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Jorge Carpizo, *In Memoriam*
Articles by Héctor Fix-Fierro, Héctor Fix-Zamudio, and Diego Valadés

Biofuels in Mexico
Articles by Edit Antal and Ernesto Carmona; Berenice Trujillo-Martínez, María E. Rodríguez-Alegría, and Alfredo Martínez; Arón Jazcilevich; María Elena Goytia; Olivia Acuña and Yolanda Massieu; Julieta Evangelina Sánchez; and Miguel Ángel García

Mexican Electoral Scenarios
Leonardo Curzio

The Economic Impact of Insecurity in Mexico
Enrique Pino Hidalgo

U.S. and Canadian Refusal Of Asylum to Mexicans
Ariadna Estévez

Border Security under Schengen
Kurt Schelter

Tribute to a Great Artist: Leonora Carrington
Articles by Alberto Blanco, Isaac Masri, Federico Patán, and Luis Rius Caso

93
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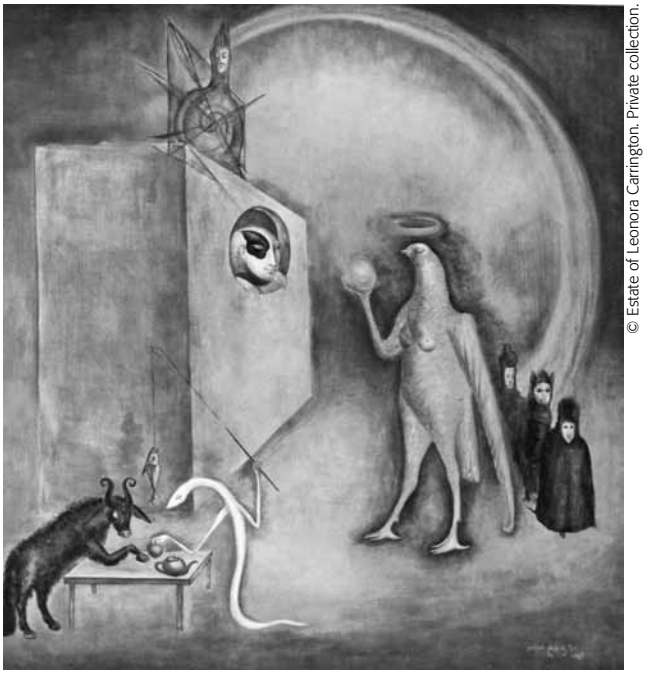


Cover
Bird Seizes Jewel, detail, 1969, 60.6 x 61 cm
(oil on masonite).

Our Voice

One month before Mexicans go to the polls, the three presidential candidates for the country's dominant parties (PRI, PAN, and PRD) have intensified their win strategies, particularly focusing on mutual mudslinging. The first televised debate in early May clearly showed this up. Enrique Peña Nieto (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI), who at that time held a considerable lead over his opponents, was the target for attacks from right-wing candidate Josefina Vázquez Mota (National Action Party, PAN) and left leader Andrés Manuel López Obrador (Party of the Democratic Revolution, PRD). At that time some of us asked ourselves who would come out the loser of that exercise, since the citizenry continue to have expectations without being able to contrast the arguments and ideas that should underlie presidential hopefuls' platforms.

However, the second —surprise— event has changed this scenario in less than a month. The protagonists have been a movement of university students, which, although it began paradoxically in a private institution of higher learning, has sparked a massive, enthusiastic, inclusive response through the big social networks. The result has been that the gap between the PRI and the PRD is closing, to the detriment of the PAN, which has currently fallen to third place in voter preferences.

This movement's main demands have been to create "awareness" and not to vote for Enrique Peña Nieto (PRI), based on what it understands his party to represent, plus the democratization of the mass media. Confronting the customs of a stagnant political culture, these young people oppose the big interests of the country's two television monopolies, Televisa and TV Azteca, which had been imposing their views on the public with their 95 percent coverage of broadcast space.

The movement, which calls itself "#IAm132," has been joined by unions and peasant groups in several important mobilizations, fundamentally in Mexico City. This has earned the name "The Mexican Spring," but above all has injected vitality back into the presidential campaign in the sphere of concrete proposals.

The Mexican case once again shows the influence of the "new social media," although the result of the elections and the route the movement itself will take are still impossible to predict, above all because the use of these new technologies shows an instantaneous capacity for socialization and calls for action, but not necessarily for profound analysis, reflection, and interpretation of a complex phenomenon like the situation of Mexico today. In any case, we would invite you to review our "Politics" section, which in this issue will give you details of the current political situation in an article by Leonardo Curzio, as well another by Tania de la Paz, focusing on the challenges we face in terms of governance.

Linked to this is the article in our "Museums" section, which highlights an exhibit about the history of electoral publicity in Mexico, a core issue that undoubtedly gives rise to passionate controversies about issues like campaign funding or the risk of image superseding

political content. This is where one of the vicissitudes of modern democracy comes into play: the public's exercise of its undeniable right to information is directly related to the media, while in election processes, equal access to resources and air time so the parties can make themselves known to the public becomes all the more pressing.

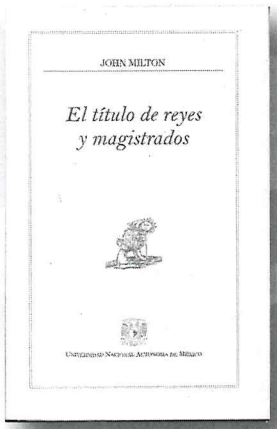
In other matters, a couple of this issue's sections touch on the recurring topic of migration, moving through discursive spheres ranging from cinema to political sociology. In the first case, Graciela Martínez-Zalce brings to our attention Luis Valdez, his renowned Teatro Campesino, and his specific vocation of recovering the historic corrido. Her article reviews a one-hour television video romantically honoring the corrido, from before the Mexican Revolution to the migrant experience in the United States, which identifies Valdez's pride in his rural, Chicano origins, celebrating his ability to transcend traditional stereotypes. In the second case, we are plunged into the harsh reality that reiterates what remains to be done in guaranteeing the human rights of migrants traveling through Mexico, narrated by John Washington based on his own experience. Added to this is the excellent article by Ariadna Estévez, who dubs the systematic denial of Mexican citizens' asylum requests by the United States and Canada, arguing that the war against organized crime in our country is not generalized, a "human rights crisis."

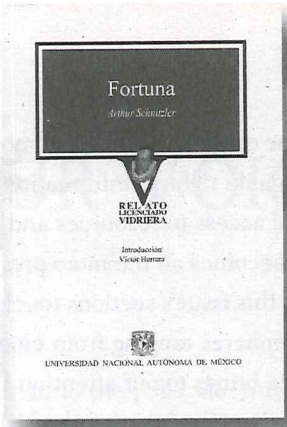
I invite you to also read the modest "In Memoriam" section that the CISAN dedicates to the illustrious Mexican academic Dr. Jorge Carpizo McGregor, who was also president of our university and a committed human rights defender. His oeuvre has undoubtedly contributed to promoting justice in our country.

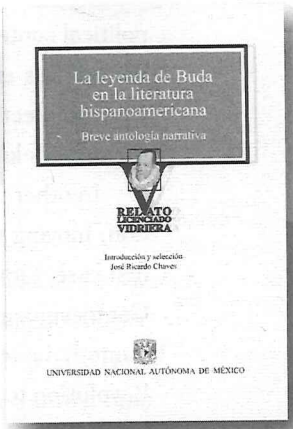
In our "Economics" section, we could not neglect to touch on the impact the European crisis is having on our economy; Alejandro Toledo's contribution forecasts a decrease in growth expectations. Clearly, globalization has also meant more demands for Mexico in the sphere of trade; this issue offers a provocative analysis by Imtiaz Hussain, arguing that the country bet its development on its close links to the United States and is now paying the extreme price for that dependence, reflected in our limited presence in Asia.

Considering that the promotion of sustained development concerns us all, I conclude by presenting for your consideration the valuable content of our "Special Section," dedicated to the development of biofuels in our country. This gives us a comprehensive overview of the challenges Mexico is facing in the spheres of their production and use, underlining strategic aspects for future energy self-sufficiency that will undeniably favor all Mexicans.

Silvia Núñez García
CISAN Director







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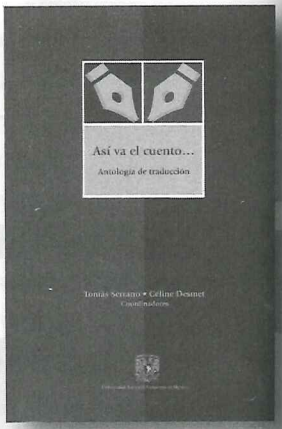

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The Mexican Elections Three Scenarios

Leonardo Curzio*

Especial/Cuartoscuro.com

The Context

As you probably know, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) warned in September 2011 that the world economy is in a dangerous new phase and lowered its overall growth forecast to 4 percent for emerging markets and 2 percent for advanced economies. Mexico should be in the middle, in other words at 3 percent, still a very weak number for an economy desperately needing job creation. It has been more than 10 years since Mexico has experienced vibrant economic growth, and, besides the social and economic impact of this sad performance, it has also strongly affected the national mood.

According to certain polls, Mexicans do not feel they are on the right path: roughly 65 percent of the population considers that we are not on the right track. Even if this enormous chunk of the population may not have an idea about what the right path might be, the figure is still quite noteworthy and is probably the heaviest burden to carry for the candidate of the ruling party. Emboldened by the small growth rate, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) is betting on connecting with this social frustration.

In any case, a caveat must be established: economic stability is an asset the National Action Party (PAN) will use to the hilt, probably saying that mediocrity means mediocrity, but in no way does this imply a critical situation like the one that used to exist under PRI administrations. The responsible management of the macro-economic fundamentals is a bonus for the PAN.

In the field of security, according to the polls, we detect a peculiar situation, because President Calderón's strategy

* Researcher at CISAN.

The daily ordeal of slogans and marketing jingles
is the toll we have to pay for having competitive elections.
As you know, legislation has been passed banning political attacks
—called in Mexico "black" campaigns.

is supported by a majority, but at the same time, a majority is demanding changes. Obviously a dramatic increase —or decrease— of the murder rate will have a considerable effect on voters' moods.

It goes without saying that a spectacular success such as the apprehension of drug kingpin "Chapo" Guzmán might have a broad impact on public opinion.

In the international arena, we must consider two main events: first, the Pope's visit, and then the G-20 summit. Seemingly, they do not have the potential to shift electoral intentions, but clearly they are the two main points on the president's agenda and he will use them as much as his competitors and the electoral authorities allow.

The Scenarios

We know that the year 2012 will bring a huge contrast on the political playing field; on the one hand, it is going to be particularly boring. Radio and TV audiences will be chastised with an unprecedented number of spots: full speed ahead with more than 42 million spots claiming that parties and candidates know the way to improve the country. We will be forced to swallow their "breathtaking findings" and new proposals. The daily ordeal of slogans and marketing jingles —platitudes— is the toll we have to pay for having competitive elections. As you know, legislation has been passed banning political attacks —called in Mexico "black" campaigns— so communication will be very prudent, cautious...and boring.

One the other hand, however, we will have a very interesting year because of the healthy, democratic uncertainty. Even if in December the pollsters detected that the leading candidate by far was Enrique Peña Nieto, I assume that campaigns will make a difference, and so history has not already been written.

Allow me to share with you, for the sake of simplicity, three scenarios and discuss the probability of each. I will name each case after a local election that took place last year. I would like to stress that the name is just a label; I am not assuming that a local election can predict the result of a national election.

Scenario, State of Mexico: 10-Percent Chance

In this particular case, the leading party and its candidate are able to preserve their position by keeping all the parameters stable. A soft, light campaign is required to maintain the distance between the leader and the other candidates. This happened on the local level last year, but it is highly probable that in the national arena, parties will struggle to regain a sure footing after this disheartening political failure.

In the state of Mexico, the PRI's huge victory was possible with the unconscious help of Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who blocked the possibility of a Party of the Democratic Revolution-National Action Party (PRD-PAN) alliance conceived with the sole purpose of beating the ruling party. Two bad candidates did the rest, and Eruviel Ávila, who began his campaign leading the polls by more than 30 points, won, beating the PRD by more than 40 points and PAN by nearly 50, an indisputable victory. The particular morphology of the political system in the state of Mexico and the prevailing civic culture explain this overwhelming hegemony, which, according to the evidence of opinion polls and the results of previous elections (1999 and 2005), cannot be extrapolated to the national level.

The 2011 electoral results were 61.9 percent for Eruviel Ávila (PRI-Green Party of México [PVEM]); 20.9 percent for Alejandro Encinas (PRD-Labor Party [PT]); and 12.2 percent for Luis Felipe Bravo Mena (PAN). The only chance for the PRI to see this scenario unfolding nationwide would be through a combination of political mistakes by the opposition (imposing a weak and unpopular candidate, inept tactics, and fumbled campaigns). And, last but not least, PRI candidate Enrique Peña Nieto will have to wage his campaign by the book and not ad lib.

Scenario, Veracruz: 50 Percent Chance

The second scenario could be like the Veracruz elections: 50 percent chance. In that state, at the beginning of the race,

the PRI was also leading in the polls, but the gap between first and second place was not that wide. The governor was not particularly popular and neither was the candidate. The PAN selected a very controversial candidate, Miguel Ángel Yunes, but who was very effective in restoring discipline in the party's electoral structures. And the left-wing parties for the third time nominated the same candidate, a former governor, who was very well known both for good and bad reasons.

The leftist campaign never took off, and made room for the voters who disliked PRI strongman Fidel Herrera's imposing his successor to support the right wing party's less unpopular candidate. To state the obvious: the election became a sort of referendum for independent voters, with a central question: to PRI or not to PRI? We know the story's denouement: the PRI won the election by a small majority and was forced to set up an alliance with a dissident branch of the PAN and to give a lot of power to the oil workers' union and even the teachers' union led by Elba Esther Gordillo (known as "la maestra"), who used to have a close relationship with Yunes.

The 2011 electoral results in the Veracruz elections gave Javier Duarte (PRI) 43.3 percent, Miguel Ángel Yunes (PAN) 40.9 percent, and Dante Delgado (PRD-MC-PT) 12.9 percent. In my view this could be a more likely scenario for this year's national elections. If the PAN is able to send the PRD to the non-competitive area, and manage the elusive possibility of establishing a dual system of choice ("me or the PRI"), the chances of increasing the right-wing candidate's odds will leave us a completely different campaign.

Some might say that the same scenario could be used the other way around, in which the leftist coalition reaches the competitive area and sends the PAN to a distant third, but according to the polls, the potential vote for the PAN is 25 percent, while the PRD's is 18 percent. The key will be the candidates' ability to become a credible and reliable second-best, and, honestly, the PAN's Josefina can do a better job than Andrés Manuel López Obrador in winning the independent vote.

Scenario, Michoacán: 40-Percent Chance

The third scenario is close to the Michoacán election, the last of the local elections before the presidential race: I give it a 40-percent chance. As you certainly know, in Michoacán the ruling party was the PRD, so the burden of daily governance and public safety, which became a big deal in the campaigns, was mainly carried by the leftist party. Yet the PRD remained very popular and managed to keep the allegiance of a considerable chunk of voters despite an uncharismatic candidate.

The PAN, facing the *fait accompli* that the experiment of coalitions against the PRI faded away, was forced to run on its own. The president's sister, Luisa María Calderón, was nominated as candidate and, in addition to the support of her powerful brother, she ran a successful campaign. Her gender was a new component, but apparently that did not make the difference. In the last weeks of the campaign she shot up in the polls like a raising star. In the end, she did not make it, but she sent the PRD to third place.

2011 Michoacán Electoral Results

For Fausto Vallejo (PRI-PVEM), 35.4 percent; Luisa María Calderón (PAN-Panal), 32 percent; and for Silvano Aureoles (PRD-PT-MC), 28 percent. The PRI had a popular candidate, Vallejo, and the ascent of Peña's popularity was tested once again. The PRI won the election by a small margin.

In the Michoacán example, the voters were divided evenly into thirds and it was the campaign that made the difference; so the outcome was radically the opposite of what happened in the state of Mexico. If this were the case nationwide, the campaign debates will be crucial. According to the polls, 20 percent of the population had not yet decided their vote.

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the greatest risk to Mexico's democratic progress over the last decade.
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Final Remarks

We Mexicans like rhetoric, so we often say that the elections will be a turning point for the country... But, seriously, it could be true on this occasion. What is at stake? If the PRI wins by a huge majority, in the short term, a great danger for the economic system could be averted: central bank autonomy and the laws for a responsible budget would shield the economy. Nevertheless, public finances will come under pressure for two main reasons: first, from interest groups clamoring for a piece of the public pie, and secondly, because of increased government spending to artificially foster economic growth.

A greater danger still lies in public and national security. In this field, in local PRI administrations, especially in the state ruled by Enrique Peña Nieto, change has been regrettably absent. With the exception of the State Security Agency (ASE), the police and the justice department are far from a source of pride for the former governor. The same must be said for almost all the other PRI governments. If they have a secret weapon to fight against criminal organizations, it has been very well concealed. For the foreseeable future, Calderón's strategy (the display of federal forces) will prevail until a new paradigm is found. In my opinion, law enforcement in both the local and state governments must be the priority.

In the political arena, the forecast is gloomier. A PRI with a huge majority is probably the greatest risk to Mexico's democratic progress over the last decade. The main obstacle to improving governance is not the lack of majorities as Enrique Peña Nieto states. Almost all the budgets since 1997 have been passed by a virtual consensus. It is true that no administration since Salinas has had a two-thirds majority to be able to change the Constitution and pass the so-called structural reforms, but a new tax law does not require such a majority, and the PRI has had a majority in the Congress and did not move forward. It is the same with other pieces of legislation.

The main problem of Mexico's democracy is a double-entry one. On the one hand, with the democratic race for power, we discovered that Mexico is a federation and must be ruled by three levels of government. As opposed to the U.S. experience, Mexico has never had a strong local tradition of self-government. The driving force has been always the central government. So, in reality, the federal system is not as stable as it looks in the Constitution.

On the other hand, Mexico has been ruled during the last century by the so-called spoils system, so we are missing a professional administration, and this is particularly visible in sensitive areas like customs and immigration. The exception confirms the rule; the federal police force is a very recent achievement of the current administration. Mexico is still lacking professional agencies in many fields.

The new government's central project should be to reform public administration before stability suddenly turns to brittleness.

If the right-wing PAN wins, it will have a third opportunity to accomplish all the points that the PRI is not able to because of its very nature. And these are:

1) carrying out the administrative reform;
2) articulating the federation to improve the system's governability;
3) putting an end to union privileges; and
4) opening up the economy.

Are they going to do that? I am not sure, but it is obvious to me that this will be their last chance. As for the leftist coalition, it is interesting to see their new program focused on values and, mainly, love. Andrés Manuel López Obrador is trying to change his bad reputation for intolerance and disrespect for the rules and the rule of law. In the leftist discourse, the pursuit of happiness is becoming the right to love…or the compelling force of a Valentine. Seriously speaking, Andrés Manuel López Obrador is leaving behind his confrontational rhetoric in order to occupy the center and fight for the independent vote. I am not sure that he will succeed, but he is going to do his best, and even if he is not the favorite second best in the beginning of the race, he cannot simply be disregarded.

As I said, the healthy, democratic uncertainty of the election results is good news for a young democracy. VM

Elections, Governance, And Coalition Governments

Tania de la Paz Pérez Farca*

Especial/Cuartoscuro.com

With all my affection, to the memory of Dr. Jorge Carpizo, beloved friend and exemplary jurist.

Today, Mexico is facing grave problems of insecurity, unemployment, poverty, social inequality, and poor quality education, among many others. However, despite the difficult straits the country finds itself in, political actors must seek solutions to the problems plaguing the populace.

In Mexico, we are nearing the next federal elections, which, like every six years, will take place on the first Sunday of July. That day, all federal elected posts will be contested. We will elect the new president, who heads the executive branch, in addition to 500 deputies and 128 senators, who make up the entire federal legislative branch.[1]

Unfortunately, the vagueness of the proposals coming from the candidates aspiring to these posts is evident. Once again, the possible representatives of the citizenry seem to have a phobia against sharing power; they think that when they win the election, they will get the biggest piece of the pie. Nevertheless, the reality is that, at bottom, the problem of dealing with the crisis the country is experiencing is not a matter of reforms but of political will.

In short, the party that wins the coming elections will need a coalition government to be able to move the country forward. It will need a national front with a government program negotiated by the three strongest parties to be able to thoroughly deal with the great difficulties facing Mexicans today.

This must be considered because today, more than ever, government coalitions are indispensable in our country. It is not enough for the parties to seek a majority; it is a mistake to think that with partisan majorities, but with a divided government, a country like ours can be made to move forward. This is because, even if one party achieved a majority in the two chambers of Congress, what does not look possible is for a single party to get two-thirds of the seats required for making structural, constitutional reforms to benefit society.

*Visiting professional at the Inter-American Court of Human Rights.

In our country, electoral coalitions, and even legislative coalitions are common practice. By contrast, government coalitions are an unexplored possibility that politicians must study and consider.

Government Coalitions vs. Electoral Coalitions

Now then, what is a coalition government? There is a lot of disinformation about this. The concept can often be confused with electoral coalitions or coalitions around a certain project, also called legislative coalitions. Frequently, political coalitions —whether electoral or around a particular issue— are sought during processes of democratic transition, or political, social, and economic polarization, such as what Mexican society has been immersed in for several years now.

In our country, electoral coalitions, and even legislative coalitions are common practice. By contrast, government coalitions are an unexplored possibility that politicians who aspire to represent the citizenry in coming years must study and consider. This means that it is important to point out that government coalitions can be defined as a group of political parties that agree to pursue common goals, pool resources to achieve them, and distribute the benefits when those goals are reached.[2] However, there are those who maintain that these kinds of coalitions are only viable in parliamentary systems, given that, there, the government must have the support of the parliament in order to continue to exist, forcing the parties to form government coalitions.

There is a great deal of literature on this point, and very little on coalitions in presidential systems, but these coalitions should not be considered indispensable and transcendent exclusively in the parliamentary system. Today, more than ever, it is clear that countries with presidential systems of government have divided governments, which is why they have to generate consensuses to allow them to move ahead with a political agenda that benefits society.

In other places in Latin America, large numbers of successful coalition governments exist that Mexico should study and take into account, precisely to avert government crises. Most Latin American countries are going through political processes in which the party in office is attempting to forge pacts or agreements with the different opposition parties to generate a force that will make it possible to carry out a common government project. According to César Cansino, "In the Latin American political systems it would be difficult to find full autonomy or full dependence of the national executive branches *vis-à-vis* the parties that support them."[3]

Mexico is a country with a presidential system that operates with a divided government, and very probably it will continue that way. This should not alarm us. Divided governments are not, in and of themselves, a threat to democracy. Quite to the contrary: they are the result of the political reality of our country today. This is why the success of public policies in presidential systems of this type depends on government coalitions.

In this sense, by building a base with multiparty support, alliances are beginning to form in the Congress. This will ensure that a divided government will not cause political immobility. As a result of a multi-party cabinet, and given the need to support the president in Congress, a coalition government would be forged with the aim of achieving a shared government without legislative deadlock and in which its members would necessarily have to be much more careful in putting forward their ideas and projects. As Jorge Carpizo points out, a bad project would have catastrophic results for the country since Mexico is moving ahead in its historic evolution. What works must be preserved, and reforms must not be made just to create change, but to improve.[4]

It is probable that the next chief executive will not have a majority in Congress, which seems to me enough reason and a strong incentive to negotiate with other political parties. If the next Mexican president wants to see his/her main public policies go into effect, he/she will have to forge agreements between the administration and the political parties that will be part of the coalition. These agreements are designed by the executive and the legislative branches; that is, the president will have to invite the members of other parties to be part of the cabinet to ensure that his/her bills are passed in Congress by the governing coalition.

At this point, the presidential candidates are Andrés Manuel López Obrador, Enrique Peña Nieto, Gabriel Quadri de la Torre, and Josefina Vázquez Mota. Ideally, they should inform the citizenry about their government proposals and the actors that will make up the governing coalition. I think it would be a good idea for the coalitions to be built before the elections, in full view of the citizenry, and not afterwards. That way, the citizens can choose in time, in a transparent, objective, informed way, who will govern our country.

The president's ability to govern a country with a divided government, such as the case of Mexico, depends on the negotiations and agreements arrived at with the opposition parties. This means that including in the cabinet members from parties other than the president's is very important; it gives the other parties the possibility of influencing and participating in the decision-making process.

It is also necessary for the president to include diverse projects from other forces on the political agenda in order to govern together. The influence of each of the coalition actors in designing government policies depends on the balance and composition of that government, that is, on the president's degree of autonomy or the level of commitments. This is why it is important that the chief executive seek the correct combination through negotiation, and a formula that will get the necessary public support for the governing coalition to remain stably in office.

It is important to emphasize that legislative or constitutional reforms are not necessary to form this type of coalition. It is just a matter of will, political common sense, as has been shown in the success stories like Chile or Brazil, countries that share many similarities with Mexico. These two nations have achieved stable democracies and foster agreements and negotiations to govern with a common project. Undoubtedly, this brings with it the participation of different political parties in the cabinet and stable support in Congress.

Conclusions

Government coalitions are the result of negotiations and political agreements that, by their very nature, would be very hard to regulate in legislation. "Sometimes I have the impression," continues Carpizo, "that people try to make up for the lack of dialogue, negotiation, and political consensus-building by proposing constitutional reforms, which is naïve and extraordinarily dangerous."[5]

The candidate who wins the presidency will probably be very debilitated; his or her strength will depend to a great extent on negotiations and consensus-building with the opposition parties. In this sense, the Congress will be a very important actor for the coming government.

Mexico needs a political system that can guarantee legality, pluralism, and, with that, tolerance. For that reason, in a divided government like ours, this kind of coalition can help us to have politically responsible authorities, where accountability and transparency have an impact on the confidence of the citizens in their institutions.

The participation of the minority parties in the cabinet would be irrefutable proof of the coalition parties' level of commitment to the public policies fostered by a government coalition.

It is necessary that the candidates for public office, among whom are our representatives, come to inclusive agreements that put to one side individualism and focus on the construction of alliances with diverse groups to trace political proposals that make it possible to create a strong government with a legislative majority for the coming years.

For all these reasons, it is very important —rather, it is urgent— to create awareness among the different political groups about the formation of coalitions. It is to be hoped that in the next elections, Mexico will achieve a government coalition that will bring with it negotiations, pacts, and agreements that move toward joint political responsibility. The participation of the minority parties in the cabinet would be irrefutable proof of the coalition parties' level of commitment to the public policies fostered by a government coalition, so that the political parties would take on joint responsibility for government decisions. VM

Notes

[1] It is important to point out that local elections will occur simultaneously in 14 states and the capital: Campeche, Colima, Chiapas, Mexico City's Federal District, Guanajuato, Guerrero, Jalisco, the State of Mexico, Morelos, Nuevo León, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, Sonora, Yucatán, and Tabasco.

[2] This idea is Kaare Strom's, as quoted by Daniel Chasquetti, "Democracia, multipartidismo y coaliciones en América Latina: evaluando la difícil combinación," Jorge Lanzaro, comp., *Tipos de presidencialismo y coaliciones políticas en América Latina* (Buenos Aires: Clacso, 2001), p. 329.

[3] César Cansino, comp., *Gobiernos y partidos en América Latina* (Mexico City: Centro de Estudios de Política Comparada, 2001), p. 34.

[4] Jorge Carpizo, "Propuestas de modificaciones constitucionales en el marco de la denominada reforma del Estado," Diego Valadés and Miguel Carbonell, comps., *El proceso constituyente mexicano. A 150 años de la Constitución de 1857 y 90 de la Constitución de 1917* (Mexico City: IIJ-UNAM, 2007).

[5] Jorge Carpizo, op. cit., pp. 170-171.

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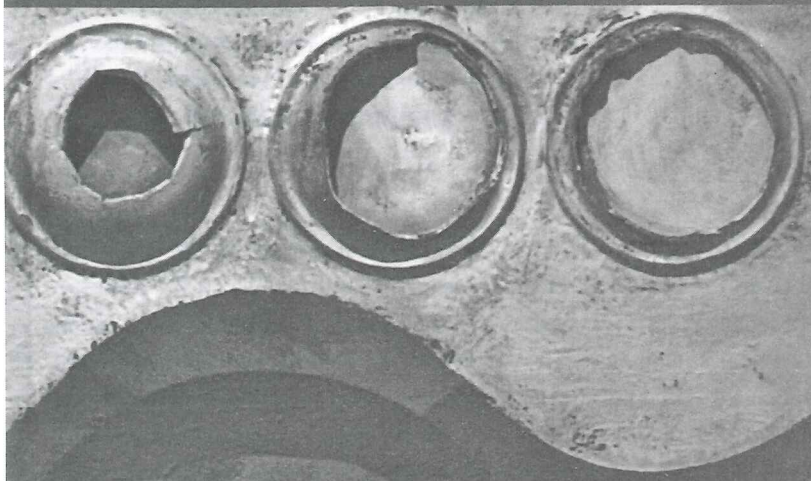

José Narro Robles
Jorge Carpizo in memoriam

Hugo Gutiérrez Vega
Poema

Eduardo Matos Moctezuma
Vicente Quirate
Sobre León-Portilla

José Pascual Buxó
Sobre Alfonso Reyes

Emmanuel Carballo
Cuatro grandes narradores

Manuel González Casanova
In memoriam

Fátima Fernández
Juan Ramón de la Fuente
Gerhard Heinze
Salud mental y medicina psicológica

Jacqueline Peschard
Por un voto razonado

Mauricio Molina
Tabucchi en la UNAM

Reportaje gráfico
80 años de Vicente Rojo

Textos
Geney Beltrán
Elsa Cross
Beatriz Espejo
Arnoldo Kraus
Carlos Martínez Assad
Margarita Peña
Aline Pettersson

Corridos! Tales of Passion And Revolution by Luis Valdez
An Adapted Tradition

Graciela Martínez-Zalce*

www.carmel.com/corridos-tales-of-the-mexican-revolution-e915371

An adaptation is an interpretation of previously-existing materials, transformed according to specific aspects of the medium to which the original cultural product is to be transferred. The interpretation is determined by the cultural situation and the historic moment in which the adaptation is done; when previously-existing materials are interpreted, adaptation intervenes in a specific group of cultural and social relations and events. Adaptation, then, continues to be a process parallel to translation.

From its first appearance, *Corridos! Tales of Passion and Revolution*, by Luis Valdez, was both an adaptation and a translation.[1] In the "actobiography" of El Teatro Campesino,[2] we find the background of this document. Written and directed by Valdez when the theater was headquartered in San Juan Bautista (1971-1980),[3] we find *Los corridos: Rosita Alvírez, Gabino Barrera (Ballads Adapted from the Mexican Tradition)* (1971), and at the El Teatro Campesino Playhouse (1981-today), *Los corridos Cornelio Vega, Delgadina, Soldadera (Adapted and Directed by Luis Valdez from the Mexican Tradition)* (1982-1983).[4]

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Valdez never loses sight of the fact that his text must interpret cultural situations for an audience that does not share the tradition, the history, or the original language. Thus, the dramatization also serves as a translation.

A Hemispheric Institute Digital Video Library review states that the piece began as a five-week Teatro Campesino workshop in 1982, which sought to explore the stories and lyrical narrative of Mexican corridos.[5] The production was so successful that a production of these corridos had a three-month run at San Francisco's Marines Memorial Theater and was awarded 11 prizes by the Bay Area Critics. In 1984, it was performed again several times.

In 1987, Valdez wrote and directed an adaptation of the 1982 work for the U.S. Public Broadcasting System (PBS) network, adding a subtitle: *Corridos! Tales of Passion and Revolution*. The production was given the George Peabody Award for excellence in television and historian and critic Chon A. Noriega includes it on the list of the 100 best Chicano film scripts, placing it in the Short or Video Narratives category.[6]

Corridos! has two leitmotifs. The first is a character, the teacher, played by Valdez himself. The second is the musical theme called *El corrido*, sung by Linda Rondstadt, which explains what the genre is: the soul of a people that speaks with melancholy of tragedies and joys.

As Yolanda Broyles-González says in the only academic article about the program —very critical and unfavorable, by the way, contrary to the opinions in the reviews published in cultural supplements— the dramatization for PBS excluded the corrido *Cornelio Vega* and includes the one about the dishwasher.[7]

Production for television, then, is the second level of adaptation, since the first level was producing a piece for the stage based on corridos and linking them up through a recurring musical theme and the explanation of the scenes by the teacher. The third directly involves the way in which the piece is dramatized: the songs, sung in Spanish, are dramatized by men and women actors, but are also interrupted by a narrator who translates the lyrics into English. As a creator-adaptor, Valdez never loses sight of the fact that his text must interpret cultural situations for an audience that does not share the tradition, the history, or the original language. Thus, the dramatization also serves as a translation.

The production of *Corridos! Tales of Passion and Revolution* is divided into three acts situated in three different settings. In the opening scene, the teacher is in a cantina where two historic corridos are sung; in the next, he moves to an office to introduce the three songs about women soldiers, or *soldaderas*, during the revolution; and in the last, from the projection room, he talks about Mexican migration to the United States right after the Mexican revolution, presenting a corrido about migrants. In the epilogue, he returns to the cantina.

The two historic corridos involve tragedies of love in which the female protagonists die. The first is *Rosita Alvírez*, who is murdered because she disobeys her mother —in Valdez's interpretation, with traces of humor, Rosita is tempted by the devil, whose face merges with hers in the mirror, and is murdered because she's a flirt. It is interesting to note that the end of the corrido, which is also mocking, cannot be heard because during the dancing, it merges with the polka *Échale un cinco al piano* (Put a Nickel in the Piano), by Felipe Valdez Leal.

The corrido is dramatized as a farce: the devil's make-up is like a carnival performer's; the choreography exaggerates the gestures and the outcome, Rosita's death —she literally kicks her legs up, as if to kick a bucket, showing her drawers, and then wafts up to heaven like a circus acrobat— underlines the amusing side of the punishment inflicted on women for being disobedient or flighty and loose, as narrated in the original corrido and its adaptation.

