it to publicize their activities and for different campaigns like getting out the vote, in favor of a democratic culture, against discrimination, in favor of transparency and to promote respect for human rights, among many others. [Editor's Note.]

² The "video scandals" refer to the broadcasting of videotape of flagrant cases of corruption that have affected different political figures and organizations, but particularly the Party of the Democratic Revolution. Far from putting these

events into their proper context and explaining them, the media has used them sensationally to boost ratings and besmirch politics in general.

³ Edmundo Berumen, "La democracia al azar," Guido Lara and Adriana Arizpe, comps., *Comunicación política y democracia* (Mexico City: Cal y Arena, 1998), p. 141.

⁴ Recent reports show that the business of electronic communications in Mexico is controlled by Televisa, which operates 306 television stations, 50 percent of the country's total. Televisión Azteca has 180 stations, giving it control of one-third of all of Mexico's broadcasters. In commercial radio, 76 percent of the licenses are held by 14 families, while four big chains group half the stations. María Osterroth, "Crisis en las ondas hertzianas," *Telecomunicación*, a supplement of *Reforma* (Mexico City), February 18, 2003, p. 8. Obviously the concentration of the electronic media impedes competition.

⁵ Rosa María Alponte has written a good appraisal of how the emotional is exalted in television programs. See her "La oferta noticiosa: celebración de simulacros y cofradía de emociones por televisión," *Versión* no. 10 (Mexico City), 2000.

⁶ Carl Schmitt, *El concepto de lo político* (Buenos Aires: Folios Ediciones, 1984).

⁷ According to the World Survey of Values coordinated by Ronald Inglehart, trust in the government, political parties, the Chamber of Deputies and the judiciary only rates 53 percent, 40 percent, 38 percent and 38 percent respectively, not to mention the vision the public has of the police or the state bureaucracy. This survey also states that 75 percent of Mexicans feel little or no interest in politics, in contrast with the apparently overwhelming presence in the media of campaigns, candidates and the shuffling of cabinet ministers. With regard to this, it is impossible to overlook that one of the basic differences between the "subject culture" characteristic of authoritarian regimes and the civic culture that should be a part of democracies lies precisely in the degree and quality of public involvement in the different decisions made throughout the socio-political fabric of a community. This means that Mexicans' low participation in different types of organizations is also not very encouraging, as shown by the following figures: only 4 percent say they belong to a political party; 6 percent to a union; 8 percent to artistic or cultural organizations; 9 percent to sports or recreational groups; and 23 percent to religious organizations. These figures were published by *Reforma* from May 9 to 13, 2000 (the data about political issues was published on May 13).

⁸ The importance of the media in the population's daily life is shown by the fact that the television is on an average of seven hours a day; every Mexican watches it four hours a day; and nine million children do their homework while watching television. Sergio Aguayo, *El almanaque mexicano* (Mexico City: Grijalbo, 2000), p. 218.

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Ética y educación superior en el contexto de la mercantilización

Claudio Rama

Propuesta de un indicador de eficiencia en el estudio (IEE)
en educación superior

Marcos Jofré, Miguel de Bortoli, Rosana Aspiroz

Amor y sexualidad: algunos desafíos

Lourdes Fernández Rius

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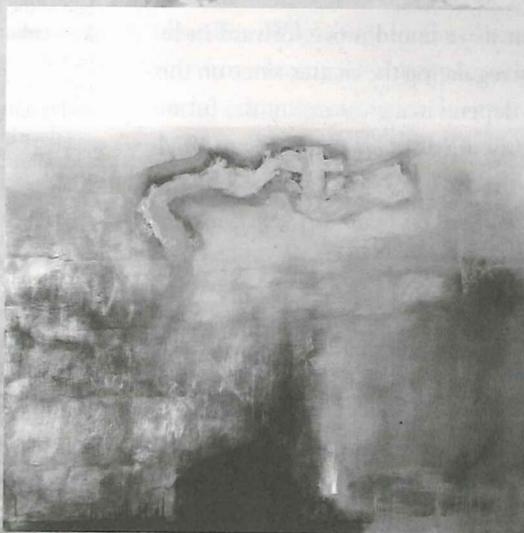
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Mexican Nationalism in Times Of Globalization and Multiculturalism¹

Fernando Vizcaíno Guerra*



Pedro Valterra/Cuartoscuro

I will deal mainly with state nationalism, not the nationalisms of cultural minorities, often constituted as movements against the central government and, therefore, against state nationalism. This emphasis does not mean that non-state nationalisms are not important; quite to the contrary, they must be recognized in Catalonia's cultural and linguistic policies; in the fight for the autonomy of Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland; in Chechenia or Kosovo; in Taiwan, Quebec, Mosquitia (Nicaragua); and, in general among the indigenous peoples of the Americas.

In recent years, the development of these nationalisms has been favored by the universal wave in favor of minorities, central governments' dwindling capabilities and sovereignty, and the blurring of the frontier between what belongs to a nation and what does not, between the indigenous and the universal. Also, in the social sciences, people have lost academic interest in historical nationalism and turned their attention, in contrast, to nationalism linked to ethnicity and movements for autonomy or secession. I do not follow the most traveled, fashionable road; rather, I will focus on the recent history of state nationalism, which dawned in Mexico at independence and the 1848 defeat at the hands of the United States, to see its

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long day with the Reform, the Revolution and Cardenism, to the hardly defensible point when in 1982, then-President José López Portillo made his celebrated nationalist speeches, denouncing the “de-nationalists.”²

Several things justify this choice. The state, despite its transformations, is still the seat of the world order, and, therefore, nationalism will continue to be a force for preserving unity and defending what remains of sovereignty. Also, in the end, the nationalism of minorities consolidates in the form of a state. National minorities fight against the central state precisely because they are trying to build an autonomous form of government, and if possible, constitute themselves as a state.

Thus, we are talking about different phases of a single phenomenon: from the nationalism of groups who aspire to constitute themselves in states, to that of consolidated states. This idea presupposes that all communities or nations aspire, in the long or short term, implicitly or explicitly, to constitute themselves as states or as some pre-state form of government. It also implies that one of the state’s functions is nationalism, because it needs to favor solidarity, unity and the symbols of the shared identity among the members of a political community. Nationalism seeks the form of the state, and the state, in turn, that of nationalism.

I should add another—not lesser—point: in many countries, perhaps because of their authoritarian, centralist tradition, or because of the poverty of their provinces and minorities, nationalism was almost always an instrument exclusive to the state.

In Mexico it has not stopped being that, although it has been deformed;

neither has any type of ethnic or regional nationalism emerged that would threaten the integrity of the state. Sociologically or politically, the reference to nationalism implies the central government. By contrast, in Spain or in Canada, for example, nationalism is associated less with the central government and more with the pro-autonomy movements of regions like Quebec, the Basque Country or Catalonia. But the fact that the nationalism of national minorities and an academic outlook focused on it prevail is insufficient reason to supposed that state nationalism (of the Spanish State or the Canadian Federation) has stopped being significant for the preservation

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of political and cultural unity. On the contrary, this nationalism seems needed when it is necessary to organize diversity, to learn to live in plurality and to preserve some form of shared identity.

For that reason, if we imagined a future scenario for Mexico with the existence of a significant regional nationalism, for example in Yucatán, or an indigenous movement that defended some model of a nation, some form of state nationalism would continue to exist.³ Thus, we are not witnessing its disappearance, but its metamorphosis, which has created new problems of interest to us.

How can we explain it in a time when unity, centralism and sovereignty are faced with the growth of democracy, federalism, diversity and links to the world?

We must recognize that academic studies about minority rights and ethnic nationalism have changed their fundamental concept. Until a few years ago, the idea that the state was an essential condition for nationalism predominated. Gellner and Hobsbawn, among others, disseminated this hypothesis.⁴ Nationalism implied state nationalism.

In the late 1970s, the hypothesis that the fundamental condition of nationalism was the nation, not the state, began to gain credence. This conception changed theory and the existence of innumerable ethnic nationalist movements was accepted. Wherever there is a nation, understood as a people or a culture, nationalism can exist, which implies, in turn, that Europe has stopped being the historic axis of how this phenomenon unfolds. Looked at like this, it is a matter of explaining nationalism once it has become a resource of the state; however, I accept that the basic condition for nationalism is not the state, but rather the nation.

Some problems arise here. The first is anchored in the issue’s recent history: how should nationalism be studied in the contemporary world, let us say from the early 1970s until today?

When I began doing research on this matter, I started from the fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Union, both of which favored the reemergence of ethnicity and the recognition of the former Soviet nations as independent states. These transformations happened while Carlos Salinas de Gortari was presi-

dent of Mexico. This was a foundational stage for Mexico if we take into consideration the changes to Article IV of the Constitution, that recognized the multi-ethnic nature of the country; the establishment of the National Human Rights Commission; the arrival of international electoral observers; the control of elections by the citizenry; and the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement. Multiculturalism, democracy and globality were condensed in the history of those years, and these three factors, as I will explain, are related to the changes nationalism went through.

However, it was clear that none of these processes began in the late 1980s. Going back in time, I found, for example, that the number of international conventions signed by Mexico grew significantly as of the mid-1970s, so the 1990s international integration is the ratification of a trend. For example, in 1974, the then-minister of finance, José López Portillo, began negotiations for Mexico's joining the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), today the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The advance of democracy in Mexico also reached a fundamental turning point in the 1977 political and electoral reform. I even agree that the democratization of Mexico is part of the world trend begun in Portugal and Spain in the middle of that decade, as Samuel Huntington suggested. And there would be a great deal to add about ethnic nationalism and the multinational state if we reviewed the history of minorities' rights since World War II.

One of the most significant facts for Latin America —a foundational fact for the reappearance of ethnicity worldwide— was the rebirth of the

ethnic movement in Nicaragua in the 1970s in the middle of the Cold War when the disintegration of the central government and the advance of the Sandinista movement gave way to the reconstitution of Mosquitia and the recognition of its autonomy. These facts led me to think in terms of a longer time, with the additional advantage that the length of the interval had allowed me to explain the changes in nationalism considering the growing presence of multiculturalism, democracy and globality.

The second problem is how we can explain the change in the characterization of the concept of nationalism. And the third problem emerges

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from Mexico's specificity: how has Mexican nationalism changed in recent history?

These three problems must be examined, and I believe that Mexican nationalism should serve to illustrate the theory and to build ideas with a certain degree of abstraction, in any case, shifting between general elucidations and historic examples, in which Mexico is the most outstanding case.

Actually, there is no single factor that explains nationalism in Mexico or anywhere else in the world: neither the weakening of the state; nor the advance of democracy, which in one

of its liberal variants recognizes cultural diversity; nor the rediscovery of races or languages, which are at the root of nationalities; nor the often ephemeral intellectual utopias; nor the flow of globality, whose force has overflowed the old circles of the sovereign state.

"There is no unilateral history," wrote Braudel in the 1970s.⁵ Neither is there any homogeneous or linear history. The question, however, is whether, even if we recognize that we are facing a variable phenomenon, we can find a dominant factor that helps order the problems in time and according to a significant relationship.

In my opinion, there is a relationship between nationalism and the three factors that define today's world: globality, democracy and multiculturalism. I think that as these three factors advance, state nationalism loses weight in political life and, in turn, transforms much of its content.

The argument can begin to be developed if we return to the three problems. With regard to the first one, how to study nationalism today, I maintain that we must do so with reference to the multinational, global state and not, as some authors insist, in relation to the homogeneous, sovereign nation-state, as if it were still a closed entity or a body that moves to a single beat. Here, we touch on the arguments with regard to two other questions: how to explain the change and how it has manifested itself in Mexico. The transformations of nationalism are due to a great extent to the growing, extensive links among countries through culture and law, technology and the economy, and also, to the growing democratization and recognition of minorities.

State nationalism, specifically in Mexico, has lost many references of a

closed, self-contained, homogeneous society. In contrast, it has developed others linked to diversity, an international vocation and democracy. This does not imply the total elimination of the old reference points, as though in three decades the material or symbolic protectionist aspects of “what is Mexican,” which are the basis for mistrust of international powers, had disappeared. These processes are simultaneously contradictory and complementary. The decreasing weight of nationalism and the negation or reiteration of its contents is explained, then, by the growing dynamic that links the country to modernization (globality, democracy, diversity) and by the weakening of tradition in the form of being closed off, corporatism and uniformity. **MM**

NOTES

¹ For more information about the issue, see Fernando Vizcaíno Guerra, *El nacionalismo mexicano en los tiempos de la globalización y el multiculturalismo* (Mexico City: UNAM, 2004).

² In February 1982, the president spoke of defending the Mexican peso “like a tiger,” and on September 1, during his last report to the nation, decreed the nationalization of the banking system as part of that defense. The ideas upon which he based his decision constitute a discourse representing the failed restoration of the nationalism spawned by the Mexican Revolution.

³ The question of Yucatán will be one of Mexico’s great issues in the twenty-first century. In recent years, much has been said about the self-determination of indigenous peoples due to the indigenous movement in Chiapas. But many of us had forgotten Yucatán. For a long time, Yucatán leaders considered it a region apart from the rest of Mexico. Although in 1843 federal troops put an end to the secession movement, tensions continued in the nineteenth century and up until the 1910 Revolution. Both the caste

wars and the struggles between provincial leaders and Mexico City led to instability and the natural will to secession of indigenous, mestizos and criollos alike never diminished until the first third of the twentieth century. In 1916, Carrillo Puerto called Yucatán a “Socialist Republic,” and in 1924, a movement of Mayas and mestizos once again declared independence, making Mayan the official language. In response, the federal government sent troops and re-created the territory of Quintana Roo since the separation of Campeche had not been sufficient to fragment the region. Then, many highways and schools were built in an attempt to definitively integrate the state into the federation. This was another of Lázaro Cárdenas’s great nationalist projects. However, I think the matter is not completely resolved, as was clear during the 2001 political crisis when the local Congress disobeyed the decisions of federal institutions.

⁴ Ernest Gellner, *Naciones y nacionalismo* (Mexico City: Alianza Editorial, 1991); Eric Hobsbawm, *Naciones y nacionalismo desde 1780* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1991).

⁵ Fernand Braudel, *Écrits sur l'histoire* (Paris: Flammarion, 1969).



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Civil Society Against Free Trade in Mexico

Part 2

Ariadna Estévez López*



Jorge López/Cuartoscuro

Protests against free trade in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 2004.

In the last issue of *Voices of Mexico*, I showed how throughout the 1990s democratic elections were constructed as the means to challenge the status quo supporting the economic discourse that was reshaping Mexico's social arrangements. Democracy was the discourse facilitating unity among the social movements and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) affected by economic re-structuring. Expressed in terms devised by Ernesto Laclau

and Chantal Mouffe, democracy was the first discourse acting as the nodal point extending the chain of equivalence for hegemonic articulation against the hegemonic forces imposing neoliberal policies and globalization.

In this article, the last of a two-part series, I will argue that this situation has been changing. As electoral democracy has been progressively achieved through the 1997 mayoral elections in Mexico City and the 2000 presidential balloting, human rights is now replacing democratic discourse—at least the discourse of

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electoral democracy advanced until 2000— because the latter became obsolete after the country's first democratic elections.

I contend that over the last 20 years human rights discourse in Mexico has changed to include issues related to free trade, thereby extending the chain of equivalence to include many of the NGO networks and social movements involved in the struggle for fair trade in Mexico over a 10-year period (1991-2001).¹ It is therefore becoming increasingly hegemonic.

CONSOLIDATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS DISCOURSE

As shown in Part 1, from 1988 to the first half of the 1990s, human rights became a mere object of democratic discourse. This was due to the fact that, after originally including issues related to political repression, i.e. violations of the right to physical integrity and security, to life, to justice and to freedom of expression, association and opinion, through murder, torture, illegal and incommunicado detention, execution, etc., the discourse was extended to include impunity and non-political abuses, but also political rights such as the right to be elected to public office and to vote in democratic elections.

However, in spite of this subordination, human rights were given a definition that would eventually lead to their expansion to include issues related to social justice. Because human rights represented a concept directly imported from Central America, where the social justice discourse of liberation theology was very strong, in the leading human rights groups chaired

by Dominican priests it remained holistic. All writings of the time indicate the holistic character of the NGO understanding of human rights, which included civil, political, economic, social, individual and collective rights, and a strong awareness of the collective rights of indigenous peoples. Although they could not address these rights in their totality because of the lack of local expertise and the limitations of international human rights discourse itself in relation to this type of rights, they were always present in their rhetoric in order to explain the larger context of repression and lack of democracy—economic injustice leading to viola-

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tions of economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR). This is particularly true for organizations linked to the progressive Catholic Church.²

Pioneer human rights activists share the opinion that human rights discourse was consolidated in 1990, when the government was forced to do more than simply cope with the accusations of widespread violations made by international NGOs, accusations also made by national NGOs which were finally addressing the problems of selective repression in Mexico.³ That year the government set up the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), a sort of ombudsman appointed by

the executive branch that marked the development of NGO human rights discourse in two ways.

On the one hand, it linked human rights to the wider struggle against free trade and neo-liberalism. The CNDH was created in June 1990, a few weeks after human rights lawyer Norma Corona Sapién was killed in Sinaloa state and a few weeks before president Carlos Salinas traveled to Washington in order to initiate negotiations for the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NGOs accused the government of setting up the CNDH to gain legitimacy in trade negotiations with its U.S. and Canadian counterparts, who were very sensitive about civil rights and representative democracy. Human rights NGOs were determined to prove that human rights were systematically violated by the future trade partner of the U.S. and Canada.

On the other hand, human rights NGOs reinforced their own identity by marking a qualitative difference between their discourse and the government's. This is because, arguing that politics should be alien to human rights observation and that there were already courts dealing with labor issues, the government decided that the CNDH would not accept complaints about violations of political and labor rights, some of the most systematically violated rights in the country. Consequently NGOs began to distance themselves from the government because they did consider, unlike the government, the promotion and defense of all human rights.

HUMAN RIGHTS AND FREE TRADE

Only two out of 40 human rights NGOs belonging to the "All Rights for All"

Organizations Network (RTDT) joined the coalition of organizations opposing free trade in Mexico, the Mexican Free Trade Action Network (RMALC), set up in 1991, but these NGOs failed to advance economic and social rights issues in the wider free trade agenda; they focused on civil and political rights. Some NGOs did try to establish a link between free trade and human rights violations like the repression of strikes organized by independent unions, or the exploitation of workers in sweatshops, by carrying out such activities as observing union elections and preparing socioeconomic analyses of employment, agriculture, the environment and the situation of indigenous people.⁴ Nevertheless, getting other governments and organizations to put pressure on the Mexican government to liberalize politics, put an end to impunity, stop police and military abuse of social leaders and poor people and recognize indigenous peoples was the major human rights goal within the free trade agenda.⁵ Consequently, the more general link between free trade and human rights violations became a simple matter of indicating that democratic countries should not engage in business with an undemocratic government that systematically violates human rights—in particular political rights—like the government in Mexico and, if they do, they have to force them to improve their human rights performance.

However, there was—as in fact there had always been—a broad reference to violations of economic-social-cultural rights (ESCR) by neoliberal policies in the general framework for abuses of civil and political rights. Mexican NGOs even supported the mainly U.S. and Canadian demands for the inclusion

of labor rights and environmental protection, which resulted in parallel labor and environment agreements totally lacking a human rights perspective.

Failure to address human rights abuses generated by the impact of the agreement was the result of four factors. One, there was still little human rights expertise in human rights groups since it was a relatively new discourse in the country and organizations dealing with it were not familiar with ESCR or collective rights issues. Furthermore, the dominant discipline in those groups was law; economics as a field of knowledge was absent. Two, the international human rights discourse itself had not

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yet developed enough tools to address many of the issues related to free trade: labor, the environment, agricultural sovereignty, development, international cooperation, state duty and the right to plan the economy, etc. Three, they did not know with any degree of certainty what the consequences of free trade on people would be—they still lacked the traditional raw material of the human rights methodology they had used thus far: cases. Finally, because of their shared priority, the empty signifier extending the chain of equivalence was democracy. Human rights discourse, although expanding, was still subordinated to democracy.

HUMAN RIGHTS: A NEW CHAIN OF EQUIVALENCE AGAINST FREE TRADE?

In 1994 the Zapatista uprising, an event that highlighted and defended indigenous identity in opposition to NAFTA, forced organizations to finally discuss something that had been in their rhetoric for a long time: the fulfillment of ESCR and collective rights, especially of indigenous peoples, as a precondition for democracy.

Nevertheless, since human rights organizations had been familiar with and interested in indigenous peoples' cultural rights and their situation of structural discrimination since the late 1980s, working on indigenous people's human rights came almost naturally. In fact, human rights NGOs were a key factor in translating indigenous rights into human rights, by sharing their knowledge and through their handling of International Labor Organization (ILO) Covenant 169 on Indigenous Rights, which declared the collective rights of indigenous peoples to manage their own resources, to elect their own authorities, to be consulted, etc.⁶ It was easier, then, to broaden out the discourse in the direction of the collective cultural rights of indigenous peoples than in the direction of ESCRs under NAFTA.

However, during the second half of the decade, two important events helped make free trade an object of human rights discourse. In the first place, the initial consequences of unregulated capital began to appear. On the one hand, financial crises occurred between 1994 and 1997 in Latin America—including Mexico itself—and Asia, revealing the vulnerability of individuals and human collectivities vis-à-vis unregulated trade and portfolio and

foreign direct investment. On the other hand, the RMALC analyzed the consequences of the unfair terms of NAFTA during its first three years: plummeting wages, bankruptcies of small and medium-sized companies in Mexico because corporations were not required to buy from Mexican producers and the crisis of Mexican agriculture due to the lack of government support and competition with agricultural corporations, among other factors.⁷

In the second place, international human rights discourse had started to develop a considerably large body of instruments and mechanisms for ESCR implementation, such as the Limburg Principles and the Maastrich Guidelines, as part of the state's duties; the general observations of the Committee for ESCR, especially reports for the rights to development, food, health and education, among many others.

These instruments, together with the first economic assessments of NAFTA, provided the elements for a free trade-human rights relationship outside the democracy chain of equivalence —data and cases were finally available. For instance, in 1996, the article *Apuntes sobre los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales y el TLC* (Notes on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and NAFTA), written by the then-technical secretary of the “All Rights for All” Organizations Network (RTDT), Rocío Culebro Bahena, explicitly refers to the loss of legal entitlements in free trade, and, unlike previous articles which linked human rights to free trade in terms of the lack of democratic discussion in negotiations, this article attempted to employ an economic discourse: “Economic integration based on an economic model of structural adjustment emphasizes privatization,

mostly in favor of multinational corporations and dismantles state regulation. This, together with the negative effects of NAFTA, worsens the situation.”⁸ The typical free trade agenda expands toward economics when Culebro adds references to ESCR instruments, the right to development and the problems caused by corporations.

Furthermore, free trade became the focus of the counter-report to the Mexican government's third report to the United Nations' ESCR Committee,⁹ a joint report written by human rights NGOs and social organization networks dealing with such issues as housing, gender, labor, development and health.

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The former (represented by the most important groups, Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez, Fray Francisco de Vitoria, the Mexican League for Human Rights, the Mexican Commission, the RTDT) provided the human rights expertise and perspective. The latter (including such important networks as Convergence of Civic Organizations for Democracy) provided a set of discourses human rights NGOs had been unfamiliar with, like economics, gender, public policy, social and economic development.

With this combination of discourses, the report assessed the government's obligations concerning each of

the articles of the International Covenant on ESCR, and provided detailed analyses of three issues, as recommended by the Committee for ESCR itself: the federal budget for social policy, the situation in the state of Chiapas and the impact of NAFTA. The focus of the latter analysis was the agreement's impact on labor and wages; the impoverishment of rural areas and migration; health and the environment; food and food technology (genetically modified food).¹⁰

Developments in the field of ESCR and the availability of evidence of their violation, however, were not the only factors contributing to the increasing importance of human rights discourse in free trade over democracy. Another major factor was the first democratic elections held in the country (the Party of the Democratic Revolution [PRD] won local elections in Mexico City in 1997 without PRI attempts of electoral fraud). The relaxation of the democratic agenda, together with the availability of data, cases and methodology, allowed NGOs to widen their agendas and interests. More importantly, as clean elections were increasingly a fulfilled objective, democracy as a chain of equivalence no longer made sense. This was reaffirmed in 2000, when PAN candidate Vicente Fox became the first president from a party other than the PRI —the party which had held power since its inception in 1929.

After this, organizations began to develop methodologies, expertise and knowledge about ESCR, including violations of free trade. This was partly because organizations were not as interested in democracy as before, but also for two further reasons. First, the new right-wing government showed no signs of changing neoliberal poli-

cies (in fact it reinforced them, placing businessmen and women in such posts as the Ministry of Labor). Second, Vicente Fox began an aggressive international campaign to improve the Mexican state's human rights record. He started to sign United Nations human rights conventions, admitted the jurisdiction of Inter-American human rights bodies and liberated the so-called prisoners of conscience whose cases had been publicized by NGOs. In summary, while he carried on with the economic policies violating ESCR since the 1980s, he also implemented an international policy centered on adopting any human rights treaty or convention available and vocally supporting human rights causes throughout the world.

In this context, since 2000, the ongoing construction of the relationship between human rights and trade has been pushing toward an increasing use of human rights discourse for framing social diplomacy against free trade,¹¹ particularly in the context of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), an initiative launched by then-U.S. president Bill Clinton in 1994 at the Americas Summit in Miami, Florida. Two major civil society human rights initiatives in the FTAA summit process point to an increasing use of a human rights framework for the construction of joint agendas in social diplomacy activities, that is, the use of human rights discourse—which after 20 years of developing toward free trade and ESCR has become hegemonic in this struggle—as an empty signifier extending the chain of equivalence against free trade.

First, the Hemispheric Social Alliance's Alternatives for the Americas is a hemispheric development project that proposes human rights as the basis for

a fair free trade policy covering work, the environment, migration and matters of gender, together with investment, services, FDI, finance, agriculture and dispute resolution mechanisms. The document, which places human rights at the beginning of an index covering labor, the environment, the role of the state, investment, finance, property rights, etc., states, "A common human rights agenda should form the overall framework for all hemispheric policies, and include mechanisms and institutions to ensure full implementation and enforcement. This agenda should promote the broadest definition of human rights, covering civil, political, econom-

Since 2000, the ongoing construction of the relationship between human rights and trade has been pushing toward an increasing use of human rights discourse for framing social diplomacy against free trade.

ic, social, cultural, and environmental rights, gender equity, and rights relating to indigenous peoples and communities."¹² This is the common platform of a continent-wide network gathering together unions, farmers' groups, NGOs and social organizations, including hemispheric human rights networks.

Second, the Second People's Summit took place in Quebec, Canada, in 2001. This was the sequel to the parallel NGO gathering during the governmental Second Summit of the Americas, which took place in Santiago de Chile, in 1998. (The first governmental forum was held in Miami, in 1994, and had no parallel NGO gathering.) NGOs from

throughout the region organized a gathering that included a human rights forum. Nevertheless, it was in 2001, during the Third State Summit in Quebec, Canada, when human rights became a wider framework in the work of the NGO parallel summit. They issued a civil society declaration demanding that governments make human rights the axis of free trade policy, and governments replied with a plan of action that included human rights and democracy.

"We want to put a priority on human and collective rights as defined in international treaties on free trade... We want full respect for human rights, which are universal, equal and indivisible... We want to build bridges among the people of the Americas, to be inspired by the pluralism of our histories and cultures, to become stronger by exercising representative and participatory democracy."¹³

This does not mean that democracy is completely disappearing from the NGO and social movement arena, just that its expansion (it is increasingly comprised of citizen participation in the regional and global arenas as well as on social justice issues) is now subordinated to human rights, which are more and more the nodal point for a hegemonic articulation of the different NGO networks vis-à-vis free trade. Human rights are thus performing a twofold role. First, by becoming an empty signifier suitable for a chain of equivalence between NGOs in two ways.

On the one hand, if an empty signifier is constructed by becoming that which represents the fullness of what is in fact absent, human rights achieves that because they are precisely entitlements that are absent in

free trade. On the other hand, it becomes a chain of equivalence because all NGOs and social organizations are concerned, one way or another, with creating the conditions for human dignity, which is a cornerstone value (although not essential) of human rights discourse.

Second, it is providing the nodal points for partially fixing meaning in a common agenda against free trade; human rights can be the nodal point which is the overarching factor in the content of social struggles. This means two things. First, that demands are expressed in terms of human rights

discourse in order to emphasize human dignity, citizen participation and state and private accountability in the construction of agendas. Second, an agenda for the defense of a particular right could include most demands because it can work as a nodal point fixing floating signifiers in trade discourse. ■■■

NOTES

¹ This research has been conducted with the extensive use of original documents and personal interviews with major human rights figures in Mexico.

² There are two types of human rights NGOs: academic-professional groups and left-wing Catholic organizations. The difference between the two groups in the late 1980s and early 1990s was marked by the wider discourse within which human rights discourse was either an instrument or a requirement for achieving long-term political and social aims. Academic-professional organizations used a discourse of the rule of law as a precondition for a truly democratic regime, whereas Catholic organizations used the discourse of liberation theology which aimed at achieving social justice for the poor. The former saw democracy as an end in itself while the latter believed that democracy was a means for achieving social justice. It seems that the first view was rather idealistic, coming from intellectuals working for social movements, while the other was based on the experience of priests working directly with workers and farmers. Activists from the academic-professional wing see this difference as merely philosophical, while religious groups believe that such a distinction had important ontological implications. The immersion in either liberation theology discourse or the rule of law discourse marked the long term aims of the two types of NGOs. On the one hand, Catholic groups believed that violations of civil and political rights were rooted in political, social and economic causes, and that the defense of human rights had eventually to lead to a democratic regime supporting social justice. On the other hand, the long term aim of secular organizations was an idea of democracy whereby the law is enforced in favor of individuals, so they could choose their leaders and thus a different economic future. Sources: Mariclaire Acosta (2004), interview (Mexico City); Sergio Aguayo Quezada (2004), interview (Mexico City); Miguel Concha Malo

(2004), interview (Mexico City); J. Maldonado (2004), interview (Mexico City).

³ Although the first NGOs were created in 1984 (the Fray Francisco de Vitoria Human Rights Center and the Mexican Academy of Human Rights), human rights did not provide a framework for addressing Mexican issues. They addressed repression in Central America or refugee issues in Mexico, in the case of the Vitoria Center, or theoretical and conceptual issues, i.e. the ombudsman, in the case of the academy. Interviewees argue that they had to spend their first years of work trying to make human rights a legitimate discourse (it was seen as a foreign, pro-Yankee framework, and most people did not know what, exactly, their human rights were, including government officials and social leaders), and to get social backing (it was too dangerous to talk about repression or other anomalies under the PRI government). It was only after 1988, when the first report on the Mexican case was published, that the first national NGOs addressing violations perpetrated by Mexican authorities were set up (the Miguel Agustín Pro Juárez Human Rights Center, in 1988, which was set up by Jesuits; and the Mexican Commission for the Defense and Promotion of Human Rights, in 1989, which was set up by people who left the academy because they wanted “to address cases rather than causes”, in the words of former academy chairman Sergio Aguayo). In 1989, the Civil Organizations Network “All Rights for All” was set up in order to coordinate the work of the increasing number of human rights NGOs in the country.

⁴ Fuentes, M. “El caso ‘Ford’ ¿Modelo de relación laboral en el futuro?” *Justicia y Paz* (Special issue on Labor Rights and Free Trade) no. 23, year 6 (1991), pp. 3-8.

⁵ Red Mexicana de Acción Frente al Libre Comercio, Founding document of the Mexican Action Network on Free Trade (Mexico City: RMALC, 1991), p. 8.

⁶ E. Cortez Morales (2004), interview (Mexico City).

⁷ Red Mexicana de Acción Frente al Libre Comercio, *Espejismo y realidad: el TLCAN tres años después. Análisis y propuesta desde la sociedad civil* (Mexico City: Red Mexicana de Acción Frente al Libre Comercio, 1997), p. 203.

⁸ Culebro Bahena, Rocío, “Apuntes sobre los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales y el TLC,” M. Chamberline, *La integralidad de los derechos humanos II* (Mexico City: Universidad Iberoamericana, 1996), p. 36.

⁹ The ESCR Committee allows NGOs to submit their reports when governments present theirs, so committee members can balance the usually optimistic government reports.

¹⁰ Espacio DESC, *La situación de los derechos económicos, sociales y culturales en México. Informe alternativo de organizaciones civiles, sociales y redes mexicanas al tercer Informe Periódico del Gobierno Mexicano ante el Comité de las Naciones Unidas sobre Derechos Económicos, Sociales y Culturales* (Mexico City: Espacio DESC, 1999), p.123.

¹¹ I am using the term “social diplomacy” in the sense proposed in D. S. E. Gallardo Calva, *Acción colectiva y diplomacia: Movimiento ambientalista frente al Tratado de Libre Comercio de América del Norte* (Mexico City: Centro de Estudios Sociológicos-El Colegio de México, 1999).

¹² Hemispheric Social Alliance, *Alternatives for the Americas* (Quebec: Hemispheric Social Alliance, 2001), p. 85.

¹³ Alianza Social Continental, *Declaración de la II Cumbre de los Pueblos de las Américas* (Quebec, 2001).

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Revista 57 Enero-abril de 2005

Ludolfo Paramio

- Teorías de la decisión racional y de la acción colectiva

Charles Tilly

- La democratización mediante la lucha

Álvaro López Lara

- Los rituales y la construcción simbólica de la política.