The teacher/narrator mentions certain corridos on scandalous topics, like the *Corrido of the 41*,[8] to make the transition to the next act, the longest of the video, based on the corrido about *Delgadina*, based on a Spanish medieval romance. The version sung here is from the nineteenth century, and is listed as having been collected in Michoacán by Vicente T. Mendoza —it is listed as number 116 in his book, which includes others from Durango, Guanajuato, Chihuahua, and Zacatecas.[9]

The production is interesting for several reasons. Valdez decides to situate the corrido toward the end of the 30-year dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz, the *Porfiriato*, and underlines both the characters' aristocratic origins and their wealth. This serves as a contrast with the act that follows, situated during the revolutionary period, to underline the corruption of the upper classes and their lack of ethics or even the most elemental moral values. The topic of the corrido is incest, and its result, filicide. The entire corrido is sung by a chorus, symbolizing the community that witnesses the abuse by the patriarch. Delgadina's ethereal beauty is underlined by making

her character be played by a classical ballerina who moves across the stage on her toes, initially gracefully, and in the end, in a ghostly way. She is accompanied by a narrator who, with death-like make-up and a strange costume —he is a mixture of dancer, with half his body uncovered, and butler, wearing gloves and livery— translates the verses into English. Actors and actresses reproduce the scenes of the family life of the king, his wife, his son, and his three daughters. The characters wander through sets that, on the one hand represent their ancestry, and on the other hand, mock their supposed noble lineage. For example, on the walls hang moving portraits of ancestors who are making ridiculous gestures of approval or disapproval. At mealtimes, a multitude of servants wait on the family, and as the food is served, the corrido is interrupted with the sounds of Juventino Rosas's waltz *Sobre las olas* (Over the Waves).

A fundamental scene for pointing out the corruption characteristic of this oligarchic patriarchy depicts the father taking communion at mass with his family, and immediately after, demanding his daughter's sexual favors while the mother, an observer steeped in ignorance, watches with indifference or submission.

Delgadina's tragedy also stems from her disobedience to her father; however, in this case, it is reasonable because he wants to take her as his mistress, and since she does not consent to consummate the incest, he locks her up and lets her die of thirst in full view of everyone. Including the beautiful corrido about Delgadina situates us in a period when the powerful could commit any injustice with impunity, sheltered by an equally unjust regime, as the teacher seems to say when pointing to the period in which the director decided to represent it.

To introduce the second act, a minimal transition is used: a musical background using the Zacatecas march and a fragment of black and white documentary footage of the entrance of the revolutionaries into Mexico City in 1910, which serves as a bridge and indication for the viewer that the following corridos will be different.

To effect this change, the narrator not only moves into an office, but also changes his costume on camera, discarding his nineteenth-century tie, all the while there is a smoking pistol on the bar. Characterized as a Villista soldier, with a Texan hat and cartridge belts crossed over his chest, the teacher-narrator will now act as someone who sets the context and as a cultural translator. He begins by clarifying that the Mexican Revolution was the first great social movement of the twentieth century, explaining that for the first time, the people had a voice and used it to express itself in corridos. But in addition, he wants to underline the important role played by women in this period. Lastly, he speaks of the U.S. journalist, John Reed, who accompanied Francisco Villa.

With that, he has not only put the songs into context, but he has also told us the structure of the second act. This is visually the most attractive section because it presents on a lavender or orange background, reminiscent either of the dawn or dusk, back-lit scenes of revolutionaries on a train, in which the camera moves in or back to give us the sensation of a multitude and because, in addition, it includes footage of documentaries from the period.[10]

The musical leitmotiv is the corrido *La rielera* (The Railroad Woman) with an altered chorus to emphasize the female character more: "I have my pair of pistols / with a good supply of ammo / One for my [female] beloved / and another for my rival" has become "I have my pair of pistols / for the revolution / one is a 30-30 / the other is my good 32"; or "I am the railroad woman and I have my Juan / He is my life; I am his love / when they tell me the train is leaving / good-bye my railroad woman, your Juan is leaving" becomes "good-by mother dear, I'm going with my Juan." This way, the railroad woman is no longer just a woman at a whistle stop; she becomes a *soldadera*, or camp follower/woman soldier. Fragments of *La Adelita* and *La Valentina* are also played. It is noteworthy that of the corridos selected for this act, none of them is really about war.

I agree with Yolanda Broyles-González that the presence of John Reed is odd. Why replace the teacher's voice with his? Perhaps including it is part of the adaptation process, since he is not only a narrator, but a character who interacts with the others, particularly with the *soldadera* Elisabeta. But, in addition, his inclusion is also related to the fact mentioned that in this text by Valdez, the adaptation also serves as a translation of cultural values: introducing a U.S. American voice, a white, Anglo-Saxon character who speaks English without a Chicano accent or Latino jargon and does not constantly

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to video or film gives theater.
If it were not fixed, the stage production
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move from English to Spanish may be a dramatic technique so the viewers find a point of connection with the content of the work. Broyles-González notes that the characterization of Reed represents the benevolent Euro-American who mediates between the Mexicans who kill each other, or who defends the women from their drunken, abusive men. Reed's texts, read by the character, serve to link together *La rielera* (The Railroad Woman), *La Valentina*, and *La Adelita*, all played with arrangements for accordion and redova (what in Central Mexico is called "Northern music"), sung in an open-throat style by Linda Rondstadt, and ending with a large chorus.

The last act also has a cinematic transition, but this time of Hollywood fiction, the dream factory. The teacher, who has now returned to his role as narrator, translator, and setter of contexts, tells us that the corridos dealing with episodes of the migration of a million Mexicans to the United States immediately after the revolution display a sharp sense of humor and a hint of political satire. The *Corrido of the Dishwasher*, the teacher explains, involves an illegal immigrant.[11] Accompanied by a player piano, he begins the story of dreams of Hollywood that end in disappointment. The introduction of what is considered the first Chicano novel, *Las aventuras de don Chipote o cuando los pericos mamen* (The Adventures of Don Chipote, or When Parrots Suck), by Daniel Vanegas, points to the topic of this corrido as a common thread throughout Chicano literature: the desire to return to the homeland because of disappointment.[12]

As the intertext shows us Rudolf Valentino's sheik, the real action takes place in a kitchen where the actors imitate slapstick comedy style. Valdez uses this to situate the corrido written on the other side of our borders —his side— where the hero is a human being who has to work to survive, a person who fled the war with the hope of well-being that never comes. Curiously, in this case, the action is not interrupted with the translation of the lyrics. Amidst the exaggerated movements, the circular chase, and the over-done gesticulation, a new villain appears: the immigration officer, showing his INS badge.

The adaptation's epilogue is brief and deals with the corrido's durability. Sitting at a table, Valdez and Linda make a toast and the circle closes with a return to the musical leitmotif, *I Am the Corrido*. What is not talked about is the durability that an adaptation to video or film gives theater. If it were not fixed, the stage production would have been ephemeral; the memory of the translation would have remained only in the few existing reviews, which, in turn, are interpretations. The possibility of consulting this document gives us the other voices not only of the revolution, but also of Mexico's narrative and musical tradition, of its border and the "other side." VM

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Notes

[1] The first public showing of the video in Mexico was as the closing session of the Chicano-Mexican symposium titled "Those Pachucos, Those Chicanos, Those Spanglish-Speakers! The Theater of Luis Valdez and His Fight for an American Mexican-ness" at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) in June 2010. The second was at the symposium, also held at the UNAM in October 2010, titled "Other Voices of the Mexican Revolution in the Fabric of Mexico and the United States." At the latter symposium, the author presented a shorter version of this article.

[2] "Since its inception, El Teatro Campesino and its founder and artistic director, Luis Valdez, have set the standard for Latino theatrical production in the United States. Founded in 1965 on the Delano Grape Strike picket lines of Cesar Chavez's United Farmworkers Union, the company

created and performed "actos" or short skits on flatbed trucks and in union halls. Taking the "actos" on tour to dramatize the plight and cause of the farmworkers, El Teatro Campesino was honored in 1969 with an Obie Award for "demonstrating the politics of survival" and with the Los Angeles Drama Critics Award in 1969 and 1972….It is our mission to create a popular art with a twenty-first century tools that presents a more just and accurate account of human history, while encouraging the young women and men of a new generation to take control of their own destiny through creative discipline, vibrant education, economic independence, and artistic excellence." http://elteatrocampesino.com/.

The Teatro Campesino profile on the Hemisphere Digital Video Library is titled "Actobiography" in allusion to its origins. [Translator's Note.]

[3] "In 1971, the company moved to San Juan Bautista, a rural town of 1 600 people located on the periphery of the major metropolitan centers of Northern California. In summer of 1973, legendary British theater director Peter Brook and his Paris-based company, The International Centre of Theater Research, participated in an eight-week experimental workshop with the company in San Juan Bautista culminating in a joint venture performing throughout farmworker communities in the San Joaquin Valley." http://elteatrocampesino.com/.

[4] In 2007, together with his son Kinan Valdez, the author, he returned to the topic with *Corridos: Ballads of the Borderlands.*

[5] See *Corridos! Tales of Passion and Revolution.* El Teatro Campesino Collection. Hemispheric Institute Digital Video Library, http://hidvl.nyu.edu/video/00539671.html, HIDVL Artist Profiles. "Actobiography of El Teatro Campesino," http://hemisphericinstitute.org/artistprofiles/etcampesino/campesino_Actobiograf%C3%ADa_2008.pdf, and compiled August 8, 2008. Hemispheric Institute, accessed October 1, 2010, and http://elteatrocampesino.com/.

[6] Chon A. Noriega, "The Aztlán Film Institute's Top 100 List," *Aztlán,* Autumn 1998 vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 1-9, http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/media/documents/aztlanfilmlistbychon_000.pdf, and http://outandaboutmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/pdf/issues/oa_07_10.pdf.

[7] Broyles-González argues that Valdez's attempt to cross over to the mainstream in order to open up to the white, middle-class audience leads him to perpetuate the stereotypes Hollywood has used to depict its Mexican and Chicano characters. She also criticizes the work's excessive violence, which situates the characters in saloons, with the women appearing solely as companions to the men in their drinking bouts, dressed either as prostitutes or cooks, making tortillas for the revolutionaries. I do not completely agree with her on this score, since the corridos selected speak of women in that tone and tell violent stories. I think the adaptation to more contemporary versions of gender relations would have distorted the tradition Valdez wanted to talk about and that would have bowed to another kind of mainstream, the mainstream of the politically correct. See Yolanda Broyles-González, "What Price 'Mainstream'?: Luis Valdez' *Corridos* on Stage and Film," *Cultural Studies* vol. 4, no. 3, 1990, pp. 281-293.

[8] He explains that corridos were popular ballads about topical items of the day. *The Corrido of the* 41 involves 41 homosexuals, some in drag, surprised dancing together at a soirée and arrested. [Translator's Note.]

[9] Vicente T. Mendoza, *El romance español y el corrido mexicano: un estudio comparativo* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1997).

[10] John J. O'Connor's review links these tableaus with the aesthetics of the Mexican muralists. John J. O'Connor, "Corridos!, an Adaptation of Mexican Folk Tales," *The New York Times*, October 7, 1987, http://www.nytimes.com, /1987/10/07/arts/corridos-an-adaptation-of-mexican-folk-tales/html.

[11] Broyles-González is very disturbed by the use of this term, "illegal immigrant."

[12] Nicolás Kanellos, "Introducción," Daniel Vanegas, *Las aventuras de don Chipote o cuando los pericos mamen* (Tijuana: El Colegio de la Frontera Norte/Plaza y Valdés, 2000), pp. 7-26.

The New Migration Law
Mexico's Continuing Failure To Protect Migrants

John Washington*

Fredy had already died twice before I met him. The first time they hit him in the chest with the butt of an AK-47 while he was up against a wall. The man who killed him, he remembers, was tall and fat and put his weight behind the butt of the gun. Fredy's sternum was crushed, his heart stopped.

He didn't wake again until he was already in the morgue. They'd even put a tag on his toe.

That was back more than a year ago. In Guatemala.

Fredy chuckled about the fright that he must have given the mortician, waking up halfway inside a body bag.

Fredy is thin, short, has big eyes, dark hair, and smiles frequently and widely. Everything about him seems sweet. He has a sweet, soprano voice and a sweet bright-toothed smile. He has a little bit of acne on his cheeks and forehead and he likes to sing to himself: sweet, high, slow songs. The few nights we slept on the same floor in the shelter, he even sang himself to sleep.

I met Fredy at the "Hermanos en el Camino" (Brothers on the Road) migrant shelter in Ixtepec, Oaxaca. He was overstaying the maximum three-day reception because it was in the shelter that he died for the second time.

Maybe he had a premonition that some bad was coming to him. Maybe he saw the bandits with their machetes working their way down the train. Maybe he had dozed off and had no idea what was coming to him. Maybe he was in the middle of song. It's unclear exactly what happened. What he remembers is that there was a group of them, and that they knew or suspected that he had family in the U.S. They secured his arms. They secured his head. Then they forced a bottle into his mouth. He couldn't scream. He could either drink or suffocate.

Courtesy of the author

He drank.

I asked him what it tasted like. Was it water or soda? Milky or sweet? He doesn't remember.

As his assailants waited for the drug to take effect, they dropped their guard. Fredy didn't want to get hit in the chest again. He didn't want to wake up in another morgue. So he ran. And he made it, cutting a few corners and crashing into the bushes. A few minutes later he made it to the shelter. He was sweating like he had never sweated before. And yet he felt cold. He was starting to tremble. One of the volunteers at the shelter saw him. Tried to lay him down. That's when Fredy started vomiting.

But it was too late. The poison, or the drug, was already in his bloodstream.

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By the time the ambulance arrived Fredy's heart had stopped again. The paramedics got him in the ambulance and, on the ride to the hospital, defibrillated him three times before his heart kicked back in.

I met Fredy three days later.

If you want to see legislative evidence of the poor treatment of migrants on the North American continent you could start as far back as the United States Naturalization Act of 1790, which established limitations to citizenship based on color of skin. That is, only white people ("free white people… of good moral character") could be citizens. In Mexico the laws weren't as explicitly racist, but, in 1854 with the Decree on Foreign Citizenship and Nationality of Inhabitants, still limited nearly all benefits, even fishing on Mexico's coasts, exclusively to Mexican citizens.

In the last century and a half since this decree, in both the United States and Mexico, migrants have been wanted, put to work, granted amnesty, hated, oppressed, expelled, and just about everything in between. The only thing that has remained constant has been the migrants. They keep moving. And the trend on behalf of both the U.S. and Mexican governments has been to pass legislation, including those laws that purport to protect, that makes migrants vulnerable. Vulnerable and exploitable.

> They renewed their commitment to forging new and realistic approaches to migration to ensure it is safe, orderly, legal, and dignified, and agreed on the framework within which this ongoing effort is based…respecting the human dignity of all migrants, regardless of their status; recognizing the contribution migrants make to enriching both societies; shared responsibility for ensuring migration takes place through safe and legal channels.[1]

The quote is from a Wikileaks document detailing Mexican President Vicente Fox's September 2001 visit to Washington. The meeting between Presidents Fox and Bush launched the so-called "Partnership for Prosperity," in which the matter of migrants, their safety and dignity, was a primary concern. A few days after the meeting, however, the September 11 terrorist attacks dramatically changed the way U.S. Americans viewed undocumented migrants. The hope for "safe, orderly, legal, and dignified" migration was buried under the rubble of the Twin Towers. Since 9/11, the U.S. government, besides building more walls and funding more Border Patrol agents, has only taken steps, whether state-by-state or federally (as with the Secure Communities program),

Migrants keep moving. And the trend on behalf of the U.S. and Mexican governments has been to pass legislation that makes migrants vulnerable. Vulnerable and exploitable.

to hound, catch, scare, and deport undocumented migrants (see, for example, for evidence of systematic federal abuse, No More Death's recent report, "A Culture of Cruelty"). In the past 11 years, the U.S. government has done effectively nothing to ensure the dignity or safety of undocumented migrants.

But what about Mexico?

Though Mexico is also a destination country for migrants, primarily it is a migrant stepping-stone for an estimated one million Central Americans who annually channel through its cargo-rail and highway systems toward the United States. And, ostensibly heeding the 10-year old clarion for the "safe, orderly, legal and dignified" passage of migrants, in May 2011, Mexican legislators passed the new Migration Law.

Fredy is from a small town outside of Mazatenango, Guatemala. After his father died when he was a boy, he grew up in a small house with his five brothers and sisters. He went to school until he was 14, when, after his eldest brother died and his impoverished, desperate mother started drinking, Fredy moved into the streets, begging for bread and pocket change. After his mother cleaned up a few years later, Fredy moved back in with her, working on the large corporate farm, the *finca*, the family both lived and worked on. Then, at 19, Fredy married his childhood sweetheart. A year later (one year ago) the young couple had a child, a little girl named Iris.

The story is as sweet as Fredy telling it: his soft, singsong voice, his wide, bright smile, his misting, distance-drawn eyes. I asked him why they named their daughter Iris. Because, he explained, there are a lot of rainbows where they live, and the little girl reminded him and his wife of a rainbow. In Spanish rainbow is "arco*iris*." The story is almost too sweet.

But the thought of raising his daughter in the same nearly destitute conditions he himself was raised in cut all the sugar and didn't give Fredy much hope. And then, one day, his elder sister was threatened by a local gang in the city. When Fredy went to go help, they put him against a wall and a large, fat man hit him in the chest with the butt of a rifle, crushing his sternum, stopping his heart. He woke up later, in a morgue, a tag on his toe. When he recovered, a few months later, he

It is on cargo trains where migrants are particularly easy targets for "criminals without scruples." The UN recently estimated that as many as 18 000 migrants are kidnapped annually.

and his wife decided that he should go north, find his cousin in Los Angeles and work for a year so he could move his family off the farm, to somewhere safer, to somewhere with more opportunities for little Iris.

The Mexican Migration Law was passed in order to, in rhetoric reminiscent of the 2001 Fox-Bush meeting, ensure the "legal and orderly flow of migrants" across the country. For years, especially since the fractioning of the cartels and the spike in narco-violence in the country, migrants in Mexico have been especially vulnerable to extortion, robbery, beatings, kidnappings, rapes, and murder. There is no doubt that something needed to be done to protect migrants from, in current President Calderón's words, the "criminals without scruples."[2] But in the past 10 months since the implementation of the new law, have things actually changed for the better? Are migrants safer in Mexico? Do they feel safer? The answer, sadly, seems to be a resounding no.

One of the most concrete policy changes in the new law is the promise of temporary (180 day) visas for migrants to cross the country safely. In theory, the visas give the migrants the chance to take public transportation instead of having to illegally cross the country on top of cargo trains in fear of migration checkpoints. It is on these cargo trains where migrants are particularly easy targets for the "criminals without scruples." The United Nations recently estimated that as many as 18 000 migrants are kidnapped annually.[3] Alejandro Solalinde, one of the best-known migrant rights voices in the country and the founder of the shelter where I met Fredy, recently estimated that seven out of ten undocumented migrant women are raped on their journey north.[4] The trails of the undocumented are, without doubt, incredibly dangerous. The opportunity to skip these trails where "rape is part of the cost of the ticket" would be an incredible improvement for a journey that more than a million take each year.[5]

But, in practice, the visas promised by the new law are effectively impossible to obtain. There are three basic requisites a migrant must meet to procure the visa: 1) proof that the migrant plans to return to his or her country of origin; 2) proof that the migrant will be economically solvent during his/her passage through Mexico; and 3) a letter of invitation from the employer or organization that is inviting the migrant to the United States. Not only are these three requisites almost insultingly impossible for an overwhelming number of migrants to meet, but, due to fear of authorities and the daunting bureaucratic runaround, these temporary visas are not even being requested.

In my two weeks at the shelter where I met Fredy, I saw hundreds of migrants in their transit north. If we broached the topic of security, many —nearly everyone I spoke with— told me they were scared of what might happen to them on the remainder of their journey. Not one of them mentioned even the possibility of a visa. I asked long-term volunteer, Karla Miranda, who was temporarily in charge of the shelter, how many migrants succeed in obtaining a visa. Miranda explained to me that volunteers only help migrants procure visas who have suffered some type of violence (usually rape, assault or kidnapping). But if —I pressed— if they haven't suffered an abuse, can they still get a visa? She told me she'd never heard of a single case. "The reality," she said, "is that a lot of these people are extremely vulnerable."

But isn't that why the law was passed, to help these vulnerable people? I asked her what they had to be scared of in applying for a visa. She hesitated, and then repeated herself. "Look, they are vulnerable. And they are very scared."

The aforementioned United Nations report also described that investigators have received "concrete, detailed, and credible information of cases of forced disappearances at the hands of public authorities (as well as by criminal groups working closely with public authorities)."[6] According to Mexico's own congressional report in 2011, more than a fifth of all kidnappings in the country involve police officers or soldiers.[7] That is to say, since in practice a migrant needs to have already suffered some type of abuse to obtain a visa, one-fifth of the time that same migrant would be appealing to a representative of a system that has committed the very crime they are being asked to denounce.

I asked Wilmer, a young Honduran who had been beaten by bandits and threatened with being handed over to the notoriously brutal criminal group Los Zetas if he didn't pay a fee to a band of less organized bandits, how he felt during the application process volunteers at the shelter were helping him with. He said that he was nervous. I asked him what he was nervous about. "Los Zetas," he responded. I asked him to clarify.

"You were nervous about Los Zetas when you were giving your interview at the Migration Office?"

"That's right."

"And were Los Zetas there?"

"No."

"And how did the agents treat you?"

"They were fine at first."

"And then?"

"Now they're not very nice."

I asked him to explain.

"They are," he hesitated, then repeated, "not very nice."

Again, I asked him to explain. They hadn't done anything to him, he assured me, but they simply weren't very kind. Despite the unclear implications of the "not very nice" treatment by the immigration officials (and Wilmer's hesitancy to elaborate), one fact is clear, the migration officials weren't going out of their way to change the common perception of a corrupt government in Mexico.

And yet the fear involved in obtaining a temporary visa is not the only difficulty.

After denouncing the crime (which, as in Wilmer's case, usually involves multiple interviews with both police and migration officials), the migrant then needs to provide an official form of identification. For many, this is another potentially insurmountable hurdle. Many migrants from rural parts of Central America don't have birth certificates, or official IDs. Wilmer, for example, had to wait two weeks for volunteers at the shelter to send a letter to the Municipal District in Honduras where he was born so that they could send him back a birth certificate. And it doesn't always happen so quickly.

To continue with the visa process, once a migrant does finally have his or her papers, he or she then has to prove that they have a place of temporary residence while awaiting a verdict on the visa. This, of course, unless the migrant is able to find the support of an aid group or a shelter, costs money. Then, once the multiple interviews are over and the proofs of identity provided, it usually takes 45 days to process the paperwork. That is 45 days, at least, that the migrant is usually not working. During this month-and-a-half-long wait the migrant also has to report to the Migration Office and sign a paper to prove that he/she hasn't continued his/her intended journey north, leaving themselves vulnerable to another potential kidnapping, to further violence, to more "not very nice" treatment, and, commonly, to incredible boredom. Wilmer spent most of his days, when not lending a hand to the volunteers at the shelter, sitting in patches of shifting shade or playing bottle-cap checkers on a piece of cardboard with other passing migrants.

I left Fredy before he had made his decision as to whether he would wait the (at least) 45 days for a potential visa, continue the trip on the top of a train, or head back south to his wife and child. He wanted to go north, I could tell. A cousin, who I talked to a few times on the phone, was expecting him in Los Angeles and had a job lined up for him. If he waited out a visa for at least 45 days, as he saw it, he'd be losing money. But he didn't want to get back on the train either, which has taken and mutilated so many lives. He didn't want to die for a third time. Before I said goodbye to him, I asked what he was leaning toward. He told me that his heart was still weak, from the poison, from his second death, and that he wanted to recover his strength another day or so and talk to his wife before deciding what to do.

The question remains: what has the Mexican government effectively done to ensure the promise of "safe, orderly, legal, and dignified" migration? The new Migration Law is more of a bone thrown to migrant aid advocates than an actual step forward. If Mexico or the U.S. wants to take any steps toward what was promised back in September 2001, lawmakers need to not skirt around trying to appease one political faction and not offend another. They need to model laws based on the needs of the actual migrants.

I later discovered that Fredy, instead of continuing the trip north, decided to go back to his wife and little Iris in Guatemala, where he is as of the finishing of this article. VM

Notes

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[2] Jorge Ramos, "Calderón promulga Ley de Migración," May 24, 2010, *El Universal* (Mexico City), http://www.eluniversal.com.mx/notas/767626.html.

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The Euro Crisis And the Mexican Economy

Alejandro Toledo Patiño*

Alex Domanski/REUTERS

The crisis in the eurozone has been at the center of international economic concerns since late 2009. The financial turbulence associated with the public debt crises in Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain (known as PIIGS) have affected stock market indices and credit and banking institutions globally, as well as investor and consumer confidence levels in practically all countries in 2010 and 2011.

The epicenter of this crisis has been Greece, which constitutes 3.8 percent of the eurozone's gross domestic product (GDP). The prolonged negotiations between Greek authorities and officials from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Central Bank (ECB), and the European Union (EC) about the austerity measures required for Greece to be able to receive a financial bailout of 160 billion concluded last February.

On February 12, amidst Molotov cocktails, tear gas, looting of stores, burning buildings, and the partial break-up of the coalition government, the Greek Parliament approved a new austerity program imposed as an unequivocal condition by the ECB, the EU, and the IMF for turning over the second bailout payment (the first payment, €110 billion, was doled out in May 2010).

On February 15, the Panhellenic Socialist Party (PSP) and the New Democracy Party gave their written guarantee to eurozone authorities of their commitment to respect the austerity plan if either of them won next April's elections. The plan consists basically of 3.3 billion in cutbacks; immediate lay-offs of 15 000 public employees, with a total of 150 000 over three years; a 20-percent cut in the minimum wage; and cutbacks in pensions. This, in a country that is now entering its third year of recession, with 21 percent unemployment —43.5 percent in the case of young people— wages that have dropped 20 percent, a foreign-trade deficit equivalent to 7.6 percent of GDP, and a public deficit of 9.1 percent of GDP (1.4 percent less than the one that existed at the time of the first austerity program and bailout package).

Finally, on February 20, the financial bailout was granted, at the same time that Greece's public debt was reduced by a discount of around €100 billion, negotiated with its creditors, putting its total debt at €206 billion.

What can be expected of the euro crisis after these agreements?

What can Mexico expect from the winds blowing across the Atlantic in the coming months of the continuing European storm?

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Facets of the Euro Crisis

The euro crisis has three facets: first, what has been called the "sovereign debt" crisis; second, the European banking system's great fragility; and lastly, the slow-down and eventual recession of the 17 economies that are members of the eurozone —and in fact, of all the European Union's 27 economies.

The so-called sovereign-debt crisis reached its climax with the recent events in Greece, but by no means did it end there or in Italy, Portugal, or Spain, whose economies will require a reduction in their fiscal deficit under recession conditions, and without being able to use a depreciation of their currencies to reactivate their competitiveness. To these macro-economic restrictions will be added the social tension and political conflicts sparked by the crisis and recessive policies.

The European banking system's fragility stems from its excessive exposure to public debt securities, particularly by the French and German banks in the last decade. The weakened state of Europe's banking system was thrown into relief the first two weeks of this year when banks deposited the highest amounts in history (€490 billion) in the ECB at overnight rates of 0.25 percent, instead of depositing them in the interbank market at 0.37 percent, while the cost of money is 1 percent for a deposit with a three-year maturity. This means that the banks prefer to maintain "liquidity cushions" given the low confidence levels in being able to recover interbank loans.

In the first quarter of 2012, the European governments will have to pay more than €457 billion in sovereign debt. Of that, Italy owes €113 billion and Greece, €14.5 billion. The possibility of Greece defaulting seems to have been avoided for the moment. A default by Italy would be a catastrophe that would cause the banking system to implode. In November 2011, European leaders declared that Italy was "too big to fail," given that it represents 18.5 percent of the eurozone's total GDP, the third economy after Germany and France.[1]

The third facet of the euro crisis is the recession. In addition to Greece and Portugal, which have been in recession since 2010, at the end of 2011 Belgium, Holland, and Italy were added to the list of European economies whose GDP had dropped in two consecutive quarters. EU authorities, perhaps with calculated optimism, think that at least for the first half of 2012, the rest of the EU countries will go into a "moderate recession," with an average annual drop of 1 percent over the eurozone as a whole.

One of the main impacts of the euro crisis has been the reduction of economic growth expectations worldwide.

Depending on the depth of that recession in each country, especially the PIIGS, the public debt crisis and the banking system's fragility could be accentuated: because of the crisis, which the austerity policies will deepen, the governments will not be able to pick up enough revenue to pay for their bonds when they come due.

Until now, the ECB has favored "orthodox" policies that have sharpened the economy's recessive tendencies,[2] but an increasing number of voices in Europe are questioning this way of dealing with the crisis and suggesting they do what the U.S. Federal Reserve did in 2008 and 2009 when it acted as last-resort rescuer of the banks and insurance companies, injecting massive amounts of liquidity (known as quantitative easing), loans to banks in trouble, and massive purchases of debt and toxic assets.[3]

In line with the argument that European monetary authorities should play a more active role in dealing with the crisis, some even suggest they implement an inflationary policy to reduce the burden of the payment of the debt for governments, companies, and families, and thus lessen the economies' general decline. Others favor implementing a depreciation of the euro to foster exports and thus stimulate production.

Traditional ECB behavior changed in December 2011 when, in the face of the worsening Greek sovereign debt situation and its probable contagion of Italy and Spain, the ECB began what it called long-term refinancing operations (LTROs) in order to purchase public debt and inject liquidity (€500 billion) into the European banking system. Simultaneously, it proceeded to make more flexible conditions for accepting collateral for the lines of credit given to the banks.[4]

This change brought the markets temporary relief, reduced the costs of taking out debt for European countries in trouble, and, if this new kind of intervention by the ECB is confirmed, in the medium term, it could also be good news in terms of the perspectives for the euro crisis. It may not be good news if it is only an already tardy, momentary change, and, as a result, if 2012 becomes the year in which Europe enters into the maelstrom of massive fiscal adjustments-production crises-

defaults-banking crises. That would be a crisis that would shake the economic and financial world to its foundations and redefine the integration of the eurozone.

Banks with European headquarters could drain liquid assets from their branches in Mexico in order to have liquidity to face possible scenarios in which clients stage runs on their banks in Europe.

The Impacts of the Euro Crisis in Mexico

Up until now, the impact on Mexico of this crisis has been limited. It has mainly been confined first to the financial sphere, with a hike in the cost of placing government debt securities in the third and fourth quarters of 2011. Secondly, the exchange rate has been affected, with a devaluation of the peso *vis-à-vis* the dollar and the euro itself, moving from Mex$12.70 and Mex$17.50, to Mex$14.27 and Mex$18.94 respectively at the end of 2011. Thirdly, prices have risen with the peso/dollar exchange rate, key to the Mexican economy, and the inflation rate tends to rise, as happened in the last months of 2011. And fourth, the external sector has been affected because the depreciation of the peso tends to lower the price of exports and raise that of imports.

One of the main impacts of the euro crisis has been the reduction of economic growth expectations worldwide, in the United States, in Latin America, and, of course, in Mexico. Comparing 2011 to this year, what we will see is a global slowdown.

Taking into consideration the European recession, the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) predicts that the Latin American economies will grow an average of 3.7 percent in 2012, compared to 4.4 percent in 2011. Its figures for Mexico come in at 3.3 percent for 2012, compared to 3.9 percent in 2011 (see Table 1).

If these growth expectations are compared with the predictions for GDP performance in Europe or the United States, Latin America is very far from a crisis. In fact, in the last summit in Davos, Switzerland from January 26 to 29, Latin America was dubbed an "oasis of growth, stability, and opportunities."[5]

In the case of Mexico, a 3.3 growth in GDP indicates that, after a 5.4 percent jump following the tumble caused by the U.S. 2008/2009 crisis, as Graph 1 indicates, the Mexican economy maintains its moderate performance levels for the last decade.

Mexico has followed a model of economic opening and de-regulation that has led to price, exchange-rate, and financial stability. At the same time, however, it has experienced sluggish production performance, and above all, insufficient creation of formal jobs.[6]

The open unemployment rate in December 2011 was 4.7 percent, comparing favorably with the high rates in the eurozone (10.6 percent at the end of 2011). Leaving to one side the important methodological and institutional differences in measuring unemployment, in Mexico, underemployment has reached major proportions. According to recent data from Mexico's National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Information Processing (INEGI), the number of informal jobs (or the underground economy) rose from 12.8 to almost 14 million between the first quarter of 2010 and the last quarter of 2011. In that period, two out of every three new jobs were created by the informal economy.

The Mexican economy has lacked sufficient dynamism in recent years, creating an enormous social backlog; but its current monetary and financial stability, its low fiscal deficit, and the amount of its international reserves (US$145 billion)

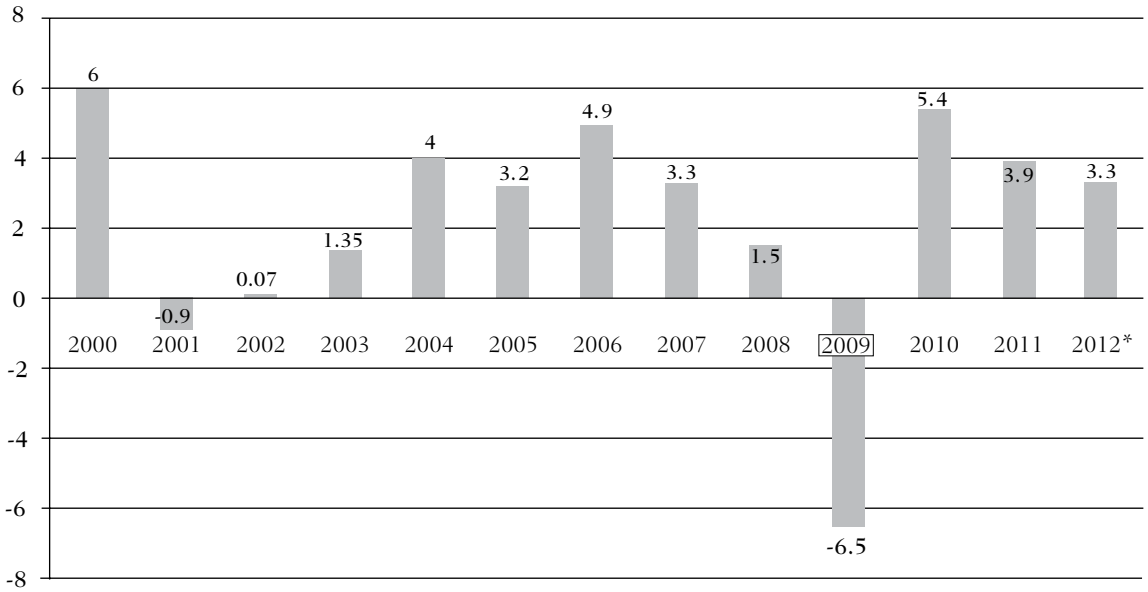
Table 1
Latin America: Predictions of GDP Growth Rates 2011-2012 (%)

Country/Region	2011	2012
Argentina	9.0	4.5
Brazil	2.9	3.5
Chile	6.3	4.2
Mexico	3.9	3.3
Peru	7.0	5.0
Venezuela	4.2	3.0
Latin America	4.4	3.7

Source: ECLAC, "Balance preliminar de las economías de América Latina y el Caribe," December 21, 2011, http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/get Prod .asp?xml=/prensa/noticias/comunicados/8/45478/P45478.xml&xsl=/prensa/ tpl/p6f.xsl&base=/tpl/top-bottom.xsl.

GRAPH 1

MEXICO'S REAL GDP (ANNUAL RATE OF VARIATION 2000-2012)*



* Data for 2012, projection.

Source: Developed by the author using INEGI data for 2000-2011; and for 2012, ECLAC, "Balance preliminar de las economías de América Latina y el Caribe," December 21, 2011, http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/prensa/noticias/comunicados/8/45478/P45478.xml&xsl=/prensa/tpl/p6f.xsl&base=/tpl/top-bottom.xsl.

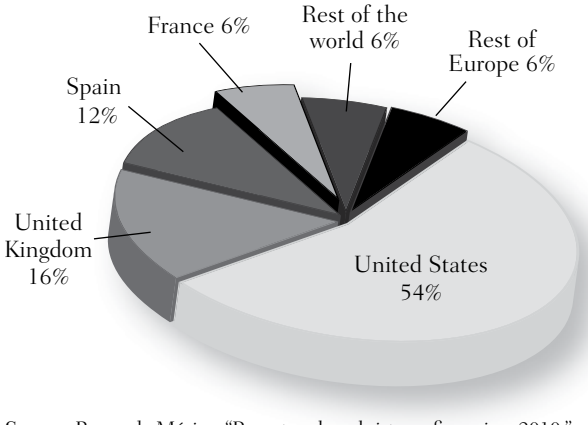
Changes prompted by lower Mexican exports to Europe are estimated to be marginal since the European market currently represents less than six percent of the country's non-oil exports.

will leave it relatively well-positioned to deal with the fallout from the European crisis. Initially, these effects will be cushioned by Mexican economic activity's high dependence on the U.S. cycle. These two conditions, both momentary and structural, will allow the Mexican economy to maintain margins of "de-linking" *vis-à-vis* the crisis in Europe. But even so, Mexico's economy will feel direct and indirect effects.

The indirect effects will be felt as the recession in the old continent slows down the U.S. economic recovery. Mexico's manufacturing sector and *maquiladora* export sector will be affected through trade channels. The changes prompted by lower Mexican exports to Europe are estimated to be only marginal since the European market as a whole currently represents less than six percent of the country's non-oil exports. Recent studies estimate that a one-percent drop in GDP in the eurozone would signify a marginal decrease of only 0.8 percent of

GRAPH 2

EXPOSURE OF BANKS OPERATING IN MEXICO TO BANKS ABROAD, BY COUNTRY OF ORIGIN OF THE COUNTERPART*



Source: Banco de México, "Reporte sobre el sistema financiero 2010," p. 64, http://www.banxico.org.mx/publicaciones-y-discursos/publicacionesinformes-periodicos/reporte-sf/%7BDC37ABCB-26F0-020D-145B-5CF397D62E68%7D.pdf.

*Average of the period from January 2008 to June 2012.

those exports.[7] Also, a general decrease in the flow of European tourism to the rest of the world can be expected, but it will be offset in Mexico by two circumstantial factors that will bring in tourists from other places: the mid-year G-20 meeting slated for Los Cabos, Baja California Sur, and the intensive sale of promotional tour packages for the Mayan Zone because of "the prophesies about 2012."

Perhaps the most important direct effect of the European crisis on the Mexican economy may come from banking. As Graph 2 shows, the banks operating in Mexico are highly exposed to European banks, particularly from Great Britain and Spain. Given the credit crunch in the eurozone, banks with European headquarters could drain liquid assets —that is, money— from their branches in Mexico in order to have liquidity to face possible scenarios in which clients stage runs on their banks in Europe, as happened in Eastern Europe in 2009 and 2010. Something like that would have an impact on Mexico's banking system, raise the price of money, and accentuate the slowdown regardless of how the U.S. cycle performs.

In short, all this gives us an idea of the foreseeable impacts of the euro crisis on Mexico. It is impossible to estimate changes in foreign direct investment from Europe —erratic in any case— or the size and impact of any eventual withdrawal of European portfolio investments in the stock market or debt securities. Lastly, it should be mentioned that the scenarios sketched here for 2012 would vary drastically if the international economic context changes as a result of —from least to most likely— any stumble of the Chinese economy, greater deterioration of the stagnant Japanese economy, or the outbreak of military conflict in the Middle East. VM

NOTES

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[2] European Central Bank, *The Monetary Policy of the* BCE (Frankfurt: European Central Bank, 2011), 161 pp.
[3] J.J. Crespo, "Cuatro años de estrangulamiento crediticio y dos de eurocrisis," *Boletín Económico del* ICE no. 3018, Madrid, October 2011, pp. 27-37.
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The Economic Impact Of Violence in Mexico

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Stringer Mexico/REUTERS

The new upswing in insecurity and criminal violence in Mexico has many causes, but two are decisive and structural. The first is mass unemployment and the absence of economic and educational expectations for millions of young people; the second is the breakdown of the institutions involved in the administration of justice and crime prevention. The insecurity-violence binomial is an increasingly complex phenomenon rapidly weakening the fabric of society and inhibiting productive activities in general, particularly business activities, in broad regions of the country. It is already considered a risk factor for the economy as a whole by some financial institutions like the Bank of Mexico, the country's central bank.

The liberal economic model, based on deregulation of markets and the withdrawal of the state from promoting the economy, has brought about a cycle of low growth —even stagnation— that has accentuated poverty and social disparities. The country's economic move backwards coincides with the lack of efficacy and credibility of government institutions in charge of guaranteeing the security of persons and their property, a basic function of the national state.

The economy's sluggish performance and the weakening of government institutions have sparked a chain of negative incentives such as impunity and the structural corruption of police forces, among other phenomena, that favor an expanding informal economy and organized crime activities linked mainly, but not exclusively, to the traffic in narcotics. Rigorously speaking, the millions of dollars in business done by these organizations, converted *de facto* into powerful corporations, are an extreme expression of the informal economy.

The patterns of functioning and the structures of the criminal organizations come very close to the modern definition of a corporate firm: a hierarchical organization with internal and external rules, based on certain values and objectives

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For businessmen,
adapting to the new environment
of insecurity and violence
has meant increasing security personnel.

of profitability and social recognition. From this point of view, the narco-corporations are something more complex than the common image of simple bands of criminals with no rules, no strategy, and no organizational logic, completely dependent on a nucleus of bosses and groups of armed men.

The proliferation of the criminal corporations and the territorial influence they exercise in different regions has generated a "national map of insecurity" and systemic criminal violence. This is how a scenario of social instability emerges, experienced and perceived in different ways by different sectors of society. So, I will make a preliminary exploration of some of the many complex economic effects of insecurity and the violence associated with criminal corporations nationwide.

Economic Failings, Incentives For the Informal Economy

The expansion of criminal activities should be situated in the economic and social context molded over the last 25 years by the economic model that concentrated income and wealth, creating social exclusion. This model prompted a first stage of stagnation and is currently going through a phase of slow growth.

In accordance with the dictates of orthodox liberal economics, the strategic withdrawal of the state from the promotion of growth and development created a situation in which the growth dynamic gravitated around national and foreign private investment and international trade, mainly with the United States. The decrease in social rights (employment, health, education, and culture) has regressively altered the *distribution of social risks*. The liberal state's refusal to uphold these rights re-launched the family, in any of its forms, as the main refuge of security for individuals.[1]

In Mexico, almost 50 percent of the population lives at some level of poverty, and more than half the work force participates in the informal economy, which makes up 30 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), more than in Chile and Costa Rica, and less than Bolivia or Peru's 60 percent. Things are not going very well in the Mexican economy's formal sector either if we take into account that the purchasing power of real wages dropped one-fourth from 1980 to 2010.[2]

Economic inequality in Mexican society is caused by the advancing concentration of wealth and social privileges. According to International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates, the urban unemployment rate in 2012 will be 6.1 percent of the work force, and the informal economy will absorb 54.25 percent of jobs.[3] Every year, 900 000 more people join or rejoin the work force.

In 2012, 500 000 will join the formal sector and 400 000, the informal sector. The economy will grow at a relative rate of 3.6 percent, which can be considered a very poor performance compared with the demand for jobs. In these conditions, it is understandable that the economy's mediocre performance created a structure of incentives that stimulates the informal sector.

Incentives for Criminal Organizations

The informal economy spans a diversity of mechanisms for obtaining a job and an income, an economic space that is reaffirmed as the "last-resort option" for millions of people. It is characterized by a broad range of alternatives, from precarious jobs to illicit itinerate sales, which offer attractive profits but are high risk, like moving around drugs or adulterated alcohol and even trafficking in persons.

By definition, in Mexico, this sector does not comply with the basic institutional norms of a market economy: paying taxes, making social security payments, obtaining sanitation certificates, respecting copyright laws, paying royalties, etc. An extreme form of this are the criminal organizations based mainly, but not exclusively, on the production and distribution of illegal drugs inside and outside Mexico.

The economic variables of the crisis are only one dimension that partially explains the origin of the criminal organizations. It is therefore necessary to integrate the institutional dimension into the analysis. This is identified as the unspoken "rules of the game" that make criminal activities possible, such as active or passive collusion between segments of the municipal, state, and federal government bureaucracy and the criminal organizations.

The institutions' progressive deterioration contributes to the increased climate of violence, of intolerance in society, and

non-compliance with the law. In 2009, of almost 70 000 investigations initiated into violent crimes, fewer than 10 percent ended in charges being brought. In these conditions, the drop in the number of people who even make complaints about crimes against them can be attributed to the fact that Mexicans consider it a waste of time to make a complaint or file charges; this is an expression of the citizenry's mistrust of the institutions.[4]

The Map of Insecurity and Violence in Mexico

Contrasting with the government's discourse presented in costly media campaigns to convince people of the achievements of the police-military strategy, critical points of view also exist questioning the orientation, advances, and social costs of President Calderón's policy. One notable exception is the article by Joaquín Villalobos, former commander of the Salvadoran guerilla movement and currently an essayist and consultant on international conflicts. Villalobos disregards the idea that the criminal violence in Mexico is the consequence of a *failed government strategy.* He thinks it is the result of the cumulative effect of policies by different governments in recent years characterized by "an aversion to risk" that only sought to "manage the conflict."[5] However, studies and reports on this topic put forward a different vision.

According to the Global Peace Index, Mexico has become one of the most insecure countries in Latin America, occupying 107th place out of a total of 149 countries in 2010, while in 2007, it was in 79th place. In 2010, 15 000 murders were committed, and more than 30 000 at the end of President Felipe Calderón's fifth year in office.[6]

With regard to how the population views the climate of insecurity, the "Index of Perception about Public Security" indicates that 60.7 percent of those polled in early 2011 thought criminal activity had gotten "worse" than the previous year, while 10.7 percent thought it was "much worse."[7]

The United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office distributed a diagnostic analysis underlining the increasing gravity of insecurity and the risks in Mexican territory. The alert classified half the country, spanning 15 states, as risky for travelers. Concerned about the safety of their citizens visiting the country, the governments of Australia, the United States, France, Italy, Spain, and Germany have also drawn up lists of insecure areas in Mexico.[8]

> The economy's sluggish performance and the weakening of government institutions have sparked a chain of negative incentives such as impunity and the structural corruption of police forces.

In short, it can be said that the results of the government strategy in its fight against the criminal organizations are the object of controversy, and we cannot say there is consensus around it. Both inside the country and abroad, critics question the rigidity of the President Calderón's policy, its advances, and the social costs.

The Insecurity-Violence Binomial, Risk Factor for the Economy

The cycle of violence and insecurity sharpens two characteristic traits of market economies regarding uncertainty and the risks with a negative impact on economic performance. Global financial corporation J. P. Morgan has fielded the idea that the greatest problem generated by the climate of insecurity and violence is missed business and investment opportunities. Their studies estimate a macro-economic cost of Mex$195.72 billion (US$15 billion), which represents between 1.0 and 1.5 percent of GDP.[9]

Fitch financial rating agency analyst Shelly Shetty has also warned that drug trafficking-related violence puts economic growth and investment flow at risk. And, in an unprecedented report titled "Mexico: Who Let the Dogs Out?" Credit Suisse bank affirmed that insecurity was becoming a threat for national economic recovery expressed in a drop in investments and a rise in the cost of doing business.[10]

Micro-economic Impacts

At the micro-economic level, evidence exists suggesting that conditions for doing business in Mexico are deteriorating. Seven out of every ten businesses operating in the North have been affected by insecurity (66 percent of the firms consulted). At the same time, in the South, the impact is less than in the North: half the firms surveyed said their operations had not been hurt. Actually, the impact is diverse and varies from

The climate of violence stimulates the emergence of a *new behavior pattern* by firms, aimed at protecting their business, property, and markets by negotiating costly insurance policies to protect their transactions.

one region to another. Theft of merchandise is higher in the central part of the country, including Mexico City; in the North, telephone extortion by criminal gangs is more common, upping the cost of corporate security (see Table 1).[11]

The climate of violence stimulates the emergence of a *new behavior pattern* by firms, aimed at protecting their business, property, and markets by negotiating new, costly insurance policies that allow them to protect and provide continuity in their transactions in local and foreign markets.

For businessmen, *adapting to the new environment* of insecurity and violence has meant increasing security personnel, acquiring electronic control units for protecting factories and distribution equipment (see Table 2). In extreme situations, companies and authorities on different levels of government will seek to preserve their commercial or bureaucratic interests with informal arrangements —voluntary or not— including extortion payments, ransoms, and protection payments to criminal organizations. In short, for companies, the insecurity-violence binomial has translated into a *negative externality* that demands extraordinary spending, different from traditional production costs.[12]

Impact on the Construction Sector

Certain experiences indicate that the business class in Mexico lacks a unified, coherent vision and an appropriate strategy to implement it. For Eduardo Correa Abreu, president of the Mexican Chamber of the Construction Industry, insecurity affects the businessmen's investment decisions in this strategic sector, such as what is happening in the *conflict zones* in north of the country.

Correa Abreu states that firms emigrate to the states offering greater security to company operations and workers. In cities considered poles of development like Monterrey, an important number of construction companies have stopped working. In 2009, 2010, and 2011, the list of construction companies in the state of Nuevo León dropped from 680 to 480. Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, is an extreme case, where the number of construction firms plummeted from 220 to 18.

Executives and shareholders of large national and foreign corporations have remained optimistic, minimizing the repercussions of the climate of insecurity and violence. Luis Zárate, executive vice-president of the Mexican multinational Ingenieros Civiles Asociados (ICA), asserts that the companies in his corporate group have not suffered insecurity to any degree that would be of concern. From that perspective, and from the position of strength made possible by a fortune estimated at US$68 billion, Mexican magnate Carlos Slim thinks the problem of drug trafficking in Mexico should not be an impediment for businesspeople to continue to invest in the country.[13]

Table 1
Impact of Insecurity and Violence on Firms by Region (2011)
(% of firms affected)

Problem	North	Central North	Central Mexico	South
Theft of goods and inputs	22	32	42	29
Losses of future business or investments	27	24	15	35
Drop in sales	12	12	8	4
Insecurity of personnel	5	11	11	11
Rising security expenditures	7	8	5	3
Other crimes (includes extortion by telephone)	27	13	19	18

Source: Banco de México, "Reporte sobre las economías regionales. Enero-marzo de 2011," http://www.banxico.org.mx/publicaciones-y-discursos/publicaciones/informes-periodicos/reportes-sobre-las-economias-regionales/.

TABLE 2
ACTIONS TAKEN BY FIRMS FOR PREVENTION AND PROTECTION (2010)
(% OF FIRMS BY REGION)

Measure	North	Center North	Central Mexico	South
Hiring security personnel	20	21	39	24
Security cameras/alarms	18	22	18	17
Other preventive measures (changing delivery routes, satellite tracking, etc.)	11	13	11	15
Heightened security measures/more guards	10	12	10	14
Taking out a bond or insurance policy	9	13	7	4
Others[a]	33	19	14	26

[a] "Others" includes changing working hours and days, restricting access to facilities, limiting the use of cash, making complaints to the police or bringing legal suit, and taking measures to support personnel.
Source: Banco de México, "Encuesta mensual de actividad económica en los sectores manufactureros y no manufactureros," December 2010, http://www.banxico.org.mx/publicaciones-y-discursos/publicaciones/informes-periodicos/reportes-sobre-las-economias -regionales/.

The economic variables of the crisis are only one dimension that partially explains the origin of the criminal organizations. It is therefore necessary to integrate the institutional dimension into the analysis.

Just to show the great disagreement prevailing in the business community, it should be mentioned that Gerardo Gutiérrez Candiani, recently elected as head of the Business Coordinating Council (CCE), made the surprising statement that what exists in Mexico is "a political system and institutions that are not democratic because they are the home of partisan and group interests." He went on to say that the political parties do not facilitate agreements and fail in their responsibility of achieving justice and ensuring respect for the law.[14]

He goes even further, stating that Mexico is facing a grave crisis in public security and its inability to achieve the economic growth that is both needed and that it has the potential for. He says that the country has moved toward a modern market economy, but continues to be one of the nations with the greatest social inequality and a chronic culture of illegality and impunity.[15]

We have seen, then, that the continuity in the flow of goods and services is strategic for the world of business and the economy as a whole. This is why recognizing insecurity as a risk factor poses the urgency of fostering new mechanisms for organizing the economy and the citizenry to contribute to overcoming the "state failure" manifest in the government's inability to ensure a climate of social stability favorable to production and development. VM

NOTES

[1] David Ibarra, "El ahogo de la inseguridad," *El Universal* (Mexico City), July 16, 2011, p. 16.
[2] Organización Internacional del Trabajo, *Panorama laboral 2011 de América Latina y el Caribe* (Mexico City: OIT Lima, Oficina Regional para América Latina y el Caribe, 2012).
[3] Ibid.
[4] Alejandro Madrazo, *Un balance de la política de drogas en México* (Mexico City: CIDE, 2012).
[5] Joaquín Villalobos, "Nuevos mitos de la guerra contra el narco," *Nexos* no. 409, January 2012.
[6] Instituto para la Economía y la Paz, "Índice global de paz," http://www.universitam.com/?p=154.
[7] "Barómetro de empresas," *Excélsior* (Mexico City), January 18, 2011, p. 8-D.
[8] Silvia Otero, "Países alertan sobre peligros en México," *El Universal* (Mexico City), November 6, 2011, p. A-6.
[9] J. P. Morgan, "Inseguridad cuesta 1.5% del PIB," *El Universal* (Mexico City), June 10, 2011, p. B1.
[10] Fernando Franco, "Prevén invertir con cautela por inseguridad," *Excélsior* (Mexico City), January 18, 2011, p. 8.
[11] Banco de México, "Reporte sobre las economías regionales enero-marzo de 2011" (Mexico City: Banco de México, 2012).
[12] José Ayala, *Instituciones y economía. Una introducción al neoinstitucionalismo económico* (Mexico City: FCE, 1999).
[13] "Violencia afecta inversión en construcción, dice CMIC," *El Universal* (Mexico City), August 27, 2011, p. A-12.
[14] "Con cartera bajo el brazo," *Excélsior* (Mexico City), February 7, 2011, p. 3.
[15] "Gobiernos, incapaces ante crimen, asegura Consejo Coordinador Empresarial," *El Universal* (Mexico City), March 2, 2012, p. A-12.

Cranking Up the Volume So Asia Can Hear

Imtiaz Hussain*

Stringer China/REUTERS

Introduction

One lesson for Mexico from Agustín Carstens's failed bid to become managing director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is simply this: broaden external interests and crank up the preference-volume so Asian leaders can hear. Though Asia, and particularly its markets, might be flourishing across the Western Hemisphere, Mexico remains too far out in left field to really matter.

At stake is Mexico's fidelity to a fading North American idea. Much as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) yanked a "new" Mexico out of its failed corporatist and introverted import-substitution culture, a presidential election year like 2012 offers Mexico an opportunity to confront global challenges.

While this reorientation must begin on the economic front in a materialist world (with cell phones, iPads, and a jet-set mentality symbolizing an increasingly upwardly-mobile population), diplomatic lessons from the 2011 IMF fiasco can help. I explain this in reverse order: first, the missed opportunities of Carstens's IMF bid; then, why NAFTA is yielding diminishing returns; and finally, by examining how the global window that Mexico opened has become a one-way highway for Asian goods nibbling away the essentials of one of the world's top dozen largest economies.[1]

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When Agustín Carstens's candidacy for the IMF was announced May 22 in a Bloomsberg television interview, Lagarde led the polls without even announcing hers. She carried Europe's 31-percent vote allocation, but Carstens had no North American/NAFTA support.

Fiasco-filled IMF Bid

Dominique Strauss-Kahn's May 18, 2011, resignation suggested a tooth-and-nail contest. French Economic Minister Christine Lagarde's candidacy was consistent with the 1944 "unsigned convention" that the United States supply World Bank leadership and Europe the IMF's;[2] but a string of emerging market (EM) countries demanded greater IMF influence. Even by adopting this EM argument, Carstens was largely ignored in Asia and Africa. When his candidacy was announced May 22 in a Bloomsberg television interview, Lagarde led the polls without even announcing her candidacy. Britain's Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, extolled her "real international leadership" on May 19; Italy's Silvio Berlusconi did likewise the next day; and Angela Merkel, Germany's chancellor, sealed European support for Lagarde on May 22.

The net result was that Lagarde's May 25 entry meant she carried Europe's 31-percent vote allocation,[3] but Carstens had no North American/NAFTA support. Though the Latin bloc provided Carstens with slightly less than 5 percent of the IMF votes, EM countries kept a polite distance from their own Pied Piper. Neither Argentina nor Brazil in the Western Hemisphere, nor China, India, Russia, or South Africa elsewhere, followed Carstens. Both North American countries praised the "competence" of both candidates, but Canada went for Carstens only because Stephen Harper did not like Sarkozy's France, while the United States cast its lot in with Lagarde.

Carstens's candidacy was "like starting a soccer game with a 5-0 score" against him, meaning the 31-percent vote he would not get. Yet, he still had 69 percent to work for had Brazil, China, India, Russia, and South Africa —the BRICS— supported Carstens, and the U.S. vote, cast in the very penultimate moment, might have ditched the Bretton Woods convention, easily compensating for Carstens's lost 31 percentage points. It was clear in early June that widespread Asian and Latin respect for both candidates was not enough. Lagarde was "known" in critical Asian capitals; Carstens, remained "unknown."

Carstens —and Mexico— missed today's critical globalization message of EM salience in international political economy. Though Canada and the United States have long recognized this, Mexico has not been flexible enough. It is purely conjecture whether Europe will find another Lagarde when her term(s) are over, but this is for sure: when EM noise to rebalance IMF rules erupts again, Mexico might not even be in the picture.

NAFTA's Diminishing Returns

The IMF race exposed the slower NAFTA-based integration compared to Western Europe. Several factors confirm why North American regional integration has not been a twenty-first century priority. First, 9/11 rudely interrupted NAFTA hopes and threw a security curveball that eventually diverted U.S. and Canadian economic attention, resources, and priorities elsewhere and into other activities. Second, even after the 1994 NAFTA implementation, Canada, Mexico, and the United States explored NAFTA extensions rather than NAFTA cultivation, and though the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) never truly had as much steam as NAFTA, it nevertheless exposed NAFTA's role as a *means* toward other goals rather than the *end*, a critical NAFTA-EU distinction. Third, the U.S. competitive-liberalism policy approach dictated just as much "go global" with piecemeal FTAs, combining them where possible to promote U.S.-friendly multilateralism.[4] Fourth, Canada's similar global-level shift rebounded after Harper's resounding May 2011 victory refortified negotiations with the European Union, China, and India. Fifth, Barack Obama's November 2011 Asia visit not only put more steam into the Asian-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) than NAFTA received at the moment, but also confirmed trans-Pacific passageways to be a higher U.S. priority than just North American consolidation. Finally, when many of NAFTA's 15-year goals had been attained, no extensions were proposed, nor were graduating to a customs-union stage of regional economic integration or fulfilling a pure free-trade area sug-

gested, as more border walls dotted the North American landscape in 2008 than in 1994. Mexico created more FTAs in the 1990s than any other country, but simply failed to put substance into many of them. Its North American economic fidelity makes sense for accessing the world's largest market (the United States); but without diversifying, Mexico becomes a "sitting-duck" under globalization. Led by China, every country was snapping up opportunities with or without FTA obligations. Mexico simply shortchanged itself.

Cold Global Winds

Globalizing forces compelled NAFTA's diminishing returns. Mexico's trade surpluses with the United States after 1994, and increasingly with Canada, reversed the chronic 1980s deficits, but in doing so, not only locked the country's options, but concealed the *maquiladorization* and dependent growth that NAFTA was expected to eliminate. Just in the last five NAFTA years, when more symmetry should have emerged in Mexico-U.S. trade, the proportion of Mexico's equipment and parts exports (Table 1 expresses this in billions of dollars) remained so static (16.6 percent in 2003 and 16.4 percent in 2008) that the same argument Canadians have always made of themselves *vis-à-vis* the United States (of being an eternal *spoke* of the U.S. *hub*) now characterized the Mexico-U.S. duo.[5] And with the proportion of primary products (oil and gas) shooting up from 9.9 percent to 17.5 percent during that period, the structural *dependency* Raúl Prebisch sought to eliminate through import-substitution industrialization (ISI) in the 1950s seemed to be as true of post-ISI twenty-first century Mexico as it was then (see Table 1).

And if this were not eye-popping enough, Mexico was losing all its North American surpluses to the rest of the world, *so much so that it was actually ending up with net annual trade deficits*. Tables 2 and 3 show how North America accounted for 74 percent of Mexico's imports and 93.1 percent of its exports in 1994, but only 52.1 and 82.5 percent, respectively, in 2008. On the other hand, the values of Mexico's North American balance of imports and exports improved consistently from a negative US$5.2 billion in 1994 to US$79.9 billion in 2008 for the whole North American region (see Tables 2 and 3).

> 9/11 rudely interrupted NAFTA hopes and threw a security curveball that eventually diverted U.S. and Canadian economic attention, resources, and priorities elsewhere and into other activities.

Table 1
Mexico-U. S. Traded Items (2003-2008) (billions of U. S. dollars)

Mexico's Exports to the U. S.	2003	2008	Mexico's U. S. Imports	2003	2008
Oil and gas	13.67	37.93	Motor vehicle parts	7.11	10.06
Motor vehicles	19.03	22.02	Petroleum and coal products	2.31	9.63
Audio/video equipment	6.91	17.84	Basic chemicals	3.35	7.16
Motor vehicle parts	15.99	17.82	Resin, synthetic rubber, and related products	2.94	5.95
Communications equipment	5.98	7.45	Oilseeds and grains	2.61	5.94
Other	75.62	104.97	Other	64.79	92.77
Total	137.20	216.33	Total	83.11	131.51

Source: M. Ángeles Villarreal, "U. S.-Mexico Economic Relations: Trends, Issues, and Implications," *Congressional Research Service Report for Congress*, CRS #7-5700 (RL32934), Washington, D. C., 2010, p. 5.

TABLE 2

MEXICO'S IMPORT PROFILE (1994-2008) (BILLIONS OF U. S. DOLLARS)

Year	World Trade Total (from DOTS)*	North America** (as % of column 2)	Western Europe*** (as % of column 2)	Latin America (as % of column 2)	China (as % of column 2)	India (as % of column 2)	Japan (as % of column 2)
1994	79.20	58.61 (74.00)	9.58 (12.90)	3.16 (3.98)	0.43 (0.50)	1.40 (1.80)	3.81 (4.80)
1995	72.48	55.39 (76.40)	7.13 (9.80)	2.16 (2.98)	0.52 (0.70)	0.12 (0.20)	3.61 (4.90)
1996	89.47	69.37 (77.40)	8.23 (9.20)	2.24 (2.50)	0.89 (0.99)	0.13 (0.10)	3.90 (4.40)
1997	109.80	84.16 (76.60)	10.51 (9.60)	2.62 (2.40)	1.44 (1.30)	0.20 (0.20)	4.33 (3.90)
1998	125.19	95.54 (76.30)	12.25 (9.80)	2.92 (2.30)	2.03 (1.60)	0.23 (0.20)	4.56 (3.90)
1999	141.98	108.22 (76.20)	13.51 (9.50)	3.45 (2.40)	2.17 (1.50)	0.23 (0.16)	5.08 (3.60)
2000	174.46	131.55 (75.40)	15.63 (8.90)	4.89 (2.80)	3.35 (1.90)	0.29 (0.17)	6.47 (3.70)
2001	168.40	118.00 (70.10)	17.07 (10.10)	5.54 (3.20)	4.48 (2.70)	0.39 (0.23)	8.00 (4.70)
2002	173.85	111.04 (63.90)	15.9 (9.10)	6.69 (3.80)	6.80 (3.60)	0.46 (0.26)	9.34 (5.40)
2003	173.84	109.48 (62.90)	17.18 (9.90)	7.98 (4.60)	9.93 (5.70)	0.56 (0.32)	7.60 (4.40)
2004	201.16	116.16 (57.70)	19.60 (9.70)	11.19 (5.60)	14.80 (7.30)	0.87 (0.40)	10.60 (6.00)
2005	221.82	125.14 (56.40)	24.19 (10.90)	12.82 (5.80)	18.26 (8.20)	0.96 (0.40)	13.10 (5.90)
2006	256.06	138.16 (53.90)	27.07 (10.60)	14.97 (5.40)	25.08 (9.80)	1.13 (0.40)	15.30 (6.00)
2007	281.94	147.81 (52.40)	32.19 (11.40)	15.43 (5.10)	30.33 (10.80)	1.21 (0.40)	16.30 (5.80)
2008	308.60	160.78 (52.10)	36.87 (11.90)	15.83 (5.10)	34.73 (11.30)	1.36 (0.40)	16.30 (5.30)
Average annual change	**26.00**	**18.30**	**25.60**	**33.30**	**538.40**	**80.90**	**32.20**

Source: International Monetary Fund, Statistics Department, *Direction of Trade Statistics, Yearbook 2009* (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2009), pp. 355-357; *Yearbook 2002*, pp. 329-330; and *Yearbook 2001*, pp. 327-328.

Notes

*DOTS: Direction of Trade Statistics.

**North America includes Canada and the United States with Mexico.

***Utilizes "eurozone" category of sourcebooks, plus Great Britain until 2001, then Western Europe.

TABLE 3

MEXICO'S EXPORT PROFILE (1994-2008) (BILLIONS OF U. S. DOLLARS)

Year	World Trade Total (from DOTS)	North America (as % of column 2)	Western Europe (as % of column 2)	Latin America (as % of column 2)	China (as % of column 2)	India (as % of column 2)	Japan (as % of column 2)
1994	57.38	53.41 (93.10)	2.92 (5.10)	2.76 (4.80)	0.42 (0.70)	0.4 (0.70)	0.99 (1.70)
1995	73.74	68.73 (93.20)	4.01 (5.40)	4.51 (6.10)	0.37 (0.50)	0.3 (0.40)	0.93 (1.30)
1996	96.00	82.84 (86.30)	3.95 (4.10)	6.21 (6.50)	0.48 (0.50)	0.02 (0.02)	1.36 (1.40)
1997	110.43	96.69 (87.60)	4.38 (4.00)	6.59 (6.00)	0.33 (0.30)	0.04 (0.03)	1.16 (1.00)
1998	117.49	104.83 (89.20)	4.18 (3.60)	5.85 (4.90)	0.32 (0.30)	0.03 (0.02)	0.86 (0.70)
1999	136.39	122.78 (90.00)	5.66 (4.10)	5.19 (3.80)	0.31 (0.20)	0.02 (0.01)	0.78 (0.60)
2000	166.46	151.04 (90.70)	6.20 (3.70)	6.47 (3.90)	0.40 (0.20)	0.06 (0.04)	0.93 (0.60)
2001	158.44	143.37 (90.40)	5.79 (3.70)	6.56 (4.10)	0.41 (0.30)	0.16 (0.10)	0.62 (0.40)
2002	161.23	144.89 (89.80)	4.79 (2.90)	6.52 (4.00)	0.81 (0.50)	0.33 (0.20)	1.19 (0.70)
2003	164.89	147.34 (89.30)	5.31 (3.20)	6.74 (4.10)	1.2 (0.70)	0.49 (0.30)	1.17 (0.70)
2004	187.81	167.81 (89.30)	5.38 (2.90)	8.48 (4.50)	1.16 (0.60)	0.45 (0.20)	1.19 (0.60)
2005	214.23	188.10 (87.80)	7.71 (3.60)	10.91 (5.00)	1.32 (0.60)	0.56 (0.30)	1.47 (0.70)
2006	249.92	217.27 (86.90)	9.70 (3.90)	13.77 (5.50)	1.97 (0.80)	0.68 (0.30)	1.59 (0.60)
2007	271.87	229.92 (84.50)	12.38 (4.60)	17.80 (6.50)	2.22 (0.80)	1.1 (0.30)	1.91 (0.70)
2008	291.34	240.65 (82.50)	14.66 (6.30)	21.87 (7.50)	2.44 (0.80)	1.56 (0.50)	2.05 (0.70)
Average annual change	**34.00**	**30.00**	**33.00**	**53.00**	**38.00**	**371.00**	**14.00**

Source: *International Monetary Fund, Statistics Department, Direction of Trade Statistics, Yearbook 2009* (Washington, D.C.: International Monetary Fund, 2009), pp. 355-357; *Yearbook 2002*, pp. 329-330; and *Yearbook 2001*, pp. 327-328.

Carstens's fate was dictated by Mexico's commercial absence in Asia, Mexico's role as an Asian platform for U.S. sales making it a lesser commercial competitor, and the expanding North American pie with Mexico's continuous and gleeful surpluses masking the many structural constraints on shifting from an emerging market to a developed country.

China, India, and Japan accounted for 0.7, 0.2, and 4.9 percent of Mexico's imports, respectively, in 1995, which increased to 11.3, 0.4, and 5.3 percent of Mexico's 2008 imports. Yet, Mexico's exports to these countries remained proportionately similar in 2008 to those of 1995: China, India, and Japan, for example, accounted for 0.5, 0.4, and 1.3, respectively, in 1995, which climbed to 0.8, 0.5, and 0.7, respectively, in 2008. Even though the volumes remained negligible compared to North America, Asia not only notched up surpluses in Mexico, but also displaced Western Europe and Latin America as loftier Mexican partners in 1994. The same three Asian countries accounted for 7.1 percent of Mexico's imports as against 12.1 percent for West Europe and 3.98 percent for Latin America, but in 2008, the three Asian countries accounted for 17 percent of Mexico's imports, as against 11.9 percent for Western Europe and 5.1 percent for Latin America. Mexico's Asian exports did not grow: the same three Asian countries purchased only 3.1 percent of Mexico's exports in 1994, as compared to 5.1 percent and 4.8 percent for Western Europe and Latin America, respectively, *but merely 2.0 percent in 2008, as compared to 6.3 and 7.5 percent for Western Europe and Latin America, respectively*. Less was being purchased from Mexico during the NAFTA years in Asia than in 1994, while Asian exports were penetrating Mexico's markets opened by NAFTA.