Federico Matías Rossi

- Las asambleas vecinales y populares en la Argentina

Débora Betrisey Nadali

- Identidades, nacionalidad y frontera en el Mercosur

Raúl Rodríguez Guillén y Juan Mora Heredia

- Todos en la colonia nos conocemos: la movilización de clases medias en Clavería



PROBLEMAS DEL Desarrollo

REVISTA LATINOAMERICANA DE ECONOMÍA

Publicación trimestral del Instituto De Investigación Económicas
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
Vol. 35 núm. 139, octubre-diciembre, 2004

Índice

EDITORIAL

ARTÍCULOS

El crecimiento económico en América Latina y sus perspectivas más allá del sexenio perdido
HUBERT ESCAITH

Ciclos políticos largos en América Latina durante el siglo xx y sus efectos en el crecimiento económico
GUY PIERRE

Trajectoires de croissance et de volatilité macro-économique dans le MERCOSUR: quelques éléments d'analyse empirique
ALEXIS SALUDJIAN

Medición del desarrollo sustentable, reto de las cuentas nacionales. La experiencia de México en el cálculo del producto interno bruto ecológico
FRANCISCO ALMAGRO VÁZQUEZ

Medición de la sensibilidad de la estructura productiva al desarrollo sostenible
MIGUEL ÁNGEL TARANCÓN MORÁN

Clúster y coo-petencia (cooperación y competencia) industrial: algunos elementos teóricos por considerar
ALEJANDRO GARCÍA GARNICA
ARTURO A. LARA RIVERO

Innovación, financiamiento y organización financiera nacional
CELSO GARRIDO NOGUERA
LILIANA GRANADOS MUÑETÓN

La condicionalidad estructural de las IFIs y la autonomía de la política económica: crítica a los argumentos de la impotencia
OSCAR MARIO MAÑÁN GARCÍA

Los actores de Petrópolis-Tecnópolis: ¿experiencia de desarrollo endógeno basada en nuevas tecnologías?
ESTER SCHIAVO
GERMÁN DABAT

COMENTARIOS Y DEBATES

El péndulo monetario
DAVID IBARRA MUÑOZ

Perspectivas socioeconómicas de México después del desarrollismo y del neoliberalismo, una nueva economía política
IFIGENIA MARTÍNEZ HERNÁNDEZ

TESTIMONIOS

Por una globalización justa: el trabajo como objetivo global y hemisférico
VIRGILIO LEVAGGI

REVISTA DE REVISTAS

RESEÑAS

ACTIVIDADES DEL IIEC

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PROBLEMAS DEL
Desarrollo
REVISTA LATINOAMERICANA DE ECONOMÍA

que cumple su 35 aniversario y en este número especial ofrece a sus lectores:

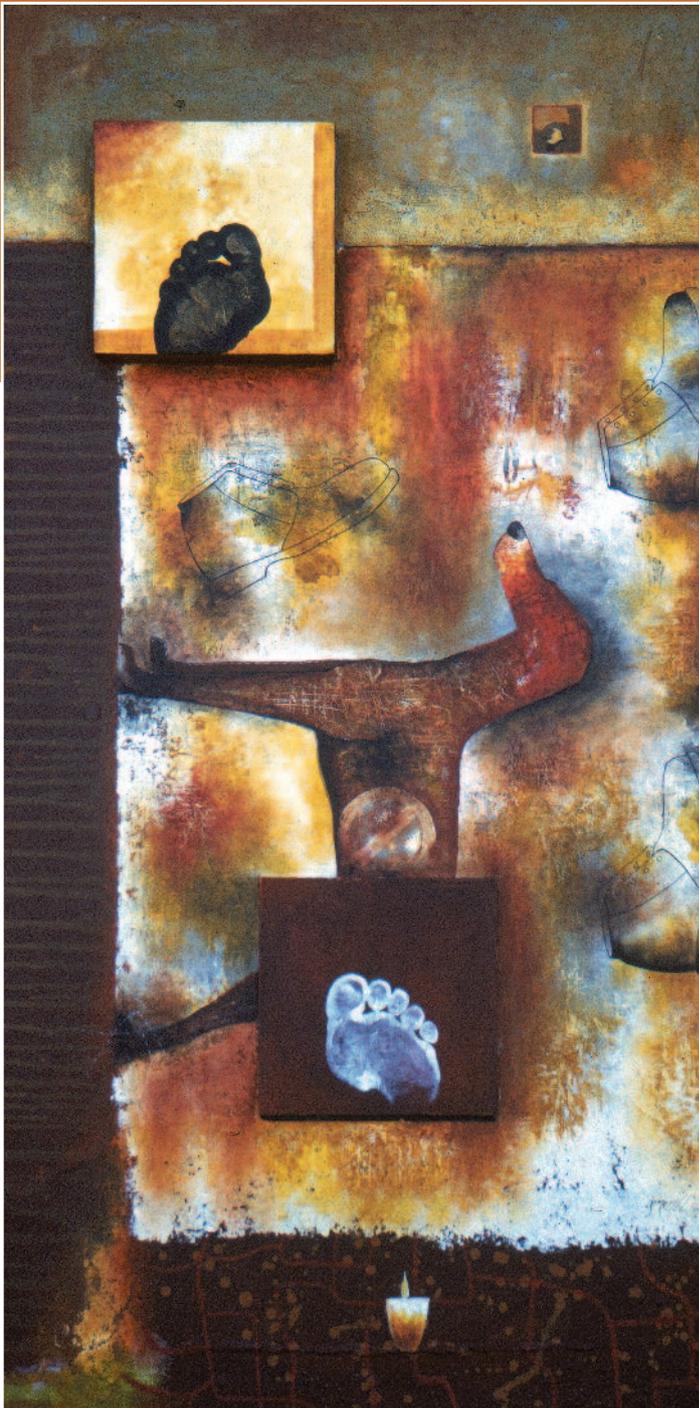


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Jesús Portillo

An Artist from the Heart Of Guerrero

Patricia Gómez Maganda Bermeo*



Ironic Errant 2, 120 x 60 cm, 2004 (mixed techniques on wood).

The city of Chilapa is the door to the mountain region from where craftsmen come to sell what they produce. Visual artist Jesús Portillo Neri was born and bred here, in this place, rich in traditions, still retaining something magical, with one of the best cuisines in this southern land.

Jesús is a young painter; his precociousness is founded in an uncommon talent that has reached maturity in his work and his undoubted skill.

His use of color is magnificent. His colors “are alive” as he himself says, and his paintings have a *raison d’être*: the painter is seeking the essence of things.

I noted something very difficult to accomplish in his work: a style of his own. His authen-

* General Director of Culture for the State of Guerrero in Mexico City.

tic, honest work may cause different sensations, pleasant or unpleasant, but never indifference. Jesús never paints a canvas in a specific style just because it sells; neither is he overly concerned with criticism since in both his life and his art, he continues to be the same man. He alone rules over his life, no one else. Portillo is unsatisfied in the sense that he is constantly searching; he is also someone who answers back, just like the music he listens to when he paints, heavy metal. That is why he says outright, “I am against decorative painting that doesn’t say anything; ‘pretty’ work is dead to me. Probably they paint them to cover a wall, but artistically that’s tying your hands.”

Jesús loves literature, which nurtures his life, his analytical capabilities and his imagination. He also has another love: philosophy. This solid training and an ever-alert mind make him a stupendous conversationalist.

PATRICIA GÓMEZ MAGANDA: *What is the difference for an artist between being born in a place like where you were born in Guerrero and being born in an enormous metropolis like Mexico City?*

JESÚS PORTILLO: It has an influence on your themes, your colors and the freshness with which you paint. City painters lean toward the concep-



Window I, 120 x 140 cm, 2003 (mixed techniques on canvas).



Window II, 120 x 120 cm, 2003 (mixed techniques on wood).

tual; they’re colder. They have more elements of technique than of sensibility. The difference between them and someone born in these towns full of life is above all the benign images, in contrast with the decadent images that populate large cities. In the provinces, above all where I lived as a child, everything is nature; everything is contact with the land and the water. So painting becomes more transparent. The difference in the painter who comes from here [Mexico City] is that he seeks an idea of the conceptual to achieve the universal; painters from there seek the local to be universal.

PGM: *Rilke says that childhood is an endless source of inspiration. What was your childhood like? What do you remember most about it?*

JP: What I remember most is being with my parents—I was very close to my parents—with my grandmother, with Clarita, who was my nana, like my second mother, a woman from the mountains, who was central to my life. From Clarita I learned all that simplicity and enormous wisdom of seeing things and life totally without prejudices. I mean social prejudices. You learn to see



Window III, 120 x 140 cm, 2004 (mixed techniques on canvas).

life in a more open way. Everything can be handled like something illusory. There are fantasies that are fundamental later.

That time in my life shaped my character. I consider my childhood a letter that takes me everywhere and introduces me.

PGM: *Who was the most unforgettable person in your childhood?*

JP: My grandmother. She was widowed very young, and she had to struggle for many years. I was very impressed by her strength, her decisiveness, her personality, which could be violent but at the same time was very tender. I also remember going to the countryside with my father; we would go into the hills, and he would explain everything to me. I was discovering the world around me: the countryside, that contrasted sharply with what I found in books. At that time, Chilapa was full of red roof tiles and the cathedral was very important. This sum of images is fundamental in my painting, in which candles and mystical figures appear.

PGM: *Kafka said that human beings have such interior wealth that they could stay in their bedrooms their whole lives and even so continue to constantly create.*

JP: I agree. I sometimes spend 8 or 10 days coming out just to eat or without coming out at all. You can create a universe in a room of three meters by three meters and never finish creating and recreating it. Creation is the product of the most powerful thing we have, the imagination.

PGM: *Doesn't it seem risky to you to be an artist in the midst of an economic crisis and a crisis of values like the ones we are experiencing? What do you need to be an artist at such a difficult time?*

JP: You have to be courageous and have character. You can't fight against the exterior world because it might defeat you. The struggle is with yourself to begin with. You need self-discipline and self-criticism. Being an artist today is a risk because we're in a world that daily becomes more technocratic. Now, the risk also makes you more creative. You even get ideas that make you paint originally.

"My windows open up on dead eras.

They are a reflection of the voracity of time, of the angst created by the intangible."



Window IV (diptych), 120 x 120 cm, 2004 (mixed techniques on wood).

I'm a little ironic about his. I did a painting called *Ironic Errant*, which is a dancing horse, like the ones in training, but it has a no-parking sign and a raised hoof, with a net on top of it: it is a contradiction. This painting refers to humans trapped in a spiritual vacuum.

PGM: *What do you think of the young people of your generation in this time of a crisis in values?*

JP: Thirty percent are productive, working on literature and pictorial art. The rest are apathetic about what is happening in the world and in our country. That apathy worries me.

I just want to say this about the lack of values: the value from which all the others are derived is respect. It is the only thing I consider a value because it survives over time and it encompasses freedom and loyalty.

PGM: *Why did you go from painting brightly colored canvases to colors like ochre and gray?*

JP: People think gray is sad and they associate it with a feeling of melancholy. The change I made from strong colors to monochromatic was technical. My previous work was more colorful; those were the colors of Guerrero, of its mythology, of its regional stories. The change was not a break, but a visual search; the attempt to make rusted effects is another step in my learning process as a painter.

PGM: *You're a Taurus; your element is earth. What is the earth for you?*

JP: The earth is our mirror. Every human being is the earth, dust, whether metaphorically or literally. All the shades of the color ochre are earthy



The Dominions of Dust, 140 x 120 cm, 1999 (mixed techniques on wood).



Ironic Errant 1 (diptych), 120 x 120 cm, 2004 (mixed techniques on wood).

and exist in the countryside. In my painting, light was like an exorcism. Before, I painted more with feeling than with my head. I had a sentimental prejudice.

PGM: *Tell me about your liking for literature. What else feeds your imagination?*

JP: I had more contact with books than with painting. The idea of literature grew inside me before painting. My father used to tell me stories about what happened in Guerrero. He tried to find a way to tell them so that I could understand. He bought encyclopedias and all kinds of books. I liked the smell of the paper, the black and white photographs.

One summer my mother took me to an aunt's house in Mexico City. She took me to the Tamayo Museum and there I saw some of his work and I was fascinated. When I got home, I asked my aunt

for some watercolors and began to paint some porcelain ducks. My aunt couldn't believe it. That was my start as a painter.

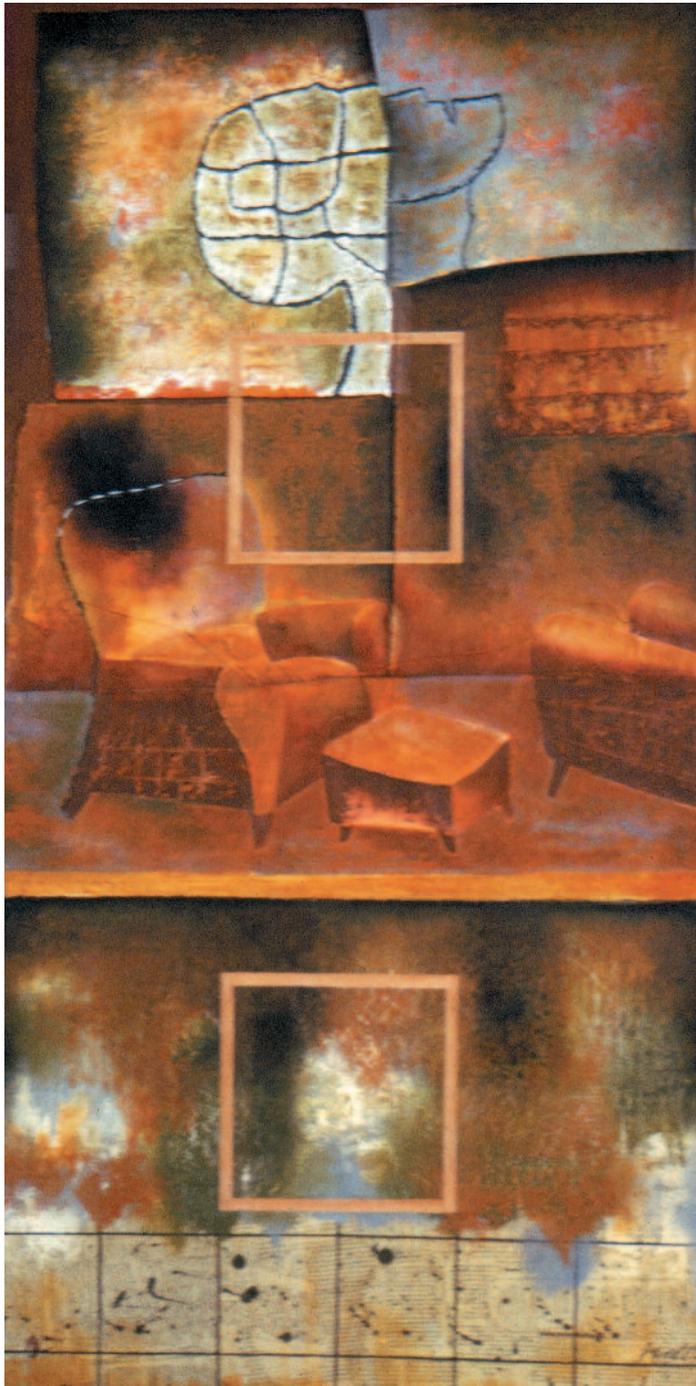
PGM: *Why do you like heavy metal?*

JP: Because it's a force, brute energy —a superior kind. I like the din, the feeling of euphoria; it's the expression of a human being with a sense of protest.

PGM: *Is painting your other voice? What do you express with it that you don't usually express verbally?*

JP: Yes, painting is my other voice. The themes I paint are not personal. I don't paint what I'm feeling at the moment; that would be very narrative. My work is the synthesis of my handling of time. There's a part of my life that I carry inside

"The rust effect in my work represents the distance of my childhood, the weight of all the absences and of the continuous gnawing of the days."



Two Rooms, 120 x 60 cm, 2003 (mixed techniques on wood).

myself and that I don't share because they are the "the spoils of battle." I don't externalize everything. I prefer to keep it as nourishment to recreate not only those longings, but I want to keep that aroma, that time, that life for myself.

PGM: *I once read that you liked the painting of Francis Bacon and Chagall. Why do you like it?*

JP: Francis Bacon's work has lively, primary colors; it is strong work and expresses human loneliness. Bacon revolutionized the meaning of painting in the post-war period; his work is not realism, or surrealism. It's something very different. I like it for its purity in the use of spaces, the movement of its figures. The faces look like unshaped masses; they denote people's loss of individuality at that time. Chagall is the painter of my first period. His themes and colors are extraordinary. His naiveté and fantasy are the total opposite of Bacon. He exalts the feminine with great purity and respect. I also like Rembrandt and Caravaggio, the Mexicans Tamayo and Cuevas, and I like Jacobo Borges from Venezuela very much.

PGM: *What is success for you?*

JP: Success would be if my paintings looked more and more like what I have in my mind. Total success: being happy.

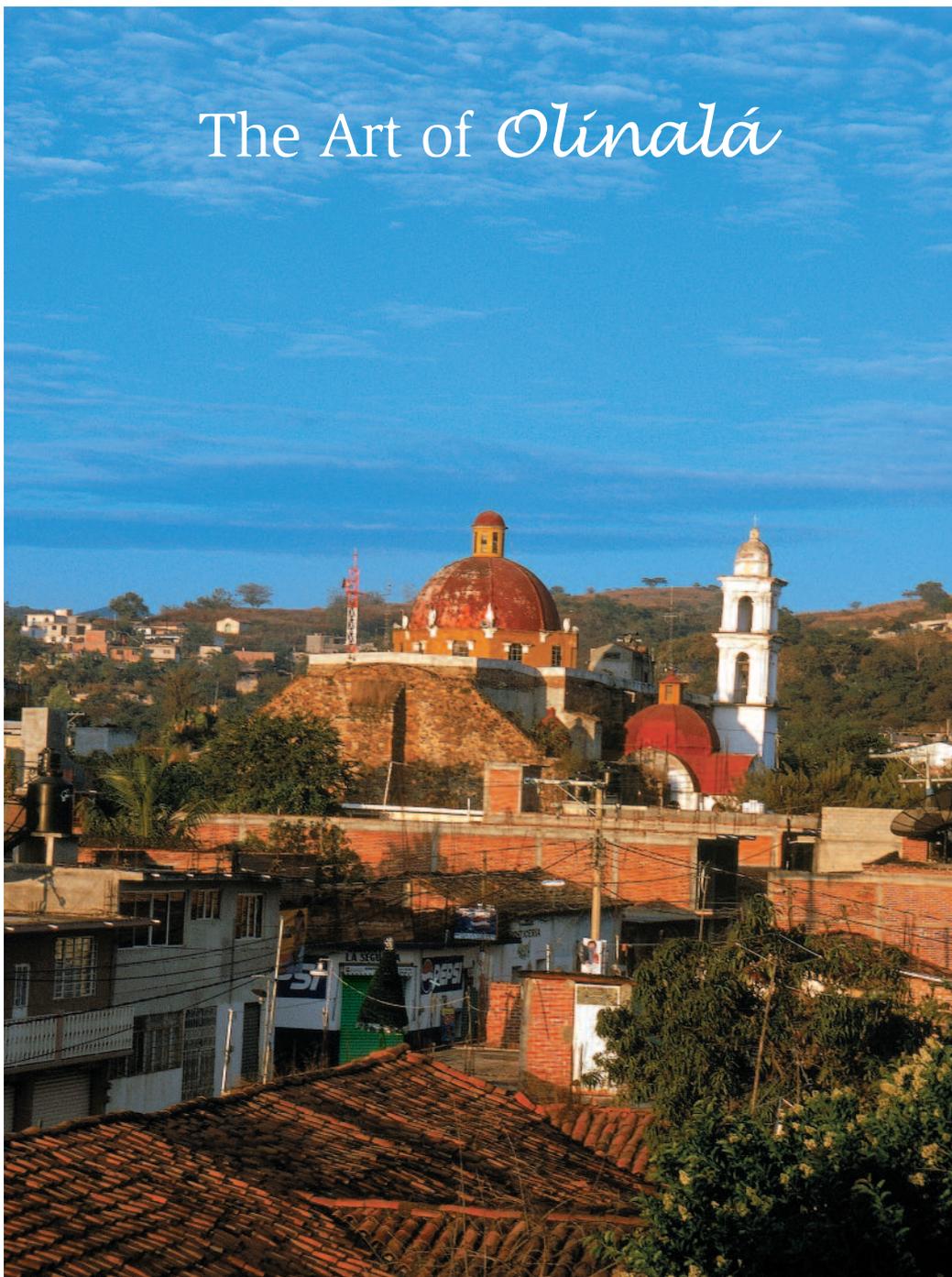
PGM: *Does failure exist?*

JP: Only if I couldn't paint, if I did something that didn't include painting. That would be failure not only as an artist, but as a human being.

PGM: *Will you live in Guerrero again some day?*

JP: The idea is not only to live there but to organize workshops. I would like to use them to contribute to changing the image of art that exists today in Guerrero. There are a lot of very capable people in my state. Of course, I will go back to Guerrero to live. **MM**

The Art of *Olinalá*



You cross the mountains of Guerrero to get to the valley where Olinalá is nestled. As you approach it from above, it gives you the impression that it is the only town in the area, making you think that time passes more slowly there and that changes from outside, from the globalized world, are checked—like the wind—in the mountains. That would explain why the essence of this lit-

tle Guerrero town's lacquer work remains almost intact until today: boxes, rattles, trays, coffers, picture frames, frames for mirrors, little figures of animals and many other items, prodigiously decorated using centuries-old techniques, are all produced everywhere in this town. The trade has been passed from parents to children for innumerable generations lost in time.



Wood piece for alms. "Gold" technique.

Today, the wooden objects are no longer made in the family carpenter shop, nor do the artisans necessarily have to go into the mountains to bring back the soil they use to prepare and decorate the boxes. People in the town now do a lively trade in both wooden objects and the earth and stains. But the preparation of the pieces, the soil and stains for their decoration and the techniques of application continue to be the same ones used by their forebears, probably even before the colonial period. And the most important thing is that all the pieces from this town have the unmistakable mark that identifies them as a product from Olinalá.

In the distant past, the lacquer was applied to the *jícara*, *bule* and *calabazo* gourds from the *tecomate* tree. Although these continue to be made, today it is more common to see the production of wooden trays, boxes and trunks, among other objects.

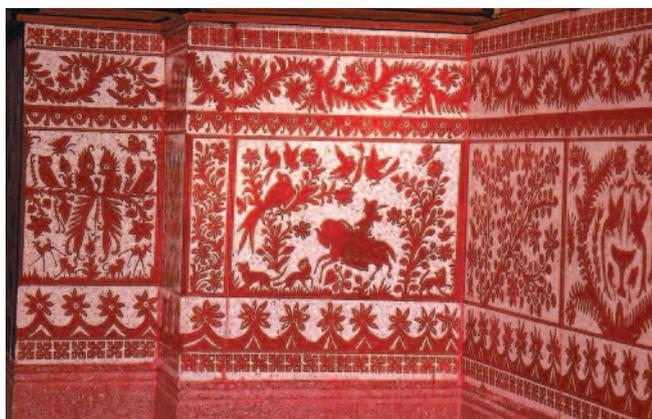
Everything about Olinalá's lacquer work is interesting, beginning with the wood most of the pieces were made of until very recently: *lináloe*, which comes from a 5- to 7-meter-high tree typical of the low forest. This tree's resin

gives off an exquisite aroma that permeates the boxes and trunks made of its wood and, if cut correctly, lasts for years. Unfortunately, *lináloe* has become very scarce, and so today other kinds of lumber are often used, applying essence of *lináloe* resin, whose aroma lasts only a few years. *Lináloe* is held in high regard in Olinalá and has become an item that differentiates some artisans from others. Many of them proudly say they know where it can still be found and that their important pieces are of the original wood.

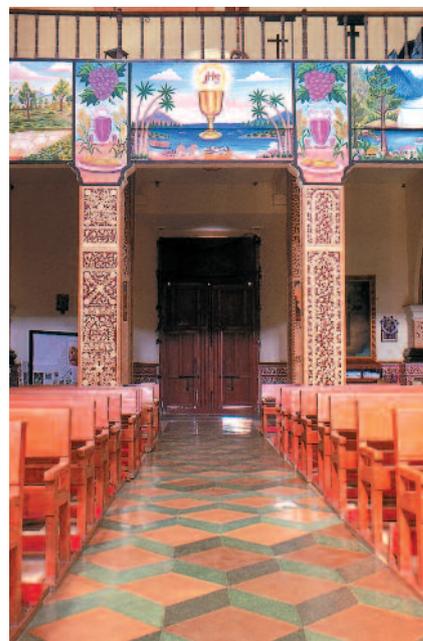
The preparation of the pieces to be lacquered is another surprising step. After sanding and repairing the surface of the object, it is waterproofed with what the craftsmen call a varnish made with a mixture of *tecostle* earth and live-leaved sage or linseed oil. The earth comes from deposits close to the town and is toasted on a griddle and then ground. The most frequently used earths are *tecostle*, *tesicalte* and *tolte*, which many artisans buy already ground, but others still prepare themselves in their homes.

The next step is to polish the object using a piece of marble, obsidian or flint until it is completely smooth. Then they apply more soil mixed with coloring and live-leaved sage to

Even the main church is an unmistakable example of the beautiful art produced in Olinalá.



Decorations on granite at the base of the columns.



Olinalá artisans volunteered their services to decorate the church.

give the piece its color. Several coats of this paste have to be applied until the piece acquires the desired smoothness. Every process demands time for the piece to dry, a minimum of two or three days. Then, depending on which decorating technique is being used, the piece is burnished once again and more earth is applied with a sponge or it is followed by the “gold.”

The so-called “gold” requires a single polishing; after it dries, it is decorated using industrial pigments and colors (in the past it was done by brushing on gold dust and gold leaf). Very fine brushes made of cat hairs that the artisans still make themselves are used to draw landscapes, flowers, towns and an infinity of animal figures on the pieces.

The technique that requires two phases of polishing is the “scratching” whose second coat of earth is applied with a sponge. After drying pieces are “scratched,” that is drawn on with a *huizache* tree thorn. The powder produced by the scratching is cleaned off at the same time with a turkey feather. It is surprising how precise the drawing is and how quickly it is done, particularly because the artisans have no patterns to follow. Every stroke of the

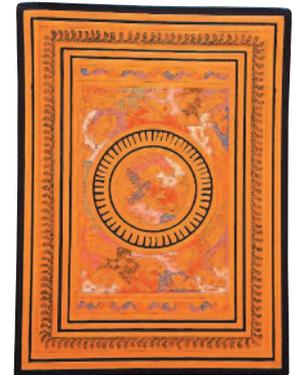
huizache thorn is a product of the craftsman’s imagination at the moment, even though animal, flower and landscape motifs are repeated in almost all the decorations.

Another possibility is the stippling, which consists of drawing the outline of the figures and applying tiny points of color to the white spaces. They also use casting, that consists of using the *huizache* thorn to take off part of the earth paste on each piece and surrounding the drawing to emphasize it and obtain a contrast between the drawing and the background. Finally the pieces are given their luster by rubbing them with cotton.

This process is followed more or less exactly in 80 percent of the homes in Olinalá and the fame of its products reaches beyond Mexico’s borders, although their price does not always embody the art and effort put into them.

ANOTHER UNIQUE ART FORM: THE TIGER MASKS

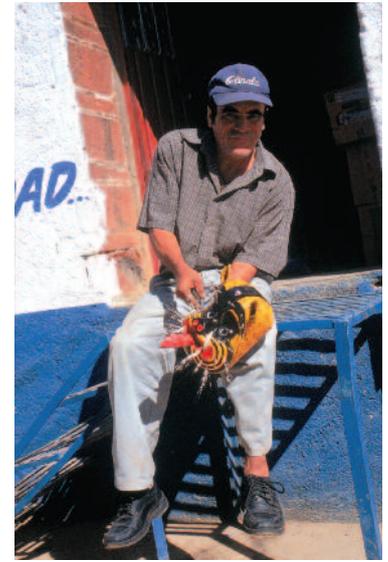
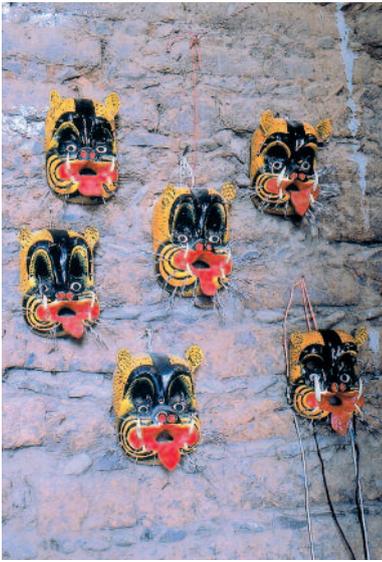
In early October of each year, the town of Olinalá celebrates a fiesta during which the “Tiger Dance” is performed. The participants dress in



Artisans follow no patterns.

Every stroke during the precise process of decoration is a product of their imagination.





Tiger masks have become another symbol of Olinalá. Their bright colors and design remain the same.

rough cotton clothing dyed yellow and marked in black with reed-grass and aniline. They all wear tiger masks made in the town itself by the only two families —related to each other— who ply this trade.

Don Felipe Díaz is the head of one of these families. His uncle, his mother's brother, taught him the trade he has been working at for more than 35 years. He makes masks of different sizes all year round, not just near the time of the fiesta, to sell not only to locals but also as decoration. The masks are made with *colorín* wood because it is soft and easily rounded. Don Felipe shapes it with a machete, takes out the eyes with a gouge and then prepares, sands and paints the wood with the earth used to lacquer the boxes. You can find similar masks in other places, but the authentic ones are only made in Don Felipe's and his aunt's house. Although it is not obvious at first glance, each mask is made using the skin, canine teeth and hair of three different animals: the tongue and ears are made of deer skin; the canine teeth are taken from pigs; and the eyebrows and moustache are made from the hair of wild boar.

These masks would not be noteworthy outside the town if it were not because they have become another symbol of Olinalá. Their bright yellow color and design have not changed, and the way they are produced has also remained the same.

AN AUTHENTIC CRAFT TOWN

Olinalá survives as an authentic craft town, with all the vicissitudes and all the conflicts that this implies: almost every family has lost at least one member to migration north or to one of the large cities in search of his or her fortune; the competition in commercializing the objects that pile up on the shelves in almost all the houses causes some division among the townspeople; and, most importantly, the retail and wholesale buyers lack knowledge and do not appreciate the precision of the “scratching” or the fine stippling work, much less can they distinguish when an item's lustrous finish comes from a perfect, careful polishing and not from the application of an industrial lacquer. This affects and tends to dishearten the artisans, who care about detail and perfection, the two characteristics that can turn their creations, apparently similar to the rest, into unique pieces.

Dealing in a craft market that rejects individuality and tries to put a price —the lowest possible one— on each piece may turn this art into something very like the mass production of goods in the modern world, even though its creators are still human beings with distinguishable features. **MM**

Elsie Montiel
Editor



XXVI Feria Internacional del Libro del Palacio de Minería

Tacuba núm. 5, Centro Histórico, Ciudad de México

24 de febrero al 6 de marzo de 2005

Estado Invitado: Querétaro

Jornadas Juveniles 28 de febrero, 1 y 2 de marzo.

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México/Facultad de Ingeniería



<http://feria.mineria.unam.mx>





Figure 1. Fragment of the Chiepetlan 1 canvas. A battle between an Aztec tiger-knight and a Tlapanec warrior in eastern Guerrero.

The Codices of Guerrero And Their Stories of Power

Gerardo Gutiérrez*

In 1461 an Aztec noble left Mexico-Tenochtitlan for the rugged eastern mountains of what is today Guerrero. His mission was to settle a conflict between the Aztecs and the ruler of Tlapa-Tlachinollan, a rich and powerful kingdom strategically located on the main trade route between the Pacific coast and Central Mexico. The ruler of Tlapa-Tlachinollan, Lord Rain, controlled trade between the two regions whose mountains were rich in gold and gemstones.

Since 1447 the Aztecs had tried—with little success—to conquer the kingdom (see figure 1), but this time they had a better idea. The Aztec ambassador proposed a deal to Lord

Rain: the Aztec attacks would stop and there would be peace between Aztecs and Tlapanecs and Lord Rain would be recognized as the *tlacatectli* (imperial governor) of the entire region (see figure 2). In return he would only have to show obedience to Tenochtitlan and pay tribute. The Aztecs had just recently defeated the neighboring Mixtec kingdom of Coixtlahuaca, and Lord Rain understood the growing strength of their empire and the risks in continuing a war of attrition with them, so he accepted their proposal.

Lord Rain became an important Aztec ally in southern Mesoamerica and both the Aztec empire and his Tlapanec kingdom benefited from the agreement. Nevertheless, the deal disrupted the internal politics of his kingdom and eventually Lord Rain faced civil war led by nobles of other prestigious families. Lord

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Figure 2. Meeting between the Mexica ambassador and the Lord Rain, ruler of Tlapa-Tlachinollan. Azoyú Codex 2.

Rain survived an assassination attempt and war broke out (see figure 3). The kingdoms of eastern Guerrero organized into two groups: those who supported Tlapa-Tlachinollan and those who supported a coalition formed by the kingdoms of Yoallan and Cuitlapan.

The forces of Tlapa-Tlachinollan headed to Atlamajalcingo del Monte, where they fought against the enemy troops (see figure 4). Tlapa-Tlachinollan won the battle and then its warriors decided to attack the capitals of Yoallan and Cuitlapan. Many prisoners were taken, bound with ropes and brought before Lord Rain, who

was waiting in the town of Tlaxco, between Atlamajalcingo del Monte and Yoallan (see figure 5). A warrior named Bird captured Lord Chalchihuitl (whose name meant jade stone), the ruler of the kingdom of Yoallan (see figure 6), who was assassinated together with his son and daughter, a child of only three, on the Mount of Sacrifices (see figure 7). After this, Lady Serpent Skirt, the wife of Lord Rain, was sent as ambassadress to the kingdom of Cuitlapan to arrange for the surrender of Lord Fish-Feather, a descendent of the Tlahuiscalera (dawn) line, previous supreme rulers of the mountains of



Figure 3. Assassination attempt on Lord Rain by the warriors of Yoallan (Iqualita) and Cuitlapan (Teocuitlapan). Azoyú Codex 2.

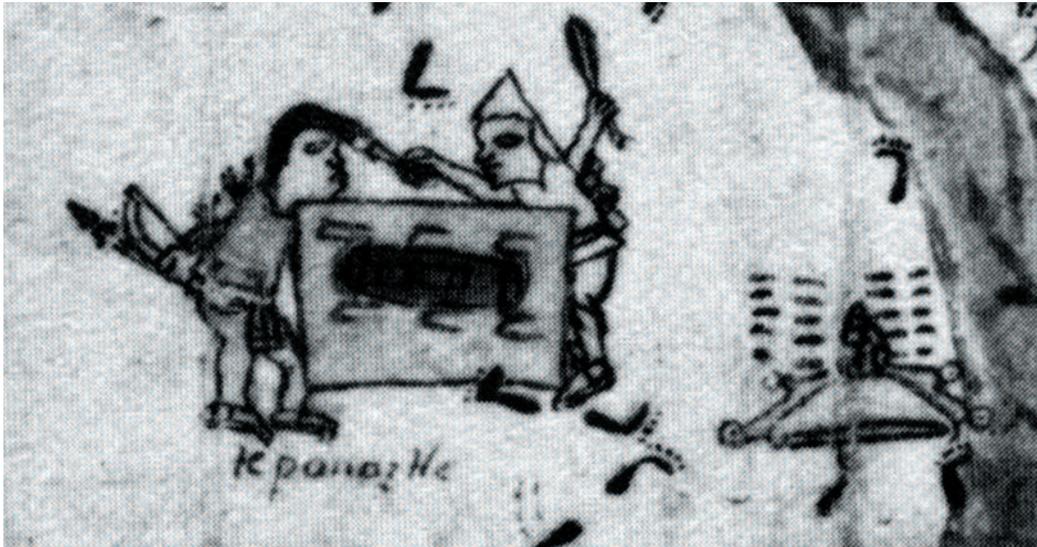


Figure 4. Battle near Atlamajalcingo del Monte, between the armies of Tlapa-Tlachinollan and Yoallan-Cuitlapan. Twenty Corn Cob Palimpsest.

eastern Guerrero (see figure 8). So it was that Lord Rain crushed the rebellion and went on ruling for another 20 years or so, using shrewd policies and his strategic alliance with the Aztecs to consolidate power for his family and line.

The story of Lord Rain is a key example of pre-Hispanic native politics, warfare and diplomacy, no different from similar histories of imperial states the world over. The events of Lord Rain's life plus another story are described on pictorial documents that have been recovered in indigenous villages in the state of Guerrero.

Guerrero's indigenous communities had a rich pre-Hispanic and colonial tradition in painted historical codices. This is shown in the more than 60 documents found in the area. The history of how they were discovered and published is just as interesting as the very stories they tell. Alexander von Humboldt was the first well known figure to reproduce one of Guerrero's codices, in 1808, now known as the Humboldt Codex, Fragment 1. This codex lists the tribute obligations of the Tlapa-Tlachinollan kingdom to the Mexica *calpixque*. We do not know how this document came into Humboldt's possession, but he must have acquired it during his stay in Mexico City in 1803. The codex was incomplete, and many years later other parts of it surfaced in a small town in Guerrero.

In 1940, Francisco Rodríguez, a topographer employed by the Agrarian Commission, was

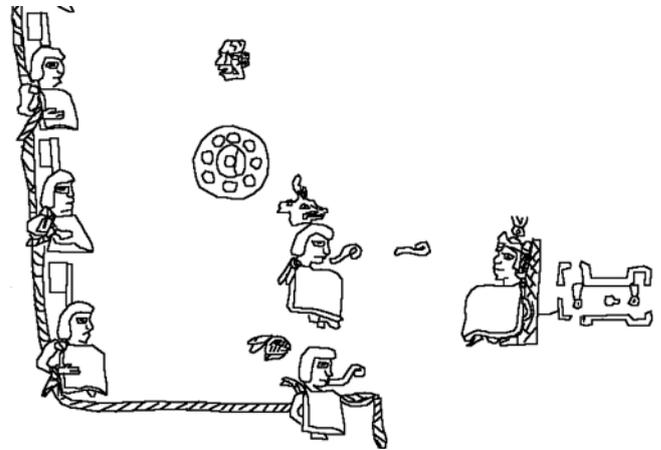


Figure 5. Handing over prisoners to Lord Rain. Twenty Corn Cob Palimpsest.

given a couple of sheets of an old pictorial document kept by local authorities in the community of Azoyú on the Pacific coast. Rodríguez told researchers at the National Anthropology Museum of his find, and the director of the National Institute of Anthropology and History, Alfonso Caso, became interested in the documents and made the arrangements for the National Library of Anthropology and History to eventually acquire them. In all, two historical codices and a genealogical canvas were brought in from Azoyú, known as the Tlapanec Codices of Azoyú (Azoyú Codex 1, Azoyú Codex 2 and the Tlapa-Azoyú Genealogical Canvas). These documents, together with others, contain part of the political history of eastern Guerrero. Some of the narratives cover periods of 265 years (from A.D. 1300 to A.D. 1565) and when

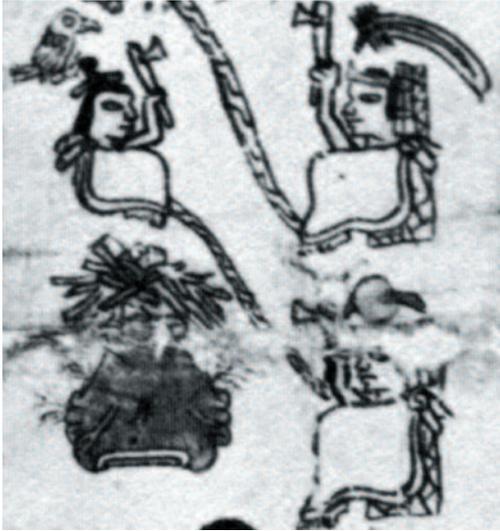


Figure 6. Capture of the Lord Chalchihuitl, ruler of Yoallan, by the warrior Bird. Twenty Corn Cob Palimpsest.

interpreted, they show the fundamental concern of ancient Guerrero rulers for leaving a record of their political and military feats, which validated their right to govern their people and territories. Given that most of these documents were painted during the first decades after the European conquest, almost all of them have the objective of explaining to the Spanish the rights their ancestors had acquired in order to ensure that the Spanish bureaucracy respected the prerogatives of the colonial *caciques* and the land belonging to the towns and peoples.

A great deal is still to be studied about Guerrero's pictorial documents and in the future, they will undoubtedly provide us with welcome news about the history of the indigenous peoples who inhabited the state and their process of mestization. ■■■



Figure 7. Shrouds of Lord Chalchihuitl, ruler of Yoallan, and his children. Azoyú Codex 1.



Figure 8. Meeting between the wife of Lord Rain and the lord of Cuitlapan to negotiate peace between Tlapa-Tlachinollan and Yoallan-Cuitlapan.



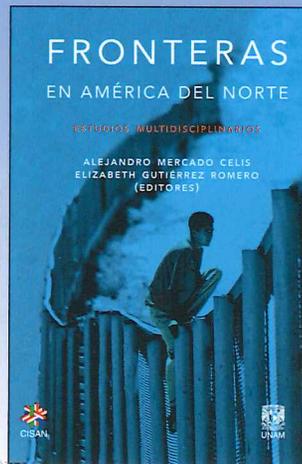
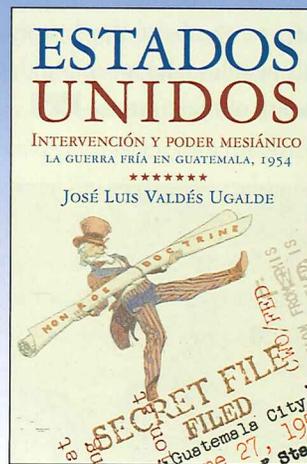
CISAN

p u b l i c a t i o n s

Estados Unidos: Intervención y poder mesiánico. La Guerra Fría en Guatemala

José Luis Valdés-Ugalde

The outstanding feature of this book's analysis of the 1954 intervention in Guatemala is that it is sensitive to the need to present a comprehensive image of Washington's actions, taking into account both internal and external factors, local and international dynamics, as well as power relations and the issues contained in its discourse.



Fronteras en América del Norte. Estudios multidisciplinares

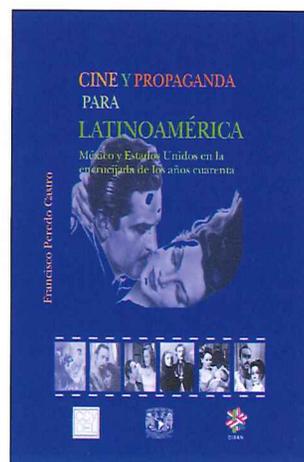
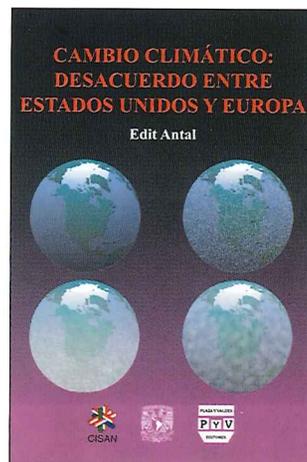
Alejandro Mercado and Elizabeth Gutiérrez, eds.

This book compares the Mexican and Canadian borders with the United States, singling out the regional as opposed to the national, and debates theoretical and empirical questions from a rich multidisciplinary perspective.

Cambio climático: desacuerdo entre Estados Unidos y Europa

Edit Antal

This book uses a constructivist focus to explain the differences between the United States and the European Union with regard to climatic change. The United States takes no preventive measures until the damage has been proven and can be measured and refuses to revise its way of life, production and consumption. Europe, on the other hand, is more cautious and is making ready to take measures even at the expense of economic losses.



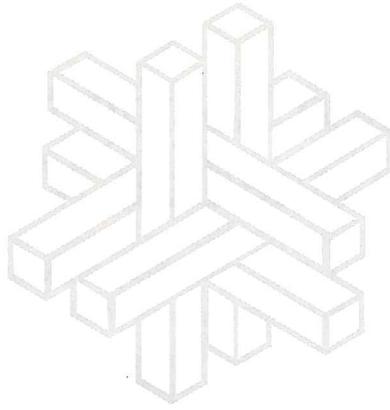
Cine y propaganda para Latinoamérica. México y Estados Unidos en la encrucijada de los años cuarenta

Francisco Peredo Castro

When in the late 1930s, fascist propaganda films threatened to flood Latin America, the allies reacted rapidly, from Mexico to the north and Argentina to the south. In a film production project coordinated by the United States and Mexico at a time of diplomatic tension and international intrigue, Mexico emerged as the region's firmest ally. For that reason, it would later receive fundamental support to consolidate its movie industry and achieve its cinematic "Golden Age."

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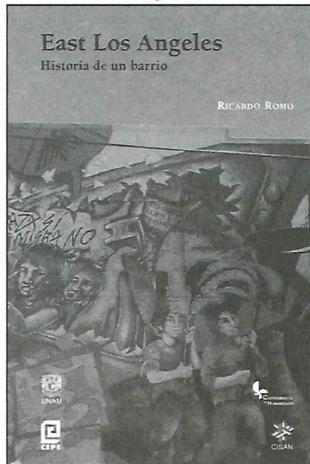
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p u b l i c a t i o n s

East Los Angeles. Historia de un barrio

Ricardo Romo

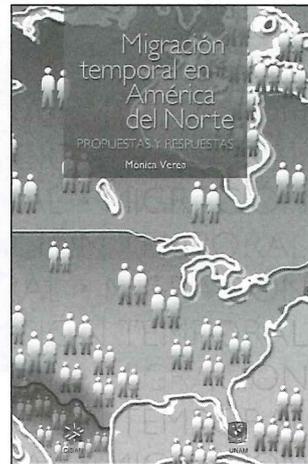
This book, a classic in its field, traces the history of the largest and most important Mexican American community in the United States, East Los Angeles. It is a detailed review of the development of a community that has had to construct and defend its identity to survive in what were often hostile surroundings. The book also sketches the beginnings of the Chicano movement and the emergence of Mexican-American political and social organizations.



Migración temporal en América del Norte. Propuestas y respuestas

Mónica Verea

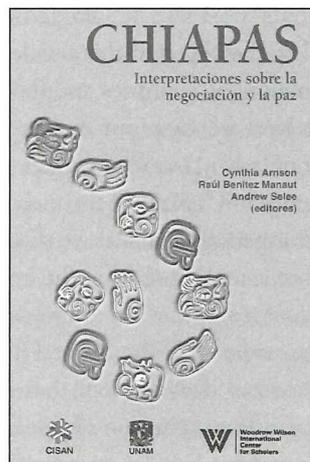
The author puts forward the causes behind international migration and studies the evolution of policies on temporary migrants (tourists, businessmen, workers and students) to the United States and Canada, their impact on the integration of Latino communities in general and Mexican communities in particular, and how the September 11 attacks were a turning point in the regional migratory debate.



Chiapas. Interpretaciones sobre la negociación y la paz

Cynthia Arnsón,
Raúl Benítez Manaut,
Andrew Selee, comps.

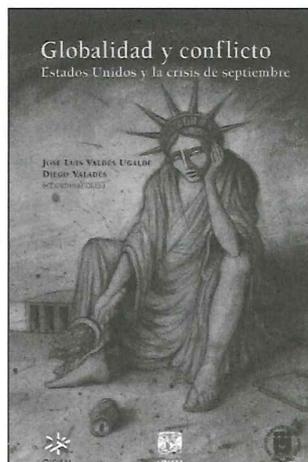
This book presents the debate on the Chiapas peace process and the causes behind the failure of the negotiations. Mexican and foreign academics, as well as some of the conflict's protagonists, analyze its structural causes, indigenous rights and the San Andrés Accords.



Globalidad y conflicto. Estados Unidos y la crisis de septiembre

José Luis Valdés Ugalde
and Diego Valadés, comp.

The events of September 11, 2001 have prompted the concepts of security and globalization to be posed in different ways and have given them new meaning. This book is the first Spanish-language academic publication in which specialists from different fields analyze these issues.



Forthcoming:

*Una herida por otra. Testimonios de latin@s en Estados Unidos sobre 11/s.
La política energética estadounidense, ¿asunto de seguridad o de mercado?
La controversia sobre el aborto en Estados Unidos*

Is Mexico Losing the U.S. And Canadian Markets?

Bernardo Olmedo Carranza*



Shannon Stapleton/Reuters

INTRODUCTION

Prospects for Mexican manufactured exports to the U.S. and Canadian markets should be analyzed in the light of different factors, both domestic and international. Domestically, the economy's performance is important, particularly after the U.S. recession and our own, the resulting performance of domestic manufactures and the competitiveness problems we face.

To start with, we should consider the world economy, and particularly that of the United States, since, as we know, Mexico's economic cycle has historically been linked to it. Today, expectations for economic recovery in the U.S.

do not look very promising for the near future and should be taken into account in any analysis of the prospects for Mexican exports in that market.

Other elements must also be taken into account, and will be the object of this article: the position of the emerging countries and those in transition that have become our competitors in exports, particularly in our own market. This is the case, mainly, of China and the members of the Mercosur, especially Brazil, as we shall see. We also must not lose sight of what the impact of a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) would be on our exports to the United States and Canada. Another development that must be kept in mind is the expansion of the European Union since May 1, 2004 to include ten formerly socialist countries now in transition to a market economy.

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NEW COMPETITORS IN THE NORTH AMERICAN MARKET

The apparent dynamism of Mexican exports is illustrated in figures that show that in less than a decade, our economy achieved sales abroad similar in terms of value to those of all of Latin America and the Caribbean in 1993.¹ Nevertheless, this export “success” has not resulted in a generalized strengthening of Mexican production, and most of the country’s exports are produced by no more than 50 companies, above all multinationals with subsidiaries and plants here. Also, our economy’s main market is the United States. Already by 2000, 88 percent of Mexican exports were concentrated there, while 3 percent went to the European Union, 3 percent to Latin America and the Caribbean, 1 percent to Asia and the rest to other countries.²

The U.S. economy’s recession has made for changes in the conditions of the world market. In that scenario, Mexican exports are made in an increasingly competitive environment, and we have begun to suffer the consequences: while we had managed to send around 90 percent of our exports to the U.S. market, turning us into its second largest supplier, China, with its economy’s dizzying growth and the world coverage of its exports, has pushed us into third place and threatens to increase its participation worldwide. It is relevant here to review the characteristics of China’s economy a little further.

In recent years, China’s economic policy has allowed it to grow at outstanding rates of more than 7 percent a year and given it an export and import potential that has turned it into one of the world’s most attractive economies.

In Latin America it is considered a threat because it has supplanted maquila plants from Mexico and Central America in export markets, especially in the garment industry, and more particularly, in the U.S. market. For its part, the Mexican government perceives China as an enemy of our economy; Vicente Fox himself has been one of its main critics, while in Brazil things are moving in exactly the opposite direction.

Luiz Inácio “Lula” da Silva sees things differently and his strategy is to create mutually beneficial commercial and investment ties between China and Brazil. This is a striking contrast with the Mexican president’s position, which

China, with its economy’s dizzying growth and the world coverage of its exports, has pushed us into third place as a U.S. supplier and threatens to increase its participation worldwide.

by confronting Mexico with China may cause the country serious problems.

Since 1979, the Chinese economy has grown at a yearly average of 9.4 percent, making it the world’s sixth largest. It is thought that it will surpass the United States in three or four decades.³ Today, its economy is the world’s most globalized in terms of trade. Even the U.S. economy is far from it, since its trade is concentrated in relatively few countries. The speed of China’s growth has turned it into an important consumer, to the point that, for example, the world steel market has felt the impact of the growing Chinese demand, which has fueled a substan-

tive increase in steel prices internationally. China needs to build a great deal of infrastructure to maintain its high growth and, therefore, needs international supply, particularly of manufactured products and certain raw materials. That is why it is attractive as a consumer of imports. In that sense, seeing China as a trade enemy is exceptionally myopic, when in the future, it is just as attractive as the U.S. market. That means that the perception and strategy of leaders of other emerging nations and countries in transition differ from the Mexican case when they define their economic and trade strategies on this matter. So, while in Mexico, the president and part of his cabinet view the Chinese economy with misgiving, the Brazilians, Argentines, Chileans and others see it as a potentially growing market and an ally for doing business and joint investment with substantial prospects for the medium- and long-term future. This explains why since 2002, China is the world’s biggest recipient of foreign direct investment, replacing the United States itself.⁴

China’s relevance is also due to other reasons:

- a) In most of the important economies, exports and imports (total foreign trade) come to more than 25 percent of their gross domestic product (GDP). In China’s case, they represent 50 percent, a proportion similar to Mexico’s.
- b) Its manufacturing sector constitutes more than one-third of the economy, while in other developing countries, it represents from 20 to 25 percent of GDP.
- c) In China, investment and savings rates hover at about 40 percent of

GDP, while in the remainder of developing economies they are between 15 or 20 percent.

In the opinion of Eduardo Lora, an Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) expert, what is really moving the economy of the Asian giant is its continual restructuring, since its dynamic sectors are the ones linked to foreign direct investment and private property, and labor displaced from agriculture and state companies is assimilated by these sectors, where productivity is several times higher. Along those lines, today, approximately 160 million surplus workers are located in the country's most inefficient sectors, and in the next 25 years, the rural population will drop by 300 million. Looked at like this, and with the growth rates in China's economy, it is to be expected that in 25 years, annual per capita income will be half that of the United States.⁵ In addition, with its aggressive trade policy, it will certainly continue to increase its participation as the U.S. economy's main supplier, perhaps even pushing out the Canadians.

The case of Brazil is another factor that must be taken into account when analyzing Mexico's exports of manufactured goods to the United States and particularly Canada in the medium and long term. We should point out that the Brazilian economy is quite promising, particularly with regard to its industrial growth, since its recovery is strong and increasing, to the point where growth predictions for 2004 were that industry would grow 6 percent, 50 percent more than the estimates for the economy as a whole (4 percent). These predictions have been developed by the National Industrial Confederation, Brazil's main business

organization, which made a third adjustment in 2004 with a prediction of 4.5 percent for industry and manufacturing, and an adjustment of 6 percent in early August of this year.⁶ President "Lula" da Silva's trade strategy aims to create more equitable conditions for underdeveloped countries in world trade. The Brazilians were important in forming the so-called Group of 20 (G-20)—actually made up of only 19 countries, including Mexico—which aspires to "create a political force capable of making sure that we have enough votes in the WTO so that we can democratically ensure that the [industrialized nations] market opens up to the markets of

Mexico sends the United States and Canada about 94 percent of its exports, but evidence indicates that Mexico will continue to lose important segments of that market because new competitors have emerged.

the emerging countries."⁷ It should be said that other important members of the G-20 include China, India, South Africa, some South American countries and, as mentioned above, Mexico, which, however, has not played a very important role.

In the case of its relations with China and other G-20 countries, President Lula says that with them, "We hope to build the possibility of a new geography of world trade," in which what is important is not condemning the United States or the European Union, with whom they maintain strong trade and economic relations, but, together with other emerging economies, de-

fending their interests as equals from those who determined the trade dynamic of today's world. We should say that trade between Brazil and China has grown notably, and, instead of competing, they have mutually beneficial economic relations. Thus, in 2002, bilateral trade between the two countries came to U.S.\$4.4 billion, while by 2003, it shot up to more than U.S.\$7.98 billion. China is the third biggest importer of Brazilian products (following only the United States and Argentina) and is Brazil's main market in Asia.

Mexico has tried to join the Mercosur and benefit from this important trade mechanism. However, in a recent South American trip, President Fox, who went to the last meeting of Mercosur presidents, only managed to get Mexico recognized as an observer (associate member). This is an expression of the reservations in that part of the hemisphere about our country, perceived as an unconditional defender of U.S. interests. Parallel to this, the United States has insisted on moving forward toward establishing the Free Trade Area of the Americas. However, there has been a great deal of resistance from some countries, among them those of the Mercosur, and the U.S. has therefore taken on the task of creating bilateral free trade agreements with several countries of Central and South America and the Caribbean, despite the resistance of business circles in some of these countries. With these agreements, the United States will give preference to exports from those economies, which puts Mexico at a disadvantage in its market, despite the benefit of the exclusive access in theory guaranteed by the free trade agreement with it.

The Canadian government, for its part, is fostering trade with Latin Amer-

ica in the form of investment flows in the region and the trade of goods in both directions, which opens up important possibilities for Latin American exports, particularly from South America. In the first half of 2004, South American exports to Canada increased by approximately 20.6 percent, while Mexico's only went up 5 percent.⁸ If this trend continues, we could say that, like the United States, the Canadian market is opening up preferentially to the rest of the Latin American economies, competing more with Mexican exports, wresting away possibilities for the future.

The new economies in transition that joined the European Union are possible trade competitors for Mexico in the North American market in specific niches. Until before May 1, 2004, the European Union (EU) had 15 member countries, with a market of 370 million people, an average per capita GDP of U.S.\$23,000 a year and a single currency, the euro.

The scenario changed with the incorporation of 10 new economies, most of which had belonged to the socialist camp: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta and Cyprus. Today, the European Union is comprised of 455 million inhabitants, which represent 19 percent of world trade and an average annual per capita income of U.S.\$20,500.⁹ Mexico sells the EU about 3 percent of its exports and despite having a free trade agreement with it since 2000, that percentage has not changed, although EU exports have increased significantly even though its average per capita GDP dropped about 10 percent in May 2004. This will certainly mean that European politicians will propose increas-

ing living standards in the new member countries using their own mechanisms of support and financing for their production. It is expected that European investments will be channeled with this in mind, as well as to increase the new economies' export potential by giving them preferential treatment. Thus, for Mexico, they represent potential competitors, not only in the European Union but in the world market, particularly in that of North America.

FINAL THOUGHTS

The North American market continues to be the world's most attractive and alluring since it has two of the most important economies, both big consumers of foreign products. Mexico sends the United States and Canada about 94 percent of its exports, but evidence indicates that Mexico will continue to lose important segments of that market because new competitors have emerged, in some cases encouraged by our NAFTA partners. Mexico's productive sector, particularly for export, will be more limited because of its own restrictions. Even in the case of the so-called "nostalgia" market of down-home products in the United States, Mexican producers and entrepreneurs, have reacted late, and businessmen of other nationalities have benefited from that important growing niche among Mexican immigrants.

The challenge will be to strengthen Mexico's productive capacity and competitiveness, not only to recover markets but also to diversify them, and the strategy must undoubtedly include the recovery of the domestic market. Unfortunately, this does not seem

to be part of the Mexican government's plans and policies, no matter how much official rhetoric says it is. **MM**

NOTES

¹ In 1993, Latin America's foreign trade in goods totaled U.S.\$329.77 billion, of which U.S.\$160.81 billion were exports and U.S.\$168.96 billion were imports. This total is calculated on the basis of official figures from 19 countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay and Venezuela. CEPAL, *Globalización y desarrollo* (Santiago de Chile: CEPAL, 2002), p. 178.

² Figures based on United Nations COMTRADE trade data from CEPAL, op. cit., p. 182.

³ Eduardo Lora, "El riesgo oculto de la economía china," *BIDAmérica*, 2004. <http://www.iadb.org/idbamerica/index.cfm?thisid=2562>

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ "Fuerte recuperación de la industria brasileña: CNI," *Excelsior* (Mexico City), August 4, 2004, p. 4-F.

⁷ "Brasil busca en China un socio para una nueva geografía comercial: Lula," *Excelsior* (Mexico City), May 13, 2004, p. 2.

⁸ "Renovado impulso al comercio Canadá-Latinoamérica," *El Financiero* (Mexico City), August 16, 2004, p. 26. Mexican exports to Canada in the first half of this year came to U.S.\$5.7 billion, more than double those of South America, despite the fact that South American exports jumped 21 percent compared to the same period in 2003.

⁹ Claudia Berlanga Zubiaga (member of the European Commission Delegation), "La Unión Europea y México. Programas de apoyo a las pequeñas y medianas empresas," presented at the 60th annual convention of the ANIERM entitled "Los nuevos paradigmas del modelo exportador mexicano," held in Mexico City, February 26, 2004.

Ten Years of NAFTA And The New Labor Market Part 2: Migration

Javier Aguilar García*



Guadalupe Pérez/Cuartoscuro

Ready to cross.

THE EXPLOSION OF THE MIGRANT POPULATION

Given the difficulties in finding formal jobs and the low wages in both the formal and informal economy, millions of Mexicans opt to emigrate. While this has many historical pre-

cedents, since modernization (1983-2004) or globalization, this process has turned into a massive expulsion of Mexican workers. However, the great majority of those who enter the United States and Canada do so illegally.

For a long time, there has been hostility in the United States toward Latin Americans, particularly Mexicans, who enter into the underground economy where they are exploited to the maximum, earn low wages and enjoy few if any benefits.

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In this context, three major trends forge the new contours of the status of Mexico's working classes: work in the country's informal sector, jobs in the maquiladora sector (analyzed in the first part of this article; see *Voices of Mexico* 69) and migration to the United States and Canada.

These parts of the labor economy offer bare survival to millions of Mexicans in the global economy created in the last 10 years, the years of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). If these escape valves did not exist, the social pressure on the formal labor market would be much more explosive since the population in general and workers in particular have lost confidence in public institutions, political life and the formal labor market.

For that reason, migration as an answer is quite complex and has a long history and deep structural roots, not only in Mexico but also in the destination countries:

- a) The accelerated, constant growth of the Mexican population of working age.
- b) The Mexican economy has limited capabilities of absorbing the national work force.
- c) Economic policy has been incapable of consolidating economic and social development, and particularly of fostering the domestic market.
- d) The United States requires manual workers with a basic primary and junior high school education, above all for agriculture and services, where the current scarcity of labor will increase in coming years.¹
- e) Wage differentials between the two countries are significant.

NAFTA AND MIGRATION

While the articulation of the U.S. and Mexican economies was already quite strong in the 1960s and 1980s, Mexico's modernization policy and free trade from 1994 to 2004 led to a greater integration of different areas of the economy.

These conditions, among others, have led to such an increase in the flow of Mexican migrants to the United States, the majority undocumented, that the Vicente Fox administration has promoted a migratory accord to

Three major trends forge the new contours of the status of Mexico's working classes: work in the country's informal sector, jobs in the maquiladora sector and migration to the U.S. and Canada.

give the process a certain legality. For his part, George W. Bush has talked about signing this agreement, although he has not specified when, probably because his reelection was at stake and he was trying to get the Hispanic vote, particularly that of Mexicans.

EFFECTS OF MIGRATION IN MEXICO

Generally speaking, we can say that in these conditions, migration has both positive and negative effects:

- 1) The loss of human capital, particularly of skilled workers.
- 2) Mexican immigrants in the United States earn wages—whether agreed legally or illegally—that

are relatively higher than those paid in Mexico.

- 3) One of the benefits are the remittances sent to Mexico, the country that receives the most remittances in Latin America and the second worldwide—the first is India. In 2000, for example, they came to between 1.5 and 2 percent of Mexico's gross domestic product.

THE EFFECTS OF MIGRATION IN THE UNITED STATES

- 1) In the tax system, illegal immigrants using false documents pay withholding tax, but laws limit their access to social networks and services.
- 2) The immigration of young workers contributes to diminishing the effects of the aging of the U.S. population. Eventually, they will replace retirees.
- 3) The immigrant population tends to remain in the United States, integrating into society and cultural life.²

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN MEXICO-U.S. MIGRATION

Today's migration has the following characteristics:

- 1) Greater complexity and heterogeneity.
- 2) Growing regional diversification. Among the home states of recent migrants are Puebla, Hidalgo, the State of Mexico, Mexico City's Federal District and Morelos.

- 3) An increasing number of migrants come from large and medium-sized urban centers.
- 4) Greater occupational and sectoral diversification among migrants.
- 5) Mexican migrants tend to prolong their stay in the United States, even taking up permanent residence.³

The profile of today's Mexican emigrants is not the same as that of the 1960s and 1970s. Until the 1970s, they came mainly from among the poor or from peasant regions, but between 1994 and 2004, because of increasingly precarious economic conditions, people with greater resources or with family ties to emigrant groups have joined them.⁴

Over Mexico's last two presidential terms (12 years), every year approximately 390,000 workers have emigrated. The annual net flow has increased about 12-fold in the last 30 years, going from an average of 29,000 persons in the 1960s to 390,000 in 2003.

REMITTANCES

a) According to National Population Council (Conapo) figures, the 1995 economic crisis spurred Mexican international migration in search of higher earnings. By 2003, remittances sent home by Mexican migrants reached U.S.\$14.5 billion.⁵ As a point of comparison, Mexico's Central Bank states that in 2003, foreign direct investment came to U.S.\$11 billion.

Today, 4.5 million Mexicans depend directly or indirectly on remittances from abroad.

- b) These monies, on average U.S.\$321 per month per family (about the equivalent of twice Mexico's monthly minimum wage), were received in one out of every four homes and contribute to Mexico's domestic consumption.
- c) Remittances were the equivalent of 79 percent of the value of crude oil exports in 2003 and 2.2 percent of Mexico's GDP.⁶

The impact on the Mexican economy of the labor of migrants who work in the United States and Canada, then, is noteworthy, particularly with regard to consumption. They have become the second source of hard currency, after oil production and ahead of tourism, which is in third place.

To the extent that the country lacks real development plans for agriculture, industry and services, as long as there is no policy to shore up the domestic market, Mexican society will continue in a process of social and economic marginalization, suffering the continual decrease in its revenues and labor rights. On the other hand, Mexico's large companies and the multinationals will continue to increase their profits. **MM**

Mexico is the country that receives the most remittances in Latin America and the second worldwide. In 2000, they came to between 1.5 and 2 percent of Mexico's gross domestic product.

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Obstacles To The European Integration Model For North America

Isabel Studer*



When Vicente Fox took office, he promoted the idea of a deeper integration of North America including not only the free circulation of goods, service and capital, but also labor. He proposed establishing a development fund, equivalent to the European cohesion funds, to invest, among other things, in infrastructure corridors throughout the region. For Fox, then, the European Union process of integration was the model to follow in North

America. It facilitated dealing with the problem of the great asymmetries between Mexico and its two northern neighbors, sharpened by the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Up until now, Fox's proposal, known as NAFTA Plus, has met with little success in Canada and the United States. The experts say this is to a great extent because of the events of September 11, 2001. However, I will attempt to demonstrate that in addition to the atmosphere created after 9/11, there are structural, economic, geo-political and socio-cultural factors that

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block the way for implementing the European integration model in North America. Specifically, I am interested in exploring the obstacles in the United States to creating supranational institutions and adopting mechanisms to correct the inequality among the countries of North America.

A first very general answer is linked to the economic asymmetry among the partners in integration, which is much greater in North America than in Europe when it began its process (see graph). On the one hand, this asymmetry inhibits the creation of mechanisms to correct inequality because that would imply the flow of resources from the more developed to the less developed countries.¹ On the other hand, it also determines that these countries prefer a pragmatic association with a minimal number of institutions.

We might think that this asymmetry creates incentives for developing institutions in North America that favor the powerful. This is the case first of all because institutions contribute to resolving difficulties of collective action by reducing both problems of compliance and transaction costs that prevent the political exchange from being efficient and mutually beneficial. In the second place, the most powerful state sees in institutions an opportunity to lock in the behavior of the less powerful states, since it avoids the cost of continually using its power to force others to act in the way it prefers and, in contrast, restricting the arbitrary, indiscriminate exercise of its power. Thus, international institutions correct the asymmetry of power.² This explains why, as a super-power, the United States was the great promotor of the multi-lateral institutional framework that emerged after World War II.

Naturally, this does not mean that it succumbed to using its unilateral power. Historically, it has been ambivalent toward international institutions and rules: it participates actively in those that it dominates and evades or resists those that it cannot control.

This ambivalence also grows out of historical and socio-cultural factors. The combination of several issues linked to U.S. “exceptionalism” gives its poli-

Both the international trade regimen the United States founded at the end of World War II and NAFTA reflect basic U.S. values, particularly strong anti-statism and individual liberalism.

tical class’s actions, particularly those of Congress, a negative bias *vis-à-vis* international institutions, especially if they are supranational.

An absolute, irrational adherence to seventeenth- and eighteenth-century liberal ideology makes the U.S. experience differ substantially from that of other Western countries. The lack of a strong, centralized state, such as existed in Europe, meant that in the United States the state was perceived as the only threat to the individual. Therefore, individual liberty became the fundamental political value.³ This liberal absolutism created an American ideology, and those who question these minimum, fundamental values are considered anti-American. Anti-statism, then, made law the only sovereign, giving rise to a legalist, litigious culture.

We should add the profound “patriotism” of U.S. society, partially derived

from popular pride in the unique, morally superior values of the first “new nation,” and partially from a populist trait of U.S. liberal ideology arising out of the belief that sovereignty resides in the people. This explains why Congress, as an expression of that sovereignty, plays a fundamental role in designing U.S. international policy. The design and implementation of that policy is based on local concerns and interests;⁴ this is the basis for its refusal to accept the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court and even of the difficulty in approving the establishment of the World Trade Organization.

One solution of the U.S. dilemma *vis-à-vis* international institutions has been the search for an international order with low costs in terms of limiting U.S. political sovereignty. From 1945 on, it promoted an “automatic” international order that would emerge from the dissemination of free trade and would require only minimal direct intervention by the United States. An open world economy would, in turn, lead to a liberal international order in which the U.S. would not have to compromise its political autonomy.⁵ For example, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) established a minimal bureaucracy that disseminated U.S. values and interests without it having to pay the costs in terms of its sovereignty. This trade regimen had broad support from both the public and Congress as a driving force for economic growth and a key to prosperity. The United States promoted a similar focus in NAFTA.

With NAFTA, it fostered an institutional framework based on a legalist *laissez-faire*, leaving very little room for future interpretation or practically any delegation of sovereign authority to

inter-governmental bodies or, of course, supranational ones.⁶ In fact, with the exception of the supranational mechanism for protecting investors, the dispute resolution procedures, particularly with regard to the application of policies of jurisdiction, are “review” mechanisms for the rules that operate domestically in the countries of North America. In accordance with this perspective, the United States achieved its goals in NAFTA (regarding access to its partners’ markets, guarantees for its investors, the political and economic stabilization of Mexico and pushing forward multilateral trade negotiations that were stymied at the time NAFTA was negotiated) without having to invest in strong North American institutions. The supranationality of Chapter 11 was seen as a mechanism that was of interest to the United States since its aim was to discipline the Mexican government *vis-à-vis* U.S. investors.

Canada and Mexico also favored NAFTA’s minimum institutional structure because they thus avoided supranational institutions that could end

up dominated by the United States. They preferred to reduce uncertainty as well as the indiscriminate use of their powerful neighbor’s unilateral might through a regimen in which there was little room for interpretation.

Both the international trade regimen the United States founded at the end of World War II and NAFTA reflect basic U.S. values, particularly strong anti-statism and individual liberalism.

Asymmetry inhibits the creation of mechanisms to correct inequality because that would imply the flow of resources from the more developed to the less developed countries.

Historically, the U.S. elites and public have supported capitalist values and the pre-eminence of the market and have not felt the need to “manage” capitalism like in the European case.⁷ “Individual-

ism in a growing economy fostered the belief that the U.S. was a land of opportunity, based on meritocracy rather than privilege....The belief in individual opportunity and limited government has meant that there has been much less support for welfare and redistributive policies than is typically found in Europe. There is a strong commitment to equal opportunity, but this is to be in the competition of a *laissez-faire* economy, and not via strong government.”⁸

In general, in the United States there is less support for redistributive measures and greater enthusiasm for actions that promote equal opportunity than among Europeans.⁹ As Lipset has noted, the United States continues to be the exception among developed countries in the scant support it gives to welfare, housing and public health services. As a result, despite being the richest country in the world, the proportion of its population that lives in poverty is the highest of all the developed countries.¹⁰

The NADBank is a clear example of the predominance of the market, even in matters related to economic devel-

ASYMMETRIES IN NORTH AMERICA			
	GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT	POPULATION	TRADE WITH NORTH AMERICA
	% OF NORTH AMERICAN TOTAL	% OF NORTH AMERICAN TOTAL	% OF TOTAL EXPORTS
United States	85.3%	68.07%	37.3%
Canada	7.4%	7.6%	80.2%
Mexico	7.3%	24.4%	90.5%
Absolute total North America	U.S.\$ 12.89 trillion	430 million	U.S.\$626.99 billion

A strictly economic integration that deepened the NAFTA model in North America would meet with opposition of unions and environmentalist groups and, therefore, of a majority of Democrats.

opment. In the last phases of the negotiations between President William Clinton and Congress for approval of NAFTA, Esteban Torres, Democratic congressman for California, demanded the creation of a development bank to invest in environmental infrastructure on the Mexico-U.S. border as a condition to vote for the treaty. The original proposal consisted of creating a bank with U.S.\$1 billion in capital that could generate U.S.\$15 billion for projects favoring social integration. The European model was the inspiration for the bank's design, which should offer guarantees and low interest rates for environmental projects, infrastructure that benefited trade and social development and promoted growing businesses.¹¹ But the bank ended up having much less capital and a much more limited mandate than the original design called for. Its mandate was restricted to financing environmental infrastructure and making loans at market rates that are not accessible in Mexico and are not very competitive in the United States.¹² The market focus has prevailed even in the reforms to the bank's mandate, which were proposed and designed as a response to Vicente Fox's North American initiative.