Conclusions

Carstens's fate was dictated by a) Mexico's commercial absence in Asia, a true case of diplomacy following trade (rather than the other way around); b) Mexico's role as an Asian platform for U.S. sales making it a lesser commercial competitor, thus weakening its diplomatic bargaining room; and c) the expanding North American pie with Mexico's continuous and gleeful surpluses masking the many structural constraints on shifting from an emerging market to a developed country, thus decreasing its North American bargaining chips. Quite obviously, these trade figures did not determine how EM countries voted against Carstens, but they portray Mexico's weakness in leading the EM revolution the way it once did the 1960s non-aligned movement (the Treaty of Chapultepec, for example).

What can Mexico do? To go with the global flow might be the short answer to a complex puzzle. Mexico's excessive loyalty to this North American idea (in particular, prioritizing the United States at the expense of other bilateral or even greater multilateral opportunities) stands out in an age when trade agreements are being increasingly twisted to promote self-interests and serve exploitative purposes by almost all countries, including Mexico's North American partners. Better to go with the flow, as the cliché goes, than remain the paragon of purity. If Mexico diversifies markets and partners, its EM leadership would show more substance, strengthening any future Carstens IMF bid. Ultimately, a presidential initiative might have to pave the way, just as Mexico's 1994 North America bid did. This makes the July 2012 elections critical; only if a fierce cosmopolitan leader won would Mexico be ready for the global shift. Tacos, tamales, and tortillas apparently yielded to hamburgers, hoagies, and pizzas under the NAFTA regime, but will they do likewise to sushi, chow mein, and curry under globalization? Cosmopolitanism could be the answer, either on the part of a leader or the voters. VM

Notes

[1] Robert Pastor's rankings. See "A Friend in Mexico," *Globe and Mail*, editorial, January 30, 2012, http//www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/editorials/a-friend-in-mexico/article231.

[2] Pam Johnson, "Days Ahead of Official Election, Lagarde 'Crowned' IMF Chief," *Global Geopolitical Economy*, June 24, 2011, http//globalgeopolitics.net/wordpress/2011/06/24/days-ahead-of-official-election-lagarde, accessed August 19, 2011.

[3] Quota power determines voting, which begins with 250 *basic points*. One point is added for every 100 000 Special Drawing Rights (SDRs).

[4] Richard Feinberg, "The Political Economy of United States' Free Trade Arrangements," paper, Berkeley APEC Study Center (BASC), University of California, Berkeley, March 21-22, 2003.

[5] See Ronald Wonnacott, "Trade and Investment in a Hub-and-Spoke System versus a Free Trade Area," *The World Economy* 19, no. 3 (1996), pp. 237-252.

Human Rights and Non-State Violence
U.S. and Canadian Refusal of Asylum to Mexicans

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Óscar Alvarado/Cuartoscuro.com

The skyrocketing death toll in the war against organized crime has led to a rapid increase in asylum requests.

The so-called war against drug trafficking began in 2006, and in 2007, it became one of the main reasons cited for applying for asylum in Canada. Applications reached a record high in 2009, and Canada imposed a visa requirement for Mexicans, arguing that they were taking advantage of Canada's refugee system by presenting faked applications. By 2010, the numbers of asylum requests began to drop, but the number of requests made to the United States doubled and some began to be made to European countries. This trend indicates that, while some people tried to use the Canadian system to emigrate for economic reasons, it is also true that a situation exists that generates real requests for asylum, particularly in those countries, in the context of the war against drug trafficking.

Nevertheless, with a few exceptions, Mexicans' requests for asylum have not been granted by U.S. and Canadian courts. In this article, I venture a hypothesis about the reasons for this systematic refusal.

The Numbers

In 2007, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) shined a light on how Mexico was becoming an important point of origin for asylum requests, particularly for Canada and the United States. While in 2004, Mexico had been twenty-first on the world's list of countries whose citizens requested asylum, by 2007, it had moved up to seventh place, following only Iraq, Russia, China, Serbia, Pakistan, and Somalia. Mexico was even ahead of Afghanistan, Iran, and Sri

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Lanka. In contrast with Mexico —or at least what people used to think Mexico was like— all these countries had openly authoritarian regimes or were in the midst of civil wars. In 2007, Mexico was the origin of 9 545 asylum requests, 74 percent of which were made to Canada and 24 percent to the United States, and this trend has continued to rise.

Between 2006 and 2010, 44 019 Mexicans requested asylum in other countries: 13 700 in the United States and 30 142 in Canada. In 2007, 1 830 requests were made to the United States; in 2008, this number increased to 2 487; but in 2009, it went down slightly to 2 422. In 2010, the number almost doubled, jumping from 2 422 to 4 225. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, Mexico went from being the country with the fifth largest number of requests in 2006 to the second in 2010, following only China and surpassing Haiti, Guatemala, and El Salvador. Canada, for its part, received 4 913 requests in 2006, and by 2008, the number more than doubled, soaring to 9 413 in only two years. In 2009, requests began to drop (7 561), and by 2010, they had dropped to 1 198, evidently due to the imposition of the visa requirement for Mexicans in July 2009.

On July 14, 2009, the Canadian government announced a visa requirement for Mexicans who wanted to visit Canada, contravening the reciprocity it had previously had with Mexico, which does not require a visa of Canadians. However, despite the elimination of this possibility for asylum, Mexicans continued to seek alternatives: as already mentioned, from 2009 to 2010, requests for asylum in the United States increased and a few began to be made to European countries. This showed that even though some Mexicans may have been able to defraud Canada's asylum system, many others, legitimately afraid for their lives because of persecution, were looking for alternatives.

What Is behind Mexican Requests for Asylum

Since he took office in 2006, President Felipe Calderón declared "war on drug trafficking." The language is not metaphoric: he put 45 000 troops out on the streets right away, and by 2011, that number had swelled to 70 000. By 2011, military operations had extended to the states of Chihuahua, Baja California, Nuevo León, and Tamaulipas. This military approach to the phenomenon of drug trafficking excluded almost by definition the financial or social policy aspects,

Some people emigrate for economic reasons, but it is also true that real requests for asylum, particularly to U.S. and Canada are made because of the situation generated by the war against drug trafficking.

and efforts concentrated on the capture or assassination of drug kingpins. Thus, from that year on, the criminal gangs opened fire on each other to gain control of strategic resources (territory and routes) and fill the power vacuums that emerge every time a kingpin is killed or captured and territory opens up because of the confiscation of drugs.

The military approach, therefore, has unleashed a wave of violence and insecurity in cities like Morelia, Michoacán; Acapulco, Guerrero; Veracruz, Veracruz; Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua; Tijuana, Baja California; Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas, and Monterrey, Nuevo León. This is due not only to in-fighting among the criminal gangs but also to the fact that military harassment led the cartels to diversify their criminal activities to include kidnapping, smuggling and trafficking in persons, "protection" schemes, and charging legitimate businesses for the right to operate.

However, the violence has not only been the work of the criminals. According to information from the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), the number of complaints against army personnel rose from 8 in December 2006 to 376 in 2007, 1 143 in 2008, and 1 644 in 2009. By 2010, the number began to drop, registering 1 320, although it is possible that this was due to fear of making a complaint and not to a drop in abuses. By the first half of 2011, the complaints had decreased to 709, although the total from December 2006 to June 2011 was 5 200. Of these, only 81 ended in CNDH recommendations.

Human rights organizations have said that the criminal organizations' activities and abuses by the military in the context of the war against drug trafficking have pushed Mexico into a grave human rights crisis. This has been sharpened by the high degree of impunity both in cases of human rights violations by the military and the offenses committed by the criminals: nationwide, impunity for both crimes and abuses is at 98.76 percent. This is not simply a result of the inability to investigate or lack of skill, but the result of widespread corruption and the criminals' penetration of the justice system and police forces. Unfortunately, in contrast with the militarization, concentrated in the country's Central West and

North, impunity is neither isolated nor regional, but rather affects the entire country on all levels of government.

Because of the justice system's structural deficiencies, the military, police-based approach to drug trafficking has not solved the problem. Far from it: despite kingpins being captured and killed, the criminal gangs have not disappeared, but have regrouped or allied with others. As a result, the atmosphere in the country is that of a war among criminal groups who are fighting for control over the illicit drug business, and even if they do not confront the state directly, they resist the government onslaught with actions that can be characterized as terrorist, like car bombs.[1] This war's death toll is already 50 000; at least 4 000 people have disappeared; and another 230 000 have had to leave their homes, according to the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre and the Norwegian Refugee Council.[2]

Despite this human rights crisis and the ongoing war in the regions mentioned, as I have already pointed out, refugee applications continue to be systematically denied in the United States and Canada. The reasons cited in both cases are similar: neither the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees nor its 1967 Protocol recognizes refugee status for victims of organized crime. The judges say that, even if the cases did fit within the stipulations of the convention and its protocol, since a state of war has not become generalized throughout the country, those affected could always simply relocate to other cities. However, although it is thought that the war is contained in certain regions in Mexico, the other components of the human rights crisis (impunity caused by corruption and criminal penetration of the justice system) are nationwide.

According to migration lawyer Carlos Spector, in the United States, Mexican asylum seekers are trying to prove that they are the object of political or religious persecution, but this is no easy task because the U.S. justice system cannot manage to understand the complexities of Mexico's political reality. This is precisely the case of police officers José Alarcón and his colleague Felipe Galindo, who both received death threats from the Juárez Cartel after stopping two armed hit-men for a traffic violation. Since the cartels have totally infiltrated the police, they used the police band to order the two officers to let the detainees go immediately; they complied, but the hit-men were gunned down in a fire-fight a few hours later. On the way to the scene of that crime, the police officers received a new message on their patrol-car radio: even though they had let the two hit-men go, they were to consider themselves dead men. The next day they were attacked. Alarcón fled to Texas and is requesting asylum there.[3]

The military approach has unleashed a wave of violence and insecurity in several cities due not only to in-fighting among the criminal gangs but also because that military harassment led the cartels to diversify their criminal activities.

While the exact number of asylum cases is confidential, the U.S. media are getting information directly from asylum seekers' attorneys, who state that some truly dramatic cases are being refused, such as that of the woman who fled to El Paso with her four children after her husband was murdered in a massacre by organized crime. Two of her children have already been deported, and she is awaiting the judge's decision about her own situation and that of her other two children, one of whom is only nine years old.

Mechanic José Jiménez's case is similar; he was threatened because he refused to build secret compartments into tractor-trailer trucks to store drugs. Spector, who has lost several of these cases, says that the orientation is very clear: "The government's strategy is to oppose all Mexican asylum claims. Their marching orders are no, no, no, no, no."[4] Of the 13 700 requests received in the United States from 2006 to 2010, only 382 have been granted.

Two cases stand out among all the others: two people who have been able to show persecution by a government body, specifically the Mexican army. The first case is that of journalist Jorge Luis Aguirre, the director of the internet news website LaPolaka.com.[5] Aguirre managed to flee Ciudad Juárez a few hours after journalist Armando "Choco" Rodríguez was killed execution style and after receiving an anonymous call warning him, "You're next."[6] Aguirre made a political —not a legal— defense of his own case before a hearing of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Crime and Drugs in his testimony in March 2009.

The other case is that of human rights activist Cipriana Jurado, who was able to prove that the army persecuted her for defending the human rights of a family who had denounced the disappearance of three of its members, two of them women, in the Juárez Valley in 2009.[7]

The systematic rejection of requests for asylum is similar in Canada. It is the case, for example, of a truck driver who was threatened with his own and his family's deaths if he did not agree to transport drugs. Similar to this is the case of

a journalist who received death threats after denouncing trafficking in children's cadavers for the illegal organ market, and who was later involved in a traffic accident. One woman had to flee after her ex-husband, a federal policeman, pressured her to act as a cocaine mule. A radio reporter was attacked and threatened for investigating links between police and organized crime. All these asylum requests were denied using the argument that Mexico has the capability of protecting its own citizens.

The Canadian government bases itself on a false premise protected by its legislation: that the Mexican state has the capability and the will to protect its citizens, and that asylum seekers can avoid persecution. Canada recognizes that collusion between organized crime and the institutions in charge of public safety is serious, but it also unequivocally states that this is not Canada's problem in the framework of its legislation about asylum and refugee status. For them, if a person is persecuted by a group of police or a drug cartel, he or she can go to the justice system and seek support, or move away, as mentioned before. It is not understood that the problem is institutional and structural, as has been shown by the cases of kidnapping in which a complaint made to the public prosecutor's office is useful only to alert the criminals that they have been "outed."

The argument is constantly repeated to shore up the refusal of asylum, as in the case of police detective Gustavo Gutiérrez, who had to flee from Ciudad Juárez after becoming known for his outstanding work in investigating the feminicides there, and being promoted to an important position because of his clean record. The judge said that Gutiérrez was perfectly capable of relocating to Mexico City, undoubtedly because he could not see that organized crime has penetrated the entire country.[8]

Conclusion

In study by Marc Rosemblum and Idean Salehyan, the authors lay out the reasons for the refusal to grant asylum, at least in the U.S. case, stating that U.S. asylum policy regarding particular countries can have three objectives:

1) preserving relations with friendly countries, by refusing asylum requests from their nationals;
2) weakening enemy states by accepting their nationals as refugees; and
3) limiting entry through the country's back door to "fake" asylum seekers.[9]

According to these authors, the determining factor for being accepted is not the prevailing human rights situation in the country of the asylum seeker, but U.S. economic and security interests. In the case of Mexicans, giving them asylum would mean recognizing that Mexico is incapable of protecting its citizens. It would also mean opening a new door to Mexican migration, which has been combated by policing and legal means. In the Canadian case, we can assume the situation is similar, which is why visas are now required of Mexicans and asylum cases have been dubbed fake. Also, while judges argued the legal reasons for not granting asylum, it is clear that the real reasons are completely political, since the United States and Canada are protecting their relations with Mexico at the same time that they are closing the little door that remained open in their migratory policy toward Mexico. VM

Notes

[1] Scott Stewart, "The Perceived Car Bomb Threat in Mexico," Stratfor, April 14, 2011, http://www.stratfor.com/.

[2] *Mexico* (Oslo: Displacement Monitoring Centre-Norwegian Refugee Council, 2011).

[3] "Un policía mexicano pidió asilo en EE.UU," ObservadorGlobal.com, November 24, 2011, http://observadorglobal.com/mexico-fracaso-la-lucha-contra-el-narcotrafico-n12742.html. [Editor's Note.]

[4] Quote taken from Todd Bensman, "Attorneys Speak Out on Mexican Deportations." Globalpost, 2009, http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/mexico/us-asylum-cases-mexico, accessed October 5, 2011. For further information see Sito Negrón, "Q and A with Carlos Spector. Fighting for the Mexican Media," *El Paso Inc.* September 26, 2010, http://groups.google.com/group/frontera-list/browse_thread/thread/f39195e66a8181e7.

[5] See http://lapolaka.com/. [Editor's Note.]

[6] Alejandro Páez Varela, "¿Quién mató al Choco?" http://www.letraslibres.com/revista/letrillas/quien-mato-al-choco. [Editor's Note.]

[7] See the cnn.com report, http://mexico.cnn.com/nacional/2011/03/15/activista-de-juarez-pide-asilo-a-eu-por-temor-a-ser-la-siguiente-victima. [Editor's Note.]

[8] "Canadá deniega el asilo a un policía de Ciudad Juárez amenazado de muerte," October 14, 2009, http://procedimientospolicias.blogspot.com/2009/10/canada-deniega-el-asilo-un-policia-de.html. [Editor's Note.]

[9] Marc R. Rosemblum and Idean Salehyan, "Norms and Interests in US Asylum Enforcement," *Journal of Peace Research* no. 41, vol. 6, 2004, pp. 677-697.

The Shengen Cooperation
Border Security: Between Freedom Of Movement and Illegal Migration

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When the Iron Curtain that had divided the European continent for more than half a century lifted, we were given the chance to reunite Europe in freedom, security, and justice, and to enlarge the European Union.[1] It was a long way from the Treaties of Rome in 1957, with a European Community of only 6 member states, to the recent Lisbon Treaty,[2] with a European Union of 27 member states. The Lisbon Treaty was a further step in deepening the European Union. And it will not be the end of this process of integration of states and nations, which is without precedent in human history. The Lisbon Treaty defines migration policy as a competency of the European Union shared with the member states. EU policy in this area is based on three pillars: the promotion of legal migration, the fight against illegal migration, and the link between migration and development.

The union pursues these objectives on the firm basis of full respect for human rights. We should not forget that more than 50 years ago, the European Union and its member states were pioneers of, for instance, social security for migrant workers. In 1958, the European Council issued two regulations on social security for migrant workers that were subsequently superseded by regulations.[3] Nationals from Iceland,

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Liechtenstein, and Norway are also covered via the European Economic Area (EEA) Agreement.

What does the "Schengen Border Regime" mean? It simply means abolishing internal border controls and intensifying border checks at the external borders of the Schengen area. Since a couple of years ago, you can travel by car from Helsinki to Lisbon without any passport controls or leave Frankfurt Airport for Athens by plane without border controls, complying simply with an airline identity check. Border controls by state authorities only take place if you leave or enter the "Schengen Area." At the beginning of European integration after the World War II in the 1950s, it seemed to absolutely impossible to

1) open borders the between France and Germany and Poland and Germany;
2) allow German policemen to follow criminals across the borders to the Netherlands, Belgium, or Denmark;
3) issue a common visa for more than one European country;
4) follow the same principles concerning asylum; and
5) set up a European Police Agency (Europol) to fight international organized crime and terrorism, an agency for judicial cooperation (Eurojust), and "Frontex," the nucleus of a joint European border police force.

It was the idea of two statesmen, the president of France, François Mitterrand, and the chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, Helmut Kohl, to bring their nations and their people together by opening the borders between their states. This led to the "Schengen Agreement," signed by the heads of state and government of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, and Germany in the small town of Schengen, Luxembourg, near the Belgian and German border in June 1985.

In June 1990, the "Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement" was signed by the heads of state and government. Its key points were

1) harmonizing provisions related to entry into the "Schengen Area" and short stays in the "Schengen Area" by non-EU citizens, which meant implementing a uniform Schengen visa;
2) asylum issues;
3) measures to combat cross-border drug- and weapons-related crime;

Illegal migration is not the proper way to escape social misfortune. It makes migrants victims, vulnerable to exploitation from the first day to the end of their lives, lives endangered by crime.

4) police cooperation; and
5) cooperation among Schengen states on judicial matters.

The "Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement" entered into force in September 1993 and took practical effect in March 1995. When the "Schengen Protocol to the Treaty of Amsterdam" came into effect in May 1999, the Schengen Cooperation, based on an international agreement, was incorporated into the Acquis of the European Union. So the idea of two statesmen, initiated by an international intergovernmental agreement, was sealed by the member states and accepted as a fundamental principal of the European Union: freedom of movement for all citizens of the union within its borders and protection of all citizens against threats by international organized crime from outside the union.[4]

Since 1999, the so-called "Schengen Acquis," which means the sum of all legislation concerning the Schengen Cooperation, has been an integral part of the Acquis of the European Union. In 2006, the most important former intergovernmental Schengen rules became a new legal framework. So, the Schengen Agreement of 1985 was transformed into the "Schengen Borders Code" of March 15.[5] One can imagine that it was not easy to follow the idea of opening the internal borders in Europe after the Iron Curtain had lifted, because we had to face the danger that thousands of illegal migrants and criminals from Eastern Europe would misuse this new regime.

In 1993, for instance, more than 800 000 people living in Germany had to leave the country because they had entered illegally, most without passports, without visas, and without being asylum seekers or refugees.

We knew from our experience that illegal migration is closely connected with international, cross-border crime: falsification of documents, human smuggling, drug trafficking, and weapons smuggling.

And we were aware that opening the borders inside the Schengen Area should not give rise to more illegal migration, because obviously, illegal migration is not the proper way to escape social misfortune. It makes migrants victims, vulner-

The idea of two statesmen, Mitterrand and Kohl, was sealed by the member states and accepted as a fundamental principal of the European Union: freedom of movement for all citizens within its borders and protection.

able to exploitation from the first day of their dreadful journey to what may be the end of their lives, lives endangered by crime, determined by illegal work, and deprived of social security.

Therefore, the opening of borders *inside* the Schengen Area was only possible by intensifying border checks at its *external* borders. It was not easy to convince, for instance, the governments in Austria, Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece to build well-trained, properly equipped border police forces, to join the Schengen Information System, and to sign readmission agreements with countries of origin of illegal migration, before opening the internals border with those EU member states.

"Schengen" has become one of the best success stories in European integration, because we did not make the mistake of straying from the path of this very clear philosophy. The idea of "more freedom of movement and more security via cooperation on the external borders" works.

It has shown that it is capable of tackling even big problems, like the growing illegal migration over the Greek and Italian borders, if its rules are respected and not misinterpreted or even misused. It is, for example, not in line with the idea of Schengen, to a grant Schengen visas to migrants from third countries who are not tourists or businesspeople on short visits to one of the Schengen states, but rather people, who definitely want to stay in the Schengen area, to find better living conditions than in their countries of origin, like Tunisia. To prevent this kind of misuse of a brilliant idea, we have to think about how to tackle those problems properly, which might overtax member states concerned. It seems that the Schengen rules need to be adapted to this problem with a quite new dimension:

1) Article 2, Section I of the 1985 Schengen Agreement stated that, for a limited period, national border checks appropriate to the situation shall be carried out at internal borders, where public policy or national security so require.[6]
1) According to Article 23, Number 1 of the Schengen Borders Code, a member state may *exceptionally* reintroduce border control at its internal borders *for a limited period of no more than 30 days where there is a serious threat* to public policy or internal security.[7]

Under those even more restrictive rules of the Schengen Borders Code, it seems not to be possible to solve this problem on a solid legal basis. We need to think about an amendment to Article 23 of the Schengen Borders Code that would explicitly address the problem of a massive influx of migrants or even refugees in a certain region of the Schengen area or a single member state. But there are even bigger threats: let us not forget that since the Munich 1972 Olympic Games, since 9/11 in the United States, and especially today at airports, and in railway and subway stations in Europe and the United States, we have to face and tackle the problem that terrorists cross borders and are determined to commit their awful crimes in their country of destination.

From the point of view of the national state authorities, it must be taken into account every day that the persons they check could be tourists, workers with legal status, asylum seekers, refugees, illegal migrants, criminals, or terrorists. And it is one of the most difficult tasks in national, supra-national, and international policy to find the best way to treat each person decently in accordance with the respective laws and fundamental rights —failures in this very difficult effort included. This is the daily dilemma of the balance of freedom and security, even if legal migrants are concerned.

The necessary measures are not yet complete and need to be updated in accordance with the ongoing change of threats:

1) We have to continue our work on an integrated border police of the Schengen member states and hopefully, in the end, of the European Union.
2) The "Schengen Information System," which provides the police at external borders with the information they need, has reached the very limit of its capacity and should be enlarged.
3) And we have to pay attention to other areas that have nothing to do with Schengen: it makes no sense to intensify border controls for passengers more and more realizing at the same time that in so-called "Combi" airplanes or even quite normal planes, strictly-inspected passengers sit above decks loaded with almost completely un-inspected cargo.

The concept of an area of freedom, security, and justice already features in previous treaties. However, the Lisbon Treaty gives the union better means of reaching solutions consonant with the scale of the challenges facing it. The Lisbon Treaty confirms the European Union's commitment to developing a common immigration policy. This will ensure a consistent approach to immigration, taking into account the economic and demographic evolution of our continent, and paying due attention to social integration. The treaty also confirms the development of a common European asylum system with the establishment of uniform status and common procedures for all persons in need of international protection.

People will live in a safer Europe as the union can more easily and rapidly make decisions in the field of security. Europe will be more effective in combating terrorism, dealing with criminal gangs, crime prevention, illegal migration, and trafficking in human beings.

The Treaty of Lisbon underlines the Schengen Acquis and shapes the future development of this idea.[8] The treaty replaces Articles 62 to 64 of the former Treaty of the European Union with a new Chapter 2: "Policies on Border Checks, Asylum, and Immigration."

According to the new Article 62, the union shall develop a policy with a view to ensuring the absence of any controls on persons, whatever their nationality, when crossing internal borders, carrying out checks on persons and efficient monitoring of the crossing of external borders, and the gradual introduction of an integrated management system for external borders.

The European Parliament and the Council shall adopt measures concerning the common policy on visas and other short-stay residence permits, the checks to which persons crossing external borders are subject, the conditions under which nationals of third countries shall have the freedom to travel within the union for a short period, any measure necessary for the gradual establishment of an integrated management system for external borders, and the absence of any controls on persons, whatever their nationality, when crossing internal borders.[9]

The union shall develop a common policy on asylum, subsidiary protection and temporary protection with a view to offering appropriate status to any third-country national requiring international protection and ensuring compliance with the principle of *nonrefoulement*. This policy must be in accordance with the Geneva Convention of 1951 and the Protocol of 1967 relating to the status of refugees, and other relevant treaties.[10]

"Schengen" is not a "model" for other regions of our planet. But it is an example of how problems between states can be solved, even between Mexico, the United States, and Canada.

According to Article 63a, the union shall develop a common immigration policy aimed at ensuring the efficient management of migration flows, fair treatment of third-country nationals residing legally in member states, and the prevention of, and enhanced measures to combat, illegal immigration and trafficking in human beings.

The union may conclude agreements with third countries for the readmission to their countries of origin or provenance of third-country nationals who do not or who no longer fulfil the conditions for entry, presence, or residence in the territory of one of the member states.

Particularly, the so-called Return Directive, which entered into force in December 2008 and has to be implemented in national law by the member states until December 2010, has been characterized by numerous Latin American countries as an "unfriendly act." They assume that the directive criminalizes illegal immigration, will impose new sanctions, criminalize migrants, and will have the consequence that all immigrants will be removed immediately.

This is not true, because the directive does not impose any criminal punishment. There is no EU legislation regarding criminalization of third-country nationals illegally entering or staying in the European Union. It remains within the competency of the member states to decide on the application of such matters. By the way, until 2008 it was considered a crime in Mexico to be an illegal migrant, which could carry a penalty of up to 10 years in prison.

The only sanction imposed by the Return Directive is the prohibition of re-entry into the European Union for a certain period. Illegal immigrants are already subject to the possibility of being expelled. The difference, once the directive comes into force in all member states, is that illegal migrants will enjoy a full range of rights, for instance the right to get a written decision and information about the possible remedies, linguistic assistance, legal aid, emergency health care, education of minors, etc.

This is an enormous responsibility and challenge for the Mexican government: to manage the migration from the South and the emigration of fellow citizens to the North.

"Schengen" is not a "model" for other regions of our planet. But it is an example of how problems between states can be solved, even between Mexico, the United States, and Canada. Against this background, it is not impossible to one day open the internal borders among those three countries. "Schengen" is not Tijuana, and it is not San Diego. Mexico has to face two quite different problems concerning migration:

1) Mexico is both a country of destination and of transit as far as migrants from the South are concerned.
2) But Mexico is also a country of origin of migration —legal and illegal— to its neighbor in the North.

And this represents an enormous responsibility and challenge for the Mexican government: to manage the migration from the South and the emigration of fellow citizens to the North.

"Schengen" stands for an idea: trusting each other; helping each other against threats; being watchful to live together in freedom, security, and justice; and unconditionally respecting human rights. And this idea is not limited to the European continent. VM

Notes

[1] The precondition for this historic operation was to make the European Union fit for opening its doors to 12 new member states. "Fit" in this context means to facilitate and accelerate the decision-making process in the community and in the union; to make clear which competencies must be located on a European level and which competencies have to be dealt with by the member states, and to improve the democratic legitimacy of the various bodies of the community and the union.

[2] The Lisbon Treaty came into force in December 2009.

[3] Regulation 1408/71, supplemented by implementing Regulation 574/72.

[4] Mitterrand and Kohl's idea was so attractive that, since 1995, the so-called "Schengen Area" has expanded several times: Austria acceded in 1997; the Nordic countries, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland, joined in 2000 and Norway as well as Iceland were invited as associate members; in December 2007, the European Council decided to include the new EU member states of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia; and, beginning this year, even a third non-EU country, Switzerland, is associated with the Schengen Area.

[5] Regulation (EC) 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders, *Official Journal of the European Union*, April 13. 2006, L 105/1.

[6] The Contracting Party may, after consulting the other Contracting Parties, decide that if public policy or national security requires immediate action, the Contracting Party concerned shall take the necessary measures and at the earliest opportunity shall inform the other Contracting Parties thereof.

[7] "…or for the foreseeable duration of the serious threat if its duration exceeds the period of 30 days, in accordance with the procedure laid down in Article 24 or, in urgent cases, with that laid down in Article 25. The scope and duration of the temporary reintroduction of border control at internal borders shall not exceed what is strictly necessary to respond to the serious threat."

[8] According to Article 61, the Union shall constitute an area of freedom, security and justice with respect for fundamental rights and the different legal systems and traditions of the Member States. It shall ensure the absence of internal border controls for persons and shall frame a common policy on asylum, immigration, and external border control, based on solidarity between Member States, which is fair toward third-country nationals. The Union shall endeavor to ensure a high level of security through measures to prevent and combat crime, racism and xenophobia, and through measures for coordination and cooperation between police and judicial authorities and other competent authorities, as well as through the mutual recognition of judgments in criminal matters and, if necessary, through the approximation of criminal laws. The European Council shall define the strategic guidelines for legislative and operational planning within the area of freedom, security, and justice. It shall be open to Member States to organize between themselves such forms of cooperation and coordination as they deem appropriate between the competent departments of their administrations (Article 61 F).

[9] Those articles shall not affect the competence of the member states concerning the geographical demarcation of their borders, in accordance with international law.

[10] The European Parliament and the Council shall adopt measures for a common European asylum system comprising a uniform status of asylum for nationals of third countries, valid throughout the union; a uniform status of subsidiary protection for nationals of third countries who, without obtaining European asylum, are in need of international protection; a common system of temporary protection for displaced persons in the event of a massive inflow; common procedures for the granting and withdrawing of uniform asylum or subsidiary protection status; criteria and mechanisms for determining which member state is responsible for considering an application for asylum or subsidiary protection; standards concerning the conditions for the reception of applicants for asylum or subsidiary protection and partnership and cooperation with third countries for the purpose of managing inflows of people applying for asylum or subsidiary or temporary protection.

Jack Be Nimble, Jack Be Quick, 90 x 90 cm, 1970 (oil on canvas).

Leonora Carrington
Tribute to a Great Artist

All photographs of paintings and sculptures by Leonora Carrington in this section reproduced by permission of Gabriel and Pablo Weisz Carrington.
The editors are very grateful to Gabriel and Pablo Weisz Carrington and Patricia Argomedo for all their help in preparing this section.

Leonora Carrington
Telescope and Microscope

Alberto Blanco*

Private collection. © Estate of Leonora Carrington

The Birdmen of Burnley, 45 x 65 cm (oil on canvas).

Amidst the horror of World War II, in the entry dated Tuesday, August 24, 1943, of her extraordinary autobiographical tale, *Down Below*, Leonora Carrington made this surprising statement:

This last sentence, rightfully quoted often, speaks to us of an artist, a human being who did not settle for seeing only part of reality. To the contrary, Leonora Carrington, interested in the Big and the Small —that which in traditional symbolism is known as the Great Mysteries and the Small

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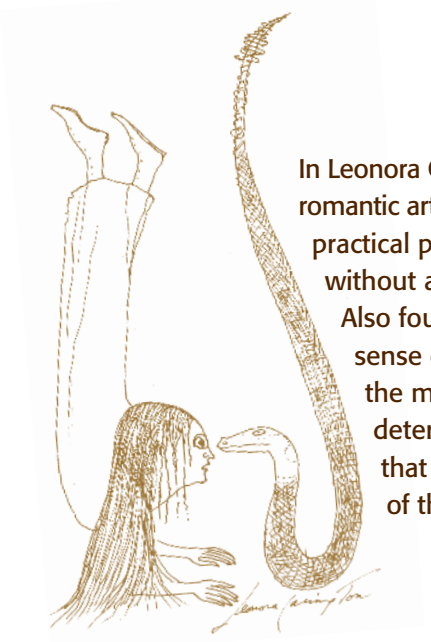
Mysteries— never wanted to ignore the great scientific or philosophical themes. Throughout her long, intense life, she was just as interested in astronomy as in astrology, in quantum physics as in the mysteries of the psyche; and at the same time, she never turned her back on what could be considered the minutiae and the details of daily life: her family, her home, her beloved objects, her friends, her pets, her plants.

In Leonora Carrington, a profoundly romantic artist —and here, I mean the great English romanticism, that of William Blake, for example— and an eminently practical person co-existed without any contradiction. Also found together were a profound sense of humor —also very English, consisting frequently of talking very seriously about the most absurd topics— and the most serious determination to do work that never admitted of the slightest vacillation and suffered no foolishness at all.

Leonora Carrington was born April 6, 1917, in Clayton Green, Lancashire, under the impetuous sign of Aries. Her father was an industrialist who made a fortune in textiles. She grew up in a big mansion, Crookhey Hall, where her Irish mother began nurturing her on Celtic legends, and her nanny —also Irish— completed this very special facet of her education that would mark her for life. The study of the mystics and the alchemists, of Carl Jung and Tibetan Buddhism, of the Gnostics and the Kabala, of Robert Graves and his white goddess, and of the Popol Vuh would all come later.

Her parents, both Catholics, sent her to religious schools run by nuns, where she was always in trouble because of her



In Leonora Carrington, a profoundly romantic artist and an eminently practical person coexisted without any contradiction. Also found together were a sense of humor and the most serious determination to do work that never admitted of the slightest vacillation.

© Estate of Leonora Carrington Private collection.

Animus maquina, 81 x 30 cm, 1962 (oil and mixed technique on plywood).

She knew that in her work, it was also possible
to glimpse the future and its fearsome enigmas. Not in vain did this artist look
at the world with both eyes, telescope and microscope, looking out and looking in.

Lepidopterans, 90 x 90 cm, 1969 (oil on canvas).

Untitled screen, 114 x 45 cm, 1964 (oil painted on both sides of wood).

rebelliousness. Desperate, her parents saw no option but to send her to study at Mrs. Penrose's Academy of Art in Florence. On her return to England, she enrolled in the art school run by French artist Amédée Ozenfant, who taught her the basic techniques of painting. Her family, particularly her father, opposed her becoming an artist and insisted that at 17, she be presented at the Court of King George V. Her mother, slightly less rigid, committed the "terrible mistake" of giving her a book about surrealism by Herbert Read, published in 1936, whose cover illustration was "a portent" a work by Max Ernst, *Two Children Are Threatened by a Nightingale*. What omens!

When I say that this was a portentious moment in the life of Leonora Carrington, I mean it in more than one way: not only was it an omen of her introduction by André Breton into the very select circle of the surrealists, but it also presaged her passionate, tempestuous relationship with Max Ernst, 26 years her senior. It was enough for her to see the book cover for her to immediately feel a profound affinity with the work and its creator. Without knowing much about surrealism, Leonora already knew it all.