Another example is the Society for Prosperity, a Mexico-U.S. program

launched in March 2002 to foster development in low growth regions of Mexico that expelled large numbers of emigrants. The ultimate aim is to improve productivity.¹³ The plan's goal is to promote investment and experience of the private sector in a series of activities like small and medium-sized companies, housing, agriculture and infrastructure in roads, airports, ports and technological information. As President Bush himself pointed out at a meeting of the Inter-American Development Bank, most of the money for development does not come from aid, but from domestic and foreign direct investment and especially from trade.¹⁴

The NAFTA experience itself teaches us that, despite this ambivalence vis-à-vis international institutions, the United States is also willing to adopt even supranational elements fundamentally for reasons of domestic politics. For example, the NAFTA environmental side-bar agreement implied the creation of the only trilateral institution, the North American Environmental Cooperation Commission, which, while it does not have broad supranational powers, does establish "independent" functions for its secretariat as well as the bodies that represent the interests of U.S. environmental organizations (particularly the Joint Public Advisory Committee).

The negotiation of parallel agreements on the environment and labor cooperation resulted from the political moment that forced NAFTA proponents who wanted it strictly as a trade and investment agreement to accept the demands of groups very close to the Democratic Party, notably the unions, who opposed the treaty's not including guarantees of labor and environmental standards.¹⁵ These groups even

proposed a social charter that would have made the process of economic integration in North America more like the European one. The Mexican government, business sectors on both sides of the border and the conservative components of the Republican Party opposed including other aspects that were not strictly economic, since they thought they were a pretext for introducing protectionist measures.¹⁶ But, the election of William Clinton, who had promised during his campaign to review NAFTA to ensure that it protected environmental and union interests, forced Mexico and Canada to accept the imposition of parallel agreements in order to get NAFTA through the U.S. Congress.

The passionate debate about NAFTA galvanized an anti-free-trade coalition that included groups from both the extreme left and the extreme right concerned about the negative impact of free trade with Mexico. Thus, the historic bipartisan, inter-institutional consensus between Congress and the White House about promoting free trade in the world was broken. The battle for NAFTA was won, but the war for free trade was lost.

Polarization inside the United States was so great that for eight years, President Clinton was denied the extension of fast track authority. While President George W. Bush obtained congressional approval for trade promotion authority (TPA, previously known as fast track), he won it by only one vote (215 to 214: 21 Democrats out of 211 and 194 Republicans out of 221). He won it in exchange for substantial support for the steel industry and agriculture, as well as environmental and labor regulations that will have to be introduced in the texts of trade agreements. Thus, even

with TPA, a consensus around U.S. foreign trade policy has still not been reconstructed, after it had existed for decades, making it possible to promote free trade throughout the world. In a context in which the popular perception of NAFTA and free trade in general is negative, the powerful private sector coalition that supported and made the approval of NAFTA possible has not been reconstructed.

In this polarized context, it is difficult to predict the acceptance of broad initiatives that would mean the negotiation of more formal institutional ar-

rangements with Mexico and Canada. A strictly economic integration that deepened the NAFTA model in North America would meet with opposition of unions and environmentalist groups and, therefore, of a majority of Democrats. The Republicans, meanwhile, would oppose any form of integration that would favor more the interests of groups fighting for introducing social rights in new institutional structures in North America. But even if these obstacles were overcome, it is to be expected that the United States' pragmatic viewpoint and preferences about

In the United States there is less support for redistributive measures and greater enthusiasm for actions that promote equal opportunity than among Europeans.

integration, particularly with regard to how to deal with problems of inequality, will persist. ■■■

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Interpreting International Treaties

NAFTA, A Case Study¹

Stefanie Haeger*

Even if they are only the tip of the iceberg in relationships among states, international treaties can be considered the highest form of concretizing international communications and their interpretation is the natural continuation of that communication.

By interpretation of a treaty, we understand the analysis of its text, taking into consideration its authors' intentions, and its application, which is directly associated with the future development of relations among states. Therefore, a treaty is at the same time the goal of past diplomatic activity and the beginning of future relations.

To analyze the importance of interpreting treaties and their effects on international communications, we must use interdisciplinary tools from international relations and law.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) suffices as an example; it has always been controversial in the three countries involved, from its creation up to its application, both politically and legally. In NAFTA, these issues are inseparable, particularly if we focus on how the interpretation can influence relations between states and if we ask ourselves if international law plays its role as a regulator of the international system.

From the legal point of view in general and that of the treaties in particular, interpretation is not a mechanical, objective action, but rather a complex, equivocal process that allows for placing theoretical approximations along the continuum between a strictly literal and a teleological interpretation, that is, one which also

takes into account the treaty's objective. In addition, external factors such as the intertemporality and the subjectivity of the actor-interpreters also intervene.

International guidelines about the interpretation of international treaties basically converge in the 1969 Vienna Convention on Treaty Law and the findings of the International Court. Nevertheless, although interpretation is quite regulated, some vacuums exist in which the authority of international law is limited in the international system. In addition, interpretation is subject to abuse by states which hide their own interests behind different possible interpretations of norms.

As a result, the interdisciplinary focus using politics and international law makes it possible to understand that international law is not a closed juridical system, above the international system, but that it is linked to politics and the will of states, which are sovereign actors for all effects.

There are several positions situated between positivist and realist theories about the role of law in the international system. The former aspire to a rule of law, that is a system in which law is the absolute entity; the latter maintain that states do not behave based on the law, but based on their own interests and their power. Between these two extremes and other theories like liberalism and those that have emerged from new studies about globalization, we find the opinion of Andreas L. Paulus, according to which law and international politics influence each other reciprocally and neither dominates the other.²

The behavior of states based on and *vis-à-vis* different aspects of interpretation depends

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a great deal on the dual nature of treaties: they are simultaneously a consequence of the dialogue among states and the cause of their interaction. They are the result of interest-based political thinking and at the same time a legitimate source of law. As Robert O. Keohane and the theoreticians of the constructivist school, like Harold H. Koe and Friedrich Kratchovil,³ propose, in dealing with treaties, we must always keep in mind the three elements that make them up and mutually influence each other: interests, institutions and belief systems.⁴ Or, as Anne-Marie Slaughter maintains, broadening out this vision, treaties play a role of persuasion and justification in forming the identities of international actors and, as a result, of interests, which in turn give rise to norms.⁵

In addition, the dual nature of the treaties lead to the recognition of the relativity of the interpretations of the rules. Attila Tanzi explains this by treaties' general nature and imprecision which, in turn, are the result of the compromise among the divergent interests involved in the process of producing norms.⁶ From this is derived the possibility the states have, spurred by profound interests to rationally defend contrasting interpretations and the opportunity of hiding their own interests behind a defensible argument, making difficult the conciliatory work of bodies like *ad hoc* arbitration panels or the International Court of Justice that generally adopt an orthodox interpretation.

NAFTA is a good example of this dual nature of treaties: it was born of the interests of the parties involved in establishing a free trade area and many institutions, procedures and domestic needs of the states have changed to make fulfilling these objectives possible.

NAFTA contains articles pursuant to its own interpretation and refers to the 1969 Vienna Convention on Treaty Law. Its Chapter 20 also includes a controversy resolution mechanism, purposely established to solve or clarify differences regarding interpretation by the parties. This mechanism is divided in a political-diplomatic phase in which ministers and experts meet to talk about the issue, and a legal phase in which an arbitration panel is established, a neutral body made up of members of the two conflicting parties which makes decisions about the interpretation of the text of the treaty and makes recommendations about the states' behavior.

Although it has resolved some disputes successfully, this mechanism has its limits. Whether during the entire political-diplomatic phase before the establishment of the arbitration panel, or after the panel has made its recommendations, the states will have to decide if they take the controversy to the following levels of the resolution mechanism or if they accept what the treaty says. In many cases, in order to maintain their good relations and save their own reputations, the parties have decided not to resort to the formal mechanism, even though the controversy and differences in the treaty's application continue to exist.

Therefore, it turns out that law and politics interact, simultaneously protecting the state's internal and external needs. In other words, it could be said that politics seems to be at the bottom of all NAFTA's trade and legal matters, leaving certain spaces in which as a legal instrument, it manages to regulate relations among states and have an impact on political interests, and other spaces in which it will always be the state which will decide about

interpretations of the treaty, and therefore about their behavior *vis-à-vis* the others.

Taking into consideration the areas analyzed —the law, the interdisciplinary intersection of politics and international law and the study of NAFTA— and applying to international communication the circularities found by Paulus in his reflection about the link between law and international politics, by Keohane in the nature of treaties, and those observed in the study of NAFTA, we can conclude that the interpretation of treaties influences and is in turn influenced by the behavior of states according to a circular dynamic which oscillates between the rule of law and a realist logic in the international sphere. ■■■

NOTES

¹ This article is based on Stefanie Haeger's bachelor's thesis in international communications at the Università per Stranieri di Perugia (Italy), presented in April 2004. The research on NAFTA was carried out at the UNAM's CISAN in autumn 2003.

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The National Autonomous University of Mexico's Center for Research on North America (CISAN) is preparing to publish the first issue of its new biannual journal based on academic excellence, *Norteamérica*, with the aim of contributing to the study and reflection about the political, economic, social and cultural situation of North America. To this end, we wish to invite the national and international academic community to contribute under the following

GUIDELINES

- The journal's theme is interdisciplinary in the areas of social sciences and the humanities about the North American Region (Mexico, the United States and Canada) and its links to the rest of the world.
- All papers must be previously unpublished.
- *Norteamérica* is an peer-refereed magazine, and all articles will be submitted to a board of specialists for review.

SECTIONS

Norteamérica has three sections: "Ensayos" (Essays), "Análisis de Actualidad" (Current Analysis) and "Reflexiones y Miradas" (Reflections and Glimpses). Contributions will be received in Spanish or English and published in their original language, and for each section, the articles must have the following characteristics:

ESSAYS AND CURRENT ANALYSIS

- Only articles based on scholarly research will be considered. These two sections will not publish articles on current events or opinion pieces.
- The articles must include relevant, up-to-date source citations.
- Articles must be accompanied by 4 to 6 key words and a 100- to 150-word summary or abstract.
Length: 30 to 60 pages.

REFLECTIONS AND GLIMPSES

INTERVIEWS

- The interview will be with an outstanding figure from the academic, political, social and/or cultural world.
- Each interview will include between 5 and 10 analytical and comparative questions.
Length: 15 to 20 pages.

CRITICAL NOTES

- Academic reflections about a polemical, current issue.
Length: 10 to 15 pages.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- Essays that review, compare and profoundly analyze from 2 to 5 recently published books on the same theme.
Length: 15 to 20 pages.

CHRONOLOGIES

- They will deal with the most important events in North America and the rest of the world and their reciprocal impact.
Length: a minimum of 15 pages.

FOR PUBLICATION

All manuscripts must comply with the following norms:

- A page is understood as a double-spaced (**not a space and a half**) text printed on one side of letter-sized (8.5 x 11 inch) paper in **12-point Times New Roman typeset**, with an average of 1,680 spaces.
- Manuscripts must be submitted in both printed and electronic form. The printed version must be on 8 x 10-sized paper, numbered from the first to the last sheet, without binding. An original and three copies are required. The electronic version must be in Microsoft Word.
- Manuscripts with corrections written by hand, words crossed out, indications on cards, etc., will not be accepted.
- Tables and graphs will also be turned in printed on letter-sized paper and in Microsoft Word and Excel, respectively, and will count toward the final total length.
- Source citation will be done using the Author-date Citations and References Lists style, also known as Harvard system. Example: (Diamond, 1995: 49-59).
- *Example of the reference list in the author-date style:*

Diamond, Larry, Seymour Menton and Juan J. Linz, comp.
1995 *Politics in Developing Countries: Comparing Experiences with Democracy*, Reinner, Boulder, Colorado.

Longer explanations of the guidelines and norms for presenting manuscripts can be consulted or requested at:
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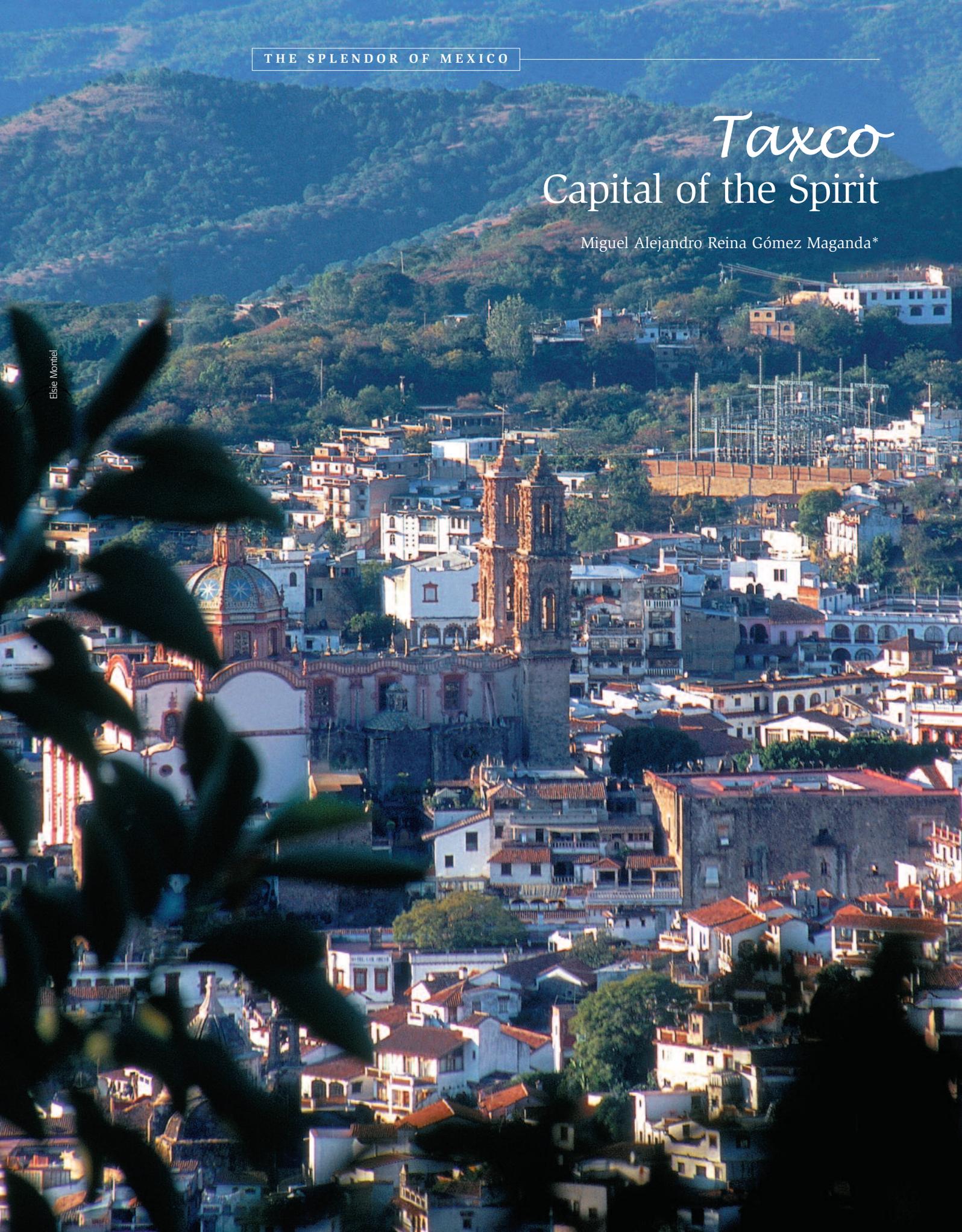
CISAN

THE SPLENDOR OF MEXICO

Taxco

Capital of the Spirit

Miguel Alejandro Reina Gómez Maganda*



Walking down the cobbled colonial streets, you feel that you lose yourself little by little along that fine line between reality and fantasy. The white facades of the red-tiled houses climb perfectly synchronized up the green “Atachi” Hill (meaning “Lord of the Waters” in Nahuatl), creating a dream city, perpetually protected by seven hills, like seven Aztec warriors guarding their damsel. One of these hills is split in two by a waterfall, a silver serpentine, like the silver that fills the bowels of Taxco. A beloved city that allows itself to be loved even more in memory: truly the capital of the spirit. A labyrinth between the mountains that invites you to lose yourself in it to possess it.

I arrive at its center, the plaza framing the magnificence of the Santa Prisca Church, a baroque glory that will enchant the most pagan visitor. This feeling that grows with the aroma of bread and fresh vegetables coming from the market, with the refrain of its artisans’ voices offering their colorful products and with the warm, friendly smiles of the locals, produces an atmosphere that makes it impossible to do anything but let yourself go and enjoy the place.

A foreigner next to me asks a peasant the name of the city; the peasant answers sweetly, “It is colonial Taxco.”

Taxco de Alarcón is located in the central part of the state of Guerrero. Its name comes from the name of the ancient pre-Hispanic city Tlachco, meaning “place of the ball game” in Nahuatl. Tlachco was one of the many towns of the great Aztec empire. Its particularity was that, in contrast to the others, this town paid tribute to Moctezuma in gold and silver.

Until 1528, Taxco was nothing more than a mining camp. This changed in 1534 when the first veins of gold and silver were discovered and mined; by 1570, Taxco was the most important mining center in New Spain.

Climbing hills and digging tunnels, Real de Minas was in its heyday during the viceroyalty. By the end of the sixteenth century, the city’s original site, now known as “Old Taxco”, would move 10 kilometers to the south. There, the Spaniards set up residence and gave the place the name Real de Minas de Tetelcingo. The locals, for their part, continued to reside in Tlachcotecapan and Acayotla, today the San Miguel and Guadalupe neighborhoods.

They say that among the miners numbered black slaves who carried out one of the first rebellions against the exploitation they suffered during the colonial period. Many of the rebels fled to the coast, where their descendants live today.

The city of Taxco grew without any concerted urban planning. Winding up the hill, white-walled, clay-tiled houses, little cobbled streets with disquietingly undefined destinations and plazas adorned with multicolored flowers and vines sprang up, everything that would later turn Taxco into a World Heritage Treasure.

Throughout its history, Taxco has been visited by world-famous, historic figures and has even given birth to some of them. Perhaps the most important was renowned dramatist Juan Ruiz de Alarcón y Mendoza, one of our literary treasures and, besides the great Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the only other person born in the Western Hemisphere to be part of the plethora of writers of the Golden Century of Spanish literature, along with giants like Miguel de Cervan-



Statue of Juan Ruiz de Alarcón outside the Spratling Museum.

* Script writer born in Guerrero.

Photos on this and the previous page by Elsie Montiel.

tes Saavedra, Tirso de Molina, Luis de Góngora y Argote and Francisco de Quevedo, among others.

Juan Ruiz de Alarcón saw the light of day for the first time in 1580. His legacy is not only his works of literary genius, but also his example of untiring, tenacious struggle, since his being born with a hunchback meant that human misery marginalized him and put obstacles in his path all his life.

In homage to this, since 1987, every year Taxco becomes the scene of the meeting of the sixteenth century and our time. Art of all kind throughout the city, and voices invoking

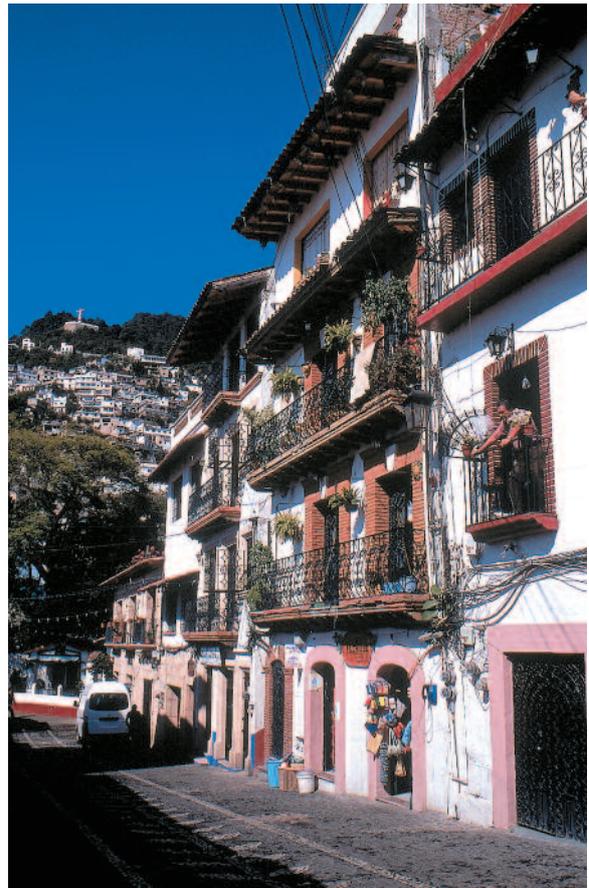
a single man, Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, constitute the celebrated “Alarconian Days” created by Guerrero government decree.

Another name inseparable from the city is Don José de la Borda, who in 1716 took up residence in Taxco. Known as “The phoenix of the rich miners in the Americas,” he would foster mining in the region, simultaneously becoming the city’s main benefactor. His nickname referred to the many times he lost and remade his fortune, which he used to a great extent to erect buildings that ennoble his name. The main example of this is the magnificent Santa Prisca

The white facades of the red-tiled houses climb perfectly synchronized up the green “Atachi” Hill creating a dream city, perpetually protected by seven hills.



Elsie Montiel



Elsie Montiel



Rubén Vázquez



Elsie Montiel

Santa Prisca achieves such a symbiosis with the city that it would seem that the entire urban area had been erected just to surround it.

Church, an imposing presence on the city's main plaza, which is named for him in recognition of his legacy.

Work on this church, considered one of Mexico's most important examples of colonial architecture, began in February 1751 and culminated seven years later. It was consecrated to the Purísima Concepción, with Prisca and Sebastián, third-century Christian martyrs, as patron saints. The first mass was officiated by Father Manuel de la Borda, Don José's son. Santa Prisca is the result of joint work by geniuses of the viceroyalty: Cayetano de Sigüenza was the architect; the altar pieces, carved in pure gold leaf, were done by Vicente and Luis de Balbás; but perhaps the most widely recognized was Miguel Cabrera, an indigenous artist who did the paintings.

Cabrera is the only artist of the time who dared to challenge all the canons established by the church, painting portraits of a *Pregnant Mary*, *The Circumcision of Jesus* and *The Death of Mary*.

Considered by historian Elisa Vargas Lugo "the pearl of eighteenth-century baroque," Santa Prisca is one of those monuments that achieves such a symbiosis with the city that it would seem that the entire urban area had been erected just to surround it. The visitor cannot but raise his eyes and admire the marvelous facade, which on his first visit there Argentinean writer Jorge Luis Borges called "the most obvious symbol of perplexity."

One night in April 1803, the celebrated German traveler Baron Alexander von Humboldt arrived in the city; he classified Taxco's climate

as the best in the world. The house where he stayed bears his name to this day and is home to the Viceregal Art Museum, whose 14 rooms hold Mexico's most important pieces of sacred, viceregal art.

Another emblematic figure in Taxco's past was the American William Spratling, a visionary and great designer who fostered the genius of Taxco residents, today known as creators of unique pieces of fine metal work.

In 1931, he opened the first silver-working workshop called "Las Delicias." He developed a school of silver and goldsmiths and jewelers that has become world famous. In 1932, Spratling celebrated the first anniversary of his workshop and instituted "Silversmiths' Day." The event became so famous that in 1953, on the initiative of Guerrero state Governor Alejandro Gómez Maganda, Mexican President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines decreed the National Silver Fair and the International Silver Competition.

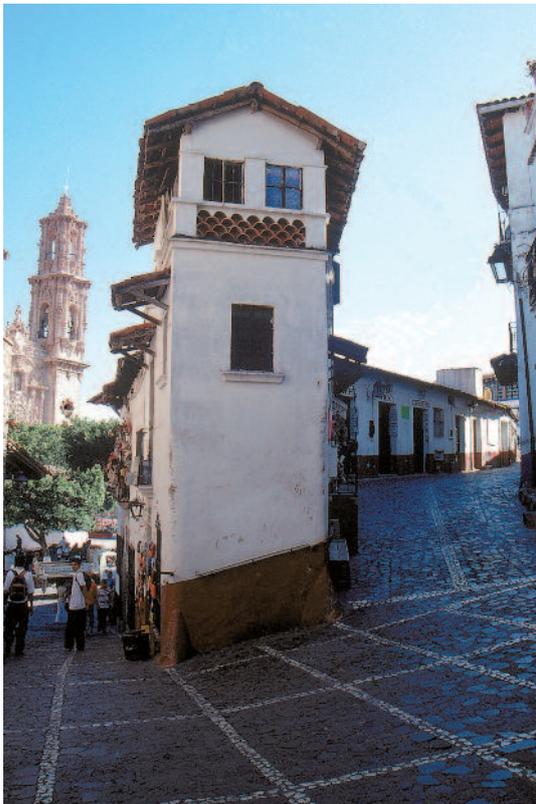
Every year, Taxco opens its doors to the world so people can admire its astonishing

pieces of silver combining the pre-Hispanic heritage with contemporary design. These activities are flanked by cultural and artistic events to delight visitors.

Among Taxco's other contributions to the world, we must mention the international symbol for Christmas, the poinsettia, native to the area and discovered by Fernando de Poinsett.

It is nighttime in Taxco. Seated on a balcony of one of the picturesque bars that look out onto the Borda Plaza, we can gaze at the imposing facade of Santa Prisca and admire the moon, so often described metaphorically as made of silver. Looking at it like this, it becomes clear that it must have been born here.

Looking at the sky, more beautiful than ever, full of stars; breathing in history and witnessing the gentle life of the city's inhabitants, words fail me to describe it. The only thing left to say is that no one should leave this Earth, no one should die without having seen Taxco de Alarcón, Guerrero. **MM**



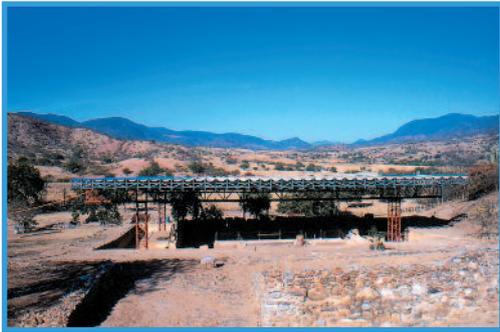
Rubén Vázquez



Rubén Vázquez

Guerrero's Archaeological Patrimony and Cultural Potential

Gerardo Gutiérrez*



Teopantecuanitlan



Cuetlajuchitlan

Photos by Elsie Montiel

Given a random combination of factors including difficult topography, a lack of paved highways and certain social strife, until very recently, archaeological research in Guerrero was minimal. Despite the efforts of a dozen or so Mexican and foreign archaeologists who fought day to day to salvage and disseminate the state's rich archaeological patrimony, the lack of exploration is evident. This turns the archaeology of Guerrero into a big black box: all kinds of unproven ideas fit. Thus, the cultures that inhabited Guerrero have been classified as peripheral, marginal, non-urban, pre-state, etc. But, actually, the state's archaeological remains show patterns of development similar to the rest of Mesoamerica and in the same time period, which means they are not backward, or marginal or peripheral.

In 1948, the Mexican Anthropological Society classified the state of Guerrero as part of the cultural region called the Mexican West. Although this erroneous notion can still be found in the literature, specialists working in



Xochipala

Colima, Jalisco, Michoacán and Nayarit have begun to leave Guerrero out of this regional classification because they consider it different from what is called the West. Unfortunately, important museums continue to promote this idea: for example, the National Anthropology Museum's Room of Western Cultures exhibits an important collection of archaeological objects from Guerrero, together with shaft tombs from the states of Colima and Jalisco, and cave art from the northern state of Baja California! This arrangement would not be particularly problematic if it were not for the fact that Guerrero's archaeological material shows evidence of autonomous development and a close relationship with the traditions of Central Mexico

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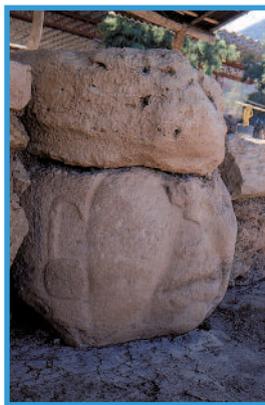
and Oaxaca, that is, two of the most important cultural nuclei of Mesoamerica.

Guerrero has no archaeological site open to the public comparable to Chichén-Itzá or Monte Albán not because the state has no monumental archaeological zones, but because they have not been explored or opened to the public. Thus, the wealth of Guerrero must be evaluated based on its potential, which is vast. Just as an example, we can mention some of the sites that have been excavated and that interested travelers may visit. I will also mention some sites that, although they have not been explored, may be visited thanks to their proximity to highways and urban areas and to their having basic tourist services.

THE ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

We cannot understand the development of pre-Hispanic Guerrero cultures without at least

a cursory description of their geographical-ecological context. The state today is roughly almond-shaped, with a long east-west axis and a short north-south one. In general terms we can say there are three parallel strips on the east-west axis: each strip represents a unique ecological area that gives the state special characteristics. Travelers can observe these strips or ecological floors when they move along the Mexico-Acapulco highway: once they have left behind the Morelos Valley, they begin a continual descent until they arrive at the bottom of the Balsas River depression, one of the country's most important hydrological basins where the tumultuous river runs. The Balsas depression has a very hot, dry climate, where rain is scarce and the only permanent source of moisture is the river itself. Its vegetation is a low deciduous jungle, with an abundance of short trees and cacti adapted to the arid terrain. When the traveler crosses the river, he/she can see that a gradual ascent begins. This leads to the

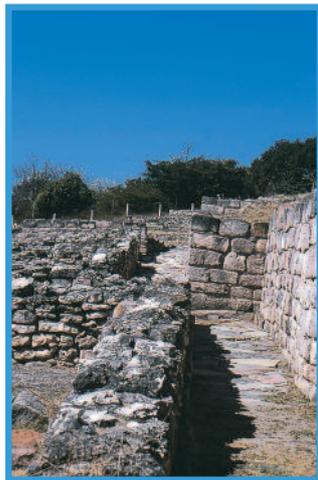


Teopantecuanitlan is the most important pre-classical site found until now in Guerrero.

peaks of the Southern Sierra Madre, the second ecological strip, characterized by a temperate to cold climate, with a predominance of holm oak and pine forests. The terrain here is both precipitous and beautiful, with enormous mountains and crags crisscrossed by deep ravines. Continuing on his/her way, the traveler will begin to descend again until he/she arrives at the warm, sunny Pacific coast, traditionally divided between the Costa Chica ("Little Coast"), from Acapulco to the southeast, and the Costa Grande ("Big Coast"), from Acapulco to the northwest. The vegetation along the coast is that of a medium, sub-evergreen jungle, but it has been almost completely cut back to make way for large pastures for cattle grazing. These strips or ecological floors display an enormous diversity of animal and vegetable life, useful to Man, which is why from very early times trade among their inhabitants played a primordial role for Guerrero's cultural development.

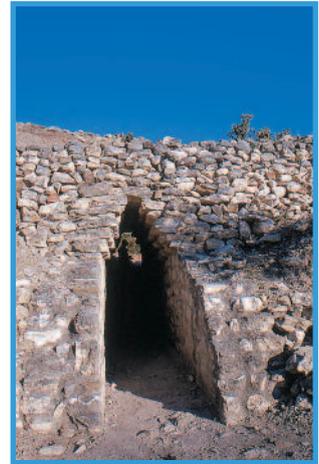
THE ARCHAIC PERIOD (8000-1800 B.C.)

It is still not possible to establish when the first settlers came to the state. But we can estimate that bands of hunters and gatherers had established temporary camps in the region before agriculture and ceramics production were introduced, 4,000 years before Christ. Cave art, together with triangular flint projectile tips, found in ancient camps in the Huamuxtitlan Valley, provide information about these cultures. Perhaps the most impressive example of ancient art in the state is found at Piedra Pinta, Totomixtlahuaca, an archaeological site located in a rock formation on the south side of the Omítlán River, which has more than 100 geometric designs carved in the rock. None of these designs have stylistic parallels with later Mesoamerican iconography. Near Totomixtlahuaca is the Cueva del Diablo (Devil's Cave) in Ocoapa, which amazingly pre-



Cuetlajuchitlan testifies to the high degree of urbanization Guerrero's pre-classical cultures achieved.





Xochipala's architecture is characterized by decorative "screws" and the false Mayan vault.

serves pre-ceramic cave painting with designs similar to those of Piedra Pinta. What is interesting about this cave is that over the first drawings, new figures are painted in the pre-Hispanic Olmec style. This would seem to indicate that Olmec customs were imposing themselves on local art in Guerrero.

PRE-CLASSICAL PERIOD (1800 B.C.-A.D.300)

Many portable objects and mural paintings, plus monumental architecture with styles similar to Olmec remains from the Gulf of Mexico Coast, the Tehuantepec Isthmus and the Chiapas and Guatemala Pacific Coast, have been found in Guerrero. Baby-faced figurines have been found in Chilpancingo and Tlapa, and a jade plaque depicting a man with Olmec features was found in Olinalá. Pre-classical clay figures can also be seen at the local museum in Azoyú. Magnificent pre-classical cave art is found in the Juxtlahuaca, Oxtotitlan caves and, of course, in the Cueva del Diablo in Ocoapa.

Teopantecuanitlan is the most important pre-classical site found until now in Guerrero; it shares many stylistic traits with sites in Central Mexico and the Morelos Valley, like Chalcatzingo. Teopantecuanitlan confirms that Guerrero societies reached a level of complexity that anthropologists call a chiefdom by the year 1000 B.C. In San

Miguel Amuco, another stone slab also carved in the Olmec style can be seen. The Cuatlajuchitlan archaeological site is an example of a society that existed toward the end of the pre-classical period. The Highway of the Sun (from Mexico to Acapulco) passes underneath it, near the Morelos Pass check-point. Cuatlajuchitlan is a very well preserved site which testifies to the high degree of urbanization the Guerrero cultures achieved in the pre-classical period, mainly because of the existence of an incipient rectangular pattern in their streets.

During this period, powerful, wealthy political entities developed in the region's main valleys: the Balsas Chilpancingo Basin; Muchitlan, Tlapa and Huamuxtitlan. Similar political entities emerged along the foot of the southern slope of the Southern Sierra Madre mountain range, on the Small and the Large Coasts. We can infer that these early political entities formed their economic niches as intermediaries in the system of exchange of goods between the Pacific Coast and Central Mexico.

THE CLASSICAL AND EPICLASSICAL PERIODS (A.D. 300-1100)

Teotihuacan-style objects, plentiful throughout the state, can be used as chronological markers. The Malinaltepec mask is perhaps the most beau-

tiful Teotihuacan object found in Guerrero. For this period, there is also iconography in monumental sculpture, like that at Piedra Labrada, Ometepec, Yu kivi, Metlatonoc, Texmelincan and Huitzapula, the last two situated in the municipality of Atliztac. Teotihuacan incense burners have also been found at several sites in the Tlapa Valley, particularly in Contlalco and Mezcala.