When Max Ernst left his wife, he and Leonora, who had fallen in love like two teenagers, left Paris and went to live on an old farm in the town of St. Martin-d'Ardèche, in Provence, near Avignon. But the outbreak of World War II put an end to their idyll and Paradise on Earth, and opened up the doors of Hell to the young, suffering, talented painter. Ernst went through several detainment camps, and as a result of all this,

Leonora Carrington turned her pain into another source of creativity, demonstrating in her life and her work time and time again how extremes meet and how harmony can come from working with opposites.

Leonora suffered a nervous collapse in Madrid, which she later narrated in detail in her chilling memoir, *Down Below*.

Leonora Carrington transmuted her horrifying experience and the torment of hospitals, treatments, and doctors, and turned her pain into another source of creativity, demonstrating in her life and her work time and time again how extremes meet and how harmony can come from working with opposites. Convinced that reality is not only much more complex than we imagine, but also than we could possibly imagine, Leonora Carrington, with her telescope and her microscope melded symbolically in the alchemist's image of the egg (yolk and white, sun and moon, masculine and feminine, night and day at the same time), knew in her soul that in her work it was possible to look to the past and discover a living tradition that dated much further back than her Celtic ancestors to her favorite paintings: the bestiary of the Altamira caves.

At the same time, completely naturally, she knew that in her work, it was also possible to glimpse the future and its fearsome enigmas. Not in vain did this artist look at the world with both eyes —here we return to the aforementioned text: telescope and microscope, looking out and looking in— as she wrote and sketched to the astonishment of all of us who had the great fortune of knowing her and being close to her: with both hands. A truly ambidextrous artist, equally deft with both right and left.

"I did not decide to be a painter," said Leonora time after time. "Painting decided for me. It picked me and invented

Sidhe: The White People of Dana tnatha de danann, 78.5 x 59.5 cm, 1954 (oil on canvas).

The House Opposite, 33 x 82 cm, 1945 (tempera on board).

me and I simply have done it as best as I have been able."[2] It is not by chance that the Van Eyck brothers signed their masterpieces, like *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb* in Ghent, with these same words: "I did the best I could." Who could doubt that Leonora Carrington did her part as best she could, and that painting and the invisible did their part?

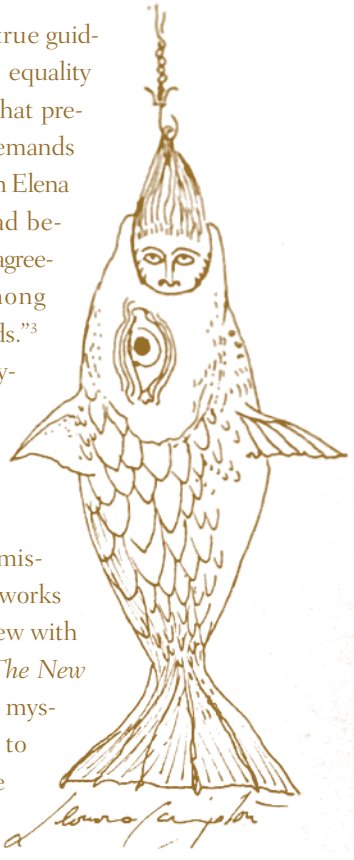
Max Ernst and Leonora Carrington met again several years later, when both were married to other people. Ernst was married to the Guggenheim heiress and Leonora to Mexican writer and diplomat Renato Leduc. She traveled to New York with Leduc, where they lived for a time. That was where she had her first individual exhibitions in the galleries of Pierre Matisse and Peggy Guggenheim.

In 1942, Leonora journeyed to Mexico, and after her marriage to Leduc dissolved, she decided to stay and live in her new country. In Mexico, not only did she find peace again, but she also met Emerick Weisz, a Hungarian photographer better known as "Chiki," who had been the assistant to the great Robert Capa. Leonora married Chiki and they had two sons, Gabriel and Pablo.

The couple lived for more than 50 years in the same house, a building that is not remarkable in the least, one of any number of houses in the Roma neighborhood. And who knows how many of those years Leonora spent in her kitchen, which served as the true spiritual center of her home; a kitchen she often shared with her fellow traveler on her journey of art and iniciation, Remedios Varo, another of the muses of surrealism who decided to come down off her pedestal to demand her place as an artist in her own right.

Leonora Carrington, with her telescope and her microscope melded symbolically in the alchemist's image of the egg, knew in her soul that in her work it was possible to look to the past and discover a living tradition.

That was the wish, practice, and a true guiding principle of all of Leonora's work: equality between men and women. An equality that precedes and surpasses many feminist demands because, as she said in an interview with Elena Poniatowska in 1957, who by then had become famous, "I am in favor of the final agreement between men and women, and among men and women and animals and birds."[3] In short, among everything and everyone. And it should be noted that, here, the word "agreement" is the key. Men and Women. Inside and Outside. Telescope and microscope.



Leonora Carrington's vision is unmistakable and laden with mystery. Her works are the proof. As she said in an interview with Elaine Mayers Salkaln, published in *The New York Times* October 13, 2002, "I am as mysterious to myself as I am mysterious to others." The little girl, the teenager, the young beauty, the woman, the wise

Three Characters, 1962 (oil on canvas).

"I did not decide to be a painter," said Leonora time after time.
"Painting decided for me. It picked me and invented me and I simply have done it as best as I have been able."

woman who lived to 94: she was always the same —mystery— and always different.

A mystery that enveloped her like an aura from her first steps in her green, native Lancashire to the end of her days. Leonora Carrington, with that smile from the soul that, despite everything, never abandoned her, might well be pleased by the verses of another of her countrymen and admirers of the Reverend Lewis Carroll, John Lennon, singing the mystery with his unmistakable voice:

> I heard the news today, oh boy!
> Four thousand holes in Blackburn, Lancashire,
> And though the holes were rather small,
> They had to count them all
> Now they know how many holes
> It takes to fill the Albert Hall.
> I'd love to turn you on.[5] VM

Notes

[1] Leonora Carrington, *Down Below* (London: Virago Press, 1989), p. 175. [Editor's Note.]

[2] Cristina Carrillo de Albornoz, "Entrevista con Leonora Carrington," in "El poeta multimedia," http://www.festivaldepoesiademedellin.org/pub.php/es/Diario/06_11_11_08.html. [Editor's Note.]

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Ogdoas, 41.5 x 81 cm, 1964 (oil on playwood).

[3] Mónica Mateos-Vega, "Celebran a Leonora Carrington, autora de 'un arte deslumbrante,'" *La Jornada,* Mexico, October 10, 2007, http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2007/10/10/index.php?section=cultura&article=a04n1cul. [Editor's Note.]

[4] "The Mystery Woman", http://www.nytimes.com/2002/10/13/magazine/the-mystery-woman.html?src=pm. [Editor's Note.]

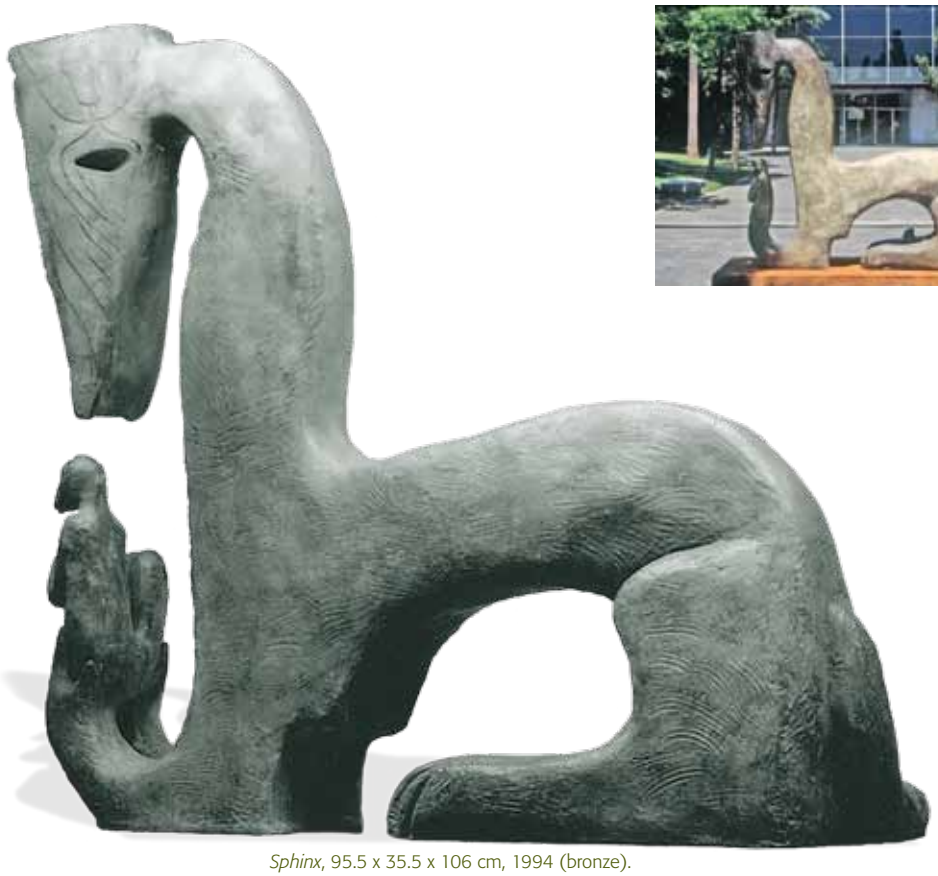
[5] John Lennon and Paul McCartney, "A Day in the Life," performed by The Beatles. [Editor's Note.]

Leonora Carrington
And Her Fantastic Oeuvre

Isaac Masri*

ING, 1994 (bronze).

◂ Detail *ING*, 1994 (bronze).



Sphinx, 95.5 x 35.5 x 106 cm, 1994 (bronze).

Born in 1917 in Lancashire, England, Leonora Carrington is recognized and admired as one of the greatest exponents of the surrealist movement. She lived in Mexico, where she produced the greatest part of her visual oeuvre. Here, she found a setting conducive to exploring the dreaming unconscious and developing the diaphanous atmosphere of her universe. She showed her essential predilection for creating a bestiary fraught with chimerical figures who wander from her painting to her sculpture and her fantastic writings. Down through the years, as a result of hard, original work, without aiming to, Leonora became a legend in world art.

In her childhood, she already needed to express herself visually, to represent the world and her own dreams to understand them, to create in order to imitate the original act; she also had a very particular idea of writing as the track left by a language, a squiggle in which knowledge ends by being said in the form of an enigma, where the real is the mystery of the body that speaks, the mystery of the unconscious. What she writes or paints, the gesture that breaks the fearsome blank space is the condition for pleasure, the

* Curator and art critic. Director of Mexico City's Indianilla Station Museum.

In her childhood, she already needed to express herself visually, to represent the world and her own dreams to understand them, to create in order to imitate the original act.

Lion Moon, 62 x 63.5 x 10 cm, 1995 (bronze).

In her work, Leonora Carrington maintains that passion of the surrealists for masks, for the hypnotic challenge launched by everything that confronts them.

Monsieur, 31 x 62 x 23 cm, 1994 (bronze).

She seeks with interest
constant signs of absence, and
at the same time, unleashes rituals
in which poetic representations
are invariably put forward.

impetus toward the depth that is so difficult to assume: in its truth shines the symbolic.

In her work, Leonora Carrington maintains that passion of the surrealists for masks, for the hypnotic challenge launched by everything that confronts them. Her images, whether in painting, texts, or writing, recover Celtic myths, create a short circuit with day-to-day reality, forcing the viewer to unfold an internal gaze, where a trace of the mythical can be found. She seeks with interest constant signs of absence, and at the same time, unleashes rituals in which poetic representations are invariably put forward.

Watching the casting of Carrington bronzes creates the feeling of being part of a "permanent metamorphosis," together with the dynamic of gravity and levity that emerges from this creative labor that leads the imaginary to the symbolic link between ironsmiths and alchemists of different dimensions. For Leonora, bronze is a civilizing witness that out in the open and assimilating the action of time recovers the poetics of the essential.

Thanks to the close friendship I had with Leonora for 25 years, we were able to produce different projects that I will mention here: "Liberty in Bronze," a collective project for which she created eight bronze sculptures, among them masterpieces like *ING*, *The Sphinx*, *Corronus*, *Lion Moon*, *The Virgin of the Cave*, and *Nigrum*. Some years later, we created the project "Family Universe," with 10 bronze sculptures, among them *Cuculatis* and *Albino Hogg*, which we exhibited at the Fine Arts Palace. A catalogue for that show used family photographs by Emerick Weisz, her husband; a painting by Pablo, one of her sons, and texts by Gabriel, her other son. These materials, together with the last project I did with her, "Image

Woman with Dove, 70 x 35 cm, 2008 (bronze).

Watching the casting of Carrington bronzes
creates the feeling of being part
of a "permanent metamorphosis,"
together with the dynamic of gravity
and levity that emerges from this creative labor.

The Virgin of the Cave,
120 x 17 x 48 cm, 1995 (bronze).

Corronus, 90 x 60 x 22 cm, 1995 (bronze).

Hunters," ten medium-sized bronze sculptures (*Nigromante*, *Boat with Monkey*, *Minotaur*, *Horseback Ride*, and *Eagle Face*, among others), made up the exhibition "Leonora Carrington in Mexico City," which was displayed along Reforma Avenue outside the Anthropology and History and Rufino Tamayo Museums, with 50 photographs showing different stages of her pictorial oeuvre; historic photographs of colleagues, friends, and relatives; some personal items from her childhood and adolescence; 30 bronze sculptures; and her largest piece, *Fisher King*, which is on permanent exhibit in San José del Cabo, Baja Californoia Sur, as homage to marine life and a call to respect nature.

We produced a large-format sculpture entitled *How Doth the Little Crocodile* for Mexico City, which Leonora donated; it is currently located on Reforma Avenue and is popularly known the *Boat of Crocodiles*. She also created a bench called *No More Room Left* for the "Dialogue of Benches" project, a collective piece that we donated to Mexico City's Federal District government, and which is on display in the city's historic center.

We arranged for Leonora to do two large-format pieces for the Cuervo tequila manufacturer, *The King of Tequila* and *The Queen of Tequila*. They are housed in the Mundo Cuervo facilities in Tequila, Jalisco, where a museum will be opened dedicated to Leonora and displaying her work.

This text has the aim of relating some moments of a 25-year history of one of the most renowned artists of the art world and whom I thank for having honored me with her trust and friendship. VM

A large-format sculpture entitled *How Doth the Little Crocodile* for Mexico City, which Leonora donated, is currently located on Reforma Avenue and is popularly known as the *Boat of Crocodiles.*

How Doth the Little Crocodile, 8.5 x 4.8 m, 2000 (bronze).

Not the Brush, But the Pen

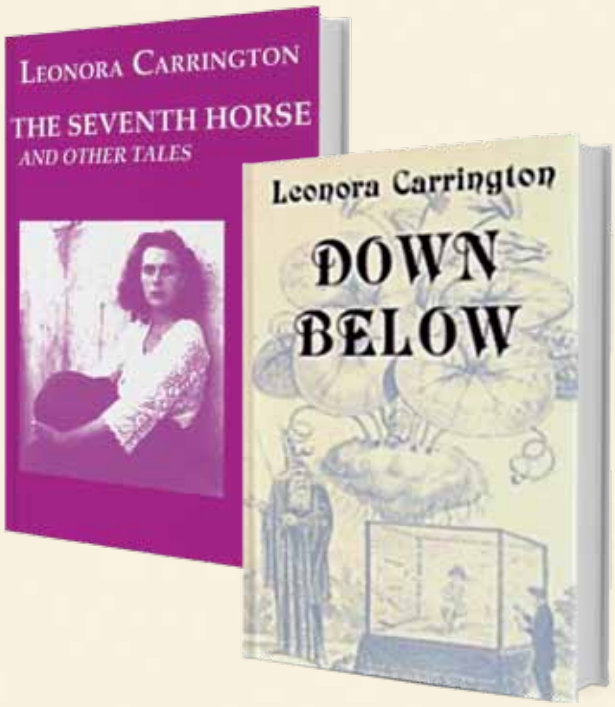
Federico Patán*

Down Below, 40 x 60 cm, 1941 (oil on canvas).

When I held in my hands two books of Leonora Carrington around 1995, I felt just a trace of mistrust born of the fact that, except for a brief autobiography, they were narratives. Prompted by a completely unfounded belief, I held onto the idea that if one were active in one field of creation, particularly painting, there was not enough creative impulse to make efforts in another. Michelangelo brought me back down to earth: I remembered his sonnets. I almost immediately remembered that Fernando del Paso had made forays into painting.

*Essayist, literary translator, poet, and professor of literature at the UNAM School of Philosophy and Letters

Much of what Carrington narrates in these memoirs is hard to read. However, at the same time, it serves as testimony of the changes that the painter herself was going through.



Now, the degree of mastery an artist has in each of his/her fields is quite another matter. For Leonora Carrington the painter, I had great respect, respect that came of being familiar with and enjoying part of her work. In the land of painting, I am a mere visitor, as I am in that of music. A visitor who enjoys a great deal what he likes, but without attempting anything like the work that is the province of the specialized critic. Full of curiosity, I began Leonora Carrington's books, and I have returned to them for this article. They have lost none of the literary appeal I found in them then.

Short stories, a novella, and an autobiography make up the two volumes I read. The autobiography, *Down Below*, is brief but very intense. The title of the Spanish translation was *Memorias de abajo*, and a pertinent note reports that it was written in 1943, although it is known that there was a version in English that was lost. As already mentioned, it is brief, only about 60 pages long; it deals with a period that was very painful, both historically and personally. Dictated in French from Monday, August 23, to Friday, August 27, 1943, it narrates what happened in Carrington's life during her confinement in a Spanish sanatorium in Santander, where she was held prisoner after a depressive mental breakdown. The historical aspect is expressed in the mention of figures like the group of *requetés*,[1] who raped her one night, or an official who was a Franco supporter who wanted to make her his mistress.

Much of what Carrington narrates in these memoirs is hard to read. However, at the same time, it serves as testimony of the changes that the painter herself was going through. She is not sure, but she did suspect, that everything that happened then helped her to cross the initial threshold of knowledge to the slow but constant loss of an innocence —perhaps naiveté— that we all share at first and we all gradually eliminate using different tools. Amidst what is a testimonial, we suddenly come across affirmations that allow us to better understand the artist's later work. One example would be her idea that she was not obeying the formulas rooted in her mind, the formulas *of the old, limited Reason,* which expresses one of the tenets of surrealism, the school Carrington belonged to. That is, working with what came from the unconscious and attempting to explain the world of the conscious with it; transforming experiences into artistic material, but doing so with less obedience to reason, which, precisely because it is reason, restricts the artist to a single approach to the interpretation of his/her surroundings.

Am I wrong in seeing in the following description a hint of surrealism? During a drive, she noted that the highway was flanked by rows of coffins. Aside from its value as a brief testimonial of what happened in Spain after the Civil War, the description encompasses the possibility of a canvas. In 1987, in a epilogue included in the book that includes this text, *Down Below*, the painter would remember that in Ávila she saw a long train with many cars of sheep bleating from the cold. She described it as appalling. The same thing happens here as with the previous quote: here you feel the seed of a canvas. And then I remembered that Carrington wrote her first short stories between 1937 and 1940. That is, at a very young age. So we must conclude that she worked on both means of expression in parallel. In one of them, painting, she achieved her goal of an image that gave the thematic intent of the canvas, and in the other, she ensured that the movement of history took care of that same task, creating a way of looking at the world.

The chronological reading of Leonora Carrington's writings shows how she integrated the experiences she was having into her narrative. And it was the same with Mexico. First, it is a matter of introducing into her stories hints of Mexican speech, and then of dedicating an entire text to it ("Mexican Story," written in the 1970s), and also of departing from historical fact, as she does in *La invención del mole* (The Invention of *Mole*, 1960) to offer us a delicious satire. Another attraction of the text is that the author risks experimenting with another genre: theater. The simple introduction of the characters obliges us to smile in complicity, since she breathes life into both Moctezuma and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The way they come together is unimportant; what is interesting is the dialogue they establish, during which they examine the criteria for the basis for the Catholic religion, criteria that scandalize Moctezuma. Then the plot begins to explain to us how *mole* was created, through information given to the archbishop. A complete and utter anachronism; however, it does make it possible to celebrate the black humor the author uses to handle the plot. Added to this are certain clarifications, as though bringing us up to date, in Moctezuma's first speech, that he speaks "naturally in Náhuatl," or that another character is knitting "a tube sweater for Quetzalcóatl."

She breathes life into both Moctezuma and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The way they come together is unimportant; what is interesting is their dialogue as they examine the criteria for the basis of the Catholic religion, criteria that scandalize Moctezuma.

This sense of irony already appears in her first short stories, the ones written in the 1930s. For example, in "When They Went along the Path on the Bicycle," a dialogue takes place between a woman who goes to die in a convent and the mother superior of the Convent of the Little Smile of Jesus' Anguish As the visitor talks about saving her soul, the mother superior fills her in about the cost of the services she is requesting. The story is a succession of images that recreate a world close to ours, but full of situations that make it magi-

Alejandro Jodorowsky's production of Leonora Carrington's play *Penelope* (1957). Set design and costumes by Leonora Carrington.

Private collection. © Estate of Leonora Carrington

The Temptation of St. Anthony, 120 x 90 cm, 1947 (oil on canvas). Private collection.

cal based on slight changes to our reality. For example, that the protagonist, Virginia Fur "had a head of hair several meters long" or the number of cats —50— that always accompanied her. These slight exaggerations suffice for our vision of the world to broaden and depart from the everyday to be enriched.

Perhaps for this reason, many of the stories have a certain flavor of fairy or popular tales. Leonora Carrington wrote most of them in French or English, given that Spanish entered her life relatively late. This might lead us to ask whether her work belongs to Mexican literature. If this is decided by the simple presence of the Mexican, there would be certain reason to ask. But equally, it would be appropriate to ask if her place is in English literature. Having chosen to exile herself in Mexico, having lived among us for most of her years, having introduced the Mexican gradually into her plots, the question answers itself.

The most interesting thing is that she worked in two fields, painting and narrative: seeing how the immobility of the canvases transforms into movement in narrative and how surrealism is expressed in two ways in her artistic production. VM

Notes

[1] The *requetés* were volunteers or platoons of volunteers who fought in the Spanish civil wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries on the side of religious tradition and the monarchy. [Editor's Note.]

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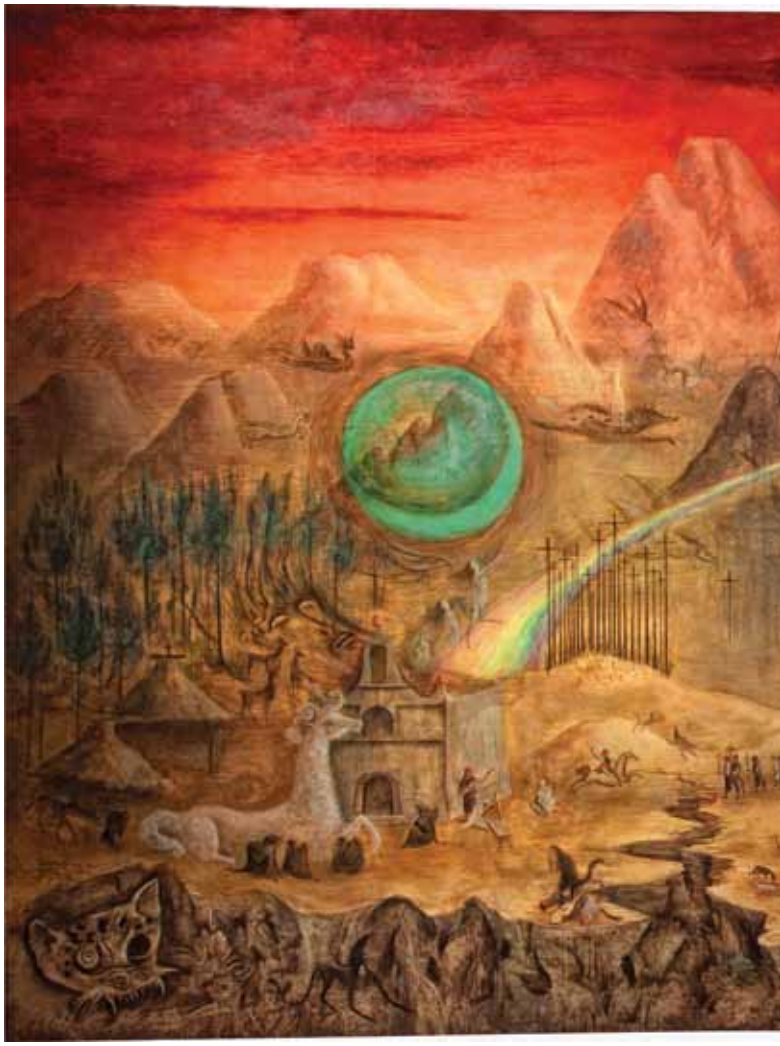
The relationship among the diminutive humans and between them and the cosmos is "personal" and concrete, not abstract and impersonal like ours.

It should come as no surprise that multifaceted Leonora Carrington included among her many talents that of painting fresco murals of noteworthy quality. In this article, I will touch on two works in particular, whose originality is evident both in the history of art and in the artist's poetics. I am referring to *The Magical World of the Maya* (1963), in Mexico City's National Museum of Anthropology and History, and *Dog Woman* (mid-1960s), to be found in the Xilitla Castle in the San Luis Potosí Huasteca region.

The former fulfills a specific function: it is situated in the museum's ethnological section, where it was intended for when the government commissioned it. It centers on a pre-established theme, which provided Leonora affinity and sympathy from the public. The portable mural, of medium-sized format, is an artistic interpretation of the Mayan culture of the 1960s —always so effusively historical— in which the painter's imagination unfolds based on her profound, conscientious study of the topic. She relies on historical sources (mainly Mayan codices and the *Popol vuh*), on a detailed examination of Mayan society *in situ* (using sketches, not a camera, given the local people's belief that they would lose their souls if photographed), and on a permanent exchange of information with



* Researcher at the National Fine Arts Institute National Documentation and Research Center for the Visual Arts (Cenidiap).

We would like to thank Xavier Guzmán Urbiola for his help in gathering materials for this article.

Leonora Carrington
Muralist

Luis Rius Caso*

The Magical World of the Maya, 213 x 457 cm, 1963 (caseine on wood).

specialists close to Leonora, like Laurette Séjourné and Gertrude Blom, the Swiss anthropologist who introduced the artist to two traditional healers who allowed her to be present at their ceremonies.

There is insufficient space here to delve deeply into this interesting relationship between the artist and the anthropologists, in many ways reminiscent, for example, of that between visual artist Miguel Covarrubias and archaeologist Alfonso Caso, or between artist Adolfo Best Maugard and anthropologist Franz Boas. Suffice it to point out this relationship to anyone interested in studying its impact on our artistic process, and in this particular case, following the trail of a friendship that led to archaeologist Ignacio Bernal inviting Leonora to paint this mural.

This work, then, is solidly based in knowledge acquired from different places, among which must be included Leonora's travels to the Lacandón region in 1963, which turned out to be a veritable initiation. Human beings and gods appear before us thanks to the artist's magic, which restores them to the unity existent in a mythical, original moment, where the tension of opposites or extreme associations, like the sacred and the profane, disappears, where opposites stop being perceived as contradictory. In the mythical time recovered, the cosmos acquires an original, virginal dynamic. Beings and things move and synchronize with each other; parts correspond to the whole and the whole is verified in each of its parts; sympathy and animism play together, the constituent parts of magic. A hidden will emits a rainbow that covers the scene and, when it touches the earth, animates it. A face emerges from the ground, from within which bursts forth the nude image of Ix Chel, or the lady of the rainbow, goddess of weaving, medicine, of birth, and of the moon, according to the sacred book, *Popol vuh*.

The artist's magic restores human beings and gods to the unity of a mythical, original moment, where opposites stop being perceived as contradictory.

Ruled by an ordering movement of their own, the three levels of the cosmos intimately and inexorably meld: at the right side of the mural, the underworld pushes to the surface a *ceiba* or silk cotton tree, the Mayas' sacred tree, which attracts a flock of owls, emerging from the eye of a being apparently inspired in a representation on the codex of the god Chac. From the depths of this figure, from his stony quiet, breaks away the antithesis of his being, in an extension of wings and feathers —reminiscent of extreme associations. The underworld is presided over by the jaguar god, in the bottom left, and there live the inhabitants destined to that place by Quiché mythology, like the twin monkeys (left side), who became monkeys after being human, when they were defeated by the heroic twins that would later become the sun and the moon. On the surface live the human beings, tiny in scale, living with the beings and things of their day-to-day existence, but also with the gods and mythological beings who populate their wakeful vigils and dreams, their life and their death.

Times as well as beliefs cross each other in an emphatic syncretism underlined by the representation of a church like the Santo Domingo Church in San Cristóbal de las Casas, right in the center of the work, and by the points where the rainbow meets the ground: a Chamula Catholic church, with a large white sacred sheep on the extreme left,

and an indigenous shack inside of which a traditional healer carries out a ritual, on the other side. Other divine and cosmic representations accentuate this syncretism even more: we can see above the rainbow in the foreground and in the middle, a disquieting figure that seems to be the beneficent personification of Chac, the god of rain, followed by a motif probably associated with Kukulkán, and the beautiful composition of what for the art historian and Carrington scholar Whitney Chadwick is a multicolored bird that is the forerunner of the hummingbird, which represents the moon and the sun.

The relationship among the diminutive humans and between them and the cosmos is "personal" and concrete, not abstract and impersonal like ours. Magic reigns among them (the science of the concrete, in the mode of anthropologist Claude Lévy Strauss), and for that reason, in the dynamic system of the cosmos, any activity undertaken makes sense —whether religious, like the procession headed to the church, or the ceremony carried out by the traditional healer, or the most prosaic, like singing, planting, herding, or conversing. And perhaps it is these daily episodes that are the most eloquent references to a reality nourished in all its spheres: from the most trivial to that involving the most complex metaphysics. So, thanks to the invocation starting from an ordinary act, a reality is unveiled that is much more elaborate in its composition due to its cosmic significance, the totality it acquires.

In this work, as we have seen, Leonora's iconography is notably based in research; but not because of that must we limit our view of it to the search for ethnic, historic, or mythological motifs. The artist's symbols take on the quality and/or singularity of the objects represented, but above all, come from a particular, more precise system of signification: the poetics of the artist herself. The animals represented (tapirs, wild boars, deer, spider monkeys, leopards, the quetzal that crowns the church of San Cristóbal, etc.), for example, came out of meticulous studies in the Tuxtla Gutiérrez zoo, but also from a poetics that in each work is concretized and to which each work refers.

Magic reigns among the humans and for that reason, any activity undertaken makes sense —whether religious, or the most prosaic, like singing, planting, herding, or conversing.

The second mural, also a fresco, contains a single figure, that of a dog-woman, or the dog goddess. It is 90 centimeters wide and 2.55 meters high; the figure is sepia color and is standing next to a column in the arcade leading to the house, on which the dog-woman rests her left arm. Conceived to be integrated into the architectural discourse, the image seems to be watching over the place. One of Leonora's typical figures, it surprises with its mystery and visual force. It was rediscovered a few years ago and published in a beautiful little book by historian Xavier Guzmán Urbiola and written by Gabriel Weisz, Leonora's son, that documents the process and meaning of the work based on an inspired exercise of memory supported by fiction. Weisz writes, "My mother came to Xilitla with her paints and brushes. As soon as she finishes breakfast, she goes over to one of the thick columns holding up the house. Slowly, the faint outlines of a new inhabitant of the column reveal themselves."[1] And also,

Dog Woman, 1964-1967.

Plutarco Gastélum Esquer

"My mother goes over
to one of the thick columns holding up
the house. Slowly, the faint outlines
of a new inhabitant of the column
reveal themselves."
Gabriel Weisz.

Plutarco Gastélum Esquer

Edward James, creator of the Xilitla artistic space.

The goddess guards an access that either invites you in or impedes your entry. Her history could be traced to the burned crimson tracks found in prehistoric cave paintings. The painter brought her from that unformed vacuum to this white, even surface. She is no longer the shadow of an idea living in limbo, since she has become the soul of the house; soulless homes are always overwhelming. She will always be there to guide nocturnal creatures, who must not lose themselves among the rows of majestic columns.[2]

With her body facing front and her head in profile, the solitary, elegant figure seems to personify ancient Egyptian genealogies. The aforementioned book describes her process of creation, with photographs from the period. The dog goddess has inspired admirable writing, precisely as it did Weisz's.

Different in theme and intention, though coinciding in time, both frescoes testify to the inescapable and extremely original presence of this brilliant painter and writer in the singular history of Mexican muralism. VM

Notes

[1] Gabriel Weisz, *Leonora Carrington. Un mural en la selva* (Mexico City: Xul Servicios Editoriales, 2008), p. 26. See the on-line review at http://www.jornada.unam.mx/2009/02/27/cultura/a05n1cul.

[2] Ibid., p. 34.

We would like to especially thank Plutarco Gastélum Yamazarez for permission to publish his father's photographs of Xilitla.

Leonora Carrington
For Art Lovers

Untitled (For Jahae and Jean François), 30.5 x 72.5 cm, 1952 (oil on canvas).

Some Suggestions

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De los Monteros Espinosa, Santiago, "Leonora Carrington: Like a Messenger," *Art Nexus* 18 (1995), pp. 80-82.
Fauchereau, Serge, "Surrealism in Mexico," *Art Forum* 25, New York (1986), pp. 86-91.
Grimberg, Saloman, "Leonora Carrington," *Art Nexus* 26 (1997), pp. 62-65.

Videos

"Leonora Carrington," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NDDc650j-zM.

Interview:

"Leonora Carrington," http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nBa5Uy9Yl0I&feature=related.

Awards

In 2005, she received the National Award for Science and the Arts in the area of fine arts. In the same year, the Mexico City government designated her a "Distinguished Citizen," and she was honored with the key to the city; the National Council for Culture and the Arts (Conaculta) also gave her the Gold Medal for Fine Arts to honor lifelong achievement.

María Cristina Hernández Escobar
Assistant Editor of *Voices of Mexico*

Good King Dagobert, 90 x 60 cm, 1952 (oil on canvas).

Red Mask, 1950 (leather).

EDUARDO OLBÉS

Matter and Form

"Space tells matter how to move; matter tells space how to curve."
ALBERT EINSTEIN

Alexandra G. Aktories*

Benevolence Bench (travertine marble).

After more than 40 years carving wood and stone, Olbés knows that he does not pick the materials; the materials pick him. This is why the raw materials for his work have always played a central role.

Sideways Comma Divan from the "i" Series (gray granite).

A Filipino in Mexico

Seduced by Mexican stone, sculptor Eduardo Olbés (b. Manila, 1951) decided to stay in Mexico 37 years ago. He chose to live on the slopes of the legendary hill, the Tepozteco, in the town of Tepoztlán, Morelos, and set up his atelier, dubbed "La iguana de Oriente" (The Iguana of the East) there. "Other Filipino artists have often asked me why I continue working in Mexico instead of doing art in my country. And well, the pragmatic reason is that the Philippines is geologically a very young country and does not have the enormous wealth of stone that Mexico does," says the artist.[1] Mexico is rich in stone deposits, including different varieties of marble, onyx, obsidian, basalt, and jade. And Mexico also has a long tradition in carving and working these materials.