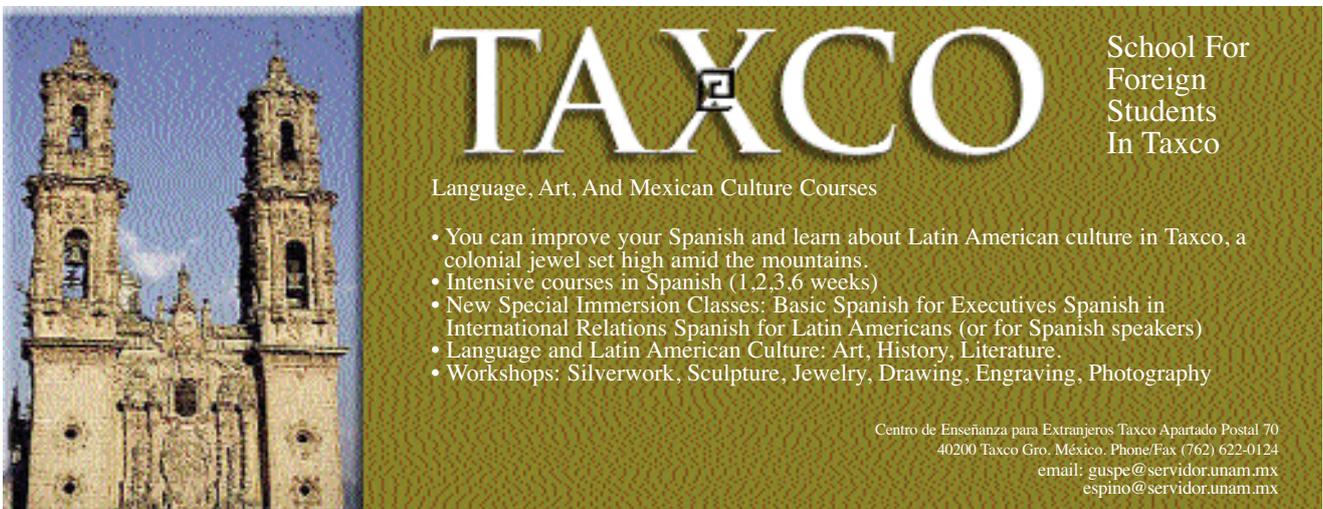
In addition to classical-period pieces, several stone sculptures seem to mark the transition to the epiclassical period (A.D. 700-1000) linked to the iconography of Xochicalco and even Tula. This is the case of some slabs in Texmelincan. Judging by their size, I believe that the civic-ceremonial centers of Texmelincan, Contlalco, Alcazauca and Xochipala played a dominant political role in the region.

The first political entities organized as states probably developed in Guerrero during the classical period, perhaps imitating Teotihuacan and Monte Albán. But after the collapse of Teotihuacan (A.D. 600-650), the area may have broken up politically and been reorganized under local authorities. The political fragmentation probably lasted until the twelfth century when state-like political entities like Tlapa-Tlachinollan in eastern Guerrero emerged and began to accumulate sufficient power to dominate their weaker neighbors.

THE POST-CLASSICAL PERIOD (A.D. 1100-1522)

This period is represented by the reemergence of political entities that managed to concentrate power and reorganize the area politically. The existence of metal-working and two kinds of ceramics used for exchange, Yestla-Naranjo and Azteca III, are used as chronological markers for the post-classical period.

The end of this period is characterized by the domination and incorporation of local lords into the Aztec Empire. A large number of pictorial documents register the names of the largest settlements and political entities from the Balsas River to the Small and Large Coasts. These references in the codices have been of great help in locating archaeological sites. Settlements abandoned in the colonial period can be identified by the remnants of churches and colonial pottery, particularly a glazed majolica-ware type ceramic. Sometimes, transition sites can be found when these items are uncovered together with obsidian. Post-classical sites worth visiting include Contlaco, around Tlapa, and Cerro Oztuma on the Michoacán border. Actually, a large number of sites all over Guerrero from this and other periods need to be explored and opened to the public. This is why we say that the wealth of Guerrero's archaeological patrimony has yet to be discovered. ■■■

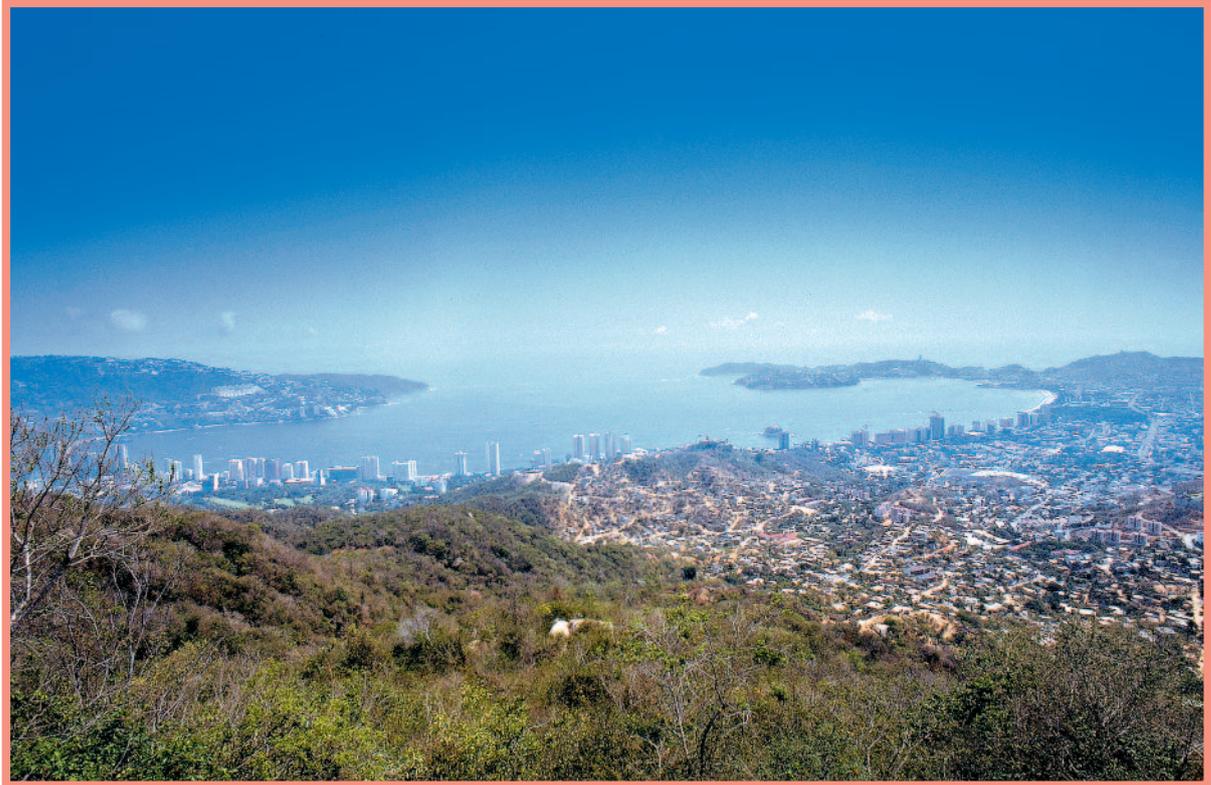


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Photos by Manuel Zavala

Twentieth-century *Acapulco*

Manuel Zavala Alonso*

Situated on Mexico's Pacific Coast, Acapulco is synonymous with paradise; its bay has been the symbol of life in Eden for all who have trod its shores or swum in its waters. Its first inhabitants showed their enthusiasm for the site's beauty in the glyphs they carved into its rocks and caves; later that enthusiasm came through in the pre-Hispanic Yope buildings, in old engravings and lithographs from the colonial period and from after independence, and finally in twentieth-century art.

* Director of Art and History Mexico, Virtual Cultural Forum.

In the first decades of the twentieth century, Acapulco was already becoming a wonderful vacation spot. That was why on November 11, 1927, President Plutarco Elías Calles ordered that the last large rock formation blocking the highway that would unite Mexico City with the port be dynamited. On that very day, the first 12 automobiles to travel the dirt road arrived in the port city, one of which carried the governor of Guerrero state. This would open up the beautiful bay to tourism to an extent previously undreamed of.

A landing strip was built in 1928 and the following year flights to Mexico City began. In



The first hotels were built by visionaries who, although motivated by ambition, foresaw an Acapulco of glamour and formidable development.

1930, President Pascual Ortiz Rubio began the introduction of drinking water brought from the Santacruz springs. By 1931 the highway had been finished and a trickle of tourists began,

foreshadowing a successful future and spurring investments in hotels. The first hotels were built by visionaries who, although motivated by ambition, foresaw an Acapulco of economic greatness, glamour and formidable development. Thus, Carlos Barnard built the El Mirador Hotel in La Quebrada in 1933, with only 12 cottages located right on the cliffs. Then came the Papagayo, promoted by the former presidential candidate Juan Andrew Almazán (today there is an amusement park on this site), and then the Flamingos, the Del Monte, the Caleta Hotel, the Majestic and the Prado Américas, among others. Government infrastructure began to grow as the Federal Palace and other buildings were erected. Wealthy Mexicans and foreigners began to build summer homes along the beaches of the peninsula. The idea of a place worthy of being called an Eden began to grow in the mind of all Mexicans. It was not by chance that in 1941 the famous Mexican composer Agustín Lara, married to the radiant actress María Félix, composed the song *María Bonita* for her, recalling her beauty as well as that of Acapulco. The song, which has traveled around the world, begins with the words “Remember Acapulco, María Bonita, María of my soul...”

But it was not until the term of President Miguel Alemán (1946-1952) that the city’s downtown streets were straightened and paved, the Coastal Road, the Great Tropical Way and the Los Amates International Airport were built, and the Caleta and Caletilla beaches were beautified. There, the powerful politician Maximino Ávila Camacho built a mansion for actress Sofía Álvarez that would become the site of spectacular parties with such famous guests as Dolores del Río, Merle Oberon, Johnny Weissmuller and other Hollywood stars. Today, that house on the hill that separates Caleta and Caletilla Beaches is home to an aquarium open to the general public.

One of the most impressive developments of the time was built during those years: Las Brisas, which included a hotel, villas and residences in a concept that surprised architects worldwide.

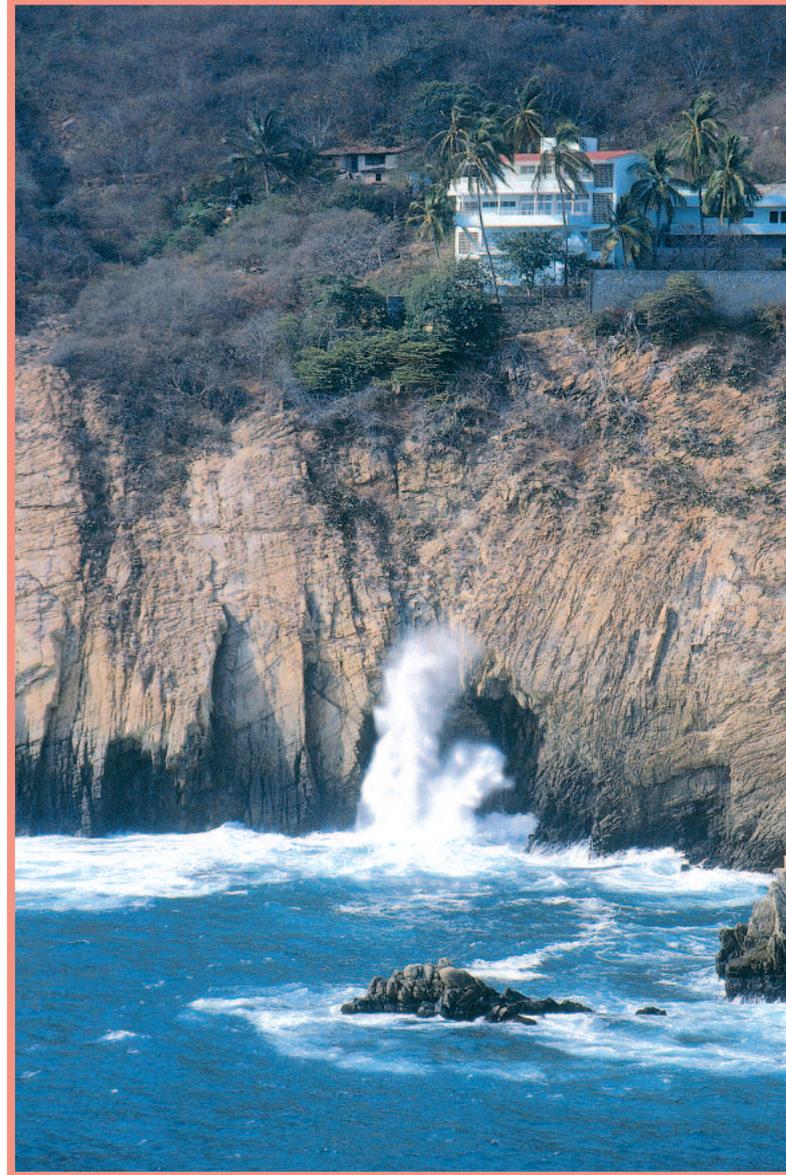
At that time, the Mexico City-Cuernavaca superhighway was being built and improvements were being made to the stretches of road between Cuernavaca and Iguala and, as far as possible, the much feared Zopilote (Buzzard) Canyon between Iguala and Chilpancingo, a part of the road that had to be travelled to get to Acapulco. Hotel capacity continued to grow in response to the increasing flow of tourists.

The city first drew international attention with the 1958 meeting of Presidents Adolfo López Mateos and Dwight D. Eisenhower. The following year it would host the First World Film Review at the San Diego Fort. The event aimed to position the port city in the international scene of the famous jet set; great film stars from Italy, the United States, Czechoslovakia, France, Sweden and the Soviet Union attended. In 1960, during a series of concerts in the port, the renowned Catalanian cellist Pablo Casals debuted his famous piece, *The Manger*. In the same year, the Second World Film Review was held with the attendance of great figures of the movie world like Brigitte Bardot, Elizabeth Taylor and others.

At that time, Acapulco competed in beauty and international events with the famous French Riviera, and for years the city was inappropriately named the “Mexican Riviera.”

In this period, internationally known celebrities built homes in Acapulco, among them, Merle Oberon, Johnny Weissmuller, Dolores del Río, Carlos Trouyet, Dolores Olmedo, Miguel Alemán, Paul Getty, William Hudson, Errol Flynn and Teddy Stauffer.

Lavish parties in their mansions made the front page of the society and entertainment sections of the newspapers and were the basis for gossip in political columns in national dailies and the occasional foreign paper. Visual artists were also among the luminaries; Diego Rivera painted his series of sunsets and the canvas *La Quebrada* while staying at Dolores Olmedo's house. Amidst the delights of extravagant glamour, flowing liquor, sumptuous banquets, business deals, political indiscretions and furtive love affairs, Acapulco grew in fame, tourist infrastruc-



By the 1930's, the idea of a place worthy of being called an Eden began to grow in the mind of all Mexicans.

ture, capital and also serious urban development problems.

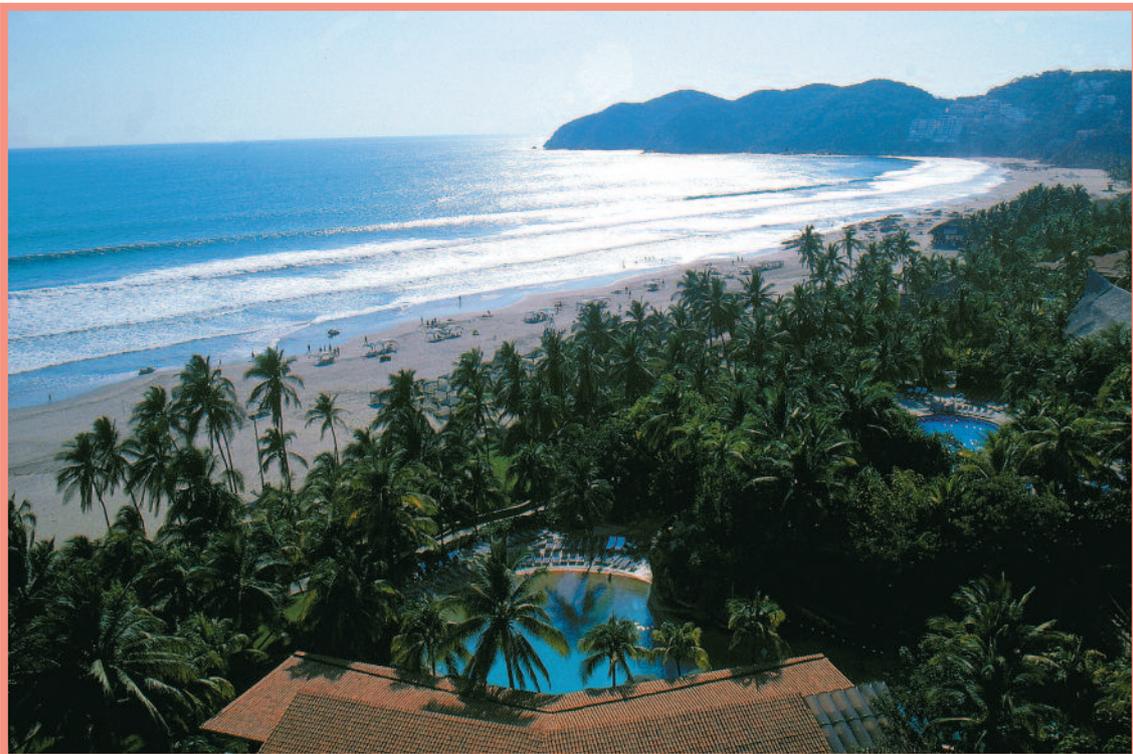
Inordinate growth between 1964 and 1970 brought terrible consequences for the city. Rings

of poor neighborhoods and irregular settlements sprang up, particularly in the Las Lajas area, producing clashes with local authorities headed up by the famous King Lopitos, with fatal consequences. The contrasts between the rich neighborhoods and the big hotels and the poor neighborhoods were truly drastic. It was then, in 1971, that the government began its Acapulco Plan to reorganize the city, alleviate poverty, develop new housing projects for the poor, improve tourist services and slow the deterioration of the water in the bay. A system to gather rainwater was established and another for providing drinking water to people living on the hills was set up. Streets in poor neighborhoods were paved, a drainage system was built in the

areas with the most difficulties, like Las Lajas, and land ownership was regulated throughout the city. Sports and health centers were built, as well as the Cultural and Conventions Center, which has hosted well-publicized national and international events for decades. Beach front property was set aside for public use, such as El Cocal, Tlacopanocha and Hornitos.

In the 1970s, Acapulco improved its tourist and urban services a great deal, but the evils of the growth in tourism increased. The proliferation of nightclubs, bars and discotheques fostered prostitution and an incipient drug trade. It seemed like the paradise was fading with economic growth, the blessings of tourism and the unfettered urban sprawl.

The First World Film Review at the San Diego Fort.
aimed to position the port city in the international scene of the famous jet set;
great film stars from Europe and the United States attended.





Veladero Hill stone glyphs in Acapulco, Guerrero.

Its first inhabitants showed their enthusiasm for the site's beauty in the glyphs they carved into its rocks and caves; later that enthusiasm came through in the pre-Hispanic Yope buildings, in old engravings and lithographs from the colonial period and from after independence, and finally in twentieth-century art.

By the 1980s, Acapulco was in the eye of the hurricane. On the one hand it was facing strong competition from other domestic tourist centers of comparable beauty like Cancún, Puerto Vallarta, Los Cabos and Ixtapa Zihuatanejo. On the other hand, the deterioration of the water in the bay was producing serious health problems, and Acapulco began to be synonymous with unlimited fun, which contradicted the fame, prestige and splendor won in previous decades.

Acapulco seemed to be in a dead-end street. However, authorities, investors, tourism service providers and inhabitants in general rose to the occasion and began efforts to improve the port and its services.

Today, after more than 10 years of improvements, Acapulco has a new face, with cleaner beaches, enhanced, refurbished tourist facilities, an austere but splendid infrastructure in cultural services and appropriate maintenance of the water and the environment in general.

With its natural beauty and appropriate services, Acapulco can continue to be that paradise that its first settlers experienced and dreamed of, that Eden where love, pleasure and the dreams of the legendary princes Quiahuitl and Acatl were born, who, according to Yope legend, gave their names to Acapulco, a place where visionary businessmen, artists and authorities have done great things. **MM**

The San Diego Fort Museum

Julieta Gil Elorduy*



Entrance to the San Diego Fort Museum.

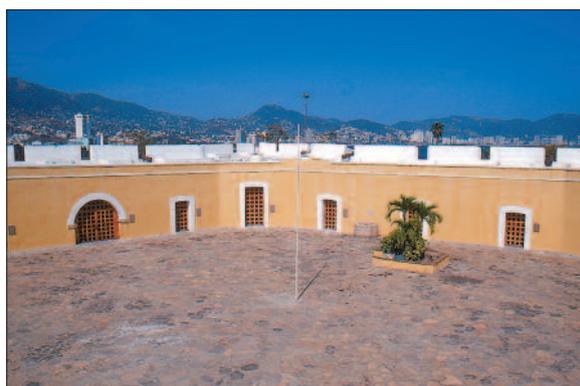
Manuel Zavala Alonso



Blue Chinese porcelain jar.



Chapel angel.



Central patio.

Manuel Zavala Alonso

The San Diego Fort in Acapulco, together with the San Juan de Ulúa, the Ciudad del Carmen and the Bacalar Forts and Campeche's fortified system, is part of the historic complex of forts built in colonial times to defend Mexico's most important ports from constant attacks by pirates. All the other ports faced Europe; Acapulco was the only port facing the East.

* Director of the San Diego Fort Museum.

Unless otherwise specified, photos courtesy of Acapulco's History Museum, the San Diego Fort.

The building's design is unique; the most advanced architectural concepts of its time were used in erecting it, turning it into a masterpiece of military engineering. Its pentagonal lay-out makes it defensible from all sides, and it is surrounded by a dry ditch. It was capable of housing 2,000 men with a year's supply of provisions and munitions thanks to an efficient system of collecting, concentrating and preserving rainwater, and its numerous vaulted rooms placed around the central patio. The entire complex covers 9,000 square meters. After fulfilling its role as the guardian of Acapulco



The museography was designed and adapted to the structure.

and the Manila Galleon, it was the battlefield for the armies that at different times in Mexican history fought for freedom.

Today, the fort discharges a noble purpose: it has become a museum that is the pride of Acapulco, making it possible to recover the port's history. Most of the building, which was a shambles, has been restored, and 10 rooms have been opened to the public displaying magnificent collections using museography especially designed and adapted to the structure.

THE MUSEUM

The San Diego Fort, a history museum that belongs to the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH), is also a site museum, since it is housed by a historic monument, incorporating the place's very history in its museographic discourse, very often with collections found *in situ*, as is the case of the room that shows how food was stored and cooked in the fort.

The 10 exhibition rooms explain Acapulco's different historical periods and matters related to the life of the port. A visit begins with the room dedicated to the first settlers and ends with Mexico's independence. The displays are part of the INAH's collection, enriched with donations and loans from other museums and private collectors. One room is also dedicated to temporary expositions. All the rooms look out onto a large central plaza.

To build on the potential of Acapulco's most important historic monument, work has been

done to turn the museum into a center for both research and dissemination of information.

Since the history of Acapulco is to a great extent the history of commerce between Mexico and the East, two enormous areas rich in products appreciated the world over, its most important asset has been the surprising diversity in cultures that came into contact with each other. Acapulco was the entryway for the great Asian civilizations, China and India. But it was also the port of entry for an immense variety of products and influences from peoples of different languages and religions that came here in galleons full of goods from Manila thanks to the trans-Pacific route.

We should not forget the importance of the ships that sailed south along the coast that would unite peoples along the long navigation routes that reached as far as South America. It was not unheard of for Peruvians to attend the Nao Fairs. Acapulco represents, then, the meeting point for several continents, races and peoples, and home to the famous China Nao and its fairs.

A PORT FACING EAST

Colonial Acapulco was a cosmopolitan, multilingual society that was much more ethnically diverse than any other colony of the Spanish Indies. The galleon was its only source of information; it brought political news, letters from family and friends and news of events in the colonies.



Wood and iron coffer with porcelain.



[1]

This explains why the port celebrated the arrival of the ships. Fanfares were played with the sailing of each galleon, reflecting not only how important it was for Acapulco society, but also becoming a ritual to motivate those who would live through the trip. The Italian Juan Francisco Gemelli Carreri, who traveled literally around the world wrote, “One could say that there is no longer, more dangerous crossing than the one from the Philippines to America. It is enough to destroy a man of steel, let alone one of flesh and blood.” Crew and passengers faced seven months of terrible storms, disease and hunger, with the permanent risk of dying on the high seas. Before leaving, to help ensure a safe journey, masses were said, confessions heard, communion given, the ship was blessed by the archbishop, and, after an elaborate procession through the town, the image of the virgin and the patron saint were taken on board amidst cannon salvos and great commotion.

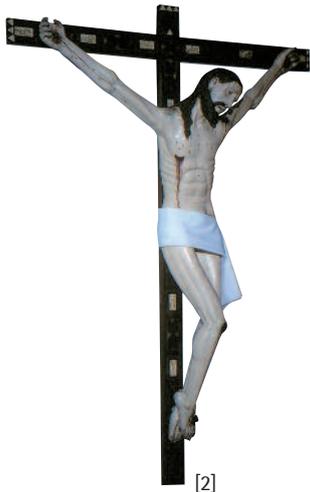
Days before sighting the shores of the Americas, travelers sought out “signs” and when they appeared, they took it for granted that the coast was near. After coming into sight of land, they followed the coast south to the port of Navidad, where anyone ill disembarked. At that point a messenger was sent to the viceroy with a letter from the galleon commander. This sparked a series of preparations for the ship’s arrival at Acapulco days later. The cathedral and the churches rang their bells; novenas were celebrated in thanks; the merchants and royal officials went to the port to arrange for the galleon’s

arrival. A little later, the commercial fair would begin.

With the dispatch of the messenger from the port of Navidad to Mexico City announcing the arrival of the Nao, the capital’s inhabitants also began to move. Mexico City merchants started on the road to the port and Acapulco’s inhabitants prepared the reception.

Acapulco’s most important characteristic is that it was a safe port, with deep waters to anchor the galleons. So, the warm water bay witnessed the arrival of innumerable galleons weighed down with goods from Asia.

Two very different worlds met year after year at the trade fair in Acapulco, which offered up goods from Asia’s far-off exotic countries that could satisfy the demanding taste of New Spain’s elite. For the two or three months that the China Nao stayed in port, the town’s activity reached a fever pitch. The population doubled or tripled. From the interior of New Spain arrived administrative personnel, merchants in search of Asian porcelains, silks, furniture and spices, missionaries preparing to travel to Asia to spread the Gospel, regiments of troops sent as reinforcements to the Philippine garrisons, criminals condemned to forced labor in the far-off archipelago, and stevedores and laborers needed to move the goods purchased. The Manila galleon also brought its own people, mostly merchants who wanted to sell their wares, and a crew that needed to ready the ship for its return voyage. In addition, a third group of merchants and crew from Peru



[2]

[1] Eighteenth-century porcelain jar decorated with Chinese figures.

[2] Eighteenth-century crucifix hung in the chapel.



Philippine robe.



Room 13. Chapel of the Purísima Concepción.



Catan.

often made the trip seeking Asian goods that they could not find anywhere else.

In some cases, whether because the organizers could not come to an agreement or due to external factors like war or the weather, the fair was not held in Acapulco, and the galleon's merchandise was transported to the capital city to be sold. The ritual of the fair lasted approximately a month.

The merchandise purchased was transported to Mexico City to be delivered to New Spain's wealthy. The journey to the capital was long and arduous. Along the route went herders, muleteers and porters who carried large China jars and dinner services, among other Asian products, through Chilpancingo, Taxco, Cuernavaca and San Agustín de las Cuevas, located just before the entry into Mexico City. The shipments that would be sent to Spain continued through Puebla and from there to Veracruz, to be loaded on the fleet that would travel to Cádiz in the following months. The rest stayed in Mexico City.

Every kind of good, both from Europe and from China, could be found in Mexico City's *Parián* market: a diversity of porcelain and fine *talavera* ware from China and Japan, crystal from Venice, rock crystal, trinkets made from ivory, silver and other metals, and crystal toys from China.

Pirates and shipwrecks sometimes delayed or even prevented the galleon's arrival in Acapulco. When this happened, Chinese products would become scarce, increasing the demand for them the following year. In the 1780s, also,

Philippine merchants were hard put to deal with English inroads into the Pacific.

After three centuries of relations, clearly, Chinese porcelain, silk and furniture shipped to New Spain were very widespread, leaving their mark on a society that appreciated them and incorporated them into its daily life. In fact, one of the most important viceregal orders was produced and acquired in Macao: the lattice-work for the choir of Mexico City's cathedral, shipped from Manila to Acapulco in 1724.

Toward the end of the eighteenth century, constant clashes with the English and the growing climate in favor of independence weakened trans-Pacific trade. This, together with the impact of the new European porcelain factories, made the Spanish crown finally cancel the Philippine galleon's trade with New Spain in 1813. The military clashes not only made it impossible to hold the last fair, but even forced the Manila merchants to spend a long winter in Acapulco.

The idea of the port facing East is one of the crosscutting themes around which the museum's vocation is defined because of both its historic importance and timeliness. This theme orients a series of activities and exhibits that show the inhabitants of Acapulco, Guerrero, Mexico and the world the significance the port has had as an entryway for Asian influences in Mexico and its importance today because of the privileged position it holds vis-à-vis the nations of the Pacific Basin. **MM**

MUSEO FUERTE DE SAN DIEGO
 CALLE HORNITOS Y MORELOS
 COL. CENTRO, C.P. 39300
 ACAPULCO, GUERRERO
 OPEN TUESDAYS TO SUNDAYS
 FROM 9:30 A.M. TO 6:30 P.M.
 ADMITTANCE: \$33 MEXICAN PESOS

OTHER FACILITIES
 THE MUSEUM HAS A SHOP, AN AUDITORIUM,
 A DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL SERVICES
 AND A ROOM FOR TEMPORARY EXHIBITS.



[3]



[4]

[3] Box with shell inlays.

[4] Detail of alabaster carvings in the chapel.

Legend and History Of the Caverns Of *Cacahuamilpa*¹

Sergio Santana Muñoz*



Elsie Montiel

Since their discovery many centuries ago, the Caverns of Cacahuamilpa, one of the world's most majestic cave formations, have been the object of study and scientific exploration as well as the scene for rituals and a refuge for warriors and men on the run from the law. It is said that in pre-Hispanic times, the indigenous people who inhabited the surrounding area did not dare enter the caves—which they called *salachi*—because they believed that the stalagmites and stalactites were the embodiment of evil spirits who pre-

vented their entering. Less superstitious people would put an end to that legend by showing that the site was not as evil as had been thought.

Legend has it that in those times, near Tetricap, a local tribal chieftain was deposed and began to roam the mountains in search of a safe haven. During his wanderings, he discovered these enormous caverns and was not only awestruck at the spectacle, but right there thought up a stratagem to recover his throne. Determined to win, he spoke to one of his daughters who no one else knew and taught her to pass herself off as a deity to the rest of their

* Mexican cave expert.



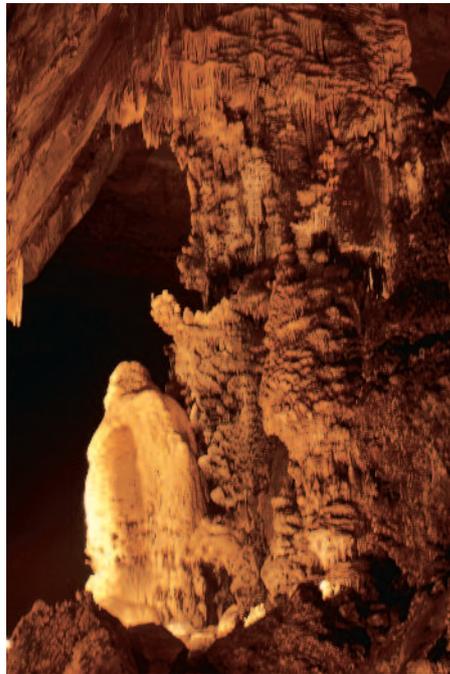
"The Champagne Bottle."
Photo: Elsie Montiel

people. Then, he went to visit an elder who had remained loyal to him and took him to the cavern to witness the divine apparition.

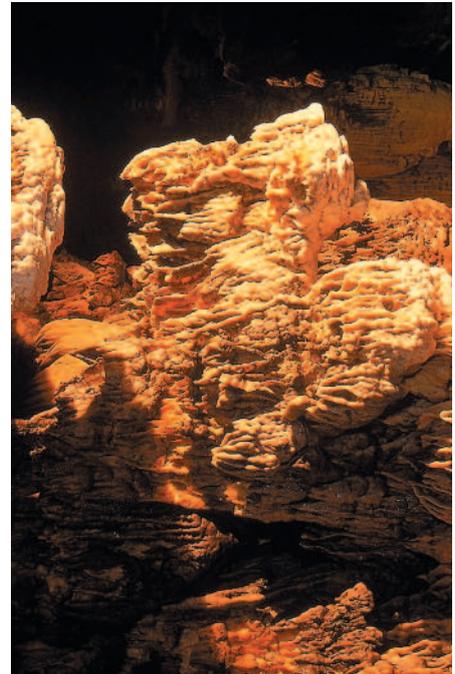
The old man returned to his tribe, frightened, and told his story of what had happened in the cavern. Followed by the tribe elders and others, he visited the place again. The “divine one” was on a marvelous formation at the center of the

The entry to the caverns was covered by thick vegetation for years, so only someone who knew about them could find them. Taking advantage of this, during the war of independence, Pedro Ascencio de Alquisiras, a native of the area and one of the right arms of General Vicente Guerrero, the man who finally won independence, often used them to hide his guerril-

Going through the different rooms, the appreciation of its beauty and its whimsical formations will always depend on each person's imagination, which may consider the place an act of fantasy or fiction.



Elsie Montiel



Rubén Vázquez

cavern. As soon as she saw them enter, she raised her voice in a threatening shout, saying that she would wipe out the region with the fires of hell if they did not restore the deposed prince to his throne and beg his forgiveness. Seemingly, the stratagem was not only successful, but the tribe continued to worship the secret, mysterious sanctuary of the false deity for a very long time. According to another legend, this cavern was inhabited by the last Aztec emperor, Cuauhtémoc, whose name means “eagle who falls on its prey.”

las. They would come out to do battle with the Spanish soldiers, who they defeated several times; but when they were beaten, they hid in the caverns, frustrating their pursuers, who eventually gave up the search.

Later, Ascencio de Alquisiras would use the interior of the caverns to hide silver, gold, jewels and money that he took from the Spaniards around Taxco and the surrounding areas.

The indigenous inhabitants of the town of Cacahuamilpa carefully hid the existence of the caves from the Spanish invaders until in 1834,

when Mexico was already independent, they hid Don Manuel Sáenz de la Peña, a highly respected rich merchant from the town of Tetecala wanted by the authorities for having injured another man in a violent quarrel.

Some time later, once Sáenz returned home, he surprised the people of Tetecala with his fantastic stories of what he had seen inside the caverns. Moved by these stories, the town's inhabitants organized the first recorded excursion to the site.

Another legend says that the famous bandit Agustín Lorenzo, the terror of the region, used

Bells) in Querétaro, one of the victorious leaders of the republic who later became president of Mexico wrote underneath the empress's words, "Sebastián Lerdo de Tejada went beyond this point."

On March 21, 1881, General Porfirio Díaz visited the spot, with his wife Carmen Romero Rubio and a large party. At the banquet given there for him, the famous composer Juventino Rosas debuted his marvelous waltz *Carmen*, composed in honor of the general's wife.

One of the most charming tales of a visit to the caves was written by Doña Francisca Cal-



Elsie Montiel

the caverns as one of his hide-outs, foiling persistent searches by law enforcement. Popular legend has it that on nights with a full moon, a throng of horses and riders said to be the souls of Agustín Lorenzo and his men can be seen coming out of the caverns.

In 1866, the Empress Carlota Amalia visited the caverns, and in the Palm Room wrote, "María Carlota was here," in Spanish on the wall. Years later, in 1872, when the monarchy had been overthrown and Emperor Maximilian shot on the Cerro de las Campanas (Hill of the

derón de la Barca, wife of Spain's first ambassador to Mexico after independence. It is published as letter 33 in her book of correspondence, *La vida de México* (Life in Mexico).

Stories and legends abound, making it difficult to collect them all. Many famous people have visited the caverns, attracted by the beauty of Mexico's underground world. Among them are General Antonio López de Santa Ana; Presidents Emilio Portes Gil and Adolfo López Mateos; the intellectual Guillermo Prieto; the geographer Alexander von Humboldt; the Chil-

ean poet Gabriela Mistral, who dedicated a famous poem to the caverns; and intellectuals and writers like Mariano Escobedo, Manuel Orozco y Berra and Ignacio Comonfort, among others.

The part of the caverns opened to the public in 1920 include 20 “rooms,” separated by enormous walls of natural rock and connected by a gallery. Inside, the ceilings are between 30 and 70 meters high. Local people have named the rooms according to the “figures” they seem to represent: for example, the porch, the jewel

Rivers, which emerge and join after a long run through the bowels of the mountain range. The most accepted theory about the caves’ origin is that they resulted from tectonic activity, the collision of underground plates, which created fissures or cracks in the limestone. Into these cracks filtered underground water rich in carbon dioxide, combining with other factors like pressure and temperature to form cavities and protrusions.

The site was declared a national park on April 23, 1936, by presidential decree signed by Lázaro Cárdenas. The decree stipulates that the state authorities who manage the site had to give 25 percent of the proceeds to local inhabitants. But this was never carried out, so the communities decided to demand their rights from the Ministry of Tourism. Since they were unsuccessful, they agreed to take over the caves until the debt had been paid. Today, the caverns are managed by the Union of Inhabitants of Communities in Possession of the National Cacahuamilpa Caverns Park.

The park has two caverns, the Cacahuamilpa and the Carlos Pacheco; two galleries; two underground rivers (the Chontacuatla and the San Jerónimo); and two chasms. In the medium term, the park management plans to create interpretative walkways, rough cabins, a hanging bridge over the river, visits to the chasms, trips on horseback, rides down the subterranean rivers and along the rapids, as well as adventure sports like rappelling and rock-climbing. For all of this, they will have the advisory services of experts. The management has also professionally trained its staff in caving.

These caverns are located in the Taxco de Alarcón municipality, 36 kilometers from the city of Taxco, near the border with the State of Mexico, 146 kilometers from Mexico City and 68 kilometers from Cuernavaca. **NM**

Rubén Vázquez



box, the dawn, the curtains, the throne, the dome and the arms plaza. After a two-kilometer journey along a walkway illuminated by artificial light—since no source of natural light penetrates here—going through the different rooms, the appreciation of its beauty and its whimsical formations will always depend on each person’s imagination, which may consider the place an act of fantasy or fiction, comparable perhaps to a story in “A Thousand and One Nights.” The truth is that the Cacahuamilpa Caverns are and have been the world’s most majestic and frequently visited complex of caves.

The caves go beyond where the usual visitor can go since they are part of an extensive, partially underground, hydrological system fed mainly by the Chontalcuatlán and San Jerónimo

NOTES

¹ Information taken from the book by José Rebolledo Iglesias, the Cacahuamilpa Caverns manager from 1962 to 1971, *Grutas de Cacahuamilpa*.

Toward the Consolidation Of Neoconservatism in the U.S.

Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla*



Mannie García/Reuters

Victory.

In an article published in issue 68 of *Voices of Mexico*, I wrote that much more was at stake in the 2004 U.S. presidential elections than a simple change of party. From my perspective, after George W. Bush's first election and the 9/11 terrorist attacks, if the Republicans won again, the neoconservative revolution would begin to consolidate. If the Democrats won, there would be an attempt to recover the

advances in civil rights and liberties that were fought for in the 1960s and that have been dismantled little by little. Today we can say that, in effect, the result of the November 2 election is the beginning of the consolidation of the so-called neoconservative revolution.

George W. Bush was reelected with the greatest number of popular votes in the history of the United States, more than 60 million, in addition to beating his Democratic rival by a wide margin of more than 3 million votes

* Researcher at CISAN.

and 286 votes in the Electoral College against John Kerry's 252. Also, the Republicans consolidated their congressional majority, dominating both houses. The Senate has 55 Republicans, 44 Democrats and one independent. In the House of Representatives, the Republicans occupy 231 seats and the Democrats 200. Today, there are 28 Republican governors and 22 Democrats. Without a doubt, what we are witnessing is a political realignment which has been going on since the time of Ronald Reagan, with a single Democratic interlude, the presidency of William Clinton, whose ideology we could classify as center-of-the-road.

Undoubtedly, all these electoral figures have been read by President Bush as a mandate to continue along the path paved by his policies. It is important to point out that in order to implement them, he will not have to deal with a divided Congress, since he will have his party's support. Nothing leads us to think that he will try to unify the United States, since his reading of the situation reaffirms that a majority of the population approves both his domestic and his foreign policies. From now on, he has two years to implement his policies with no limits, or in the best of cases with few restrictions, before the next congressional elections in 2006.

WHY DID BUSH WIN?

The first point to be made about the recent elections is that they showed society to be deeply divided. It could be argued that this is nothing new given that the previous election had been decided by a single vote in the Supreme Court and only about 500 highly con-

tested votes in Florida, the state that gave the Republicans the majority in the Electoral College. However, we should remember that in those elections the threat to U.S. democracy actually came from the many voters who believed that their votes would not make a big difference. Also, the two parties' platforms were very similar and balloting was more influenced by the candidates' personalities and the effectiveness of the campaigns than by big differences in programmatic proposals.

The two strongest candidates in 2000, George W. Bush and Al Gore, fought over the ideological center without presenting clear alternatives. This means that initially the population was not really divided, but that it polarized later because of the dirty way the elections were carried out.

In contrast, the 2004 civic exercise did reveal a profoundly divided society.

The three most important issues of the 2004 election were the vote against gay marriage, abortion and stem cell research, all controversial matters of utmost importance for religious groups.

The candidates' positions clearly went to the extremes. As a result, 51 percent of the population felt better represented by an eminently conservative party and 48 percent by one with a broad liberal bent. The former is in favor of the war with Iraq and the latter expresses serious doubts about it. The former supports so-called preventive war as a foreign policy strategy and the latter is in favor of international mul-

tilateral institutions. The Republicans condemn abortion and the Democrats defend it as a victory for women. The former see gay marriage as an attack on the traditional family while the latter want to recognize homosexuals' right to legalize their relationships. The former are totally against stem cell research, while the latter want it to be done for primarily medical reasons.

These are not small differences; they are indications of a huge polarization. Although U.S. institutions are solid enough to handle it, the breach that the war has created is undoubtedly a serious threat to social cohesion.

It is important to emphasize that this Republican victory runs counter to one of the traditional axioms of electoral politics: that the electorate votes according to the state of its wallet. George W. Bush inherited a U.S.\$236 billion surplus from Bill Clinton, and today the country has a more than U.S.\$400 billion deficit. Almost a million jobs have been lost, unemployment is at 5 percent and indicators of economic recovery are barely showing up. It is clear that 80 percent of those who voted thinking about the economic situation favored the Democratic candidate.

The election was also not decided by a public perception of crisis, times when Americans traditionally tend to close ranks around their president. Despite being a country at war, this did not mark the electoral trends. Although 86 percent of those who said their vote was for a war against terrorism voted for Bush, this was not the main driving force behind the electorate's choice.

The real driving force behind these elections was something much more profound: a concern about American values. It was the social issues that

¿HOW DID THE U.S. POPULATION VOTE?	
SECTORS OF THE POPULATION THAT BUSH WON	
Men (in general)	55 %
White men	62 %
White women	55 %
With over \$200,000 in income	63 %
Non-unionized	54 %
Housewives	63 %
Without college degree	53 %
SECTORS OF THE POPULATION THAT KERRY WON	
Women (in general)	51 %
Non-white men	61 %
Non-white women	75 %
African-Americans	88 %
Latinos	53 %
With less than \$15,000 in income	63 %
Unionized	61 %
Homosexuals	77 %
With college degree	49 %

brought the voters out in numbers unheard of since the 1960s. It was precisely the aforementioned extreme positions that caused a high electoral participation. Approximately 125 million people voted, a figure as high as 1968. The Democrats naively thought that a higher number of voters would benefit them, but it was the religious groups that achieved the president's reelection.

The grand architect of the Republican campaign strategy was the neo-conservative Karl Rove, who visualized the importance of mobilizing the different churches of the conservative right in the United States, which did not participate actively in the 2000 elections. He was so successful that preachers urged the different religious groups to get out the vote and they spent a great deal of money in promoting it.

The candidates' positions clearly went to the extremes. As a result, 51 percent of the population felt better represented by an eminently conservative party and 48 percent by one with a broad liberal bent.

They did not concretely come out for one candidate or the other, but they did propose that people vote in favor of the values and positions that they defended.

In my view, the three most important issues of the 2004 election were the vote against gay marriage, abortion and stem cell research, all controversial matters of utmost importance for religious groups. These issues were put

to the vote in 11 states and defeated in all of them.

The Republican campaign message was oriented directly to the churches and religious unions. The important thing was to mobilize the party rank and file. Eighty percent of those who voted based on moral values supported Bush. The point to emphasize here is that together with the economy and the war, moral values were the most important cause of the very high participation of U.S. voters.

While it is true that the Kerry campaign targeted young people and he got their vote, the percentage of participation of this group did not increase significantly compared to 2000 (17 percent), while white regular churchgoers increased their participation, making a big difference. White men and women went to the polls to support Bush and defend their values.

Regionally, the Midwest, including Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, and the South went to the Democrats, except New Mexico, as did the West Coast, from California to Washington. Clear divisions can be seen both regionally and in the composition of the electorate.

In his famous journey to the United States, Alexis de Tocqueville perceived a great wall between church and state. However, today, that division seems to be breaking down. In their defense, however, the leaders of these churches argue that what the founding fathers did not want was the imposition of a national church, but that they saw no problem in the proliferation and political participation of the different churches.

However, it is obvious that religion and politics are today deeply intertwined in the United States.

The consequences will begin to be felt in the revocation of certain rights such as being allowed to get an abortion with qualified medical assistance, considered one of women's victories. On the other hand, the war has made for a roll-back of many civil rights: jailings without trial, and the violation of privacy such as the government controlling and spying on citizens' reading materials by forcing libraries to hand over information about the books and issues consulted, particularly those associated with Arab and radical Muslim movements. These apparently exceptional kinds of measures increase daily, strengthening the neoconservative revolution. All the limits that the democratic society had managed to set on security agencies with regard to secret missions, unexplained budgets and espionage seem to have been turned around, and we will see even more steps backward in this sphere.

Perhaps it is in foreign policy where this position is expressed most forcefully. In contrast with traditional conservatives, the neoconservatives propose what they call an active foreign policy. They were born as opponents to Soviet excesses and today point to radical Islamic groups as their main enemy. Unlike conservatives, the neoconservatives have well structured academic and theoretical positions for every issue.

Charles Krauthammer, one of their most important exponents, thinks that it is incorrect to talk about just a period with a single pole worldwide. He thinks that we should talk about an entire era, and proposes democratic globalism. He understands democracy as a useful instrument for achieving security and stability, but he suggests intervening only in those countries that represent fundamental interests. Thus,

his ideology is different from Wilsonian idealism, which talks about the promotion of democratic values, by proposing a pragmatic idealism according to which you should not intervene simply to promote democracy as an ideal, but only in those places which are considered of great interest for the United States, and to do so only when it can serve as a weapon in the fight against the identified enemy: Arab-Islamic radicalism. Obviously, he also considers the economic interests centered in the oil deposits in the region. In addition, he supports Israel as the most important consolidated democracy in the area. Lastly, he justifies preventive war to eliminate possible threats and questions the legitimacy of the international community that criticizes U.S. actions. Favoring his position is the fact that many dangers are not perceived as such in the beginning, such

This Republican victory runs counter to one of the traditional axioms of electoral politics: that the electorate votes according to the state of its wallet. Today the country has a more than U.S.\$400 billion deficit.

as in the case of Adolf Hitler. In his opinion, despite the problems with Iraq, the war has not been a total failure: although the situation is difficult, it could have been worse. He thinks that while no nuclear weapons or laboratories for biochemical warfare were found, the world is better off without Saddam Hussein.

The problem with this vision is that we can easily imagine a not very pro-

mising future with possible preventive attacks aimed at Iran or North Korea. We must ask ourselves when the so-called preventive wars will end and what the limit on this strategy is. This also leads us to ask how advanced democracy is in these regions, or up to what point instability and hunger cultivate terrorism. In the meantime, resentment toward the United States continues to grow in the region.

Because the United States is the world's largest economic and military power, I think that the only possible limit to its unbridled unilateralism must come from within, from the heart of that divided society that is beginning little by little to show some discontent. Undoubtedly this will grow in direct proportion to the number of U.S. soldiers who die in combat, a total of 1,279 in early December 2004.

In addition, inside the U.S. political right itself there are important divisions that could blossom with time. This must be taken into account together with an economy that is not giving indications of taking off or recovering. It is important to emphasize that the so-called conservative right does not support an active foreign policy. What is more, some propose a return to isolationism and protectionism. Others are very concerned with the deficit and fearful of the growth and power of the state.

At bottom, both liberals and conservatives mistrust a greater activism of the administration that can threaten their freedom, both economic and on issues of civil rights.

Very probably it will be precisely this domestic discontent that will once again put limits on the government's unbridled actions in the domestic sphere and in foreign policy. ■■■

The 2004 U.S. Elections A View from Mexico

Patricia de los Ríos*



Rick Wilking/Reuters

Donald Rumsfeld and Colin Powell celebrate the win.

An incumbent president who seeks re-election when his country is at war practically has victory guaranteed. The closeness of the electoral debate between George W. Bush and John Kerry and the poll results until the very end is a reflection of the fact that the United States is a profoundly divided nation. Despite this, the outcome favored not only the president but also the Republican Party. In that sense, we can speak of the consolidation of a conservative majority and the validation of the Bush administration's domestic and foreign policies.

Going beyond a specific analysis of the electoral results and the media clichés about the moral “issues”—which can include everything and anything—it is worthwhile asking what the deep causes of this surprising result are, a result that flies in the face of public opinion in the rest of the world. That opinion went from a feeling of solidarity and empathy with the American people after the September 11 attacks to a profound anti-Americanism reflected in opinion polls according to which, if the majority of the world's inhabitants had voted, John Kerry would be the president of the United States.

It is appropriate here to remember two periods in the history of that nation that can shed light on what is happening today: the end of the

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nineteenth century and the 1950s. Both times suffered from underlying fears: in the first, the fear of domestic change and the “other” that was already inside the United States; in the second, it was the increasing fear of the Cold War enemy.

At the end of the nineteenth century, like today, the U.S. economy and society had gone through very rapid changes. The rise of the corporations questioned many of the basic tenets of U.S. political economy. During that time, as well, a great wave of migration created serious social problems, giving rise to a xenophobic movement. In addition, the process of urbanization had profoundly changed social customs and affected the agricultural sector, which gave rise to protest movements like populism. The countryside and the city were divided by a deep gap in values.

In the last three decades of the twentieth century, the United States went through equally profound changes. The end of the Cold War presupposes the exercise of hegemony with no counterweights; the process of globalization is headed up by the United States, but its effects are also felt in different economic and social sectors; the last census shows that there has been a wave of immigration similar to that at the end of the nineteenth century. In recent decades, U.S. society has witnessed the massive incorporation of women into productive life, at the same time that social values have liberalized with regard to homosexuality, abortion and race relations.

Many social sectors have suffered from these changes, just like at the end of the nineteenth century. They perceive them as a threat to a life-style that for many is by now only a myth they cling to desperately. In that sense,

Professor Samuel P. Huntington’s last book, *Who We Are*, is a sophisticated reflection of the fear of change, the fear of foreigners and of previously marginalized sectors of society.

These generalized fears have led to the strengthening of conservative groups both inside and outside the Republican Party and have transformed the electoral map of the United States. This was seen at the polls thanks to an electoral system in which each district is won by a majority and in which the presidential election is indirect.

Despite the conservative victory, if we analyze the election results more closely, we will see that the Republicans

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only won by 3.5 million votes, and that John Kerry won in urban areas and among young people. However, in contrast with the end of the nineteenth century, when the Democratic machines in the North and East were able to incorporate the new immigrants, this time the Republicans were able to divide the Hispanic minority. This could create a new trend that will strengthen the conservative electoral coalition even more. One of the most interesting new aspects of these elections, a phenomenon that could change the political future of the United States, was the inclination of Hispanic voters for the Republican Party.

Although the Bush family has not managed to hook up with the majority of the Afro-American electorate, we can say that it could be the main architect of a new orientation for a fundamental part of U.S. Hispanics. The Bushes have contributed importantly to the Republican Party understanding that the United States is increasingly a nation of nations and that, in that context, Hispanics play a very important role because they are the largest minority. If the party consolidates its dominion over the Cuban minority and adds to that between 40 and 50 percent of the rest of the Hispanic community, it would be able to create an almost invincible new electoral coalition. For that reason, President Bush has been consistent in naming Hispanics for the highest posts they have ever occupied in the public administration, such as the Attorney General’s Office and the Department of Commerce.

SHADES OF THE 1950S

The fear of change is reflected in the strengthening of conservative social sectors; after the September attacks, it fused with the fear of presumed enemies in the United States, manifested at other times in its history, like during McCarthyism.

Historian Arthur Schlesinger said that during the 1950s the United States had become incredibly prosperous but that people were afraid of communists and of anything that questioned prevailing ideas, customs or leaders. He said that the U.S. population lived under a heavy cloud, humorless, sanctimonious, foolish, and singularly lacking in irony and self-crit-

icism. He thought that the climate of the late 1950s was probably the most boring and depressing in the nation's history.

If we replace the word "communist" with the word "terrorist", we would have a good description of the intellectual and moral climate prevalent in the United States today and that explains, in part, the election outcome.

That climate is also related to the one that existed at the beginning of the Vietnam War when, just like today in Iraq, the conflict was escalating without anyone imagining how big it would become. In 2004, despite the fact that people thought that the war in Iraq would play a fundamental role, the voters developed a peculiar blind spot about the growing disaster and voted according to their innermost fears.

In addition, the Democratic Party has not been able to articulate an alternative vision. It was able to occupy the White House with President William Clinton thanks to his political genius and also to the fact that he was able to take over the Republican discourse, pushing political debate in the United States further and further to the right.

It was interesting that there were two types of campaigns around John Kerry: one led by the party and another led by the groups and social organizations who were against Bush but retained a critical attitude toward a party surrounded by Republicans, hounded by the accusation —like in the 1950s— that whoever is against the president's policies is anti-American.

Thus, despite growing Republican conservatism, and given the lack of an

alternative Democratic vision, it is possible to predict protest movements against the Bush administration and above all against the war in Iraq that will go against the current of the dominant political climate.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Although the president appealed for unity and bipartisanship immediately after his electoral win, his actions and nominations to his new cabinet point to the consolidation of a partisan, unilateral policy, both domestically and abroad.

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From the political point of view, building a permanent electoral coalition that supports the Republican majority is a strategic task of both presidential advisor Karl Rove, the architect of the president's victory, and the party. In matters of public policy, the electoral results are going to allow the president to consolidate conservative slants on nominations to the judiciary and economic and foreign policy.

Despite the budget deficits and the enormous costs of the war in Iraq, the Bush administration has announced its intention of continuing tax cuts, above all for corporations, and privatization of social security funds.

It is very possible that the Republican administration will be able to stamp a consistently conservative orientation on all three branches of government, including the judiciary. In the case of the Supreme Court, given the age and ailing health of some of the judges, President Bush will be able to change the relationship of forces by only naming two, since in recent times many of the court's decisions have been made with a vote of five to four. This could change the orientation of the court for decades and reverse decisions about the right to abortion, prayer in schools and other important issues. In addition, the Republicans may also be able to reorient the judiciary through the federal appeals courts, whose judges are nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

With regard to environmental policy, a second Bush administration will increase its efforts to reverse the achievements of the Environmental Protection Agency, particularly with regard to opening up lands previously protected from corporate exploitation. In addition, it will continue the international policy inaugurated when the United States refused to sign the Kyoto protocol and will persist in ignoring scientists' warnings about climate change, which could have serious effects on the future of the environment, both of the U.S. and the world.

Most of the policy moves will be opposed by the Democrats and different social groups. However, the new Republican majority is going to have an enormous impact in all these areas since, despite the fact that 50 million Americans voted against these policies, the Republicans are already talking about a conservative mandate that legitimizes their decisions.

FOREIGN POLICY

Ignoring international public opinion and the opposition of many governments, the steps the president of the United States has taken, particularly naming Condoleezza Rice as secretary of state, indicate that he will maintain the same course of action as during his first term. In that context, the priority will be policy on Iraq.

Along with the war, terrorism will be a fundamental item on the agenda both in domestic and foreign policy. The consequences of internal security measures will have to be monitored, going from the violation of Americans' individual liberties to scientific policy and the response to terrorist groups in coming months.

Europe, in particular is facing the dilemma of bending to U.S. policy or becoming a counterweight to it, which also would imply accepting the political and economic costs, costs that it does not seem ready to pay even if it does not seem to be happy with the U.S. election outcome. In that sense, it is possible to hope that the majority of countries adjust their expectations about their relationship with the United States, as happened in the 1980s during the Reagan administration.

Given the electoral results in Uruguay and Chile and the presence of Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva in Brazil, Latin America seems more inclined to swing to the left, although in very different conditions than the 1970s. Nevertheless, even the most timid re-

forms could enter onto a collision course with the Bush administration although for the moment Latin America is not one of the U.S.'s priorities.

Despite the opposition of almost half the electorate to the Bush administration, if the Republicans consolidate their electoral majority in the next elections and their political agenda in the three branches of governments and more than half the states, the 2004 election results may be felt for decades to come and change the course of U.S. politics. **MM**

NOTES

¹ Gerald Howard, *The Sixties* (New York: Paragon House, 1991), pp. 29-30.



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The Changing Influence Of the Hispanic Vote

Manuel Chávez Márquez*



Guadalupe Pérez/Cuartoscuro

Mexican migrants waiting in line for temporary entry permits. El Paso, Texas.

HISPANICS ENTER THE U.S. POLITICAL ARENA

Hispanic voters entered the political mainstream in the 2004 election as a significant political force that showed not only numbers but swift decisions. The traditional assumption that Hispanics were a loyal hard vote for the Democratic Party was thwarted in this year's election. As a result, Latinos have achieved special recognition in this election. Clearly, the political parties will not take the Latino vote for granted,

and they will need to get closer to this voting group, addressing their concerns and political interests. And this is expected to increase, as Hispanics become registered voters more quickly than any other group in the United States.

Observers, media analysts and political pollsters were equally divided as to how Hispanics would vote in the 2004 presidential election. By mid-March, the *Wall Street Journal* equated the Hispanic vote to immigration proposals, giving little hope for President Bush among registered Latino voters. By mid-September the same newspaper documented the efforts of the Kerry campaign in Florida and the coun-

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terattack that the Bush Republicans launched to keep a tight control of Cuban-American voters.¹ Florida was considered at that time contested terrain, giving Kerry only a marginal advantage over Bush. The magazine *Business Week* published an article in July citing different polls by Hispanic organizations that supported the notion that more Hispanics favored Senator Kerry and most Democratic candidates. However, the same article also acknowledged how diverse and complex Hispanics' political agenda was and how difficult it would be for the candidates to accommodate it. However, Latinos' interests were more aligned with the rest of Americans than with an exclusionary segment of the U.S. society, showing that education, economy and health care played a critical role for Latino voters. If a presidential candidate wanted to win their vote, he needed to do more than just throw some Spanish phrases into campaign speeches.²

Most Hispanic news media also capitalized on the attention that the mainstream media paid to Latinos. *La Opinión*, a large newspaper printed in Spanish in Los Angeles, reported in July that Latinos would vote on a large scale for Senator Kerry.³ Their polls indicated a 62 percent preference for Kerry over a mere 32 percent for President Bush. At the same time another Spanish-language newspaper, San Antonio's *La Prensa*, emphasized the importance of the Hispanic vote, and especially its relevance to southern Texas. This newspaper not only outlined the need for Latinos to register and vote but predicted a high turnout.⁴ Even professional journals directed toward Hispanics in leadership positions in higher education pointed out the educational issues that Latinos should fo-

cus on in the presidential candidates' platforms. Most Latino magazines also reached out and underlined for their readers that education was the number one issue for Hispanics, as shown in multiple polls and statements from Latino leaders.⁵

What is clear from the media attention is that Hispanics were on the political screen of both political parties before the election. The parties approached that issue in different ways. The November 2 electoral results clearly stated that attention to Latino voters and their issues would pay off.

While 54 percent of registered Latinos supported President Bush's initiative for temporary workers, 84 percent supported Senator Kerry's proposal that provided means to legalize current immigrants' status.

HISPANICS CLOSER TO THE U.S. MAINSTREAM

While it is too early to disentangle the exact profile of the Hispanic vote, patterns in the exit polls can be noted. Hispanic votes reflect the polarization of the American electorate, not of the group itself. In fact, Hispanics are closer to the mainstream of U.S. society than other minorities in the United States. Hispanics are as divided as the rest of the U.S. on issues such as abortion, gay marriage and gun control, the three most divisive issues for Americans in the last 20 years.⁶

In the 2004 election, the Hispanic vote tended to follow a candidate not

a party. While most Hispanics voted for Senator Kerry (53 percent), many shifted their support from the Democratic Party and voted for President Bush (44 percent). This means that there was an increase of almost 9 net points of those who voted for President Bush vis-à-vis the previous election. However, those net points represent an impressive 26 percent increase in favor of the Republican candidate. The vote given to the Democratic candidate by Hispanics also was a solid 9-point decline for the Democrats (see table 1).

Interestingly, not only Hispanics increased their vote for the Republicans. There was also some desertion by African-Americans. However, as seen in table 1, the Black vote continues to be captured by the Democrats. Of all groups, almost 9 out of 10 blacks voted for Senator Kerry. As an ethnic or racial group, only Asians voted more Democratic, mirroring the pattern of African-Americans.

Hispanics also showed in the 2004 election that their importance is not only based on numbers but on the position of their vote, debunking a perception of loyalty and hard vote for the Democratic Party. Indeed, Hispanics who were considered a solid block for the Democrats showed that their vote is as changing and as important as any other vote in the country. For the Democrats, the challenge is to actively engage with the communities to cultivate and regain their preference.

This is a serious setback for the Democratic Party, which believed that Hispanics were to be trusted as loyal constituents similarly to African-Americans. In fact, just before the Democratic Party national convention, the National Committee explicitly said that

TABLE I
1996-2004 ELECTIONS VOTE PROFILES
(IN PERCENTAGES)

	PARTY	1996	2000	2004	2000-2004 PERCENT CHANGE
Total vote	Dem	49	48	48	0%
	Rep	41	48	51	6%
	Ind	8	2		
Gender					
Men 46	Dem	43	42	44	5%
	Rep	44	53	55	4%
	Ind	10	3		
Women 54	Dem	54	54	51	-6%
	Rep	38	43	48	12%
	Ind	7	2		
Race and ethnicity					
White 79	Dem	43	42	41	-2%
	Rep	46	54	58	7%
	Ind	9	3		
Black 12	Dem	84	90	88	-2%
	Rep	12	8	11	38%
	Ind	4	1		
Hispanic 8	Dem	72	62	53	-15%
	Rep	21	35	44	26%
	Ind	6	2		
Asian 2	Dem	43	54	58	7%
	Rep	48	41	41	0%
	Ind	8	4		
Source: Table and calculations prepared with data from CNN exit polls, AP and Edison/Mitofsky, NBC, CBS and ABC (www.exit-poll.net).					

Hispanics were to play a prominent role in 2004. Yet, the party ultimately failed to reach that so-called prominent constituency. This also illustrates a serious problem for the Democratic Party: the loss of connection with its traditional rank and file. More people who are expected to vote Democratic based on ethnicity, income and education are deserting it for lack of outreach and representation.

The increase in Latino votes for Bush in 2004 as compared to the 2000

election is a research project in itself. For instance, in Texas, where Bush was governor, Latinos voted for him at higher rates than in the previous election. In 2004, 59 percent of Hispanics voted for Bush as opposed to 43 percent who voted for him in the 2000 election. Clearly, in a political party that has more detractors of immigration than supporters, Bush was able to dodge the waves of his own party's ultra-conservative members. Also, one thing that President Bush was able to

ignore was the anti-immigrant right. That is the new analysis of conservative media outlets like the *Wall Street Journal*, where Jason Riley wrote about how the GOP acknowledged the importance of the Hispanic vote and decided to go with an outreach agenda.⁷

Part of the reason for the Latino vote increase in favor of President Bush in 2004 is explained by a steady and directed campaign strategy to win what they perceive as a swing vote. So, the Republican Party paid special attention to swing voters, especially to the Hispanic electorate. In fact, after the election most Republican political strategists in TV news shows acknowledged that their party focused special attention on swing states and swing voters. The strategy focused on swing states like Pennsylvania, Florida and Ohio, which according to an analysis published seven days before the election by the *New York Times*, were what was needed to win the entire election.

HISPANICS' PREFERENCES IN THE
2004 ELECTION

In 2004, the electorate was faced with two candidates with completely different styles, ideology and approaches to solving the U.S.'s problems. Latinos were no different from the rest of the electorate, and that shows that they were aligned closely to issues and priorities.

There is general perception among political analysts, journalists and even more markedly by some members of political parties that Hispanics respond to issues in an inverse way to the rest of the population. The recent survey of the Pew Hispanic Center on political and civic attitudes of Latinos (con-

TABLE 2
IMPORTANT ISSUES RANKED BY LATINO VOTERS

ISSUES	PERCENTAGE RANK
Education	54
Economy and jobs	51
Health care	51
U.S. campaign against terrorism	45
War in Iraq	40
Crime	40
Social security	39
Moral values	36
Taxes	33
Federal budget deficit	30
Immigration	27

Source: The 2004 National Survey of Latinos: Politics and Civic Participation. Pew Hispanic Center.

ducted from April to June 2004) showed that Hispanics in general were not significantly different from the rest of the population.⁸

The significant change the survey showed was that Latinos were looking at the issues on the basis of self-interest and not based on political parties' assumptions. For many who have not studied Hispanics closely, it was easy to place immigration at the very top of the Hispanic agenda. That was a very misplaced assumption since immigration was ranked last by registered Latinos. At the top of the agenda were issues such education, the economy and jobs and health care. As seen in table 2, the war on terror and the war in Iraq were ranked after more local and domestic issues.

In examining the topics ranked by registered Latinos, it is important to note some issues around immigration. First, 60 percent believed that immigration helps the economy, however almost one third (31 percent) believed that immigration depressed wages and affected their income and employment

Latinos' interests were more aligned with the rest of Americans than with an exclusionary segment of U.S. society, showing that education, the economy and health care played a critical role in their vote.

opportunities. Moreover, if the questions focused on immigration policies, then almost 46 percent believed that the number of immigrants accepted in the U.S. should be kept at the same levels, and only 16 percent thought that immigration needs to be reduced. While 54 percent of registered Latinos supported President Bush's initiative for temporary workers, a majority (84 percent) supported Senator Kerry's proposal that provided means to legalize their status. This seems to show that Hispanics are very well aware of immigration issues and that they support certain comprehensive measures; but

immigration as a topic ranks very last on their list of issues to be considered in voting in the presidential election.

The election results also seem to indicate that security concerns and the war in Iraq played important roles in the election. As noted before, Latinos mirrored the rest of the population in terms of their ranking about these issues. The only topic that was not closely matched was moral values, which for most Americans who voted for Bush was the number one or two issue of importance.

THE ELECTION AND HISPANIC INFLUENCE IN THE U.S. POLITICAL ARENA

The Washington Editors Association official publication declared another winner in the election: Hispanic voters.⁹ The article said that the expanding population in key swing states capture more attention during the campaign, as expressed by the U.S.\$12 million spent in political advertising. According to the advertising news magazine *Advertising Age* both political parties increased almost three-fold what was spent in the 2000 election to influence Hispanics.¹⁰

Both parties recognized the importance of the Hispanic vote. Republican Party officials have tried to underline that the GOP no longer stands for the white-only party. The outreach examples in New York and Florida where steady efforts by Rudy Giuliani and Jeb Bush to connect the Republican Party with an electorate considered fundamentally Democratic seemed to work out. The Democrats, as seen in some parts of the Midwest like Ohio and Indiana, disconnected themselves

from their grassroots constituency letting Republicans refocus their efforts in states where the vote was volatile and insecure.

The election brought some important lessons for the parties, politicians and the media. First, it is clearer than ever that Hispanics are an important political force along with the rest of the Americans. As Hispanics move more generations into the social fabric of the United States, more of them will clearly identify with the core political values of the rest of Americans. Second and later generations of Latinos, while fundamentally identifying with the core values of other Americans, also become more distanced from the interests of their parents' and grandparents' homelands. Moreover, as more Hispanics move up on the social ladder their presence will be more evident in the national political arena.

Second, the dominance of the Mexican-origin population with almost two-thirds of the total number of Latinos tilts the scale in favor of its agenda. While this is a promising opportunity for Mexican-Americans, it is clear that their residence and location mostly in the Southwest makes a cohesive agenda a logistical nightmare. That could explain the election results, where clearly Hispanic political attention focuses on the issues and not on political party affiliations. Mexicans are still the prime segment of the Latino population with almost 65 percent of the total. The next group of importance is Puerto Ricans with 15 percent, then Cubans with 6 percent, and then South and Central Americans with an equal share of almost 5 percent each. That diversity not only brings different perspectives to each group's attitudes and perceptions based on their particular

experience in the U.S., but also underlines their regional location.

Third, Hispanics' experiences are similar to the Italian migrant experience in the U.S., not only because of their religious (conservative) Catholic background but because of their (low) educational level as well. Also, like Italians, Hispanics tend to rely more on their own people to find work than on getting jobs in government like Irish immigrants did at the end of the 1800s and the first decades of the 1900s. In fact, more Hispanics are succeeding as entrepreneurs and small business owners, replicating the social and economic mobility patterns of Ital-

As Hispanics move more generations into the social fabric of the United States, more of them will clearly identify with the core political values of the rest of Americans.

ians in most of the twentieth century. This will have an impact on the speed of affiliation to the economic core values of the rest of the society. The sooner a Hispanic cohort moves onto the social and economic ladder of the American society, the more closely that group identifies itself with the core values of Anglo-America.

The 2004 election simply focused attention on the importance of Hispanics in the U.S. electorate. It also underlined the fact that Americans are fundamentally divided, as are Latinos. At a time when division seems to be the norm, Hispanics are also divided by origin, residence, migrant expe-

rience and other socio-demographic factors. The challenge for a prosperous future for all is what former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani said on the show "Meet the Press" the Sunday after the election: "Now the challenge is to unite the country." If only President Bush could achieve that. ■■■

NOTES

¹ Jackie Calmes, "Bush gambit for Hispanic vote fizzles: immigration proposal is victim of presidential inattention and resistance in both parties," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 10, 2004, p. A4, and Jose De Cordoba "Kerry seeks Cuban-American beachhead; Bush travel restrictions could create an opening for the Democrat in Florida," *The Wall Street Journal*, 20 September, 2004, p. A4.

² Alexandra Star and Paul Magnusson, "It takes more than a little Español," *Business Week*, 12 July, 2004, p. 58.

³ Maribel Hastings, "Los probables votantes Latinos se inclinan por John Kerry," *La Opinión* (Los Angeles), 23 July, 2004, p. 1A.

⁴ "Su voto es su voz," *La Prensa* (San Antonio), March 21, 2004, p. 2, and "Se espera participación record de Latinos en elecciones del 2004," *La Prensa* (San Antonio), 21 March, 2004, p. 2A.

⁵ *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education* (New Jersey), 17 May, 2004, p. 32.

⁶ Pew Hispanic Center, "The 2004 National Survey of Latinos: Politics and Civic Participation" (Washington, D.C.: The Pew Hispanic Center/Kaiser Foundation, July 2004).