In pre-Hispanic times, ancient Mexicans worked on everything from great stone monoliths like the colossal Olmec heads sculpted in volcanic basalt, to materials used to make small utensils and decorative objects, sculptures, and jewelry made of jade, obsidian, and other stones. The colonial period is known for the facades of private homes and public buildings covered in pink sandstone or porous *tezontle* and carved quarried rock, such as Mexico City's cathedral and Iturbide's Palace, among innumerable examples. These stone materials continue to be used for construction, art, and household utensils to this day. This is why sculptor Olbés found in Mexico an endless supply of raw materials for his work.

Added to this is the diversity of Mexican wood, the other material with which he combines his stone sculpture. Olbés uses wood from assorted tropical species, including *narra*, ebony, chicle tree wood, and *huaje* to anchor a marble table, create a centuries-old traditional bench, or carve the wings that will give flight to gigantic angels.

Origins and Apprenticeship

The sculptor describes his first experiences carving everyday objects out of wood:

> As a child, I spent long hours trying to make different things, like slingshots out of guava tree wood, harpoons for underwater fishing, traps to catch the giant rats that made off with my

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All photos reproduced by permission of Eduardo Olbés.

cousin's rabbits, wax knives….There was nothing aesthetic about them; rather, they were fun, dangerous weapons. I never thought of this behavior as anything akin to art.

However, after more than 40 years carving wood and stone, Olbés knows that he does not pick the materials; the materials pick him. This is why the raw materials for his work have always played a central role.

His creative process began at the age of 20 when he was working as an apprentice in a cabinet-maker's workshop in Manila. He continued that learning process at university with British teacher P. Ruddick, a specialist in wood carving. Later, in Mexico, he became the assistant to Miguel Cortés at the EDA, what used to be the School of Design and Crafts in Mexico City. "Later, when I could no longer resist stone —I was just carried away by it— I went to Teotihuacan and met several obsidian carvers, and that's how I started carving stone in the Iguana de Oriente in '85."

Since then he has carved hundreds of tons of different stones —some notoriously difficult to work, like obsidian— in a variety of formats and sizes. Perhaps the biggest lesson he has learned is to know how to wait patiently and respectfully for the stone to give him an opportunity. He does not begin on a stone piece until he feels ready. Without regard for time, he gives himself over to observation and waits until his art deserves a particular piece of stone. "I have a kind of deformation of the memory that allows me to remember stones and pieces of wood I saw decades ago. It's easy for me to remember their color, hardness, grain, figure, density, and tenacity. In fact, I still have the piece of jade my dad bought me for my birthday when I turned 13."

That respect is undoubtedly an expression of his deep admiration for nature. But it is also evidence of the complicity he establishes with the raw materials that give life to his sculptures: "Each stone requires its own manner, but we love almost all of them."

Mexicans Crossing the Border in Sneakers (ash / breccia headdresses from Colima / feather masks / travertine sneakers).

Olbés moves effortlessly from sculpture (in immensely significant large-format pieces) to utilitarian or decorative art (stone and wooden furniture, fountains, ornamental pieces, and even jewelry).

Angel Thinking of His Girlfriend (travertine marble, wings of molave wood).

Magnificent Pieces, Small Beauties

Eduardo Olbés does not complicate his life with discussions about what art is and what design is; who is an artist and who an artisan; for him, the truly essential thing is the process through which things are made and, of course, the materials. That is why he moves effortlessly from sculpture (in immensely significant large-format pieces) to utilitarian or decorative art (stone and wooden furniture, fountains, ornamental pieces, and even jewelry) that almost always have a basis in the millennia-old tradition of other cultures, such as Islamic art or the Ming tradition in China. The exhibit "Ming Evocation. Olbés Furniture," recently at the Franz Mayer Museum, one of Mexico City's most important venues for the decorative arts, showcased such a series.[2]

Lady of Sorrows #1 (granite, bone, bullet casings).

Olbés does not complicate his life with discussions about what art is; for him, the truly essential thing is the process through which things are made and, of course, the materials.

Green Spiral Fountain with Iguana, 135 cm in diameter (green granite from Tierra Colorada).

Detail *Drug Trafficking* (granite and different kinds of marble carved on a galvanized metal plaque).

Pieces with Social Content

Although Olbés would not define his work as *engagé*, he is far from indifferent to what happens around him. The plight of migrants who risk their lives in hope of a better existence, the climate of violence that now exists in Mexico, injustice and horror have been driving forces behind the creation of two series of sculptures. "Mexicans Crossing the Border in Sneakers" (2008)[3] was exhibited at Bajo el Balcón Gallery in Tepoztlán,[4] and at the Borda Garden in Cuernavaca, under the premise, "There are two things that economic refugees never leave behind: their dignity and their sneakers." This series includes large-format sculptures carved in stone, in which the migrants' dignity is depicted in their faces, done delicately in feathers, and in their stone headdresses, firmly set on each of their heads. The migrants' strength and the tough road they will have to travel to reach their dreams are symbolized by a pair of rough hunks of white stone alluding to sneakers, those resistant "tools" indispensable for undertaking a journey of this magnitude.

In this exhibition, the artist wants to exalt this group of people who are an extremely important part of the economy of Mexico and the United States, but are reviled and the victims of outrages in both countries.

"Drug Trafficking and Perverse Economic Equations" (2010) is another crucial exhibition through which Olbés reflects and raises his voice against the violence of the war on drugs and the murders of women in Ciudad Juárez.[5] This show was hosted by the UNAM's El Chopo University Museum and later at the "Farewell to Arms" show hosted by the Civic Alliance and the Washington Office for Latin America (WOLA) at Mexico City's Memory and Tolerance Museum. Olbés explains how it came about and how he developed it:

> At some point in the summer of 2008, ideas and feelings that had been accumulating for years about arms and drug trafficking —their ubiquity, scope, and interrelations— as well as the hideous news that was coming out of Ciudad Juárez, ripened like an infectious pustule until they flowered in an attack of repugnance and horror. The time had come to deal with these issues directly in visual art. It was then when I began to work on "Drug Trafficking" in my workshop. Every letter of this piece is formed by over a thousand pills, joints, capsules, tablets, syringes, and lozenges, all carved and polished by hand in 15 different colors and kinds of stone, by expert craftsmen at La Iguana de Oriente.[6]

Aleph (obsidian and marble from Orizaba).

Moorish Angel, 220 cm tall, 1500 kg (white bego marble; wings of old wood from Marawi, Philippines).

A Dream to Be Realized

Since "it is not possible to think of Mexico without corn,"[7] Eduardo, in collaboration with architect Jorge Mercado, has been following a dream for some time now: creating a Corn Park, based on the design of a ceremonial center of ancient Mexico, with different references to corn. This is a way of reinterpreting the ancient Mexican custom of giving thanks for the benefits of this food by worshiping the deities: "Our proposal is not a simple sculpture project, but a true offering." With all certainty, in the hands of the Filipino sculptor, someday this project will stop being just a dream.

Whether utilitarian art or just sculpture, wood and stone are transformed and acquire their own significance through Olbés's work. "If I ask myself what has brought me here, only one response occurs to me: beauty. Beauty lures me. It tells me things that make me listen, and it shows me things that make me see. And what is more, beauty gives me the gift of wanting to keep listening, to keep seeing, to keep living." VM

Notes

[1] All quotes, unless otherwise specified, are from an interview by the author with the sculptor, in Tepoztlán, Morelos, May 13, 2012.

[2] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZBWr9pQmaCg. [Editor's Note.]

[3] See art from this gallery at www.youtube.com/watch?v=tZr7eGdP-FM and concretely, *Immigrants*, at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5Fikb3vxXc&feature=relmfu. [Editor's Note.]

[4] The gallery's name is a play on words, alluding to the Malcolm Lowry novel, *Under the Volcano*, or *Bajo el Volcán* in Spanish. [Translator's Note.]

[5] See http://www.cultura.unam.mx/?tp=articulo&id=1856&ac=mostrar&Itemid=208&ct=323, and "Eduardo Olbés en El Chopo," *Milenio* (Mexico City), October 9, 2010, http://www.milenio.com/cdb/doc/impreso/8845527. [Editor's Note.]

[6] Eduardo Olbés, brochure, El Chopo University Museum exhibition, September 22 to November 17, 2011.

[7] The author is alluding here to a nationwide campaign carried out by corn producers in defense of Mexico's hundreds of native species of maize, threatened by the introduction of genetically modified organisms. [Translator's Note.]

Cinco de Mayo

The Mexican National Holiday Most Celebrated in the United States

Patricia Galeana*

José Cusachs, *Battle of May 5, 1862,* 1903 (oil on canvas).

Mexico's Independence Day is September 16, the date the war against Spain's three-centuries-long domination began. But May 5, or Cinco de Mayo, is also a national civic festivity. On that day, we celebrate the beginning of the fight for the country's second independence, in this case against French intervention, commemorating the defeat of the French army at the Battle of Puebla. However, Cinco de Mayo is more celebrated in the United States than in Mexico. Let's look at the possible reasons for this.

* Historian and professor at the UNAM School of Philosophy and Letters.

BACKGROUND

After 11 years of insurgent warfare, the Mexican people had to fight 15 more years to achieve recognition of their independence from Spain, which attempted to re-conquer the country in 1829. When Mexico was finally recognized as a

Tiburcio Sánchez, *Benito Juárez,* 1899 (oil on canvas).

When Mexico was finally recognized as a sovereign country in 1836, the world powers tried to take the place of its previous colonial metropolis. That same year, a conflict began with the U.S.

sovereign country in 1836, the world powers tried to take the place of its previous colonial metropolis. That same year, a conflict began with the United States because of the secession of Texas, which was later annexed by the U.S. in 1845. After refusing to recognize the original borders of Texas, the U.S. army invaded Mexico, beginning a war of conquest from 1846 to 1848; the outcome was that it seized more than 2 378 539 square kilometers of Mexican land, more than half its territory.

Meanwhile, England had taken over the Mexican economy through ruinous loans, part of which were in kind, for example, providing obsolete armaments, while it took over Mexico's mines and controlled its trade through its manufactures.

France did not want to be left out, so in 1838 it blockaded Veracruz, Mexico's main port, under the pretext of procuring payment for damages to its compatriots incurred in the country's constant political conflicts during the construction of the Mexican national state. François, Prince de Joinville, the son of Louis Philippe d'Orléans, was part of the French unit that bombarded Veracruz; this gives the reader an idea of the importance they gave to their intervention in the country.

Later, the United States maintained the pressure to be able to keep more of Mexico; it wanted half the territory of the northern states, the Baja California peninsula, and passage through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. Finally, they were able to acquire the Mesilla Valley.[1] France, for its part, wanted Sonora, Mexico's second largest state, so it could work its mines, and in 1854, it encouraged the filibustering adventure of Count Raousset de Boulbon. Before becoming emperor of France, Louis Napoleon Bonaparte had thought up the idea of intervening in the Americas to stop the United States, which was threatening to swallow the entire continent, just as it had taken over Mexican territory. His uncle Napoleon I had foreseen this danger. Charles Maurice de Talleyrand, the chancellor who turned France into the center of Europe, had put forward the need to safeguard international equilibrium by stopping the United States.

Alexander von Humboldt had presented Mexico to the world as a horn of plenty. Michel Chevalier reaffirmed the idea that it was very rich in natural resources and therefore ripe for intervention. In addition, they said that the "Latin nations" had to be helped out of chaos and safeguarded from the Protestant Anglo-Saxons. The idea was to unite the Latin race with France at the head.

Louis Napoleon shared his uncle and Talleyrand's ideas of blocking the United States and uniting the "Latin world." He followed Chevalier's advice about intervening in Mexico, and he also aspired to digging a "Napoleon Channel" communicating the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. In 1846, he pub-

General Ignacio Zaragoza.

lished a pamphlet in England explaining his project and even entered into negotiations with Nicaraguan diplomats.[2] Thus, before becoming emperor of France, he had already thought about intervening in the Americas; in his mind, Mexico was part of Central America, and the ideal site for putting his imperial projects into practice.

In the midst of civil war, in 1859, since they could not defeat the republican Liberals, Mexico's monarchists asked Napoleon III to intervene to establish a second empire in Mexico.[3] The emperor of France was delighted to accept; he had only to wait for the best time, which came when the war of secession broke out in the United States, and when in 1861 Juárez's constitutional government requested a two-year moratorium on Mexico's debt.

Napoleon draped his intervention in the Treaty of London, forming a tri-partite alliance with Spain and England, to force payment of Mexico's debt to them. It should be pointed out that the debts were of different dimensions: while England was owed Mex$68.5 million and Spain almost Mex$9 million, France was only owed about Mex$200 000. To that sum must be added fraudulent bonds issued by the banker Jecker, who had made a loan to the conservative head of a coup attempt, Miguel Miramón, for Mex$15 million at 6 percent interest a year.[4] Napoleon's influential half-brother, Charles Auguste de Morny, was implicated in this —clearly illegal— business venture that Mexico's constitutional government refused to recognize. He also invited the United States to join the Treaty of London, knowing that it would not do so because of its internal strife.

In December 1861, 5 600 Spanish and 2 400 French troops disembarked in Mexico. The following January, more French soldiers landed, bringing the total to 7 111, while the English sent only 800. Since Benito Juárez's government had already been warned by diplomat José de Jesús Terán that the moratorium was going to serve as a pretext for intervention, he abrogated it. Thanks to this, he was able to come to an independent bilateral agreement with the Spanish and the English. Meanwhile, the French had advanced toward the country's capital, violating all the Treaty of London accords that stipulated non-intervention in Mexico's internal political affairs. They also violated the accords with the Mexican government that had allowed the invading armies to set up camp in a disease-free area of the coast and had stipulated they would retreat to the port where they had disembarked if hostilities broke out.

The head of the French axis, Charles Ferdinand Latrille, Count of Lorencez, planned to take Mexico City in June 1862. However, he was defeated on May 5 on the outskirts of Puebla. After being repulsed during his three attempts to take Forts Loreto and Guadalupe, he decided to retreat without

Primitivo Miranda, *Soldiers of the Reform* (oil on canvas).

Alexander von Humboldt had presented Mexico to the world as a horn of plenty. Michel Chevalier reaffirmed the idea that it was very rich in natural resources and therefore ripe for intervention.

The French Fleet Arriving to the Port of Veracruz.

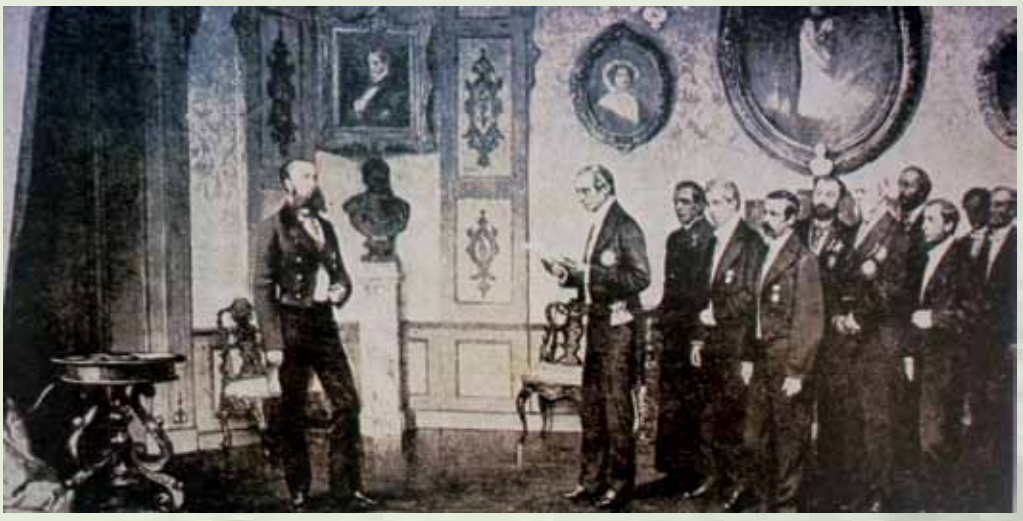
The "Latin nations" had to be helped out of chaos and safeguarded from the Protestant Anglo-Saxons. The idea was to unite the Latin race with France at the head.

giving battle again. This Mexican army victory infused confidence in the troops and government that they would be able to achieve total victory, and postponed the intervention an entire year.

The French army attacked with 6 000 men; the Mexicans had 4 800. While the French were seasoned soldiers who had been victorious at Sebastopol in the Crimean War against Russia, and at Magenta and Solferino in the Second Italian War of Independence against the Austrian Empire, the Mexicans did not even have uniforms, much less appropriate weapons. Indigenous from the Puebla mountains, part of the Mexican contingent, were barefoot, clad in rough cotton homespun, and fought with machetes, but with the strength of those who defend what is their own. The Mexican army vanquished the heretofore undefeated French army.

The words of Juarista General Ignacio Zaragoza, both before and after the battle, are an example of the patriotic sentiments that drove the fighting. On the morning of May 5, he spoke to the troops: "Our enemies are the foremost soldiers of the world; but you are the foremost sons of Mexico, and they want to take away your homeland."[5] After the battle, he reported to the president, "The weapons of the supreme government have been covered in glory,"[6] and President Juárez telegrammed "Long live Mexico!"

Mexican General Ignacio Zaragoza had taught a lesson to his French counterpart, who had written to Napoleon that, because the French "race" was superior, they already owned the country. Lorencez was relieved of his command because of the failure and his country's press tried to forget the blow. France ended by sending nearly 40 000 men but was never able to stamp out the Republican guerrilla fight-



The Mexican Delegation Offers the Crown to Maximilian.

Alberto Beltrán, *The People Acclaim Juárez*, 1968 (engraving).

ers, who wore them down until they had to leave in defeat. Mexico was their nineteenth-century Vietnam. Napoleon III had written that his work in the Americas would be the most glorious page in his reign, but it became the beginning of his fall. Louis Napoleon managed to establish a colonial empire in Asia in Indochina and Cambodia, and also consolidate the domination of Algeria; but he was not able to in Mexico.

Why Is Cinco de Mayo More Celebrated in the United States?

You will ask yourselves why Cinco de Mayo is more celebrated in the United States than in Mexico. There are different reasons. The Mexican-American communities celebrate the Mexican army's May 5 victory with legitimate pride in order to strengthen their identity *vis-à-vis* the non-Latino U.S. community.

It has been said that one reason Cinco de Mayo is celebrated in the U.S. is that General Ignacio Zaragoza was born in what is today Goliad, Texas, but obviously the town was part of Mexico in 1829 when he was born. It has also been said that the U.S. celebration is due to the fact that, when the European interventionist army was defeated, the Western Hemisphere fell to the U.S. zone of influence. The Monroe Doctrine, "America for Americans," turned into "America for the United States." This is a weighty reason, but there are others.

Countries in South America and the Caribbean declared President Benito Juárez the "Worthy of the Americas" because he headed up the fight to defend national sovereignty in the face of the French intervention.[7] The countries of the region considered the victory in the defense of Mexican sovereignty their own. When European imperialist undertakings were defeated, the Americas would stop being seen as a land ripe for conquest and colonization. In that same sense, we must keep in mind that the United States was vulnerable amidst its war of secession when Napoleon decided to put his imperialist project into practice. There was a risk that the French Empire would also want to intervene in the United States, which would explain the celebration of a Mexican victory there.

The fear of this possible intervention would also explain the United States' constant violations of its neutrality declaration *vis-à-vis* the French war in Mexico, which the represen-

Part of the Mexican contingent were barefoot, clad in rough cotton homespun, and fought with machetes, but with the strength of those defending their own, they vanquished the heretofore undefeated French army.

Montage of the Execution by Firing Squad of Maximilian, Mejía, and Miramón.

Patricio Ramos Ortega, *The Battle of Puebla, May 5, 1862,* 1862 (oil on canvas).

It has been said that the U.S. celebration is due to the fact that, when the European interventionist army was defeated, the Western Hemisphere fell to the U.S. zone of influence.

tative of Benito Juárez's constitutional government, Matías Romero, protested.[8] The U.S. Americans were selling arms to the French, but they denied them to the Mexicans; it was not until the end of the war of secession that the United States declared itself against intervention in Mexico.

Cinco de Mayo celebrations began from the moment the Mexican army defeated the French at Forts Loreto and Guadalupe on the outskirts of Puebla. Both the government and the Liberal and republican press celebrated the unexpected victory over the invader, a natural reaction given the defeat of what was considered the world's best army. The festivities were a way of encouraging the struggle against the invader.

After four years of foreign occupation, in June 1866, Juárez wrote that when the war ended, "the American republics —I do not mean Washington, but at least Mexico— will be absolutely free of the triple yoke of state religion, privileged classes, and onerous treaties with the European powers."[9]

In 1867, on the day the president returned to Mexico City after defeating the Second Empire, Benito Juárez declared that Mexico's second independence was being consummated.[10] This declaration shows the importance of what happened beginning with the battle of May 5. Thanks to that, Mexico had not been turned into a protectorate of either France or the United States. VM

Notes

[1] In 1853; this episode is also known as the Gadsden Purchase.

[2] Christian Schefer, *Los orígenes de la intervención francesa en México (1858-1862)* (Mexico City: Porrúa, 1963), p. 30.

[3] In 1856, the former head of the Mexican delegation in London, Tomás Murphy, asked Napoleon III to save Mexico from the internal strife that put it at the mercy of the United States. That same year, the French diplomat the Marquis de Radepont proposed Napoleon intervene in Mexico. During the 1859 civil war, Mexican diplomat José María Gutiérrez de Estrada had an audience with Napoleon to request his intervention to establish a monarchy.

[4] This involved 133 000 bonds of different partial values for a total of Mex$15 million that would earn 6 percent a year in interest, which would be paid in two equal parts (3 percent) to the Treasury and Jecker's banking house, and which would be accepted as payment of taxes for up to 20 percent of the amount owed. The house of Jecker received almost the entire issue, making it the owner for 10 years of 20 percent of the government's income, plus the 3 percent interest on that amount. Justo Sierra, *Juárez, su obra y su tiempo* (Mexico City: UNAM, 1972), pp. 300-303.

[5] Jorge L. Tamayo, *Benito Juárez. Documentos, discursos y correspondencia* vol. 11 (Mexico City: Libros de México, 1974), p. 119.

[6] "Proclama al amanecer," in Jorge L. Tamayo, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 435.

[7] Colombia declared Juárez the "Worthy of the Americas" on May 1, 1865; the Dominican Republic's Congress declared in April 1867 that Juárez deserved "the good" of the Americas.

[8] Matías Romero, *Diario personal (1855-1856)* (Mexico City: El Colegio de México, 1960).

[9] "Carta de Juárez a Pedro Santacilia, El Paso, 1º de junio de 1866," in Tamayo, op. cit., vol. 11, p. 119.

[10] Tamayo, op. cit., vol. 12, pp. 272-274.

Electoral Campaign Materials in Twentieth-Century Mexico An Exhibit at the MODO

Isabel Morales Quezada*

The state of Guerrero with Miguel de la Madrid

With election campaigns in full swing and only shortly before Mexico's 2012 presidential balloting, the founder of the Museum of the Object of the Object (MODO), Bruno Newman, decided to show the public his collection of electoral campaign promotional materials. It covers the 21 elections that took place in Mexico throughout the twentieth century. "Displaying the objects and letting them speak for themselves: [the curator] simply put them in chronological order so the visitor could make a journey through them and read what they say, what the complete collection says." That was the objective of the exposition "From Porfirio Díaz to Vicente Fox. Electoral Promotional Materials in Mexico in the Twentieth Century," says curator Juan Manuel Aurrecoechea.

The exhibition is made up of objects that in their original context were disposable or only briefly useful: buttons with the candidate's picture or the acronym for his party, T-shirts, pens, caps, ashtrays, cigarette lighters, matchboxes, aprons. Objects designed to be used in a specific moment, for the limited period of the election campaign. However, what is valuable about this collection is that items that seemed ephemeral have managed to survive and, with time, established a dialogue with the current moment.

---

* Staff writer at *Voices of Mexico*.
Photos by Patricia Pérez

Politics is a higher activity because the country's progress depends on it.

Courtesy of the MODO

The predominant aspect in Mexican electoral campaigns, even today, is the saturation of absolutely everything with images and symbols that, for Aurrecoechea, fulfill the function of positioning a candidate. On the other hand, however, it also causes a counterproductive reaction: at the end of the day, those on the receiving end detest it. The saturation has gotten to the point that these objects have been dubbed "electoral garbage." The exhibit, in contrast, seeks to reappraise what content these pieces considered empty may have and what turns them into the spark that sets off a series of reflections about the figure of the president, history, and democracy in Mexico, as well as about the evolution of promotional methods over time.

From the very first glance, these objects spark memories, the recollection of definitive moments for the country; they also invite the viewer to recount its democratic history, facilitated thanks to the exhibition being divided into several sections, each preceded by a brief introduction to the specific electoral period. It spans the administrations of Porfirio Díaz (in office in the terms 1884-1888, 1888-1892, 1892-1896, 1896-1900, 1900-1904, and 1904-1910), considered a dictator; the victory of Francisco I. Madero in 1910 and the Revolution; up to the democratic transition, after a single party, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), had been in government for 70 years.

Immersed in a maelstrom of spots and billboards that have invaded the city during the 2012 campaign, Mexico City residents enter here into a space where they can pause while figures from the past are evoked, the faces of candidates and politicians who perhaps no longer appear in the media, or at least not as frequently, but who are indispensable for understanding the present.

The first room boasts 400 buttons with the image of all the candidates who won Mexico's twentieth-century elections and some of their important opponents, figures counterposed

Francisco I. Madero earrings, 1910 (metal).

What is valuable about this collection is that items that seemed ephemeral have managed to survive and, with time, established a dialogue with the current moment.

to each other because of their ideological positions, whether they be left, right, or center. Certain uniformity can be perceived; what changes are the colors and the party acronyms. Nevertheless, some pieces have special value, comments the curator. One example is Lázaro Cárdenas's 1934 six-year plan, a 150-page book from the collection of writer and teacher Armando Bartra, the first systematic government plan a candidate ever presented. "Prior to that, the candidates made promises, made speeches, but the discourse was not a systematic governmental program like today. The first to present one was Lázaro Cárdenas, and his entire campaign turned around the six-year plan, organized by area. It is also very interesting because the cover —which is very beautiful— was designed in accordance with the stridentist graphics of the time."[1]

Of all the items on display, perhaps this is one of the few that contrasts with the majority of the promotional materials used until today by politicians, in which the image or name of the presidential candidate and perhaps his campaign slogan are the only thing visible. The question about the way the democratic system functions in Mexico is inevitable when we think about the quotes accompanying the exhibition. One got my attention: "My political ideal is democracy. Everyone must be respected as a person and no one must be deified." Albert Einstein.

The campaigns always placed special emphasis on the figure of the president, as if the government were made up of a single person. Using this logic, government and society are distanced, and politics should only interest politicians, who appear as miraculous beings. Suffice it to look at the

From the very first glance, these objects spark memories, the recollection of definitive moments for the country; they also invite the viewer to recount its democratic history.

In freedom, we will conquer social justice.

publicity shots used by President Luis Echeverría Álvarez, of the PRI, and the phrase accompanying them: "Politics is a superior activity because the progress of the country depends upon it."

One of the sections explains what came to be known as "el tapado," the hooded one. It began in 1952, during the administration of Adolfo Ruiz Cortines (PRI), and continued until 1988, when the official results were that Carlos Salinas de Gortari, also of the PRI, had come out the victor. The "hooded one" phenomenon consisted of the president in office choosing his successor, but not publicly announcing the candidacy until election time approached. The "hooded one" was then "unhooded" and seen as the sole candidate, with opposition candidates, when there were any, having little possibility of winning. The "hooded one" was first caricaturized by Mexican cartoon artist Abel Quezada who humorously presented these figures with hoods with two holes to be able to see out of. So, what was the function of electoral publicity if everyone "already knew" who the next president was going to be? Perhaps solely to win acceptance from the people, giving him a certain appearance of legitimacy.

According to Juan Manuel Aurrecoechea, the exhibit can be viewed as a reflection of the Mexican political system's unconscious, since it allows for looking more closely at the humor, cynicism, and frivolity that also characterize it, and, of course, the creativity of the creators of these pieces, their links to popular culture, and a peek at certain elements that appear among the objects, creating a feeling of the absurd, like Miguel de la Madrid's seeds or Vicente Fox's belt buckle. Every object sparks reflections about the political system, communications, and design. Some are unexpected, like earrings in the shape of the face of Francisco I. Madero (Porfirio Díaz's opponent from the National Anti-reelection Party), a deck of cards to promote the candidacy of Adolfo López Mateos (PRI), a soft drink with the image of Ernesto Zedillo (PRI), and a seafood restaurant tablecloth advertising Vicente Fox Quesada's (PAN) candidacy.

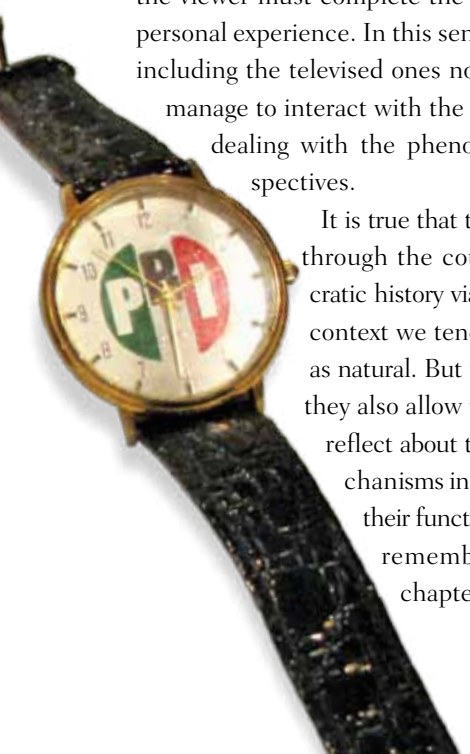
The campaigns always placed special emphasis on the figure of the president, as if the government were made up of a single person.

Electoral propaganda, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century, operated from two different vantage points: objects that alluded to the figure of the president, and campaign activities. The exhibit includes a video showing fragments of campaign events carried out by all the candidates in the twentieth century, from Madero, whose events were more spontaneous, to the PRI activities in the second half of the century, including their famous *acarreados*.[2]

The pieces —all of them, including the televised ones not present in the museum— manage to interact with the audience, which can opt for dealing with the phenomenon from different perspectives.

Today, although campaign events are an important element, and different items are still distributed among the population, the main publicity vehicle is television. However, these spots can also be considered promotional objects, says Aurrecoechea: "So, the link with the people, that used to be made through the participation of unions, merchants, guilds, and regional groups in the election campaign, now being lost, is giving way to the campaigns' professionalization, using the services of publicity and marketing firms." The candidate's image, not his/her proposals, continue to be the most important element, but now the politician is advertised like a product; the main concern is caring for the pose he/she strikes, a clean image, and a harmonious design that can be easily recognized by the public.

The exhibit does not include examples of these spots, so the viewer must complete the display from his or her own personal experience. In this sense, the pieces —all of them, including the televised ones not present in the museum— manage to interact with the audience, which can opt for dealing with the phenomenon from different perspectives.



It is true that the collection offers a journey through the country's electoral and democratic history via objects that in their original context we tend to ignore, reject, or accept as natural. But their scope goes beyond that: they also allow us to stop along the way and reflect about the impact of propaganda mechanisms in the country's history and what their function has been. And finally, after remembering or rediscovering this chapter in the history of twentieth-century Mexico, we might ask ourselves the question of how far we are from the ideal expressed by President Benito Juárez, writ large on one of the exhibit's walls: "Democracy is the destiny of humanity; freedom its indestructible right arm." VM

"The hooded one," a lengedary figure in Mexican politics in the time of the quasi-single-party regime.

Notes

[1] Stridentism was an interdisciplinary artistic movement that formally began December 31, 1921, in Mexico with the publication of a manifesto, *Actual núm. 1* (Current No. 1), by poet Manuel Maples Arce. Other artists interested in including expressions of Mexico's popular and mass culture joined this eclectic movement; however, they were also influenced by other avant-garde movements like futurism, cubism, and Dadaism. [Editor's Note.]

[2] An *acarreado* is a person who attends a political party's campaign events not out of personal political conviction, but expressly in return for financial compensation, whether in kind or in cash. [Editor's Note.]

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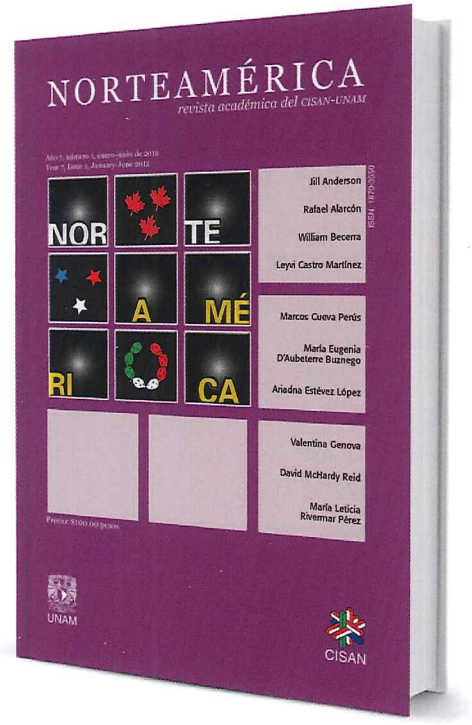

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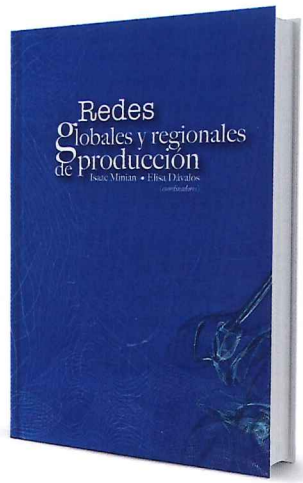
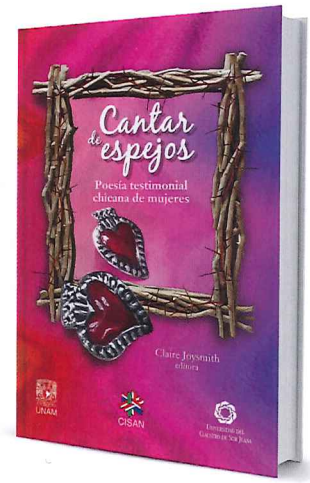
Redes globales y regionales de producción

ac Minian and Elisa Dávalos, comps.

is work analyzes global and regional duction chains. Some of the articles plain how and why they are formed, while others study the relations they have with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and China. The new international situation, involving the transformation of ernational transactions, requires new strategies, also presented here.