⁷ Jason L. Riley, "Ignore the Anti-Immigrant Right; Bush Did," *The Wall Street Journal* (New York), 22 November, 2004, p. A15.

⁸ The Pew Hispanic Center, op. cit.

⁹ *The Kiplinger Letter*, Washington, vol. 81, no. 45, November 2004, p. 1.

¹⁰ Ira Teinowitz, "Pols spend big to court Hispanic vote," *Advertising Age*, vol. 75, no. 33 (Chicago), 16 August, 2004, p. 3.

Ten Years of NAFTA = Migration Plus¹

Mónica Vereá Campos*



Migration of highly skilled workers and professionals between Mexico, the U.S. and Canada increased with NAFTA.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is the most ambitious trade agreement ever signed by Mexico. Ten years after its coming into effect, our country has become the United States' third most important partner and Canada's fifth. This has resulted in broad regional economic interaction among many sectors, greater dynamism in foreign investment and myriad trade transactions that have led to diverse businesses being opened, a growing number of students, academics, businessmen and closer trilateral

inter-parliamentary and intergovernmental communication.

As is well known, NAFTA has no provisions to allow immigration among the three signatories despite Mexico's negotiators' having exerted strong pressure to include articles about the free movement of persons across borders. After a time, they opted not to keep pressing because of the high risk that the treaty might not be approved given the Americans' reservations. Countering this, it was argued that one of the benefits of NAFTA's approval would be that the dynamic exchange of goods would foster greater economic development in North Amer-

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TABLE I
NON-IMMIGRANT WORKERS ADMITTED TO THE U.S. BY CATEGORY IN NORTH AMERICA (1996-2003)

CATEGORIES	H1-B	H2-A	H2-B	O	P	Q	R	NAFTA	TOTAL*	PERCENT OF TOTAL ADMISSIONS
TOTALS										
1996	144,458	9,635	14,345	9,289	35,573	2,056	8,992	26,987	251,335	100
1998	240,947	27,308	24,895	15,023	46,988	1,921	10,863	59,061	427,006	100
1999	302,326	32,372	35,815	19,194	48,471	2,485	12,689	68,354	521,706	100
2000	355,605	33,292	51,462	25,373	56,377	2,726	15,342	91,279	631,456	100
2001	384,191	27,695	72,387	29,519	55,791	2,388	17,122	95,486	684,579	100
2002	370,490	15,628	86,987	29,164	54,694	2,221	19,115	73,699	651,998	100
2003	360,498	14,094	102,833	30,862	56,041	2,738	20,272	59,440	646,778	100
CANADA										
1996	4,192	127	1,738	688	2,900	49	595	26,794	37,083	14.75
1998	7,595	760	4,293	1,067	4,753	89	1,070	58,469	78,096	18.28
1999	10,235	766	3,946	1,188	5,580	65	1,264	67,076	90,120	17.27
2000	12,929	747	4,741	1,601	5,718	74	1,424	89,220	116,454	18.44
2001	16,454	524	5,593	1,619	5,913	91	1,439	92,915	124,548	18.19
2002	19,866	286	5,241	1,767	5,598	91	1,470	71,878	106,197	16.28
2003	20,947	362	4,851	1,826	5,873	83	1,462	58,177	93,581	14.46
MEXICO										
1996	5,273	8,833	5,539	236	5,831	98	512	193	26,515	10.54
1998	10,079	21,594	10,727	348	7,268	116	796	592	51,520	12.06
1999	12,257	26,069	18,927	561	8,731	120	907	1,278	68,850	13.19
2000	13,507	27,172	27,755	750	10,385	132	1,147	2,059	82,907	13.12
2001	14,423	21,569	41,852	881	10,508	139	1,377	2,571	93,320	13.63
2002	15,867	12,846	52,972	851	10,237	107	1,667	1,821	96,368	14.78
2003	16,290	9,924	65,878	1,472	10,375	123	1,717	1,269	107,048	16.55
* Totals include only the categories analyzed.										
Source: Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), Annual reports, Statistical Yearbook, years: 1999, 2001, 2002 and 2003. Temporary Admissions, Non-immigrants.										

ica, creating a significant number of jobs and, as a result, reducing the pressures to emigrate North.

As an incentive to trade, investment and transfers between companies, avoiding the need to certify or validate a job, temporary moves of professionals and their spouses and children were allowed. Based on the bilateral Free Trade Agree-

ment signed by the United States and Canada in 1989, NAFTA established four types of persons to whom a non-immigrant (Trade NAFTA or TN) visa would be granted in North America: business visitors, merchants and investors, people transferred between companies and about 70 classifications of professionals.

LABOR MOBILITY IN NORTH AMERICA THE U.S. CASE

An important number of foreign temporary workers were hired in the U.S. labor market because of the 1990s sustained economic growth. From 1996 to 2003, hirings of foreigners practically tripled, soaring from 221,000 to

650,126. Mexico is one of the countries that benefits from work visas issued to cover jobs that U.S. citizens supposedly do not want. Though in 1996, 32,468 Mexican temporary workers entered the United States under different categories, representing 10 percent of total admissions, by 2003 these hirings had quadrupled, reaching 112,779, or 17 percent of all work visas.

It is well known that most Mexicans, with or without a work visa, are employed in jobs requiring little training. In 2003, 9,924 (9 percent) obtained H2-A visas as agricultural workers, while 65,878 (61 percent) were given H2-B visas, given to low-skilled, non-agricultural workers. Only 16,290 people (15 percent) received H1-B visas for highly skilled workers. Twelve percent (artists, athletes, religious and/or workers with special skills) qualified for O, P, Q or R visas; and the ridiculous sum of 1,269 people (1 percent) were given TN visas for professionals based on NAFTA.

It is important to stress that three significant changes occurred from 1996 to 2003: a) a drop in hiring of Mexican agricultural workers (decreasing from 90 percent to 70 percent of total admissions for this category, perhaps due to the tedious, complicated bureaucratic red tape that U.S. farmers must plow through to justify the lack of local workers to take specific jobs, they prefer to hire undocumented workers); b) an increase in the hiring of H2-B workers, who expanded in this period from 5,539 to 65,878 as a direct response to the demand for unskilled workers for fast-growing sectors like construction and the service industry that the U.S. economy needs to maintain its competitiveness nationally and internationally; and c) a 300-percent

increase (from 5,273 to 16,290) in visas issued for highly skilled Mexican workers (H1-B), indicating a brain drain (see table 1).

Over the 10 years since NAFTA came into effect, the number of TN visas given to Mexicans in the United States was ridiculously low and disproportionate *vis-à-vis* those given to Canadians (98 percent of the 59,440 TN visas issued in the U.S. in 2003.² Regardless of the fact that until 2004 there was a cap of 5,500 visas for Mexicans, they have not been as successful as the Americans feared: some years, not even half of that number were requested. The reasons proffered have been the lack of dissemination by Mexican authorities, ambivalent because they believe that they promote a “brain drain,” or because of the difficulties professionals themselves encounter in actually getting this kind of visa, which has made them prefer requesting the H1-B.³ In contrast, it has been easier for Canadians to get a TN visa into the United States since they obtain them in their own country at their point of exit and no limits are established.

During the 1990s, the U.S. demand for both low-skilled and highly skilled workers was clear. To get an idea of its size, suffice it to say that between 1994 and 2003, 580,987 visas for Mexican temporary workers were issued (half of them in the last three years), most of them for low-skilled jobs. Also, 1,506,504 Mexicans (18 percent of all admissions between 1994 and 2003) entered the U.S. as immigrants, 30 percent of whom did so in the last three years.⁴ In this same period, 1,271,136 Mexicans were naturalized, an unprecedented figure that shows that the Non-Loss of Nationality Law is an

incentive for legal U.S. residents to have more interest in belonging to their new country and obtaining the rights they deserve as U.S. citizens (see table 2).

This explains why the Mexican community in the U.S., estimated at about 25 million people, has increased every year. This figure represents about 23 percent of Mexico’s population and 65 percent of the Hispanic community in the United States. Approximately 10 million people born in Mexico are thought to be living in the United States; that comes to almost one-third of the 34 million documented and undocumented immigrants.⁵ This means that Mexico is the United States’ most important source of both documented and undocumented migrants.

The issue of undocumented migrants in the United States —highly divisive but a priority— must be dealt with because it will continue to be part of the bilateral agenda for many years. According to 2003 figures, about 10 million undocumented migrants live in the United States; of these, 5.5 million were born in Mexico. While in the 1980s the annual net flow of migrants who stayed in the United States was 65,000, today the figure is believed to be about 430,000 undocumented migrants.⁶

This increase will probably lead to more virulent anti-immigrant attitudes and the emergence of proposals like Arizona’s Proposition 200 which forces everyone to demonstrate their legal migratory status to get access to health and educational services, among others. This proposition passed during the 2004 balloting, although it still is not being implemented because it is considered unconstitutional.⁷ It will be

no surprise if bills of this kind spring up in other states and have an impact on the national debate, particularly in Congress, as Proposition 187 did 10 years ago in the passing of IIRIRA in 1996.

THE CASE OF CANADA

More than 90 percent of Canadian migration to the United States is made up of highly skilled workers. Of the temporary foreign workers hired in Canada's labor market in 2002, 36 percent of the 87,910 came from North America: 20,302 from the U.S. and 11,393 from Mexico. These two groups occupied first and second place in total admissions (see table 3).

Most Mexican migration to Canada is a result of the Program of Mexican Temporary Agricultural Workers with Canada. This program began in 1974 with 203 workers. Thirty years

later, about 11,000 Mexicans labor in the fields of Quebec and Ontario. Despite an increase in undocumented immigrants in Canada, very few are Mexican.

In 2001, 8,337 TN visas (based on NAFTA) were issued to professionals to enter Canada, mainly from the U.S. Only 101 (1.2 percent) were given to Mexicans, which is why reassessing access to this document on a trilateral level is urgent.

Approximately 10 million people born in Mexico are thought to be living in the United States; that comes to almost one-third of the 34 million documented and undocumented immigrants.

THE CASE OF MEXICO

The 2000 census recorded 492,617 foreign residents in Mexico, 70 percent of whom come from the United States.⁸ The number of entries of different kinds of visitors to Mexico between 1995 and 2003 increased 160 percent. However, the number of people from North America who entered the country for business reasons increased five-fold, bringing the total to half a million in 2003, indicating the great amount of trade and international business during the period. In 2002, 53,286 Americans entered the Mexican labor market with TN visas, compared to the 1,289 Mexicans who were issued this kind of visa to work in the United States, a serious disproportion.

The significant increase in trade transactions between Mexico and its partners since NAFTA came into effect

TABLE 2
ADMISSIONS OF IMMIGRANTS AND NATURALIZED CITIZENS INTO THE U.S. FROM NORTH AMERICA (1994-2003)

YEAR	TOTALS		NORTH AMERICA		CANADA		MEXICO	
	IMMIGRANTS	NATURALIZED	IMMIGRANTS	NATURALIZED	IMMIGRANTS	NATURALIZED	IMMIGRANTS	NATURALIZED
1994	804,416	434,107	272,226	130,345	16,068	8,684	111,398	46,169
1995	720,461	488,088	231,526	175,216	12,932	7,597	89,932	81,655
1996	915,900	1,044,689	340,540	506,767	15,825	11,663	163,572	254,988
1997	798,378	598,225	307,488	273,954	11,609	6,639	146,865	142,569
1998	654,451	463,060	252,996	208,192	10,190	5,545	131,575	112,442
1999	646,568	839,944	271,365	385,605	8,864	9,353	147,573	207,750
2000	849,807	888,788	344,805	347,193	16,210	11,365	173,919	189,705
2001	1,064,318	608,205	407,888	200,939	21,933	7,551	206,426	103,234
2002	1,063,732	573,708	404,437	169,950	19,519	7,591	219,380	76,531
2003	705,827	463,204	250,726	130,848	11,446	6,408	115,864	56,093

Source: Yearbook of Immigration and Statistics, 2003. www.immigration.gov

TABLE 3
ADMISSION OF FOREIGN WORKERS INTO CANADA BY PLACE OF ORIGIN (1998-2002)

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	1998			1999			2000			2001			2002		
	NO.	%	RANK												
U.S.	24,851	31.5	1	24,592	29.18	1	26,969	29.54	1	24,417	25.55	1	20,302	23.09	1
Mexico	6,949	8.81	2	8,052	9.55	2	9,858	10.80	2	11,191	11.71	2	11,393	12.96	2
United Kingdom	5,307	6.73	3	6,278	7.45	3	6,702	7.34	3	7,253	7.59	3	6,316	7.18	3
Jamaica	5,120	6.49	4	5,484	6.51	4	5,400	5.91	4	5,798	6.07	4	5,519	6.28	5
France	4,232	5.36	6	4,701	5.58	6	5,311	5.82	5	5,127	5.37	5	4,648	5.29	7
Japan	4,503	5.71	5	5,031	5.97	5	4,274	4.68	6	4,371	4.57	7	5,383	6.12	6
Australia	3,741	4.74	7	3,673	4.36	7	4,060	4.45	7	4,917	5.15	6	5,661	6.44	4
Germany	2,126	2.69	9	2,287	2.71	8	2,463	2.70	8	2,579	2.70	9	2,155	2.45	9
India	1,358	1.72	11	1,480	1.76	11	2,230	2.44	9	2,074	2.17	10	1,865	2.12	10
Philippines	2,222	2.82	8	2,160	2.56	9	2,177	2.38	10	4,104	4.29	8	4,615	5.25	8
Trinidad/Tobago	1,721	2.18	10	1,653	1.96	10	1,777	1.95	11	NA	NA		NA	NA	
Total of first 10	60,772	77.0		63,911	75.83		69,444	76.06		71,831	75.17		67,857	77.18	
Total other countries	18,128	22.9		20,365	24.17		21,867	23.94		23,724	24.83		20,053	22.82	
Total	78,900	100		84,276	100		91,311	100		95,555	100		87,910	100	

Source: Citizenship and Immigration Canada (2002), "Foreign workers", Facts and Figures 2000, 2002, 2003 at <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts2000-temp/facts-temp-4.html>.

(about 1.5 times vis-à-vis the United States and more than double vis-à-vis Canada), plus important capital flows in the form of foreign direct investment, were catalysts for the movement of professionals, mainly Americans, into the Mexican labor market. In 1994, only 289 Canadians and 3,801 Americans were hired under the auspices of NAFTA and in other ways. Nine years later, these hirings increased substantially, and since 56,945 U.S. professionals and 3,973 Canadians were working in Mexico. Simultaneously, growing foreign direct investment had an impact on the increase in professionals coming to work in Mexico: 10,678 merchants and investors and 4,099 people transferred between companies came mostly from the United States in 2003, a 400-percent increase vis-à-vis 1996 (see table 4).

Not only did NAFTA not reduce Mexican migration to the United States, but it increased it substantially, and labor mobility will probably continue on the same levels in the near future.

Mexico, both a migrant sending and receiving country, is facing the important problem of simultaneously being a stop-over on the road to the United States. Not only Central Americans, but also Europeans and Asians, enter our country without documentation. This is yet another factor in the already conflictive bilateral migratory relationship, a situation exacerbated since the 2001 terrorist attacks.

REFLECTIONS ABOUT TEN YEARS OF NAFTA

The important growth of exports and foreign investment in North America has been insufficient in Mexico to create the jobs needed, push wages up and reduce the pressure to emigrate to the United States as NAFTA negotiators had hoped.

We must recognize that the recurring, prolonged economic crises that we have experienced during the period analyzed, together with the complex readjustment processes in the Mexican economy have not benefited certain sectors like agriculture but rather have caused severe regional inequalities. Added to this are important wage differentials, which reach as high as 10 to one; the increasing dependence on remittances sent by our fellow Mex-

TABLE 4
ENTRY OF PROFESSIONALS FROM THE U.S. AND CANADA TO MEXICO (2001-2003)

	BUSINESS VISITORS	MERCHANTS AND INVESTORS	PROFESSIONALS	TRANSFER OF PERSONNEL	TOTAL
United States					
2001	221,839	7,342	46,335	1,401	276,917
2002	219,759	6,841	53,786	1,959	282,345
2003	213,413	8,823	56,945	3,352	282,533
Canada					
2001	17,136	2,333	3,890	696	24,055
2002	14,727	1,938	3,773	713	21,151
2003	15,101	1,855	3,973	747	21,676
Totals (U.S. and Canada)					
2001	238,975	9,675	50,225	2,097	300,972
2002	234,486	8,779	57,559	2,672	303,496
2003	228,514	10,678	60,918	4,099	304,209

Source: Secretaría de Gobernación, Instituto Nacional de Migración, statistics section, 2001, 2002, 2003. www.inami.gob.mx

icans (that in 2004 came to about U.S.\$15 billion); and the growing, deeply rooted, highly technical social networks. All of this leads us to conclude that not only did NAFTA not fulfill the expectation that it would reduce Mexican migration to the United States, but it increased it substantially, and labor mobility will probably continue on the same levels in the near future.

NAFTA created a space for greater formal and informal, documented and undocumented labor mobility than was expected. As trade partners, we must take responsibility for the direction we take in the near future. For that reason, it is relevant to ask ourselves what our next step after NAFTA will be. Is it feasible to renegotiate this treaty with the aim of turning it into a NAFTA-Plus and include the free transit of persons in the European mode? What benefits will

Growth of exports and foreign investment in North America has been insufficient in Mexico to reduce the pressure to emigrate to the United States as NAFTA negotiators had hoped.

the project on the Initiative for North America, currently under discussion, bring and, in the future, the one for the Americas?

The Ernesto Zedillo and Vicente Fox administrations have not used the NAFTA infrastructure to initiate a collateral treaty on labor mobility, knowing that this would imply negotiations in other areas, for example, energy (oil and electricity), which for some Mex-

icans are taboos because entering into them would be an attack on strongholds of national sovereignty. Similarly, a debate of this kind among different sectors of our neighbors' societies would raise important doubts that could involve more rigid proposals of migratory control.

For the time being, as always, the United States is leading the debate on the issue. George W. Bush's clear win at the polls gives him sufficient legitimacy to position himself on the political spectrum as he pleases in the short and long term. Given his campaign promises to the Hispanic community, it is possible that new windows of opportunity may open up to take the Bush Plan out of the freezer and send it to Congress. This proposal, first made in January 2004 and based on many bills pending approval in the U.S. Con-

gress, would create a three-year, renewable guest workers' program.⁹ Bush considers that this would contribute to solving the problem of undocumented migration and the trafficking in persons derived from it.

His victory lets us think about his convictions: the global forces of supply and demand are the main reason for the attraction of migrants who take the jobs that Americans generally do not want and that employers pay less than established wages for. If he sends his guest workers' bill to the new Congress with its Republican—and therefore more conservative—majority, it may encounter difficulties.

Conscious that the migratory accord proposed at the beginning of the Bush and Fox administrations in 2001, one week before the September 11 terrorist attacks, has been frozen,¹⁰ given the new circumstances for national security in the region, it is not very wise to continue to insist on “the whole enchilada.” Since September 11, we cannot continue to conceive of the negotiation of an integral migratory accord without including another about regional security, even though, de facto, certain bilateral measures have been established to ensure that our shared border not be used by international terrorists.¹¹ It would be more viable to bilaterally negotiate the different parts of the accord *ad hoc*, in a fragmented, incremental way, keeping in mind that in the long run a more ambitious regional project could be developed.

In this way, the Mexican government could negotiate several initiatives bilaterally and trilaterally. Given the infrastructure created by NAFTA, it is indispensable to analyze the possibility of increasing the number of TN visas so a greater number of Mexicans could

get them. Bilaterally, it would be desirable to increase the number of H2-A, H2-B and H1-B visas given to Mexicans. The creation of H4-A and H4-B visas would make it possible to temporarily hire undocumented foreigners in the United States for up to six years, with the possibility of obtaining permanent residency in a set-up similar to the bill proposed in 2003 by Arizona's Republican congresspersons McCain, Kolbe and Jeff Flake.

It would be ideal to establish a specific financial project for Mexico's general economic development and that of sending regions in particular, with the aim of reducing the pronounced inequalities between Mexico and its trade partners which, in some areas, have increased during the period we are analyzing. It would be interesting to study the possibility of setting up a trust or matching fund with the participation of migrants and the federal and local governments of Mexico and the United States, like the “Three-for-One Program.”¹² Another proposal to be considered is creating educational projects that include “hiring-education-training” for technical training of temporary migrants, with the aim of their returning to their forgotten places of origin to contribute to them for the benefit of a future community of North America. ■■■

NOTES

¹ The author wishes to thank Érika C. Veloz Gutiérrez for her efficient technical support. A longer version of this article will be published as Mónica Vereá, “Movilidad laboral a diez años de la creación del espacio del TLCAN,” Monica Gambriel, comp., *Impacto del TLCAN en México a los 10 años* (Mexico City: CISAN-UNAM, at press).

² The number of TN visas issued reached its highest point in 2001, when 95,486 were given out to professionals (97 percent for Canadians) because of the important economic growth that occurred until the beginning of the millennium (see table 1).

³ Demetrios G. Papademetriou, “The Shifting Expectations of Free Trade and Migration,” Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, *NAFTA's Promises and Reality. Lessons from Mexico for the Hemisphere* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2004), p. 42.

⁴ Most Mexicans who enter the U.S. as immigrants do so under the family reunification clause and not on the basis of a job.

⁵ “Immigrant Population at Record High in 2004,” at www.cis.org, November 2004.

⁶ Center for Strategic Studies, “Managing Mexican Migration to the United States: Recommendations for Policy Makers” (Washington, D.C.: CSIS-ITAM, April 2004).

⁷ The proposition also obligates members of the public to denounce undocumented immigrants to the authorities, turning ordinary citizens into identity vigilantes.

⁸ The 1990 census recorded 380,824 foreigners residing in Mexico; in 1970, 192,208; and in 1950, 106,015. Secretaría de Gobernación, “México como país de destino,” *Anexo 3 del Documento de Trabajo 3* (Mexico City: Consejo Consultivo, May 27, 2004).

⁹ The workers would get credit in their home nations' retirement system, and the program would support the creation of savings accounts that could be accessed when the workers return home.

¹⁰ The migratory accord included border security, the promotion of economic development in migrant-sending regions, an increase in the number of visas, regularizing undocumented migrants' status and the establishment of a guest workers' program. For more information, see Mónica Vereá, *Migración temporal en América Del Norte. Propuestas y respuestas* (Mexico City: CISAN-UNAM, 2003), p. 15.

¹¹ In 2002 the “Alliance for the Border” was signed, establishing cooperation to create “intelligent borders” to strengthen security in the region and facilitate the legal transit of individuals and goods. In February 2003 a memorandum of understanding was signed about the repatriation of undocumented Mexican citizens who would be returned to Mexico by U.S. authorities. Also, a joint communique was issued establishing the Border Security Plan for 2004, which ratifies and broadens out the Plan of Action for Border Security, signed by both governments in June 2001. See Santiago Creel Miranda, “La migración y la seguridad entre México y Estados Unidos,” *Foreign Affairs en Español* no. 2, vol. 4, April-June 2004, pp. 2-12.

¹² The “Three-for-One Program” is an initiative of the Mexican government in which for every dollar migrants send to be used in infrastructure and development of their places of origin, the Mexican government will contribute three dollars: one from the federal budget, another from state funds and the third from municipal coffers. [Editor's Note.]

Quebec and Canada A Definitive Union?

Carlos Iván Mendoza Aguirre*



Reuters

The fleur-de-lis is the symbol of Quebec's separatists.

The end of the twentieth century brought with it the disappearance of some nations, causing the constitution of new nation-states. However, separatist tendencies latent for several decades have not been and may never be concretized. Quebec is an outstanding case in point: a Francophone enclave in North America whose independence movement dates at least from 1968, when the Parti Québécois was founded, which has won the provincial government twice. However, there are those who consider that separatist ideas emerged in 1763 when France ceded its Canadian territories to Great Britain. Since that time, the Francophones have tried to achieve special status based on their language and culture.

Other distinctive aspects of Quebec are the use of its own civil code, inspired in the French tradition, and its social institutions. One characteristic that reinforces its specificity is the adoption of Canada's constitutional reforms in 1982 without the consent of the Quebec population, bringing into question the degree of cohesion and respect for the Canadian national pact. Later, several unsuccessful attempts have been made to change the Constitution to return Quebec to the federation's norms.

The Quebec government has held two referendums in which the majority of the population has voted to continue as part of the Canadian federation, although by different percentages: 60 percent in 1980 and 50.6 percent in 1995. Clearly, the trend for sovereignty has strengthened, which is why some analysts predict that if there is a new referendum—which may happen in the not-too-distant future—the probability of a victory for separatism is more than feasible.

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If one wanted to deny the validity of nationalist demands, it could be argued that Quebec is not repressed, since, like the rest of Canada's provinces, it has broad jurisdiction in internal matters such as education, culture, health and natural resources, in addition to the fact that it is part of a modern, democratic, progressive nation that respects human rights.

While this is irrefutable, it is no less true that a significant part of its inhabitants want to go further and constitute themselves as an independent country. They have plenty of arguments, starting with the fact that the French presence in the region preceded the English and that, even when still part of Great Britain and later for two centuries as part of a predominantly Anglophone Canada, Quebec's culture has managed to endure despite efforts at assimilation in a country that defends multiculturalism.

However, while recognizing the "sovereignist" Quebecois' right to self-determination, it should be pointed out that they cannot be the only protagonists; the feelings of non-Francophone communities in the province and even the rest of Canadians have to be taken into account.

CONSEQUENCES OF AN INDEPENDENT QUEBEC

International Legal Consequences

Since Canada is a party to some of the world's most important economic and political agreements, inevitably, the issue of Quebec's continued presence in these mechanisms would be of vital importance in the eventuality of a separation.

Among the most important treaties and groups that Canada belongs to are the G-7 (the most developed nations), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the British Commonwealth. Today, Quebec benefits by belonging to these groupings, but if it became an independent state, it would probably be excluded from all of them. It would have to begin the entire process to consider its admittance, although in some, such as the Commonwealth or the G-7, it might

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not be admitted: the Commonwealth includes nations that not only were colonized by the United Kingdom, but are also Anglophone; and given the size of Quebec's economy, it would not have the slightest prospect of becoming part of the G-7 (as a matter of fact, the participation of the rest of Canada might even be at risk given the fact that GDP size is the criteria for membership, and Spain or South Korea, currently not G-7 members, would surpass it by a broad margin).

An independent Quebec could most probably become part of NATO given that its strategic location to the north of the United States cannot be ignored, and its being one of the developed

countries of the Northern Hemisphere would make it imperative. Also, an economy as "globalized" as Quebec's would have no difficulty becoming a member of the WTO.

Internal Political Consequences

Quebec is Canada's largest province, covering a little over 1.54 million square kilometers, making it the second largest state or province in the Americas, surpassed only by the Brazilian state of Amazonas. However, if it seceded, Canada is not the only country that runs the risk of seeing its territory decrease: Quebec could also lose a considerable part of its territory—as much as one-third—if that part decided to either continue to be part of Canada or establish one or more different nation-states. The greatest risks come from territorial claims on areas that from time immemorial have been settled by indigenous groups.

In addition to Quebec's possible internal territorial division and Canada being fragmented into two parts, collateral consequences of the division of Canada would be, first of all, the loss of the country's bilingualism. This would basically affect approximately 670,000 Francophones in New Brunswick. In addition, Ontario's predominance in the federation as the center of power in almost all spheres, particularly the economy, demographics and politics, would be accentuated. It not only has the largest industrial and capital base in the country, but it would become the center of culture and high tech industries, central aspects of Quebec's vitality. It is that vitality which today relatively limits Ontario's power because even though Quebec has fewer inhabitants and less

economic power, it is clearly the second province in these fields, followed at a great distance by British Columbia. This is why, if Quebec were no longer part of the country, that partial balance would completely disappear.

Economic Consequences

Quebec is very important to Canada economically; it contributes about 23 percent of the gross domestic product, the second biggest of all the provinces.

If Quebec were an independent country, it would be the world's nineteenth largest economy, similar in size to Austria or Sweden, and larger than Denmark, Greece, Norway and Portugal. It should be noted that its high level of development is due to several things, among them, in addition to being the federation's largest province, covering 15.4 percent of the nation's territory, it possesses important natural resources, like minerals, water and forests. Also, it is the second most populated province in Canada (Ontario is the largest) with 7.4 million inhabitants. Despite these undoubted advantages, Quebec is relatively less developed than other provinces like Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Despite no plans for a new referendum, in recent years the Quebec government has carried out its international relations at an unprecedented level for a province. This can be seen in Quebec's numerous delegations abroad, the number of offices and staff of which could almost be comparable those of the foreign service of a medium-sized country.

The central Canadian government, for its part, has not been able to come up with a formula that satisfies the longed-for constitutional recognition of Quebec as a "distinct society," or at least of its "special character." This is despite the fact that it has been a constant demand for at least 40 years which has not been appropriately resolved. This is partly because of the different vision the Quebecois and the rest of the Canadian people have of the role federalism should play.

It could be said that the federation and the majority Anglo-Saxon provinces favor the conception of the Canadian "cultural mosaic" based on multiculturalism (in part as a response to Que-

It must be recognized that the people of Quebec have had the opportunity to express themselves and the guarantee that their preference about creating a new state or continuing to be part of the Canadian federation would be taken into account.

becois demands). This recognizes the contribution of all the cultures that make up Canada today, even if it goes against expressly defining a Canadian nationality or personality given that when you recognize all the multi-national components, the majority of which are the product of immigration, the meaning of a true local culture is neglected.

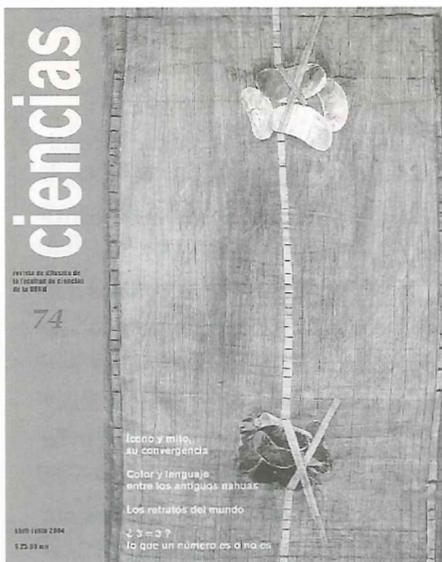
Also, the Anglo-Saxon majority sees federalism as a formula that grants equality to provincial governments, which is reinforced by the federal government's intention of centralizing even more and giving no more powers to the provinces nor accepting that they have different attributions. For them, Quebec is just one more of the country's ten provinces

and, therefore, giving it special recognition would mean abandoning inter-provincial legal equality and even cause national political instability.

However, it must be recognized that the people of Quebec have had the opportunity to express themselves and the guarantee that their preference about creating a new state or continuing to be part of the Canadian federation would be taken into account. So, if it has not separated it is because at least 51 percent of its inhabitants has preferred to remain Canadian, even though this does not mean that they renounce their condition of Quebecois and Francophones. Perhaps the underlying element of the decision is that, actually, at least half of Quebecois identify with the national project they are a part of: a developed country with an enviable quality of life, which enjoys prestige due to its initiatives for world peace and disarmament.

Nevertheless, a sovereign Quebec is perfectly viable: it possesses many natural resources, a developed industrial base and cutting edge technology in several sectors. In addition, its population has high educational levels, which would situate it internationally as a developed nation. Its traditions of democracy and respect for human rights gives it the legitimacy it would need to be recognized by other nations.

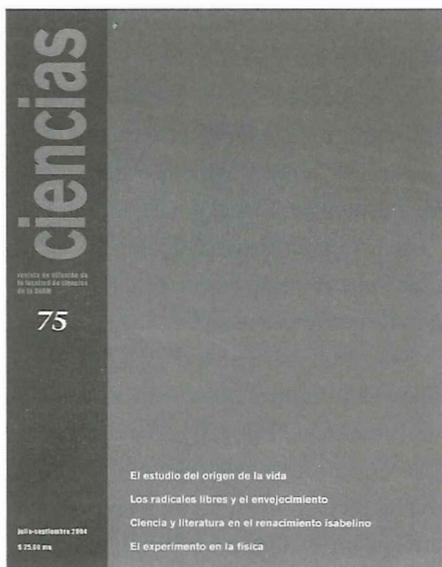
With or without formal independence, the Quebecois can be proud of having maintained themselves as a distinct people, of the values of their community, their traditions, religion and language in the face of the pressures of the Anglo-Saxon majority. In any case, Quebec has its own character, an outstanding achievement if we consider that its more than 7 million inhabitants have lived immersed in a universe of almost 300 million Anglophones. ■■■



74

abril • junio 2004

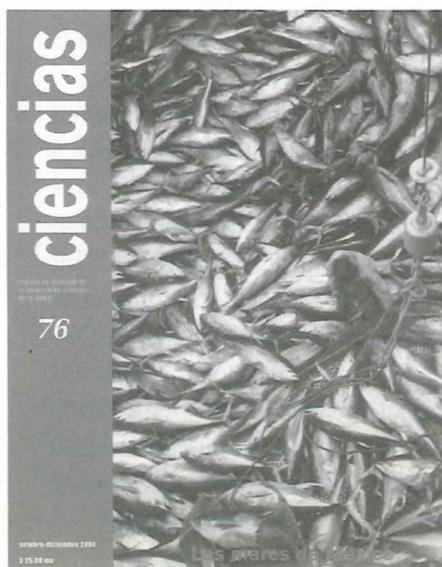
- Ícono y mito, su convergencia
- Lenguaje y color en la cosmovisión de los antiguos nahuas
- La concepción del cuerpo humano de los nahuas de la Sierra Negra
- Los retratos del mundo
- ¿3 = 3? Lo que un número es o no es
- *Vive la difference!*, diferencias entre hombres y mujeres ante la enfermedad y la muerte



75

julio • septiembre 2004

- Cuatro Ciénegas, un laboratorio natural de astrobiología
- Los sistemas hidrotermales y el origen de la vida
- El envejecimiento de la población
- El envejecimiento y los radicales libres
- Reforma y triunfo del inglés. Ciencia educación y literatura en el Renacimiento Isabelino
- Aspectos más o menos contradictorios del experimento en física



76

octubre • diciembre 2004

- Gran escenario de la zona costera y oceánica de México
- El Pacífico mexicano
- Golfo de México, circulación y productividad
- El joven mar Caribe
- La biodiversidad de las lagunas costeras
- Entre el mar y el viento
- Restauración en arrecifes de coral

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Víctor L. Urquidi

A Model Life (1919-2004)

Roberto J. Blancarte*



At a time when heroes and life models are in short supply, in which pettiness, envy, corruption and ambition have free rein, it is very difficult to find people whose lives can be an example to others. I just found out about the death of Víctor L. Urquidi. Perhaps most readers do not know who he was. Despite being one of the leaders of his profession

and being renowned in the academic world, he was not very well known outside it, although he shone like few of his fellows.

Among many other things, for years he participated actively and led the Mexican section of the Club of Rome when it was the obligatory reference point for dealing with many of the world's problems. Urquidi was the best that this country has produced in intellectual terms.

His main efforts went into being the president of the Mexican College from 1967 to 1985, almost 20 years in which he raised it to one of the most respectable and respected

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Photos courtesy of Graciela Salazar, former assistant of Mr. Urquidi at the CEDDU of El Colegio de México.

institutions in the world of higher education in social sciences and the humanities, following in the footsteps of his predecessors, writer Alfonso Reyes and historians Daniel Cosío Villegas and Silvio Zavala.

I met Víctor when I was doing my undergraduate work in international relations at the Mexican College and he was its president. At that time, in the late 1970s, student and labor unrest were high. University unions did not have legal status and Mexico's political system was going through a profound transformation. Urquidi faced the situation in the institution as best he could. I did not agree with the administration's political and administrative solutions that led to the famous strike of 1980.