Cantar de espejos. Poesía testimonial chicana de mujeres

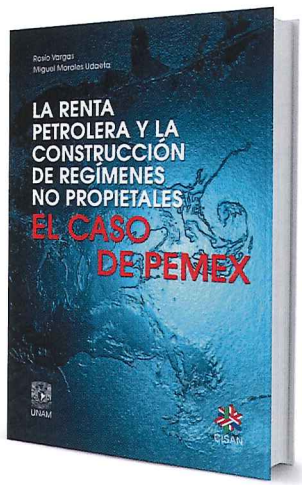
Claire Joysmith, ed.

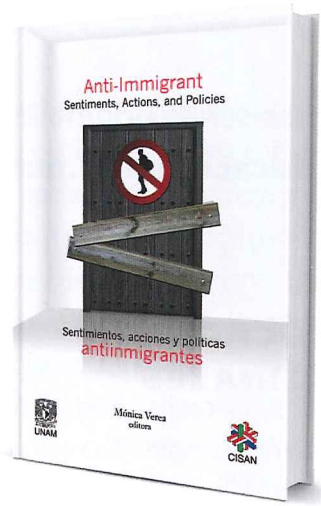
These texts, "songs,…hymns to a rich oral and poetic tradition, heritage of a braid of (indigenous, mestiza, American, and other) roots and cultures," build a bridge defined by a complex hybridity that surpasses idiomatic codes. The selection, ranging from the Chicano movement until the twenty-first century, proposes a real and metaphoric cross, in a kind of cultural-linguistic smuggling of the poetics of the feminine Chicana identities.

La renta petrolera y la construcción de regímenes no propietales. El caso de Pemex

Rosío Vargas
Miguel Morles Udaeta

The adoption of the neoliberal model by Mexico's oil industry has undermined the structure and legal foundations of the state in order to upport U.S. energy security. This has ppened in a context in which Mexico has 10 years worth of oil reserves, on which a considerable part of its udget depends, particularly the items earmarked for social security and education, among others.





Anti-Immigrant Sentiments, Actions, and Policies

Mónica Verea, ed.

Over the last decade, certain countries in North America and the European Union have seen the rise of extremely agressive xenophobic movements against unauthorized migrants and an exacerbation of nationalisms because part of the population feels threatened by the "invasion" of other ethnic groups and cultures. Both regions have reacted by applying rigid legislation and implementing stringent police controls. The authors of this book use a comparative focus to reflect on one of the most burning, divisive, and difficult topics facing migrant-receiving nations today.

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Biofuels in Mexico: Pros and Cons

Nasser Nuri/REUTERS

Today's furor over biofuels should be understood in the context of climate change and the need to replace the consumption of fossil fuels with alternative forms of energy that emit fewer greenhouse gases (GHG). Though initially, biofuels were considered an alternative to gasoline, today, they are seen as additives that prolong the use of fossil fuels. A broad debate is taking place about their economic viability and the environmental and social impact of producing biofuels, as well as scientific research about second- and third-generation energy sources.

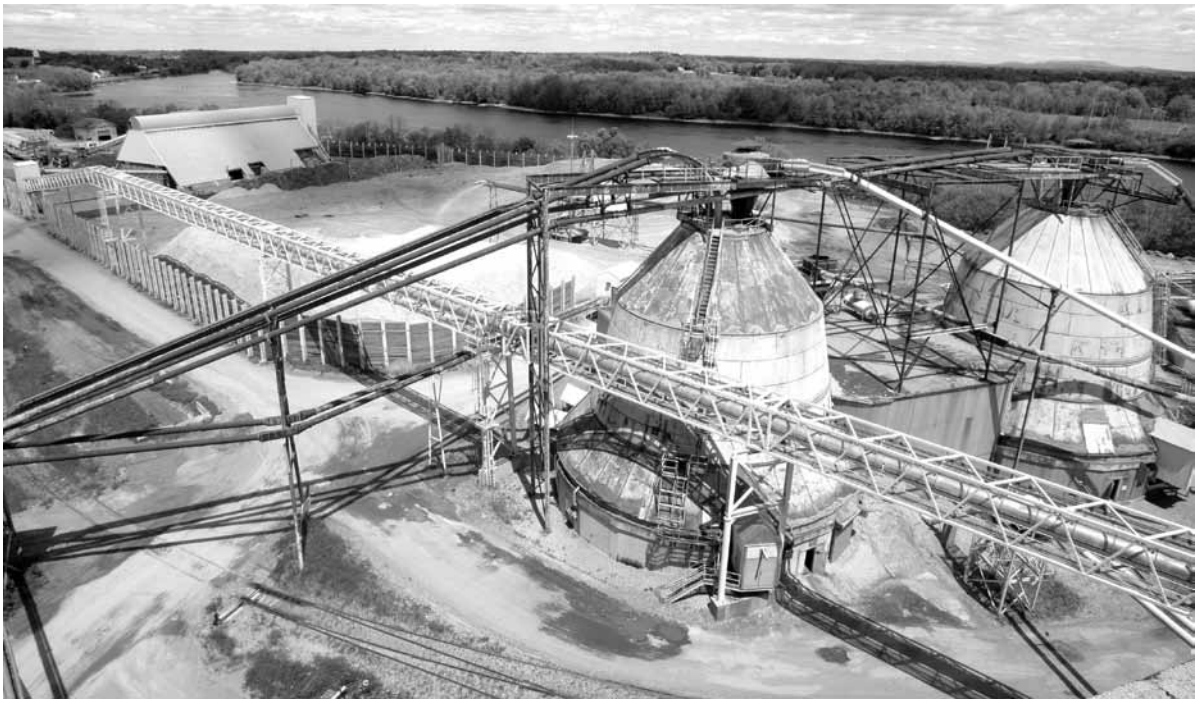
The United States, Brazil, and the European Union are the main producers and consumers of this kind of fuel. Mexico has begun production, proposing public policies influenced by the enthusiasm and economic interests of companies and international agencies that promote their production and consumption. At the same time, a series of critiques have been made by political parties and civic and academic organizations that question their viability in Mexico, using different arguments. Undoubtedly, the decision to produce biofuels will have important consequences in the country's long-term development. Therefore, Mexico must analyze in depth their possible advantages and disadvantages and the appropriate inputs for their production, as well as define their viability both nationally and locally.

With the aim of analyzing and debating this issue, the CISAN organized the seminar "North America, Climate Change, and Public Policies on Biofuel in Mexico." The articles published here were derived from that seminar.

Edit Antal Fodróczy

Biofuels: A Global Context And Viability in Mexico[1]

Edit Antal*
Ernesto Carmona**



Brian Snyder/REUTERS

Introduction

A CISAN research group is leading the "Public Policies on Biofuels in Mexico in the Framework of North America" project, and a related seminar, "North America, Climate Change, and Public Policies on Biofuels in Mexico," was held in September 2011, with the participation of key members of society, politicians, and business people working in this field.

To discuss the specific case of Mexico, federal legislators and government agencies, businesspeople, agricultural producers, scientists, and environmental civic organizations, as well as academic experts from various fields, all took part in the event. Biofuels have become an increasingly important topic, first, as an energy-related matter, since they are potential substitutes for fossil fuels; and secondly, because some argue that in the long term this technology could potentially reduce levels of energy dependency and greenhouse gas emissions, which would help mitigate the adverse environmental impacts that have been causing climate change.

The United States is the world's largest producer and consumer of biofuels and is competing to create advanced technologies such as second- and third-generation biofuels. Many countries, including Mexico, are in the process of deciding

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** Doctoral student in international relations and CISAN fellow.

It has been proven that,
without strong support and direct subsidies,
biofuels are not commercially viable
and not at all competitive
in the alternative-energy market.

whether or not to adopt biofuel development programs. The decision will undoubtedly have significant long-term consequences for the country's national development.

Politically, the project of biofuel production has been seriously questioned as an agro-industrial proposal. The key players are clearly governments across the world: it has been proven that, without strong support and direct subsidies, biofuels are not commercially viable and not at all competitive in the alternative-energy market. Here, the exception is Brazil; yet Brazil's production model cannot be emulated as we will see below.

The demand for biofuels is based on new regulations for the composition of gasoline and other fuels in industrialized countries. Nevertheless, supplies are expected to come from developing countries. To this end, a biopact between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres was even fielded, whereby countries in the North would consume (not produce) biofuels and therefore keep their air clean, while those in the South would create rural jobs as well as suffer the negative environmental impact associated with the production of biofuels. Thus, an international market would be created and biofuels would become commodities, subject to the rules of international organizations, particularly the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Although biofuels have been known about for a long time, the cultivation of the raw material currently only occupies 14 million hectares, or between 1 and 2 percent of the Earth's arable land, although this percentage is expected to increase to 4 percent by 2030 and to 20 percent by 2050.[2] Technologically, biofuels must be seen as partial and temporary substitutes for fossil fuels and under no circumstance as final or definitive products, basically due to their low energy efficiency. In other words, biofuels represent solar energy received indirectly, and their photosynthesis is very inefficient since only 1 percent of the energy received by the plant can actually be used. It is estimated that they might work for around 30 years, until regular gasoline and diesel are no longer necessary, with today's vehicles being replaced by transportation that runs on electricity, solar power, hydrogen, or synthetic fuel. In the meantime, bioethanol and biodiesel are mixed with gasoline and diesel rather than used in their pure form. Therefore, biofuels are useful for artificially prolonging the era of gasoline and coal, since their use does not imply a change in the infrastructure for storing and distributing fossil-based gasoline and diesel.

Biofuels: Pros and Cons

Supporters of biofuel say that it offers a promising agribusiness opportunity within a production scheme in which everyone comes out a winner. Three well-known arguments are used to support biofuels: environmental protection, through reduced greenhouse gas emissions from transportation; energy security, given the dwindling reserves of conventional energy; and finally, rural development, especially in Southern Hemisphere countries, with the offer of jobs to large sectors of society or a revival of the countryside.

Unlike fossil fuels, biofuels were supposed to be carbon neutral. However, scientific evidence increasingly shows that these fuels, at least those currently available, do not in fact represent a drop in CO_2 emissions, and this casts doubt on the well-worn argument centering on environmental protection.[3]

There is widespread and far-reaching criticism of biofuels, or agrofuels, as many prefer to call them. Their production is believed to lead to known risks associated with single-crop cultivation, since it involves intensive farming operations occupying thousands of hectares of land, mainly in the Southern Hemisphere. Detractors argue that agrofuels mainly cause changes in land use, place constant pressure on natural forests, create tensions around resources like water, require intensive use of chemicals, and bring about radical changes in land-ownership relationships that are seriously damaging ecosystems and making it harder for poor peasants to access land, leading to socioeconomic difficulties.

From this perspective, agrofuels pose a threat to food production and sovereignty by intensifying the competition for arable land. There is disagreement on this point: global agroindustrial companies say that biofuels have only played a minor role in the recent spike in food prices. Smallholder organizations calculate that biofuels are responsible for at least 30 percent of the price increases. Those in the middle, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and independent research centers, tend to be ambivalent and waver between recognizing the potential benefit of biofuels and being con-

A biopact between hemispheres was even fielded; the North would consume biofuels while the South suffers the negative environmental impact associated with their production.

cerned about their impact on people, food sovereignty, and the environment.

To face up to the risks associated with biofuels, their supporters' discourse has incorporated the terms "marginal" or "degraded lands" for planting of energy crops; however, these terms can be highly deceptive, creating confusion between the investment in and the colonization of lands in developing countries. In practice, producers with financial muscle use very high quality lands and possess other natural and technological resources such as water and developed infrastructure. The experience of the large producers, such as the U.S. or Brazil, seems to demonstrate that biofuel production needs large swathes of land, and also tends to concentrate even more the ownership of land and access to refining and distribution of the fuel.

The entire biofuel process is highly complex, ranging from the production of the raw material, the refining —i.e., the industrial process— and finally to the fuel's transportation or distribution. This characteristic seems to favor large companies, leaving small-scale producers little room for maneuver.

In short, the production of biofuels is a response to the scarcity of oil. Although these biofuels are not profitable at the moment, they prolong the lifespan of fossil energy because they do not affect the large production chains of cars or the distribution infrastructure of traditional fuels; but they are also a limited and temporary energy source. Criticism mainly zeros in on large-scale agroindustrial production since it competes with food production, while small-scale and local biofuel production, based on making the most of biological or agricultural waste as raw materials, is widely accepted by society.

The Debate

At the international seminar on biofuels mentioned at the beginning of this article, experts came from two of the large producing and consuming countries: the United States and Brazil, the country with the world's most sustainable biofuel project. We will therefore analyze both cases.

The U.S.: Who Benefits From Ethanol?

Sean Gillon, professor and researcher at the University of Wisconsin, presented a paper on ethanol produced from corn in Iowa, the largest producer of this grain and the region that boasts the production of one-third of U.S. ethanol and the largest number of production facilities.[4]

In the United States, ethanol production has grown almost constantly since 2002. This is explained by the existence of an institutional framework that has included federal mandates, such as the one requiring a production of 36 million gallons a year by 2022, distributed as follows: 16 million gallons produced from cellulose; 15 million from maize; and 5 million from other sources. To hit this target, a vast array of subsidies and incentives is available, mainly tax credits ranging from US$0.45/gallon available for blenders and US$0.54/gallon on the import tariff for unrefined oils or alcohols, to development funds from the Departments of Energy and Agriculture. This is in addition to decrees to reduce emissions or for the use of biofuels at a state and local level. Just like all biofuel projects, the United States' aims for the aforementioned three main objectives, on the basis of which Sean Gillon has made his critical assessment.

In terms of energy security, the group called Ethanol Promoters of America and army representatives claim that using ethanol instead of gasoline reduces revenues of "enemy" states such as Iran, and also helps prevent oil wars; however, the author argues that since the consumption of ethanol accounts for under 5 percent of the total fuel consumed by cars, energy dependency continues.

On agricultural development, Gillon states that previously most of the largest refineries were owned collectively by the smallholders. Today this has changed, and the largest refineries are owned by the largest companies. Although not a majority, these require larger areas of crops to be able to operate at 100-percent capacity, and therefore they compete with the collectively-owned plants for the best lands. The large multinational corporations in the sector, such as BP, Exxon, Chevron, and Conoco-Philips, as well as government agencies such as the Department of Agriculture (DOA) or the Department of Energy (DOE), offer research funding on biofuels

to universities. Many of these research projects are carried out in refineries owned by these large corporations.

Also, although it is true that biofuels have increased maize production between 2002 and 2010, and that the price per bushel of maize rose during that period from US$2.00 to almost US$6.00, smallholders have not reaped the benefits in terms of income; the costs of raw materials like fertilizer and land costs have risen at the same or an even higher rate than the cost of maize. Smallholders state that higher prices per bushel in fact earn them less profit than before. These conditions combine to put small- and medium-sized landowners at a disadvantage.

In terms of ecological impact, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) considers that the increase in energy crops would mean a step backward in land and water recovery achieved through the Farm Bill and the Clean Water Act. These programs focused on recovering land devastated by over-farming, rivers degraded by the use of fertilizers and pesticides, and spaces previously used for crops, with the idea of restoring them as nearly as possible to their original state. The production of biofuels would involve farming these lands once more, probably including intensive use of fertilizers.

In his conclusion, Sean Gillon states that, to meet the environmental objectives, apart from using biofuels, alternative policies would need to be explored: for example, alternative urban transport systems, such as the use of bicycles combined with some other type of efficient transport. The author firmly believes that policies to reduce fuel consumption and to make efficient use of energy would be more useful than the biofuels themselves. His research demonstrates that policies on reducing greenhouse gas emissions basically benefit the large, dominant players and minimize biofuels' other socio-environmental impacts.

Brazil: A Non-Export Model

Brazil's case was presented by Ricardo Abramovay, a researcher at the University of São Paulo, who argued that biofuels will play an important —but not the most important— role in decarbonizing energy used in transport (reducing CO_2 content and emissions). He pointed out that, in Brazil, biofuels are mainly obtained from sugarcane, and sugarcane ethanol is considered to have the world's most efficient energy balance.[5] Also, in Brazil sugarcane produces almost 9 000 l/ha, while maize only produces 4 000 l/ha.[6]

Scientific evidence increasingly shows that these fuels, at least those currently available, do not in fact represent a drop in CO_2 emissions.

Brazil's high levels of productivity are clearly the result of many decades' experience.[7] The positive results for Brazil in terms of profitability are also due to the existence of large landholdings, the single-crop *latifundios*, but since this poses the aforementioned risks, the country has worked on ways to mitigate them. This technological process has achieved four main successes: different varieties of plants are cultivated in order to diversify crops; insecticide and fertilizer use has been reduced by recycling residue; water is economized by not using irrigation; and waste is reutilized, thus reducing soil erosion.

Brazil has an automotive industry that, because of its large internal market, has enabled it to confidently respond to government decrees that demanded the gasoline-ethanol mixture. In this sense, the sale and production of what have come to be called *flex* cars (which can equally use gasoline, ethanol, or a mixture of both) now cover 80 percent of the Brazilian market, a high enough proportion to compete with oil products. And it is worth mentioning also that sugarcane, apart from being the raw material for ethanol, offers other benefits: it generates 25 percent of electricity; laborers working in the sugarcane plantations are the best paid; child labor has been eradicated; and now the sugarcane is cultivated with highly advanced technology.

Among the environmental impacts, Abramovay underscores the fact that the *finqueros*, or farmers, largely ignore the measures taken to protect biodiversity, and that it is very hard to ensure compliance. Bioethanol production also faces the problem of expensive raw materials, especially the petroleum-based fertilizers. To complement his analysis, he emphasizes the importance of other factors to improve the models of mobility in cities, which are still highly inefficient. It is illogical to use a car —a tool weighing 2 tons— to carry at most an average of 200 kilograms. Also, vehicular traffic increases the amount of time and fuel consumed per kilometer to the degree that some journeys take the same time for a person to drive as it would take him/her to walk.

Abramovay concludes that the factors that make ethanol production economically, socially, and environmentally viable in Brazil…are unique to Brazil. He therefore considers them unsuitable for export. Brazil has over 40 years' experience producing biofuels and this provides it with a skilled workforce for each and every process in the production chain; powerful economic interests are backing this type of initiative and the government does not face strong opposition to move forward with this technology. He concludes that every country wishing to adopt biofuels as an alternative energy source must consider first what it wants them for, and then, based on the answer, assess the different options.

Detractors argue that agrofuels cause changes in land use, leading to socioeconomic difficulties, and pose a threat to food production and sovereignty by intensifying the competition for arable land.

Biofuels: Viable in Mexico?

In 2008, Mexico's Congress approved a law to promote the use of biofuels, the Law to Foster and Develop Bio-energy. This piece of legislation arose in a context of the public's understanding and legislative debates about the possibility of allowing greater private sector investment in the state oil company, Pemex. Finally, and despite the fact that Pemex underwent a partial reform and was adapted to the new energy policy, the changes adopted in Mexico do not include any obligatory use of alternative energies; yet biofuels have still been promoted through government plans and programs at a federal and state level. For example, since 2009 the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, and Fisheries (Sagarpa) has run a program to support the sustainable production of raw materials for biofuels and for scientific and technological development (Proinbios); and that same year the Ministry of Energy (Sener) launched its own program to introduce biofuels. These programs have set voluntary targets and seek to replace the equivalent of 2 percent of the fuel consumed in Mexico's three largest cities (Monterrey, Guadalajara, and Mexico City's Federal District) with biofuels. Official programs in Mexico also have three objectives (outlined below), without any clear order of priority.

Energy Security. Mexico exports oil and imports gasoline. Therefore, the country faces the challenging prospect that its reserves, especially those easiest to access, are running out. Since 2005, Pemex's export capacity has declined due to its main deposits running out, and forecasts indicate that reserves will run out by 2020. Some experts point out that if Pemex were to make major investments in deepwater exploration technologies, it could resolve the issue of oil availability, although of course this would not be cheap oil. As a result, it is possible that Mexico will soon have to import oil and must therefore intensify its search for other sources of energy. However, it should be recalled that all renewable forms of energy, including biofuels, currently require subsidies. Mexico must decide where to place its bets on alternative energy for the future. To start with, the publicly stated unwillingness of Pemex, the principal link in the chain, to diversify energy sources seems to contradict all the calls for taking urgent measures.

Mexico still lacks any sizeable production of biofuels on a commercial scale. According to Sener, just 5 percent of energy consumed in Mexico comes from biomass, although this statistic mainly refers to the traditional use of bioenergy, in other words the burning of firewood in rural areas. Therefore, the introduction of biofuels in aviation and urban transportation has not yet reached a significant percentage in the energy balance of the transport sector, considered to be the main consumer of biofuel.

Rural Development. Mexico's biofuel law does not ensure direct subsidies for its production; instead, government support packages in this area are indirect: the Sagarpa-Conacyt programs provide funds for research on biofuels, and other programs provide seed capital for start-up biofuel businesses and to ensure project continuity. One of the broad rural-sector support programs includes a section supporting biofuel production. Sagarpa aims to create a market for raw materials and to train producers so that they can add value to their production. And some states, such as Chiapas and Veracruz, have offered incentives for cultivation.

In Mexico, the bio-energy law prohibits the use of maize for biofuels unless there is a surplus in national production, an unlikely scenario since Mexico imports a large part of the corn used for human consumption. Biofuels must therefore be obtained from other raw materials: from the jatropha, sugarcane, palm oil, agricultural waste, and algae.

Another specificity of Mexico is that almost 70 percent of farms are less than 5 hectares, due to a long tradition of micro-

Factors that make ethanol production viable in Brazil are unique to Brazil, which has been producing biofuels for over 40 years and has a skilled workforce for each process in the production chain.

holdings known as *ejidos*, which constitute most of the country's arable land. Mexico's landholding situation therefore contrasts starkly with that of the United States and Brazil, where large landholdings in the hands of single owners are the norm.

Finding a market for raw materials is another area of difficulty. In some cases, smallholders attracted by the incentive programs have made an effort to produce energy crops, but the lack of regulatory obligations has made it difficult for them to sell their product. This is a similar issue facing refiners seeking to sell their product: Pemex has not allowed biofuels to be refined utilizing its unused infrastructure, and although it has issued calls for tenders to purchase biofuels, no producers can sell at the prices offered. But if Pemex were to subsidize biofuels, it could offer a powerful stimulus for raw material production.

In the field of aviation, the federal government's decentralized Airports and Auxiliary Services Agency (ASA) is trying to create certainty of sales for biofuel producers through its "Flight Plan" project to promote the use of bio jet fuel. Its main stumbling block has been collecting enough vegetable oil, and the lack of technology has made it impossible for the refining process to be done in Mexico.

Reduction of Environmental Impact. Mexico produces 2 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, according to the Kyoto protocol, it is not obliged to cut emissions. Industrial activities and transport are the principal consumers of energy; urban transport emits the most greenhouse gases. There is disagreement over whether biofuels could resolve the environmental problem without creating another bigger one. Most of Mexico's energy crops are concentrated in areas of high biodiversity, like the states of Chiapas and Veracruz, where jatropha and oil palms are grown.

To reduce environmental impact, a series of experiments are being undertaken with other crops: in this phase, scientific research is looking at how to create biofuels from cellulose extracted from waste plant material from the agave, banana trees, grape vines, olive trees, fast-growing grasses, and algae. This type of second-generation technologies still requires a few more years and significant resources to be developed. In any case, environmental assessments must ensure that the proliferation of energy crops does not damage biodiversity or contribute to deforestation.

In conclusion, of the three objectives that it is hoped biofuel policies will achieve, rural development may be the most important. Mexico lacks experience in mass biofuel production, while international competition intensifies, with countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America interested in producing biofuels for export to industrialized countries. VM

Notes

[1] Our thanks to the UNAM's Climate Change Research Program (PINCC) (http://www.pincc.unam.mx/) for the financial support provided to the inter-institutional research group on biofuels and to the CISAN for its institutional support that made this report possible.

[2] Ben White and Anirban Dasgupta, "Agrofuels capitalism: a view from political economy," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* no. 4, vol. 37, 2010.

[3] M. Hartmut, "Con los biocombustibles no se ahorran emisiones de CO_2," *El país*, September 12, 2007.

[4] Sean Gillon, "Fields of dreams: negotiating an ethanol agenda in the Midwest United States," *The Journal of Peasant Studies* no. 4, vol. 37, 2010, pp. 723-748.

[5] Energy balance is defined as the ratio between the amount of energy required to obtain an amount of biofuel and the amount of energy that this quantity of biofuel can generate.

[6] Ricardo Abramovay, comp., *Biocombustíveis. A energia da controvérsia* (São Paulo: Senac, 2009).

[7] For example, in 1970, 3 000 l/ha were produced, and in 2010, 7 000 l/ha.

Bioethanol: Challenges For Implementation[1]

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Introduction

Biomass can be used to produce gaseous, solid, and liquid biofuels.[2] Of these, fuel ethanol and biodiesel have acquired special importance because of their direct applications, principally to transport.

The so-called *first generation technologies*, that is, technologies using biomass (corn starch and starch from other grains, sugarcane and grain oils, among others), which are the raw materials used for food, should not be encouraged in Mexico unless food self-sufficiency (food security) has been achieved.[3] *Second generation* technologies based on non-edible biomass, such as lignocellulose and oil obtained from inedible oleaginous plants and micro-algae, do not compete with the supply of food for arable land.[4] These should be the basis for Mexico's encouraging research and scientific and technological innovation through private companies and Pemex, to provide strong support for the rural farming sector, in order to achieve positive impacts on all sectors involved in the production of biofuels.

To endow this category with economic sustainability and technical feasibility, it is essential that biofuel generation embrace the production of other products that will replace materials currently obtained from petroleum such as plastics and biodegradable polymers, resins, and other specialized biofuels such as bio-butane and bio-jet fuel, solvents, resins and organic and fatty acids, among others.

The implementation of technologies to enable this step will require cutting-edge scientific research in agriculture, agronomy, sociology, economics, politics, environmental science, and biotechnology, to create methodologies that have not yet reached technological maturity anywhere. The interaction and integration of scientific and technological knowledge, in addition to the combined efforts of the various sectors involved, are key to enabling successful technological implementation in Mexico.

Oil and Biofuels in the Context Of Renewable Energy

If action is not taken to provide alternatives to oil and other fossil fuels for certain purposes, Mexico will probably suffer an energy, economic, and political crisis. In this context, alternative energies such as wind, hydro-electric, tidal, geothermal, nuclear, and solar power represent a wide variety of options to replace fossil fuels in the generation of electricity. However, present and future needs require the use of other energy sources whether in solid, liquid, or gaseous states. In this sense, bioenergy, energy derived from biological resources, is in practical terms the only current and medium-term fuel alternative available in all three states.

Transportation fuels, particularly in liquid form, are the second largest type of petroleum or gas consumption in Mexico. However, using biotechnological processes, biomass can be converted into a liquid biological energy source, known by the generic name of "biofuels."

This concept is currently used in several countries. Brazil and the United States are leaders in the production and consumption of so-called fuel ethanol, obtained from the starch in corn and the sucrose in sugarcane. The United States and some European countries like Germany also use biodiesel produced from vegetable oils. Both biofuels (ethanol and biodiesel) obtained from the sources described are known as

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Producing ethanol out of starch from corn or other grains is contrary to all good sense. Mexico is not and will not be self-sufficient in food production in the short term, particularly in grains.

Mark Blinch/REUTERS

first-generation because, as mentioned above, the raw materials are also used as food for humans.

The Biorefinery Concept

The variety of products that can be obtained through biomass processing is extensive, and more can be done with them than replacing the primary fuels today derived from oil. This process is known as biorefining. Depending on the writer or the context, the term includes a differing set of products. In the present case, the biorefinery concept brings together biomass conversion processes to produce biofuels of various kinds, heat for processing, electricity, and chemical products.

Biorefineries are the basis of a new industry built on biological materials that are biodegradable, renewable, sustainable, and generally more environmentally friendly, including a substantial reduction in emissions. It should be noted that to ensure financial sustainability, the production of biofuels must also lead to the creation of other useful by-products.

Factors Driving the Introduction and Use of Biofuels

Over six years ago a number of Mexican legislators and researchers took the initiative to create a law to promote the use of bioenergy. After years of analysis, the Law to Foster and Develop Bio-energy was published in the *Diario oficial de la federación* (Federal Official Gazette) on February 1, 2008. Its objective is to promote and develop "bioenergy to contribute to energy diversification and sustainable development as conditions to ensure support for the Mexican countryside."[5] Its first article sets out the foundations "to promote the production of bioenergy inputs from agricultural activities, forestry, algae, biotechnology, and enzymatic processes in Mexican farmland, without jeopardizing national food security and sovereignty; develop the production, marketing, and efficient use of bioenergy to contribute to the revival of the rural sector, job creation, and improved quality of life for the populace (particularly in areas of high and extreme poverty); promote regional development and of disadvantaged rural communities and seek to reduce atmospheric emissions and greenhouse gases."

The "Regulations of the Law to Promote and Develop Bio-energy" was published in the *Diario oficial de la federación* on June 18, 2009.[6] In its initial stage, the National Biofuels Program aimed to cultivate 300 000 hectares of sugarcane by 2012 and to produce about 200 million liters of ethanol per year. A national tender (18576112-022-09) was issued in October 2009 for Pemex to buy 658.4 million liters of anhydrous ethanol[7] from 2011 to 2015 at Mex$8.20 per liter, intended for use as an oxygenate in gasoline in the metropolitan area of Guadalajara and for the state oil company's storage

Biorefineries are the basis of a new industry built on biological materials that are biodegradable, renewable, sustainable, and generally more environmentally friendly, including a substantial reduction in emissions.

and distribution terminals (El Castillo and Zapopan) in the municipality of El Salto, Jalisco.

It must be borne in mind that oxygenates are compounds containing oxygen among their molecules and which are added to fuels thereby increasing the oxygen content in the liquid phase (such as ethanol in gasoline) before mixing with the gaseous oxygen (contained in the air) in the engine's combustion chamber. An oxygenator improves the quality of combustion by 10 percent and reduces emissions of compounds, including carbon monoxide. If ethanol is obtained from biological material, for example from the sugars in sugarcane or from lignocellulosic biomass, and the use of fossil fuels is minimized in the process of ethanol production by using pure ethanol as fuel, CO_2 emissions are also reduced by up to 90 percent compared to the emissions of this compound resulting from the processing of oil into gasoline.

In addition to the above measures, an Agreement Issuing Guidelines for Granting Permits for the Production, Storage, Transport, and Commercialization of Bioenergy in the Form of Anhydrous Ethanol and Biodiesel was published on November 13, 2009.[8] As of December 2011, none of these goals had been met.

Despite the fact that the law, its regulations, and derivative documents may be improved on —and they have been subject to criticism— they are a starting point for the creation of a new industry in Mexico, based on rural biomass generation, without compromising the production of primary foodstuffs for human consumption. These documents have also allowed us to confirm the backing that the federal government, the Senate, and the Chamber of Deputies have decided to grant the production of biofuels.

In this context, several other government initiatives exist to promote the production of biofuels, such as ethanol fuel mainly from sugarcane and sweet sorghum; biodiesel from inedible oil oilseeds like jatropha and the castor oil plant, or from oleaginous microalgae; and methane or biogas from animal manure and organic waste.

Other factors drive the development and use of biofuels:

1) the environment: seeking to reduce polluting emissions from the use of fossil fuels and a substantial reduction in greenhouse gases generated by transportation;
2) energy: seeking to retain what is known as energy independence and sovereignty, as well as an acceptable level of control of fuel prices, conserving energy security;
3) agricultural and social development: to generate employment and improve the quality of life in these sectors;
4) the economy and the market: to create jobs and a market for new products and the commercialization of inputs.

The Status of First- and Second-Generation Ethanol Production

As mentioned, the raw materials used to produce over 40 billion liters of ethanol fuel, primarily in the U.S. and Brazil, come from starch found in corn and the sucrose in sugarcane. From the standpoint of food security, the idea of producing ethanol from starch from corn or other grains is contrary to all good sense. Mexico is not and will not be self-sufficient in food production in the short term, particularly in the area of grains, of which we import more than 15 million tons each year.

Corn is the staple food for most of the Mexican population and more than 8 million tons are imported per year, although it is not used directly to feed the population, but for livestock feed. In this context, it is imperative to solve the food security situation first, and only later to think about other uses for this type of grain.

On the other hand, sugarcane production costs in Mexico are unfortunately the highest in the world (about US$36 per ton versus US$12 in Brazil), and corn prices rose sharply in early 2007 as a result of the United States dedicating about 15 percent of its production to making ethanol. In early 2011, they rose further because of heavy frosts in the state of Sinaloa, Mexico's main corn producer. Consequently, the production of fuel ethanol from raw materials is currently neither viable nor sustainable in Mexico from the economic and food security perspective.

Recent research has focused on developing new technologies for producing fuel ethanol from lignocellulosic biomass instead of using starches, since it can substantially reduce competition for agricultural land. This material may come

from municipal waste, agricultural waste, forestry, and energy plantations of agave and fast-growing grasses, among others.

Considering that wood is the most abundant source of biomass and that agro-industrial waste is not utilized anywhere in the country, the sustainable use of forest waste products, of energy plantations on land unsuitable for food production, and agro-industrial waste from a wide variety of products are alternatives that offer the greatest productivity potential in biofuel production.[9]

It is pertinent to note that from the technological point of view, current trends indicate that demand for food and biofuels will lead to the technological optimization of land use, because there is still ample room to increase productivity per hectare, and to use semiarid and marginal land to grow biomass-producing crops, so that the demand for both food and bioenergy can be satisfied. However, we should recognize that even if there is more food per capita, social inequality remains an over-arching problem, since the population without food security is precisely the sector that lacks the income to buy the food it needs. Therefore, if biomass production begins to generate income for small-scale farmers, bioenergy can contribute positively to the improvement of food security.

Another important option for reducing competition for land use involves the recovery of contaminated land that is not important to food production or nature conservation. In that regard, the production of biomass from perennial species (which are also lignocellulosic) may contribute significantly to reducing erosion.

Ethanol as a Reducer of Pollutant Emissions

As noted above, ethanol is mainly used as an oxygenate in gasoline, which, besides diminishing the use of other synthetic oxygenates, can reduce the emission of a wide range of pollutants. Fortunately, there are other longer-chain alcohols that have better fuel properties, such as bio-butane, whose formula means it does not trap water, making it a better option than ethanol for blending with gasoline, since ethanol's properties allow it to capture water from the environment and to cause separation from the gasoline in the storage tank, which affects the combustion process. Furthermore, bio-butane's energy content, vapor pressure, and other properties similar to gasoline make it completely compatible with the Pemex infrastructure and today's internal combustion engines, whether gasoline or hybrid.

Producing fuel ethanol from lignocellulosic biomass instead of using starches can substantially reduce competition for agricultural land. This material may come from municipal waste, agricultural waste, forestry, and fast-growing grasses, among other sources.