Those were the times of an omnipresent Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and an imperial presidency, so people who questioned the status quo were not well looked-upon. This was never the case of Víctor L. Urquidi, who was simply above all that. He was genuinely concerned about the institution and the advance of social sciences in Mexico. Many years later, Urquidi invited me to become part of the Tepoztlán Center, an institution he had created to stimulate debate about national problems. What had happened 15 years before was not the prism through which he viewed the world. If anything, it was an experience which, like many others, had helped him understand the changes the country needed.

If anything surprised Urquidi's colleagues and friends, it was his great capacity for work and his enormous curiosity. Here was a man who at the age of 84 read literally everything that fell into his hands. A few years ago I happened to share a table with him in the professors' dining room at the Mexican College. We talked about my research topics and he told me that he had once suggested to President Luis Echeverría Álvarez that he visit Pope Paul VI to convince him to support the Charter of Economic Duties and Rights

of States, but above all to change the relations between the Mexican state and the Catholic Church. At the end of the meal, we returned to our cubicles, which at that time were very close together, and he gave me one of the most recent articles that he had published in an international journal. Out of mere courtesy—and never thinking that he would actually read it—I gave him a book about the pope's successor which I had just published. It was to my great surprise that a few days later, as I walked by his cubicle, he called me in and began to express his opinion about my book; he had read it cover to cover. To finish up he invited me to talk about religion and politics in Mexico in the framework of the secularization of beliefs at the Tepoztlán Center.

**In our difficult times, life
models, examples to follow,
are hard to find. Víctor L. Urquidi
is undoubtedly one of them.**

Víctor L. Urquidi's academic discipline and intellectual curiosity made him an unusual phenomenon in the academic system. Accustomed to super-specialization and working in the different compartments of sub-disciplines, few intellectuals can converse like he could in a well-founded way about economics, demography, urban development, religion, politics, the environment, natural resources, alternative energy sources, education, security and many other issues. There was no intellectual grand-standing; this was a genuine desire to know and expand knowledge, fostering inter- and multi-disciplinary focuses.

Urquidi was no intellectual isolated in an ivory tower. Quite to the contrary, he knew how



to deal with politicians and civil society, how to explain to them the advantages in supporting the social sciences and the humanities. During his term of office, the Mexican College became the birthplace of the knowledge needed for designing public policies essential for the country; a great part of foreign policy, and policies for demographics, urban development, energy, education and other areas were constructed there and in other academic or public policy spaces that he helped build, always with the lack of vested interest that characterizes true intellectuals.

Urquidi was an academic who knew the importance of the independence of academic work *vis-à-vis* the powers that be. In his day, he crossed swords with politicians who wanted to use the different sister graduate schools founded throughout Mexico as though they were bureaucratic institutions. At the same time, he built and helped found other

institutions that guaranteed independence and autonomy for intellectual work.

At the age of 84, Urquidi continued to work as though he were 20. It never would have occurred to him to retire and when he finally accepted a small ceremony in his honor at the Mexican College it was not because he believed that his time was up, but because his colleagues and friends who genuinely wanted to pay homage to his career while he was still alive insisted. His idea was to keep working, and he did as long as he had the strength. Víctor L. Urquidi was an extraordinary man, one of a kind, that strange species that only appears once in a great while. The country has lost a truly great man, a life model for many in this sea of mediocrity and pettiness. Rest in peace, Don Víctor, if you have the chance, because something tells me that if there is a heaven, you must be there going over the apostles' letters. **VM**

Chicano Literature

Mediator of Discordant Borders

Eduardo Santa Cruz*



Statistical focuses are certainly illustrative and enriching, but we should insist more on adding the knowledge of alternative disciplines that bring us closer, even if only tangentially, to how Mexican-origin communities perceive themselves and the cultures with which they dialogue and share.

Cultural creation and literary production are not an outstanding part of, nor do they even figure in reports on these communities' behavior or in the analyses that scrutinize

them. Who better for bringing us close to the experiences and struggles of innumerable generations of Mexican origin than men and women writers: unique, privileged interpreters and mediators between the United States and Mexico.

Although somewhat late, but often in the vanguard of scholarship, the 1960s U.S. social movements kindled a marked interest in delving into and incorporating minority and marginal groups outside the mainstream discourse into cultural and other kinds of studies. Government-spearheaded affirmative action, together with the demands and militancy of feminist groups and Afro-American, native American Indian and Chicano communities, propitiated a more palpable representativeness of these minorities with regard to their function in the complex web of U.S. society.

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I would like to thank the CISAN for its enormous support during my research there in achieving this initial look at the reception of Chicano literature in Mexico.

Drawings by Héctor Ponce de León.

With the opening up of new spaces, Chicano literary production expanded exponentially in the United States and, in the case of the Chicana women writers, above all starting in the 1980s. In Europe, a kind of academic curiosity followed this boom, mainly in Germany, France, Spain and England; not only have conferences been held there on Chicano literature, but several Chicano writers have even been interviewed, translated and published. It is difficult to know for certain what the root of this European interest in the topic was: whether curiosity about the exotic, an authentic interest in thinking about the complexity of U.S. society, including its links with Mexican society, from the vantage point of Chicano literature, or a combination of these factors.

In Mexico, in contrast, curiosity or interest in this literature has been less marked than in the United States or even Europe. As Ana Castillo pointed out in a 1993 interview about a colloquium she participated in in Mexico,

I was glad to see that in Mexico there is now an interest in Chicana literature, at least in academic circles, something that has been of interest to European scholars since the 1970s. In the United States, until this very moment, Chicana literature has been mostly relegated to Ethnic Studies.¹

It should be noted that, even given affirmative action and the militant demands of minority groups for access to spaces in the dominant discourse, in the United States and its universities, Chicano literature is barely included in academia's ethnic studies programs, although it continues to be part of literature department programs.

For a long time, some English (or literature) departments or Spanish departments (under the heading of languages and foreign literature) refused to include Chicano literature in their curriculum. Some argued that it was not written in English; others, that the Chicano experience fit neither under the heading of what was Latin American or Spanish. Today, these —questionable— arguments can no longer be blandished

about, since there is an ever growing body of Chicano literature written in English and it is patently obvious that the Chicano experience is heir to and bearer of the Hispanic and U.S. tradition.

Today, the situation is changing and frequently U.S. literary anthologies include not only Chicano and Hispanic selections but even texts from pre-Columbian times, Spanish colonial times and others from the period of U.S. expansion that illustrate and explain the experience of settlements in the Southwest before and after the arrival of Anglo-Saxons.

In the case of Mexico, the counterpart of the Chicano experience is that of today's indigenous population and its cultural production, marginalized for so long; it is only now that they are beginning to be recognized, as seen in the General Law on Indigenous Peoples' Linguistic Rights, in effect since March 2003.² It is no surprise, then, that Chicano culture and literature has gone almost unnoticed in Mexico.

No other immigrant community in the United States has the characteristics of the Mexicans. Many were settled in the Southwest before secession and became third-class citizens of their new country. Others took refuge in the United States during the Mexican Revolution, and others —the vast majority— came to satisfy their own needs and the demand for labor born in the second half of the twentieth century. They have all managed to maintain a single cultural flow. This population (anywhere between 22 and 25 million people including U.S. citizens and legal and undocumented residents) has been both a stopgap and a scapegoat in the two countries for both labor and political matters at different points in time.

Given this panorama of marginalization, from its inception, Chicano literature has been very good at maintaining communication with its roots and traditions, be they indigenous, mestizo or even with Spain —this is the case for parts of New Mexico. In this sense, the Chicano discourse is foundational in that since the 1960s, it has appropriated a term that defines it, making it its own to identify itself with regard to and against those

who disavow Chicanos or recriminate them both in the United States and in Mexico.

It does not matter that the term “Chicano” appeared in print for the first time in Mario Suárez’s stories in 1947,³ or that what is considered the first novel about the Mexican-American community, *El hijo de la tempestad* (Child of the Tempest) by Eugenio Chacón, appeared in 1892—although for others the first novel was *Las aventuras de don Chipote o Cuando los pericos mamen* (The Adventures of Don Chipote, or When Parrots Suckle) by Daniel Venegas, published in 1928 by *El Heraldo de México* in Los Angeles. It does not matter that literary production in Spanish and by people of Hispanic or Hispanic-Mexican origin can be traced in what is now the United States for almost five centuries. None of this matters since Chicano literature has proposed maintaining dialogue with its different cultural sources.

This means that, as Américo Paredes, Nicolás Kanellos and Ilan Stavans, among many others, have said, the Hispanic tradition in what is today the south of the United States, which makes it a foundational and essential part of the nation, has followed an uninterrupted line of literary and publishing production and creation.⁴ It began with the chronicles of the shipwreck of Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca,⁵ followed by the traditions of letter writing, prose and poetry that subjects of the Spanish Crown would continue during the colonial period in New Spain.

After independence, Mexicans would continue to use this imposed language and later, as “citizens” of the territory annexed by the United States, whether in California, New Mexico or Texas, they printed and circulated newspapers and other publications in their native language. Some of our forebears, as exiles, wrote and published about the political situation in their respective countries, such as the Cubans José María Heredia or José Martí,⁶ or the Mexican brothers Flores Magón and Mariano Azuela, the novelist of the Mexican Revolution. They were all writers of enormous value, both for their own countries and for the United States.

In *El laberinto de la soledad* (The Labyrinth of Solitude), Octavio Paz emphasized the importance

and inevitability of Mexicans’ seeking their identity and self-definition, and, by extension, that of all human beings. This essay, published in the 1950s, presented “pachucos” disapprovingly and antagonistically; from then on the Mexican-American community tried to define its essence even if it originated in greater solitude than that of the labyrinth Paz described.

In the 1960s, a series of essays or discourses began to appear that were both original and provocative and that criticized and questioned the paternalistic, condescending and alien attitude toward Mexico and the United States. Suffice it to read Américo Paredes’s folk study, “With His Pistol in His Hand” (1958); Rodolfo “Corky” González’s poem of reflection on identity, “Yo soy Joaquín” (1967); Tony Castro’s essay of social criticism “Chicano Power” (1974); Juan Gómez Quiñónez’s essay on ethnicity and resistance, “On Culture” (1977); the essays on gender, machismo and racism, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1981), by Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa; or Richard Rodríguez’s essay against affirmative action and individual achievement, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodríguez* (1982).⁷

Very little has yet been written in Mexico by academics with genuine interest in looking at and dialoguing with Chicano reality and creativity. Publications like CISAN researcher Claire Joysmith’s 1995 *Las formas de nuestras voces: Chicana and Mexicana Writers in Mexico*, a compilation of lectures and talks at a women’s writer’s colloquium in 1993, stand out among what has been published.⁸ It is even more difficult to find studies, reviews or critiques of Chicano short stories, novels, poetry or theater. This is understandable if we take into account the fact that in Mexico, people do not read much. How could reading material so seemingly alien be imposed?

It is suggestive that as a counterweight to so many arid statistics that are published, literary approximations to other experiences could be attempted that would also be relevant for Mexico. We could think that Chicano literary discourse might come on its own and fight for a place in the

market and in the minds of Mexicans before academia or the universities make much effort for opening up the way.

Elena Poniatowska has said that Mexican women writers seem to trail half a century behind their Chicana sisters.⁹ This is, of course, debatable, but it is also true that the Chicanas dealt much earlier with issues that were taboo in Mexico like lesbianism or AIDS, and they speak more freely about topics like gender, ethnicity or racism.

I do not doubt that Mexico has readers curious and interested in reading about these issues or others like the participation of young Mexicans in the Vietnam or Korean Wars, as illustrated in narratives by Rafael Hinojosa or Paredes,¹⁰ or something anthropologically inclined à la Carlos Castaneda, like Rudolfo Anaya's novel *Bless Me, Última*, according to Stavans, the heir of a discourse like William Faulkner's or Juan Rulfo's.¹¹ The list of writers is considerable and growing.

English-speaking students in the United States have come to prefer the study of Spanish as a foreign language to French, German or Italian, languages whose literature is still considered—condescendingly so—the bearer of “authentic cultural traditions.” In general, however, Spanish is seen as a language that contributes little because it is the language of illegal, Third World immigrants, brown people, the language of servants and the noise of Hispanics shouting at each other, and therefore “easy” to learn compared to the others. More than a foreign language, it is actually the second language after English, the language Samuel Huntington fears will contaminate the “purity” of the dominant language. This is not to mention the fact that English has proudly been the *lingua franca* of commerce, technology and communication for some time now.

Latin American writers of the stature of Jorge Luis Borges, Juan Carlos Onetti, José Lezama Lima, Juan Rulfo or Miguel Ángel Asturias, before the Latin American boom, showed that the subtle handling and combination of the American and European traditions, of which the Latin Americans are the heirs, contributed to enriching universal literature. For this reason, it is possible to think that the contribution of Chicano literature

attempts to integrate as recreations and new proposals what by tradition and legacy belongs to it. It does not matter if, in the view of Harold Bloom, “Chicano poetry, more even than the Mexican-American novel, is still in a very early phase, and merits considerable encouragement,” and that “The Chicano Movement, admirable from the perspective of any striving for social justice, is no more an inevitable source of poetic strength than is any other protest against injustice.”¹²

While Bloom's opinion may offend some, it is also true that it opens up the door to debate. It would be ideal if Mexican thinking about this were to be in the tone of criticism and proposals, not in a propagandistic way, to baselessly heap praise or scorn upon or vituperate the proposals of Chicano discourse, but rather to propitiate dialogue, a coming together, and getting to know each other better. This, not because of globalization or the “non-free trade agreement,” but simply because Mexico today seems to look more to the North than to the South, although ironically, its dialogue with its neighbor overlooks the Chicano experience, the step-daughter of both cultures but equally scorned by both.

I also think it is possible that the “foundational” attitude of the Chicano discourse that begins by appropriating its becoming may impose itself in Mexico sooner or later. It would be better if this happened by consensus, acceptance and mutual knowledge. The numbers of those arriving from Latin America are constantly growing after the collapse of their economies. For that reason, from a consumer society like that of the United States, what the most economically and politically participatory Hispanic populations conquer will probably end up imposing itself on the South in accordance with the rules of the market.

It is no accident that before Frida-mania, the “Grupera” music boom and the recovery of Mexican traditions that had all but been lost, one finds that these proposals arrived in Mexico from the North. It is no surprise that, as Carlos Monsiváis humorously said, “The reconversion of Mexico abroad is comparable to the reconversion of Mexico in Mexico.”¹³

In summary, we can debate the contribution and artistic value of Chicano literary efforts per se. And that, I think is part of the proposal and invitation of a good number of Chicano writers seeking space and access to a wider public, not only in the United States or in Europe. I believe that reading, criticism and thinking from Mexico and by Mexicans about that production will enrich the dialogue and knowledge of what has been happening in these communities. Chicana writer Helena María Viramontes is very clear about the seriousness of the effort undertaken in the founding moments in the 1960s when she says,

[w]e take the written word as seriously as any religion, know it to be a transformative power, believe it to heal, and do not waste words. Because of who and what we are, we can't afford silences by any means, and we write with a certain urgency, as if life depended on it....The weapon is our pen; our enemy, a blank sheet of paper.¹⁴

Stanford University English literature professor Ramón Saldivar agrees when speaking of the writing process and Chicano literature, saying,

to write is preeminently a political act seeking to fulfill the potentialities of contemporary life. It is also, ultimately, an attempt to recall the originary myths of life on the borders of power in order to fashion triumphantly a new heterogeneous American consciousness, within the dialectics of difference.¹⁵

Mexico should take advantage of the specific dynamic it establishes with the Mexican-American communities to bring down old borders and be a co-participant in the creation of a new discourse in which it could dialogue more frequently and familiarly with its compatriots from the North. Then only imaginary borders will remain to be crossed by the fiction re-generated on both sides of it. ■■■

NOTES

¹ Ana Castillo, "Entrevistas postcoloquio," Claire Joysmith, ed., *Las formas de nuestras voces: Chicana and mexicana writers in Mexico* (Mexico City: CISAN-UNAM, 1995), p. 235.

² <http://www.cddhcu.gob.mx/leyinfo/pdf/257.pdf> [Editor's Note.]

³ See Mario Suárez, "Señor Garza," Edward Simmen, ed., *The Chicano: From Caricature to Self-portrait* (New York: New American Library, 1971), pp. 268-273, and "El hoyo," Antonia Castañeda Shular et al., *Literatura chicana: Texto y contexto/Chicano Literature. Text and Context* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1972).

⁴ Américo Paredes, "The Folk Base of Chicano Literature," Joseph Sommers and Tomás Ybarra-Frausto, eds., *Modern Chicano Writers: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1979); Nicolás Kanellos, "A Socio-Historic Study of Hispanic Newspapers in the United States," Ramón Gutiérrez and Genaro Padilla, eds., *Recovering the U.S. Hispanic Literary Heritage* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1993); Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition: Reflections on Culture and Identity in America* (New York: Harper, 1996).

⁵ Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca was born in Spain in 1490 and lived until 1557. In 1527, he was part of an expedition to Florida, but the boat was shipwrecked near the Mississippi River, with only four survivors. For a year, they wandered from Texas to Sinaloa, Mexico, and in 1536 were found by Spanish troops stationed in Culiacán, and sent to Mexico City. Cabeza de Vaca tells the story of his travels in *Naufragio de Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca y relación a la jornada que hizo a la Florida con el adelantado Pánfilo de Narváez*, published in 1542, a work known simply as *Naufragios*. [Editor's Note.]

⁶ For example, José María Heredia, "Himno del desterrado," *Poesías completas* (Miami: Ediciones Universal, 1970); and José Martí, "Two Views of Coney Island," Phillip S. Foner, ed., Elinor Randall, trans., *Major Poems: A Bilingual Edition* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1982).

⁷ Respectively, Américo Paredes, *A Border Ballad and Its Hero* (Austin: University of Texas, 1958); Rodolfo "Corky" González, *I am Joaquín/Yo soy Joaquín* (New York: Bantam, 1972); Tony Castro, *Chicano Power* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1974); Juan Gómez Quiñónez, *Revista Chicano-Riqueña* 5, no. 2 (1977), pp. 29-42; Cherrie Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, eds., *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (Watertown, Mass.: Persephone, 1981); and Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger for Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez* (Boston: David R. Godine, 1982).

⁸ Joysmith, op. cit.

⁹ Elena Poniatowska, "Escritoras chicanas y mexicanas" (pp. 45-49) and "Entrevistas postcoloquio" (pp. 270-271), Joysmith, op. cit.

¹⁰ Rafael Hinojosa, *Mi querido Rafa* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1985); Américo Paredes, *Between Two Worlds* (Houston: Arte Público Press, 1990).

¹¹ Rudolfo A. Anaya, *Bless Me, Última* (Berkeley: Tonatiuh/Quinto Sol Int., 1972); Ilan Stavans, *The Hispanic Condition*, op. cit., p. 19.

¹² Harold Bloom, ed., *Hispanic-American Writers* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1998).

¹³ Carlos Monsiváis, "De los aportes de los migrantes," *La compañía de los libros* no. 2 (Mexico City), March-April 2002, p. 19.

¹⁴ Helena María Viramontes, "Entrevistas postcoloquio," Claire Joysmith, op. cit., p. 271.

¹⁵ Ramón Saldivar, *Chicano Narrative: The Dialectics of Difference* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990), p. 218.

Mirage

By Kathy Taylor



It was so hot that their words evaporated as soon as they were uttered. The silence was vast and empty and their thoughts were at once lost in it. The only sound was the soft lament of their tired feet as they walked in single file across the desert sand. There was nothing in sight for miles and the horizon disappeared in the harsh sunlight.

Esperanza shifted the weight of the sleeping child toward the center of her back, hoping her sweat-soaked blouse might offer him at least some moisture in the deadly heat. The *rebozo* that held him firmly against her was already shrouded in dust. She stopped a moment to listen and noted the rhythmic breathing over

her shoulder. It was good that he slept, but his silence worried her.

The heat was too much for anyone, much less a baby. She had already thought many times about turning back, but by now it was too late. She had begged them to let her go along, promising that she could carry her child the whole way and refusing to believe the stories meant to frighten the faint hearted. Nothing could be harder than what she had already lived through, she had said to convince them—and herself—that she could do it. And now they were on their way. She had no idea how far they had come nor how far they had yet to go. The town had vanished behind them and there was only open desert ahead. “*Ya mijito*, we’ll be there soon,” she whispered to her sleeping baby, watching her feet shuffle along as though they belonged to someone else.

Don José kept a steady pace behind her. They called him Don José, though he was just an old farm hand. His lean and deeply furrowed face was barely visible under a straw hat that had molded comfortably to his head over the years. His bent arms swung slightly forward as he walked, pulling the rest of him reluctantly along. The creases in his large, earth colored

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Drawings by Héctor Ponce de León.

hands followed the grain of a lifetime of hard work. It was crazy for him to go along, they had told him. At his age, the trip would be too hard, and it wouldn't be easy to find work up there either. But there was no talking him out of it. He had just smiled and stood firm, and there was something about his wrinkled smile that could not be resisted. Everyone felt it. It was as though the old man knew something important that no one else did. "Voy, María. I'm coming." He would say every now and then, though no one knew to whom.

The others were the usual mix of men, some of them husbands and fathers, all heading north for the same reason. There was work there. Enrique was the last of five brothers to make the trip. He dreamed of coming back with a new pickup truck. His brothers had jobs in a factory somewhere in Indiana and they had urged him to come.

Álvaro had left a wife and two young children behind, promising to send them money soon. His wife had cried quietly while the children held on to her legs, not comprehending what was to come.

Jesús had assured his aging mother that he wouldn't be gone long this time. The year before he had done well picking fruit in Oregon and he was headed there again.

Humberto and Lalo had used all of the money they could scrape together on plane tickets a few months earlier, only to be caught immediately by the *Migra* and sent back. This time they would take their chances on foot, assuring their young wives that they knew what they were doing.

Miguel and Beto were the most experienced. They had crossed several times before, and claimed to know the way through the desert. They didn't tell about the time they had been beaten by vigilantes just across



the border, and left there to die. Everyone looked to them as the experts. The desert route was in some ways the surest, and they were all ready to take their chances. They had nodded gravely as they were warned to carry as much water as they could manage. The key to making it was having enough water. It would be hotter in the desert than they could possibly imagine.

“We should rest a minute and have a drink,” Beto said, glancing at Esperanza. He had wondered several times if he should offer to carry her child, but it seemed so natural the way she carried him, as if they had again become one body. They all rested for awhile, though there was no shade. There were no visible landmarks of any kind, and they knew that without the compass, they could easily wander in circles, to lie down in the end like dying dogs. It seemed almost worse to sit still under the blazing sun, so they got up to move on. Beto picked up two of Esperanza’s water jugs and tied them to his bundle. She looked at him in gratitude, but didn’t try to speak.

“We’ll find a good place to rest by evening,” Miguel said to encourage them.

When they stopped the next time, Esperanza tried to get the baby to drink more water. What little milk she had left in her breasts would not be enough to sustain him. She looked down a moment as she opened her blouse, to reassure herself that they hadn’t shriveled up in the heat. “I must keep drinking,” she told herself, though the hot water from her jug was hardly refreshing. Álvaro looked away, trying not to think of his own family.

“Where is Don José?” someone asked.

“He’s taking a leak behind that cactus over there.”

“Surprised he’s got anything to leak.”

They were beginning to see more cacti and some brush and rocks. As they walked, Jesús thought he saw something on the horizon.

Their eyes were often tricked in the bright sunlight, so no one paid much attention. Even the occasional cactus ahead was hard to bring into focus through the undulating heat waves above the desert floor.

“I think it’s a tree,” he said half an hour later. It didn’t seem any closer, but he had focused all his attention on his discovery. “Maybe we can at least find some shade.”

“One tree in the middle of nowhere?” Lalo’s voice rose in a question, but he didn’t expect an answer. Humberto shook his head and kept walking.

Esperanza didn’t look up. She just followed the feet in front of her, stopping occasionally to check the baby’s soft whistle in and out. “*Ya, mijito, ya...*” she said to her aching back and the bundle that breathed with her.

“Don José, are you still with us?” Miguel called over his shoulder. Don José hadn’t spoken for several miles. Miguel turned around and the old man swung one of his arms slightly higher in response. The water jugs sloshed at his side as he walked.

Jesús walked behind him, thinking of his father who had died a few years before. Something about Don José’s stiff but determined march reminded him of his own father. He could still picture his mother as he had left her a few days earlier, her familiar shape in the doorway outlined against the light from the kitchen window.

The sun was lower now, but the heat was even more intense. Esperanza could feel the desert floor burning her feet through her thick-soled *huaraches*. “It’s like one big *comal*,” she thought, picturing the large clay griddle in her kitchen and wishing suddenly that she had some of the fresh tortillas she could imagine puffing up on it as they cooked. For a moment she felt a longing to be back there, but then she remembered. That was all gone now. There was no going back, even in her thoughts. She was now on her way to America to find her husband, and that was what mattered.

They had begun to leave a trail of empty water jugs behind them. The ones that remained got heavier as the day went on. The evening sun cast long thin caricatures of their bodies on the ground as they walked. Jesús's tree was still tiny in the distance, even after the afternoon's progress. Miguel and Beto noticed some low shrubs and a small hollow that offered at least visual relief from the endless flatness. The two set off to scout, saying it might be a good place to stop for the night. Esperanza was relieved, as the baby had begun to stir in a whimper behind her. Don José dropped behind, staggering as though he had just left the cantina on a Friday night. Jesús went back to take his arm.

The scouts quickened their pace to reach the spot, and then stopped short. Enrique caught up soon and followed their gaze to the ground in front of them. The bones were smooth and white, scattered in the sand. A skull lay few feet away, as if it had been willed a little farther on by a dying wish. The rest of the group gathered round to stare in horror. Near the shrubs two more skeletons, still perfectly assembled stared back at them unblinking. No one spoke. They didn't try to bury them, since the desert had a way of spitting things back up in time. Don José fell heavily to his knees and said a few garbled prayers to the Virgin of Guadalupe. Then he sighed and lay down in the sand. "Ya voy, María" he said, "I'm coming."

After a simple supper of beans and day old tortillas, they settled in for the night, eventually finding strange comfort in the company of their unfortunate predecessors. Everyone knew that *La Muerte* danced around their lives daily, and seeing its fleshless face in the sand had an almost therapeutic effect, like the familiar white candy *calaveras* that accompanied the Day of the Dead celebrations.

They lay in the open silence of the desert, lost in their own reflections. The heat had not diminished even with the coming dark-

ness and no one could sleep. The air was still and the last rays of the sun seemed to light the sky and the whole earth on fire. Esperanza placed her baby gently on the *rebozo* next to her. She had managed to get him to eat and drink and he now lay quietly watching the movements of some winged creature against the red glow of the sky. They had survived the first day. The heat was worse than they had imagined and they had already drunk more than half of their water.

The next day would be a greater test.

Beto and Miguel reviewed in their minds the next day's challenges. They would have to deal with the border patrol just at the point when they would all be near madness with thirst and exhaustion, if they were lucky enough to get that far. It was statistically likely that they wouldn't all make it. Miguel had read recently that 700 people had died in the last few years trying to cross the desert. The temperature at ground level could rise to as high as 140 degrees or higher at midday. "We must be crazy," he thought. "God help us."

At first light they were ready to move on. Miguel warned them not to drink too much of the precious water, even though they were already light headed and nauseated with dehydration. Esperanza gave the baby as much as he would drink anyway, knowing that her milk would soon be gone. No one spoke. Their throats were so dry, it was difficult to swallow. They started off slowly, trying to set a steady pace in hopes of reaching the tree before the sun was high overhead. They could see it clearly now, though still far away. It seemed to move with them as they walked, ever beyond their reach.

They trudged through the morning and the indistinguishable miles. It was even hotter than the day before, and their water was getting low. The flat land seemed to tilt unexpectedly with each step. Miguel checked the compass often, to make sure they didn't wander off course. Esperanza felt weak and confused, a cold sweat dampening her forehead.



Don José fell a few times, and they had to give him extra water to coax him on. Beto warned that they must be getting close to the border, and they would have to watch for patrols.

Jesús took the lead, heading straight north towards the tree, and they all began to share his sense that it would somehow rescue them. They pushed on, leaving more empty jugs behind. There was only one left, which they all shared. And then it was gone.

“We’re almost there,” Beto said. “*Bendito sea Dios.*”

It was that hope that kept them going.

“Water!” shouted Jesús in a hoarse voice. “There’s water under the tree. Do you see it?”

They stumbled on towards the large Mesquite tree with water shimmering on the ground underneath it. The tree stood just over the border, though there was no clear line in the sand, dividing desert from desert. It had long stood there, looking out over the endless miles and witnessing many such

northward journeys. The tree had grown to over forty feet high. Its sturdy form was mirrored underground by a massive root system that reached down far beneath borders and the passing of time.

Jesús wanted to be the first to wet his sunburned face in the cool water. He lurched ahead and sank to his knees under the tree, lifting hot sand in his cupped hands. “It’s gone!” he gasped “The water...” Humberto and Enrique carried Don José the last few yards to the shade of the tree. The others collapsed in turn on the dry ground.

There had once been water there, and a few hopeful saplings still grew under the shade of the nurse tree, as such are called in the desert. “Welcome to America...” Miguel sighed as he leaned against the tree, watching nervously for signs of the border patrol. “...*la tierra prometida.*”

The desert began to spin slowly around them as they lay under the tree. Esperanza

held her baby to her breast and floated in and out of visions of her home village under water and the mountain sliding down on top of them. Don José lay still, moving his lips silently. His weathered arms looked like driftwood in the sand. “We’re here, María. Just like you wanted.”

“...I won’t be gone long...”

“...I’ll send money soon...”

“...a new truck...”

“...a good job...”

“...*ya mijito*...”

The old tree listened until the last words blew away with the wind and only the thin cry of a baby hung in the air.

Then all was still.

The soft thumping of a distant helicopter broke the silence.

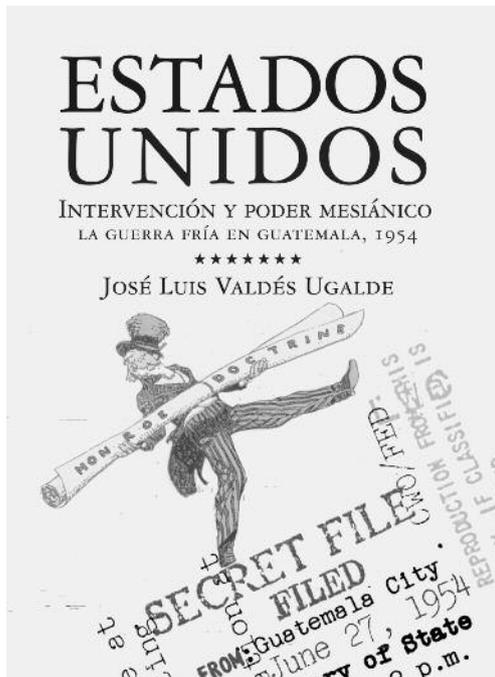
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BABY FOUND ALIVE

A baby is the only survivor of a group of Mexicans trying to cross the border illegally. Nine people were found dead in the desert, lying under the shade of a Mesquite tree. The child will be returned to Mexico, where authorities will attempt to find relatives. **MM**



Reviews



Estados Unidos: intervención y poder mesiánico.
La guerra fría en Guatemala, 1954
(The United States: Intervention And Messianic Power. The Cold War in Guatemala, 1954)
José Luis Valdés-Ugalde
CISAN/IIJ-UNAM
Mexico City, 2004, 406 pp.

Using the 1954 U.S. intervention in Guatemala as a case study, the book *Estados Unidos: intervención y poder mesiánico. La guerra fría en Guatemala, 1954* (The United States: Intervention and Messianic Power. The Cold War in Guatemala, 1954) by José Luis Valdés-Ugalde is undoubtedly an attempt to promote the knowledge and understanding of U.S. foreign policy toward

Latin America. It provides a series of fundamental historical and theoretical-methodological tools for understanding the roots, development and future lines of action of our northern neighbor's foreign policy.

The book's seven chapters center on the different forms of U.S. expansionism in the region and examine the arguments of the founders of U.S. geo-political expansionist thinking like MacKinder, Mahan, Spykman and Turner. It is also a detailed analysis of the 1954 U.S. intervention in Guatemala against the democratic, progressive government of Jacobo Árbenz: ideological construct, economic and political interests, military strategy and the creation of alliances all intertwine perfectly in the analysis.

Recovering the historical roots of U.S. expansionist doctrine and its Protestant-based vision that Americans are God's "chosen people," the author explains how the terms "exceptionalism" and "mission" constitute the historic cross-cutting themes of U.S. foreign policy. To this are added the feeling of superiority and the responsibility for maintaining freedom, order and progress. Also, following in the footsteps of authors like Octavio Paz, the book tries to explain the enormous differences between the United States and Latin America, the very concept of calling itself "America" and the meaning and function of Americanism as an ideology and instrument for domestic and international affirmation.

Historically, the Western Hemisphere has been the area of interest and natural hegemony for the United States. The end of its territorial expansion in the first half of the nineteenth century was followed by a quest for the maritime frontier and expansion into the Caribbean with the independence of Cuba in 1898, which marked the begin-

ning of economic expansion and constant U.S. interventions in the hemisphere. From that historic moment, going all the way through the Cold War and up until the present, the United States has been firmly convinced that: a) it is authorized to expand its model (the American Way of Life); and b) Latin America is its back yard and natural area of influence, which is why security in the region has always mattered, particularly in Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean because of their proximity.

The book's central hypothesis is that even though the Árbenz administration looked like a reform government because it took measures that pointed to economic and social improvements for the Guatemalan people, not necessarily aimed at installing a communist regime, and even given the absence of any evidence of Soviet involvement, the United States perceived the situation through the anti-communist-tinted lens of its national se-

Valdés-Ugalde maintains that U.S. policy toward Guatemala was subjective from the beginning. More than acting against Soviet presence in the hemisphere, the intervention ended up being an exercise against national reform processes.

curity needs, disregarding diplomacy and resorting to intervention.

Valdés-Ugalde maintains that the ideological discourse that shored up U.S. policy toward Guatemala was subjective from the beginning given the characteristics of the country (economically weak and an insignificant military power) and that it overestimated Soviet participation in the hemisphere. Actually, the strategic interest of the United States opposed the needs and strategies of progressive regimes of the time, which means that more than acting against Soviet presence in the hemisphere, the intervention ended up being an exercise against national reform processes.

The coup d'état in Guatemala, made possible by the direct support of the Guatemalan military and the dictators of Nicaragua, Anastasio Somoza,

and the Dominican Republic, Rafael Trujillo, as well as Juan Manuel Gálvez, president of Honduras, became the model for successful U.S. intervention known as "cannon diplomacy." Thus, the fall of Árbenz inaugurated a paradigm of inter-American relations centered on the U.S. vision of security which heralded the beginning of a series of direct interventions in the region: the open intervention in Guatemala was followed by those in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Brazil, Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, among others, using the pretext of the fight against the spread of communism and a rigid national security doctrine in the defense of American economic, political and military interests via the protection of the hemisphere's "territorial integrity." The result was the imposition of authoritarian regimes totally divorced from the Western values that the United States has always maintained in its discourse, like democracy, freedom and the respect for human rights.

It is possible to overlap the events of Guatemala and those of the present day in which the "other" (otherness), evil or the threat is centered in international terrorist organizations, in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that could fall into the hands of these groups and cause enormous tragedies both inside and outside the United States. The September 11 terrorist attacks made it clear that no country, not even the most powerful country in the world, is exempt from that kind of suffering.

Today, the U.S. foreign policy agenda is centered on security, although it continues to espouse the principles of promoting democracy and human rights. Let us hope that, in contrast with what happened in Guatemala, the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (regardless of whether they are just or not) are not the first of a series of wars unleashed in the name of the anti-terrorist crusade. ■■■

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