Final Remarks

The potential for the production of *second generation* biofuels is enormous. Their lower environmental impact would substantially reduce the emission of greenhouse gases generated by transportation. One of the main limitations in our country lies in the implementation of a program for the sustainable production of non-food biomass to embrace rural, social, environmental, ecological, political, land-use, technological, market, and economic factors. Another limitation involves the development and use of frontier technologies,[10] whose fundamental requirement is the creation of scientific biotechnology knowledge and processes for culturing microorganisms and microalgae, the efficient conversion of carbon sources, sugars from biomass and carbon dioxide from industrial emissions, ethanol and oils and their extraction, purification and conditioning for anhydrous ethanol and biodiesel with a quality that meets the requirements of vehicles and Pemex, and also meets the requirements of energy efficiency and the reduction of emissions and greenhouse gases.

This will require long-term programs that promote frontier research and successfully bring together multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional, and cross-sectoral research groups.

The creation of an office in the National System for Research and Technology Transfer of the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Rural Development, Fisheries, and Food (Sagarpa) and the Biofuels Department of the Energy Ministry (Sener) are initial efforts by the federal government to create links in the chain, but feedback, support, and advice from scientists and academics who are experts in these areas are also needed.

Another initiative is Conacyt's establishment of a network related to renewable energy sources that requires the necessary financial support and administrative efficiency to compete internationally in important multi-disciplinary projects in the biofuels field. These initiatives remain isolated, and a body, probably a council or national commission, should be

created to develop bioenergy and jointly coordinate the activities of these bodies, to define development policies, and above all to include scientists, academics, peasant organizations, entrepreneurs, Pemex, and other stakeholders.

Financial incentives should target not only biomass generation: comprehensive support should be given to rural development as a whole, and also to scientific and industrial development for the efficient transformation of biomass not only into biofuels but also into high-value-added products. The construction of biorefineries provides scientific, technological, and financial support for the production of biofuels, but the creation of a national biofuel research center would be desirable in the short term. Various national scientific institutions have the capability to develop part of these processes, reason enough not to wait for technologies conceived in developed countries to reach maturity and be marketed in Mexico. Domestic technology and its application on a commercial scale should be encouraged, not only to generate biofuels, but, as mentioned, to set up biorefineries. VM

NOTES

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[2] Biomass is the biological material derived from animals and plants, which is generally not used as food; for example, agricultural, domestic, and livestock waste, etc.

[3] According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. About this definition, see World Food Summit 1996 document, June 6, ftp://ftp.fao.org/es/esa/policybriefs/pb_02.pdf.

[4] Lignocellulose biomass is a type derived from plants, made up of compounds that humans and many animals cannot digest. Some common lignocellulosic residues include the stalks and leaves of corn, wheat, and sorghum; forestry residues such as shavings, sawdust, and firewood; and sugarcane and agave bagasse.

[5] Secretaría de Energía, "Ley de promoción y desarrollo de los bioenergéticos," http://dof.gob.mx/nota_to_imagen_fs.php?codnota=5029330&fecha=01/02/2008&cod_diario=213102. [Editor's Note.]

[6] See this legislation at http://dof.gob.mx/nota_to_imagen_fs.php?codnota=5094933&fecha=18/06/2009&cod_diario=220873. [Editor's Note.]

[7] Anhydrous ethanol does not contain water and must be subjected to another process after distilling, while non-anhydrous ethanol is alcohol containing 96 percent ethanol and 4 percent water, the maximum concentration reached after the distillation process.

[8] Secretaría de Energía, http://www.sener.gob.mx/res/0/Acuerdos_SENER_131109.pdf. [Editor's Note.]

[9] Energy plantations are plantations of trees or fast-growing plants whose specific purpose is to produce energy by burning directly or through transformation to produce a biofuel.

[10] Frontier technologies are those that are not yet commercially available and still require basic research using knowledge recently developed by researchers in many disciplines, such as the case of the bio-technology under discussion.

Energy and GHG Policy Options For Mexico's Private Transport

Arón Jazcilevich*

INTRODUCTION

According to reports by the U.S. Department of Energy published in 2011, world oil demand will grow about 53 percent by 2035, and production capacity is already being used. In the same time frame, oil prices are expected to rise to about US$125 per barrel and green house gas (GHG) emissions will grow about 53 percent. In addition, oil production is expected to decrease by 70 percent in 30 years, though this may be delayed by a few years due to new deep-water oil discoveries

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in Brazil, and by oil and gas sources using fracking techniques in the United States (the Marcellus fault), Poland, and other parts of the world.

This general trend can already be seen in Mexico, where oil demand is increasing, and proven reserves are dwindling (Figure 1). The large Chicontepec oil field is not producing as planned, and deep-water oil fields in the Gulf are currently not exploitable because of Pemex's lack of technology. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), deep-water oil production may not start until 2035. Compounding the problem is the fact that about 70 percent of primary energy in Mexico is obtained from oil, and transportation is totally dependent on fossil fuels.

Several technological options with high expectations around the world and Mexico have been proposed to ameliorate this impending crisis. Among others, they include the use of biofuels like ethanol and biodiesel and the introduction of new energy-saving vehicular technologies such as hydrogen cars, electric cars, and hybrid gas-electric vehicles (HEVs).

Expectations have been built up by focusing on the virtues of each technology, but often ignoring the chain of events that must be satisfied. If one or more of the links of this chain is weak, the whole scheme collapses.

As an example, we have the so-called "hydrogen civilization," with the development of hydrogen-fuel-cell cars at its core. In the United States, during his 2003 State-of-the-Union address, President Bush declared, "A simple chemical reaction between hydrogen and oxygen generates energy which can be used to power a car, producing only water, not exhaust fumes. With a new national commitment, our scientists and engineers will overcome obstacles to taking these cars from laboratory to showroom, so that the first car driven by a child born today could be powered by hydrogen and pollution-free."[1] As of 2011, this has not happened.

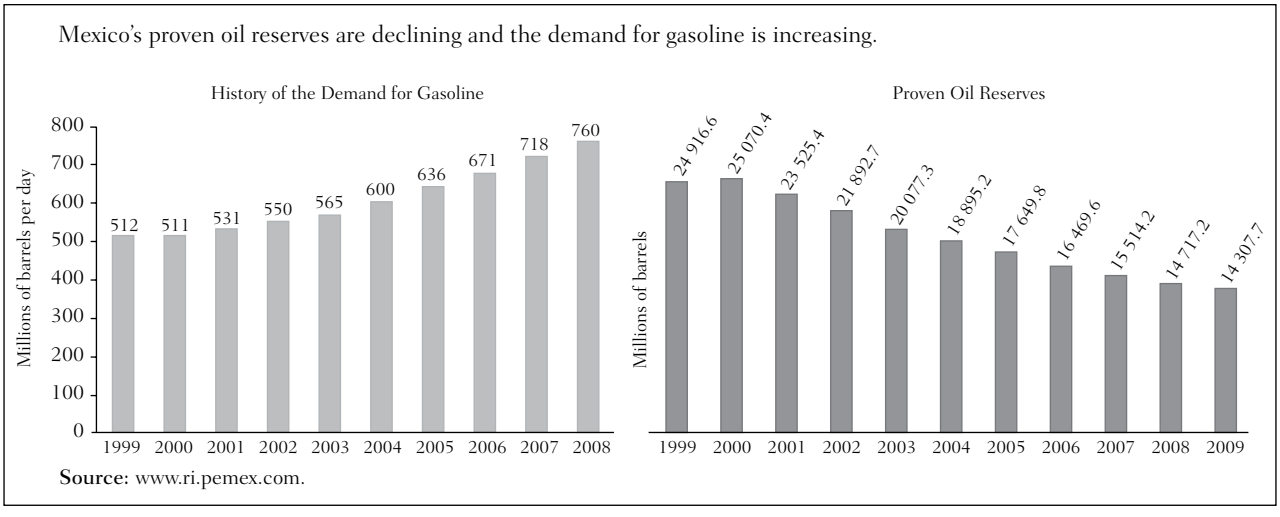
A second example is biofuels. In the late 1990s they were heralded as the environmentally sound solution for partial oil substitution. Probably because of the achievements of the Brazilian ethanol program, many considered ethanol a sure bet. Success of first generation biofuels is nevertheless put in doubt by some authors as discussed in "The False Promise of Biofuels," which appeared in *Scientific American* in August 2011.

These experiences have prompted the consolidation of methodologies such as life-and-energy-cycle analysis, and scenario analysis. Some of these studies have helped identify technological and economic barriers and "hot spots" in a given chain process. Also, they are instrumental in identifying which technologies hold promise in the near future and

Expectations built up by focusing on the virtues of each technology often ignore the chain of events to be satisfied. If a single link is weak, the whole scheme collapses.

FIGURE 1

HISTORY OF DEMAND AND PROVEN OIL RESERVES IN MEXICO



Source: www.ri.pemex.com.

Lucas Jackson/REUTERS

Many considered ethanol a sure bet. Success of first generation biofuels is nevertheless put in doubt by some authors as discussed in the August 2011 article "The False Promise of Biofuels."

which have long or unrealizable developmental time horizons or costs. I should mention that, for the Mexican case, only a few of these studies have been published in peer reviewed journals, hampering a clearer and more objective view for planners and decision-makers to form technological and economic objectives.

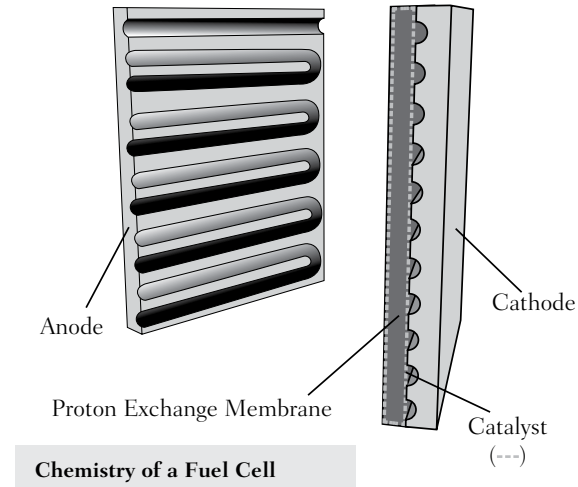
I have chosen a few examples from the private transportation sector to illustrate the scope and usefulness of the aforementioned techniques. To promote further discussion, I have included my opinion and information about specific options for Mexico. We start with the hydrogen car, since, as mentioned, it is probably the strongest example of a seemingly infallible technology that has nevertheless met with enormous difficulties in its implementation.

Hydrogen Fuel-Cell Vehicles

Hydrogen fuel cells were first proposed by William Grove in 1839. They were successfully used by the USSR and U.S. space programs beginning in the 1960s. They are simple, and their operation is based on combining hydrogen and oxygen to provide electricity. The only emission is water, which the cosmonauts and astronauts could use as an extra supply. The energy efficiency limits of such devices theoretically reach 75 percent and their main advantage is their reliability. The operation principle is depicted in Figure 2. It is basically an electrolysis process in reverse: hydrogen and oxygen are combined to obtain water and electricity.

Why has this technology not fulfilled its promise? Here are some explanations.

Figure 2
Operation of a Hydrogen Fuel Cell Using a Proton Membrane



Source: *How Stuff Works*, www.howstuffworks.com/, 2000.

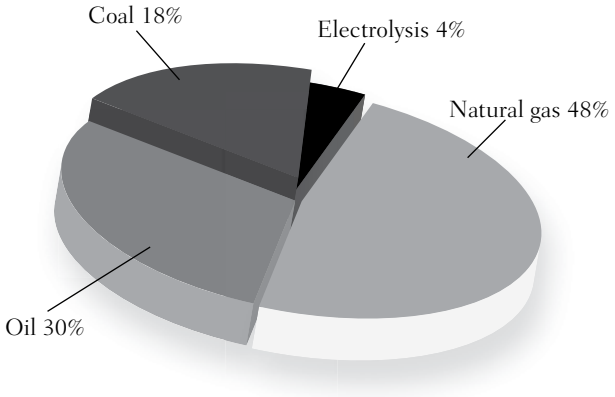
Hydrogen GHG Emissions Cycle

As mentioned, one of the justifications for hydrogen-cell cars is their beneficial emission: pure water. Figure 3 shows the percentage of hydrogen produced in the world by different means. Most of the hydrogen produced (78 percent) uses hydrocarbons such as methane as part of a high-energy process called reformation. If hydrogen obtained this way is used to feed fuel-cell-powered cars, no GHG savings are expected.

Only if hydrogen is produced through electrolysis using renewable forms of energy such as wind, photo-voltaic, or hydroelectric energy are savings in GHG emissions expected. This leaves only Iceland as a possibility for the "hydrogen civilization," since they generate their electrical power with hydroelectric dams. Nevertheless, if renewable energy is used to produce other types of secondary energy instead of hydrogen, vast GHG emissions savings could be achieved. This is shown in Figure 4.

FIGURE 3

PRODUCTION OF HYDROGEN BY DIFFERENT PROCESSES



Source: World Nuclear Association, "Transport and the Hydrogen Economy," www.world-nuclear.org/info/inf70.html, accessed in February 2012.

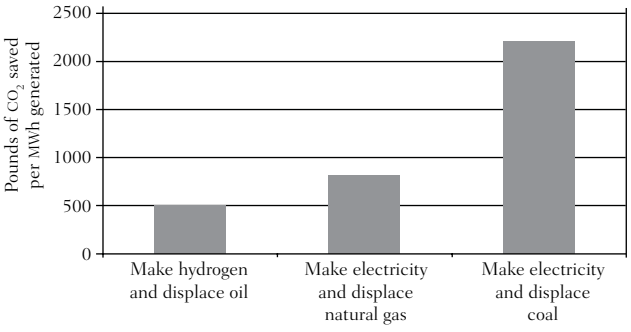
Only if hydrogen is produced through electrolysis using renewable forms of energy such as wind, photo-voltaic, or hydroelectric energy are savings in GHG emissions expected.

The Hydrogen Energy Cycle

A peer-reviewed study carried out in Norway by Ann Mari Svensson and collaborators, published in the journal *Energy,* shows that an electric car whose battery is charged with electricity generated from a natural gas plant is 35 percent more efficient than a fuel-cell vehicle. This analysis is well-to-wheel: it takes into account the beginning of the process to generate electricity, then its use to produce hydrogen, to its final use to generate mechanical power. This means that in a fuel-cell car, we must include steps such as first converting electricity to hydrogen, then hydrogen to electricity that in turn is converted to mechanical power. In an electric car, electricity is converted to mechanical power directly, resulting in a higher efficiency. Another factor is that if reformation with natural gas is used as discussed above, water (steam) and methane are mixed at high temperatures (700-1100°C). The reaction needs 191.7 kJ/mol to take place. This places the thermodynamic efficiency of the process lower than an internal combustion engine. Though some of this energy may be recovered in a secondary reformation step with CO, recovering 40.4 kJ/mol, the overall energy cost is still high. Other well-to-wheel comparisons in the same study show that a gas-electric hybrid car, or HEV, is about 27 percent more energy efficient, and a conventional combustion engine car is 14 percent more efficient than the fuel-cell car.

FIGURE 4

EMISSIONS REDUCED BY RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY



The bar on the left represents the CO_2 savings from renewable electricity used to make hydrogen, assuming the hydrogen is used in a fuel-cell car and displaces the fuel from a hybrid car. The middle bar represents the savings from renewable power displacing electricity from combined cycle natural gas power plant. The bar on the right represents the savings from renewable power displacing electricity from typical coal plant.

Source: Joseph J. Rohm, *The Hype About Hydrogen* (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 2004).

As of 2012, oil production shows a negative trend while consumption is increasing, but Mexico has not begun to diversify its liquid fuel supply or implement vigorous energy-saving policies in the transport sector.

Scenario Building, Or the Chicken and the Egg

If fuel-cell hydrogen cars are to substitute conventional cars, it is estimated that 50 000 to 90 000 hydrogen charging stations will be needed in the United States. Unless they are built in great numbers (at least regionally), no hydrogen cars will be able to compete on the market because of the inconvenience of finding where to refill the hydrogen tank. If the stations are built first, a gamble in the billions of dollars will be made in the hopes that hydrogen fuel-cell cars will be successful in the long run. These scenarios also need to take into account severe leakage problems for hydrogen storage. Argonne National Laboratories estimate that the cost for a complete system of hydrogen stations is about half a trillion dollars.

Technological and Market Barriers

According to auto industry experts, a hydrogen car will be competitive with conventional cars when a 400-kilometer fuel range is achieved. Technological hurdles must be overcome to reach this target. Though research is already in progress, hydrogen cars with this range will not be ready for the market for many years, as discussed in "Gassing up with Hydrogen," published in 2007 by *Scientific American*.

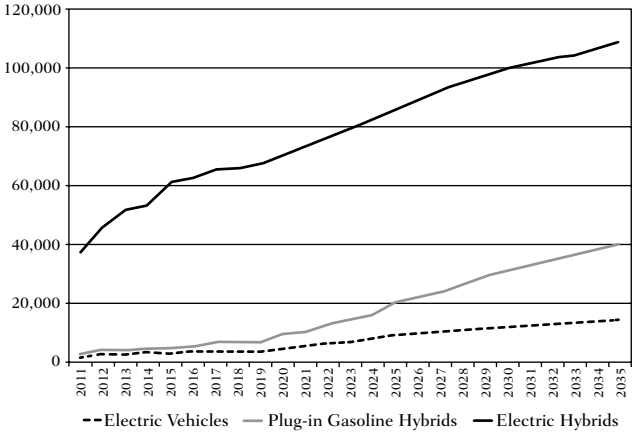
Electric Cars

We can apply some of the techniques discussed above to electric cars. Since they run exclusively on batteries, the target of the 400-kilometer range is also present. Nissan's Leaf, the first fully electric mass-produced car on the market, has a range of only 117 kilometers, creating the need for a network of recharging stations. Therefore, a chicken-and-the-egg problem also exists, although to a lesser degree. Infrastructure is needed for quicker recharge times of about 30 minutes and for locating recharging stations on highways or in workplaces.

A life-cycle analysis of overall GHG emissions shows that they depend on the source of the electricity being used to recharge the battery: if it is from a thermoelectric plant, there are net GHG emissions; from a natural gas plant, there are savings; while hydroelectric plants offer the most emission savings. In the case of Mexico, where 70 percent of the electricity is produced using oil, no GHG emissions savings will be achieved. Change to natural gas or other, renewable sources is needed to obtain an advantage. Nevertheless, better energy use may be accomplished using these cars, and air quality may be improved in urban areas.

Can we build a scenario to find out how much time it will take to have an electric car fleet make a difference? If the U.S. market can be used as a guide, future accepted market scenarios in Figure 5 show that in 2035, no more than 2 percent of cars sold will be electric.

FIGURE 5
SALES SCENARIOS FOR HYBRID, ELECTRIC, AND PLUG-IN HYBRID VEHICLES



Annual sales (2011-2035)

Source: United Department of Energy Information Administration, "2012 Energy Outlook," www.eia.gov/, accessed in February 2012.

Gas-Electric Hybrid Cars (HEVs)

Figure 5 also shows a scenario for hybrid electric cars, already successful in the U.S. market. They will outsell new technology cars and represent more than 30 percent of the car fleet by 2035. As discussed by Svensson, their GHG and production energy cycle are slightly higher, but competitive with conventional cars. The overall energy and GHG cycle,

taking into account production and usage, turns out to be advantageous.

Is there a chicken-and-the-egg problem? No, since these cars are electrically self-recharged and no public infrastructure is needed.

In a study published in the *Journal of Power Sources* by this author and colleagues, during the car's use, energy and emissions savings (both GHG and criteria pollutants) were obtained for the Mexico City case. If prices become competitive in Mexico, as is the trend in the U.S. market, this technology is promising. An optimistic scenario for year 2026 places 20-percent gas-electric hybrids in Mexico City's car fleet. By that time, benefits in energy and public health will already outweigh costs, mainly private.

Bio-fuels: Sugar Ethanol

As shown in Figure 6, Mexico exports sugar, but as of 2012, it does not produce ethanol. The costs and GHG emissions cycle for sugar-ethanol in Mexico have been investigated by Carlos García and Fabio Mancini as published in the journal *Solar Energy* in 2011. Although overall GHG emissions savings are obtained *vis-à-vis* the continued use of mineral gasoline, the land-use changes needed to substitute about 10 percent of gasoline with ethanol makes this option not as desirable as previously thought.

Combining options may offer
the most feasible and efficient solution.
Ethanol and HEVs may save more GHG emissions
and energy together than each of them alone.
Efficient public transport systems
must be built and enlarged.

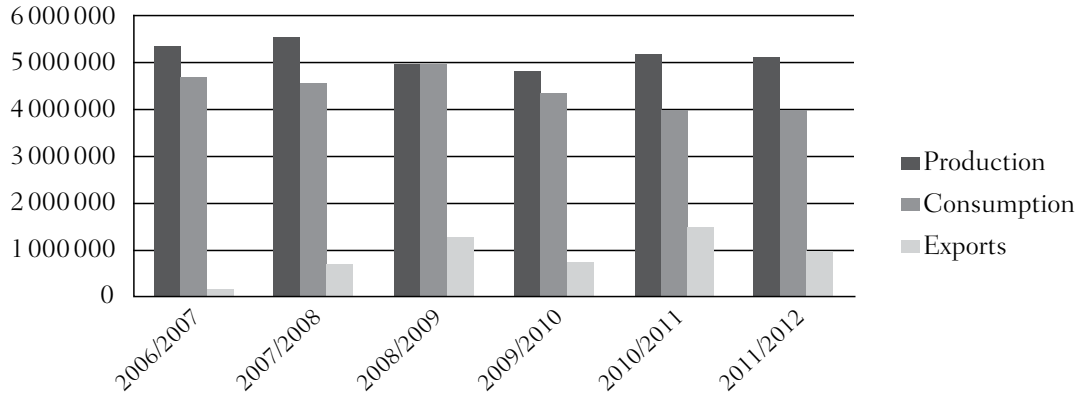
UNAM researchers are working on more precise full-energy and GHG-cycle analysis and an examination of hydrological and soil impacts of sugar cane production, detailed emissions by bio-fuels usage, their impact in the Mexico City atmosphere, and health consequences.

Comments and Conclusion

The scope of this article does not cover labor, market regulations, governance, or the internal organization of production, especially in the agricultural sector. These factors should be included in holistic studies to provide information to policy planners.

Even though oil production shows a negative trend while consumption is increasing, as of 2012, Mexico has not begun to diversify its liquid fuel supply or implement vigorous energy-saving policies in the transport sector. As exemplified here, methodologies such as life-and-energy-cycle analysis,

Figure 6
Sugar Production, Exports, and Internal Consumption in Mexico (metric tons)



Source: United Department of Energy Information Administration, "2012 Energy Outlook," www.eia.gov/, accessed in February 2012.

together with scenario analysis, can be used to decide which policies to use to deal with an impending energy crisis and what their limitations are. These methodologies show that there are no definitive technological solutions; some that appear perfect in one segment of their implementation may fail in another, ruling them out. A solution in one region may not work in another, or may only work to a lesser degree.

Combining options may offer the most feasible and efficient solution. For example, ethanol and HEVs may save more GHG emissions and energy together than each of them alone. Efficient public transport systems must be built and enlarged.

It will take time to implement any option enough so its impacts are felt. This is also the case for technologies already existing on the world market. Is there time for Mexico? VM

NOTES

[1] http://www1.eere.energy.gov/hydrogenandfuelcells/pdfs/benefits.pdf.

Biofuels and Sustainable Rural Development in Mexico

María Elena Goytia Jiménez*

Stringer/REUTERS

Global production of oil, a non-renewable resource, is expected to peak between 2010 and 2019, when conventional reserves in most oil-producing countries will have practically run out, and only Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iraq and the United Emirates will still possess this resource.

Recent studies show that Mexico hit its peak oil production levels in 2004,[1] and that from 2014 it will begin to have to import it. The political and financial costs will be high, since the Mexican economy is heavily dependent on oil, which contributes between 36 and 40 percent of the federal budget.

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Although biofuels may offer important opportunities for reducing poverty and fostering rural development by creating jobs for agricultural workers and markets on a small scale, this scenario is impacted by large inflows of capital into rural areas.

In Mexico, oil provides energy for transportation, and gas for domestic and industrial use, and raw materials for the pharmaceutical, cosmetics, plastics, leather, cement, and fertilizer industries, and many more. Therefore, the reduced availability of this resource will double or triple the prices of these products, and Mexico, like other countries, will have to find ways to create companies to produce energy and industrial products that can replace the energy generated by oil.

Another factor closely related to this energy crisis is the obsolescence and deterioration of Pemex's installations, leading to an 18.3-percent drop in diesel production from 318 200 barrels a day in January 2009 to 259 800 in December 2010. As a result, diesel imports in 2011 were up by 186.9 percent compared to 2010 figures.[2] This affects the price, which at the time of writing is Mex$9.75 per liter; and it will continue to rise for at least the next three years, driving up the cost of products transported or produced with this fuel.

Impact on Aviation

Aviation is another industry affected by the energy crisis. The price of jet fuel in Mexico, according to companies working in this sector, reached critical levels: Mex$11.47 per liter. And officials at the decentralized government Airports and Auxiliary Services Agency (ASA) say that this figure will continue to rise, putting the sector in a difficult position: falling profits for companies and higher airfares for customers.

American Airlines, which has entered purchase agreements with Mexico for jet fuel, says that the increase of one cent of a dollar per liter of fuel raises its expenses by an extra US$25 million per year. The aviation industry is also under pressure from restrictions imposed by the European Union, since only aircraft using biomass fuel will be allowed to land in its airports. They claim that this aims to reduce pollution produced by burning fossil fuels, as these companies create two percent of global CO_2 emissions. Biofuels will gradually be introduced, from one percent in 2011 to 100 percent in 2020.

For Mexico, this is the equivalent of the production of between 40 to 70 million liters of this biofuel within the next five years. To meet this target, the ASA has developed the so-called "Sustainable Flight Plan for Mexican Aviation," which calls for the production of bio jet fuel using biomass; according to this project, in the future this will be cheaper than oil-based fuels.

The "Green Energy" Program

Mexico has enormously varied climate and flora, making it suitable for generating the products needed to meet the demands of the national energy sector and to make the most of the opportunities offered by this emerging international market. Global awareness exists about this issue, and since 2003 the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) has been behind the promotion of agrofuels through the "Green Energy" program, in which small businesses participate by proposing bioethanol and biodiesel projects as principal energy sources.

Although biofuels may offer important opportunities for reducing poverty and fostering rural development in Mexico by creating jobs for agricultural workers and markets on a small scale, thus increasing the availability of energy in rural areas, this scenario is being impacted by large inflows of capital into rural areas. These investors promote single-crop cultivation and setting up industries to produce oil and biodiesel, with scant regard to sustainable rural development in the areas involved. Land ownership has been clearly affected by this, since most of this land (53 percent) belongs to *ejidatarios* (collective landowners) and 3.4 percent to *comuneros* (traditional indigenous community landowners) who hold one or two hectares each.

This shows that land ownership in Mexico is atomized, and there are no large landholdings, *latifundios*, where extensive plantations can be located. This obstacle has been overcome by companies by using a agriculture-for-hire model, whereby campesinos commit themselves to plant energy crops and to sell companies their harvests for a period of at least from 5 to 10 years with the price fixed in the contract so as not to exceed Mex$7 per kilo. Therefore, the peasants no longer plant basic grains and instead become pawns for these companies; land use also changes, which could cause agricultural biodiversity to be lost along with local people's understanding of it.

Small agro-industries are being designed to be managed by peasants organized in cooperatives; this would help them remain as skilled workers rather than going abroad or swelling the ranks of organized crime.

The principal crops being planted to produce oil for biodiesel are the Mexican pine nut bush (*Jatropha curcas* L.) and the African oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis* Jacq.) The MDLM Green Oil Corporation has planted 50 000 hectares each of pine nut bushes in Tamaulipas, in the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, and the coastal regions of Oaxaca; the South Korean company Energy J. K. has done the same on 50 000 hectares in the valley of Apatzingán, Michoacán, and another 20 000 hectares in Yucatán. And there are a reported 32 500 hectares planted with African oil palm across Mexico.

Small-scale production of biofuels can provide the opportunity to push forward sustainable development of rural communities, provided that energy crops do not compete with food crops. The former can be planted on marginal land or in conjunction with maize, squash, or beans. The full use of these crops by local inhabitants of these regions will help create self-employment, with women and young people from rural families able to help in the new type of work created with these crops. This in turn could reduce Mexico's high migration rate, particularly by the young, which has created an ageing population.

One example of this type of crop is the castor oil plant (*Ricinus communis* L.) found in the central valleys of Oaxaca. This plant's oil was used in colonial times before electricity for lighting the area's streets and churches. Today the crop is produced on a smaller scale and is used to produce firewood for personal consumption; the seed is sold to intermediaries or directly to extraction plants who then sell the oil to churches and producers of cosmetics, soap. and natural remedies. Castor oil can be used to produce biodiesel, needed in rural areas for tractor engines, to pump water to irrigate fields; in Sri Lanka and India some communities' electricity is provided by electrical generators run on biodiesel manufactured using vegetable oils.[3]

The idea is therefore to work together with peasant organizations to plant these energy crops, either alongside basic grains or as single crops in deforested areas in order to recover soil and capture water. A wide range of products can be obtained from the oil: biodiesel or bio jet fuel, lubricants for engines and car brakes, plastics, cosmetics, and insecticides. And extracting the oil leaves behind a cake that is rich in protein that can be used to produce balanced food for cattle and fish, or as bio-fertilizers and biogas, the latter with domestic applications or useful for agro-industries set up in the regions to transform the oil and the cake. Other derivative products include firewood (to help prevent further deforestation) and the plants' leaves which can be used as fodder or for composting.

To provide these crops with value added, the suggestion is for peasants not to sell the seeds but the refined oil; and to keep the cake to make balanced fodder for their livestock. Small agro-industries are being designed to be managed by peasants organized in cooperatives, with charge of the transformation processes of rural communities where the crops are grown. This would help them to remain as skilled workers rather than going abroad or swelling the ranks of organized crime.

This type of agroindustry would be able to process seeds from 500 hectares. We believe this model can be replicated and that the technology transfer created, both on a farming and industrial level, should be in the hands of the peasants themselves. VM

NOTES

[1] L. Ferrari, "México después del petróleo: ¿Transición o colapso?," 2010, www.geociencias.unam.mx/.../areas/.../ferrari.html.

[2] "Pemex importará más combustibles en 2011," January 30, 2011, www.eluniversal.com.mx/finanzas/84311.html.

[3] "Lessons from Case Studies on the Livelihoods Impacts of Small. Presentation of Draft Report," FAO, Rome, November 26, 2008. Case studies: India's jatropha electrification; India's biodiesel water-pumping; Sri Lanka, www.rivelo.net/fre/.../fao-pisces-case-studies-presentation-comp.ppt.

Agrofuels in Mexico: Challenges for Food and Energy Sovereignty

Olivia Acuña Rodarte and Yolanda Massieu Trigo*

Bruno Domingos/REUTERS

Mexico's integration into the globalization process has been a double-edged sword. On the one hand, we have achieved strong positioning for several products within the framework of trade agreements, heralded as exchange opportunities that will supposedly reinvigorate the jobs market and generate income. On the other hand, this process has introduced the massive displacement of cheap labor toward the regions where export capital is concentrated. Natural resources have been positioned as areas of investment, and many traditionally state-managed spheres have been privatized.

The expansion of agrofuels represents a new form of colonial exploitation, in which the natural resources of peripheral countries are extracted to satisfy the energy requirements of the central countries and local elites.

Within this context, the first signs of the food crisis began to emerge at the global level in 2006. The more dependent countries have been especially affected by hikes in grain prices, and have seen increasing poverty among their populations. The causes of rising international food prices, and therefore of the food crisis, are diverse and have appeared in combination. Contributing factors include the increase in energy costs and fertilizers linked to oil prices, more land allotted to cultivating the raw materials for biofuel production,

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Agrofuel production is packaged as an attractive solution to rural development problems, environmental deterioration and poverty, in such a way that indebted countries compete among themselves for the investments assigned to this new sector.

decreased agricultural production due to climate factors, increased demand for food from countries such as China and India, low food reserves, and financial speculation.

The debate on the causes of the food crisis is sharpest with regard to production of biofuels and speculative use of financial capital, both in the agricultural and oil markets. The advent of the so-called "biofuels" (hereafter referred to here as agrofuels)[1] in the global market has profound implications for the energy and agri-food sectors. One of the more salient explanations for the rising food prices in recent years is the increased demand for certain agricultural products used in the production of agrofuels, especially corn, a raw material in the production of ethanol, and rapeseed, or canola (*brassica napus*), for the production of agri-diesel.

With the argument that it will boost employment in impoverished rural areas and improve peasant farmers' living conditions, Mexico has responded by increasing grain imports and promoting the production of agrofuels; however, both decisions are linked to the processes of economic integration advocated by developed nations and not to a strategy that favors food sovereignty or security.

Even though the first agrofuels have been produced using agricultural crops, a second generation is expected to be obtained from lignocellulosic residues. The technology for the second group is not yet available and will be much more expensive; meanwhile, ethanol and biodiesel, produced from agricultural crops, suit existing engines and are proving to be a profitable business.

Proponents of agrofuels argue that they help reduce climate change because they will reduce the amount of greenhouse gases produced by fossil fuels; unfortunately, the energy balance is unfavorable.

> It has been calculated that in a scenario in which 25 percent of transportation fuel comes from biofuels, the increase in fertilizers would be 40 percent, and so the savings in greenhouse gases through the use of ethanol in transportation would be eclipsed by [the volume of] gases generated by the nitrogenized fertilizers released into the atmosphere. The environmental efficiency of biofuels is questionable, because rapeseed and ethanol release between 50 and 70 percent more gases into the atmosphere.[2]

In addition, they promote more deforestation and there are indications that one ton of palm oil produces 33 tons of CO_2 —10 times more than oil.

The expansion of agrofuels represents a new form of colonial exploitation, in which the natural resources of peripheral countries are extracted to satisfy the energy requirements of the central countries and local elites. The underlying objective is to shift the intensification of agrofuels toward other nations by transferring technology and financial resources, together with the social and environmental costs of the activity.

The production of these new fuels threatens many countries' food security and sovereignty because of the displacement of areas traditionally reserved for cultivating basic crops. In this sense, in recent years Mexico's food dependency on the United States has increased. Since 2007, the U.S. has become the largest agrofuel producer in the world, earmarking large quantities of corn for ethanol production and causing grain prices to increase. In Mexico, this situation is reflected, among other things, in the increase of the price of the tortilla, a basic foodstuff, by more than 100 percent in just four years.

Agrofuel production is packaged as an attractive solution to rural development problems, environmental deterioration and poverty, in such a way that indebted countries compete among themselves for the investments assigned to this new sector.

In terms of energy, oil has become the apple of discord. Wars are fought in the unrestrained drive to obtain it, and for many nations it has become the symbol of the omnipresent control of U.S. foreign policy. Modern world history may be written around oil disputes. The most recent setbacks in the global economy are related to the prices of fossil fuels and financial speculation. Its influence has generated profound processes of economic restructuring that have negatively impacted on the poorest countries.

The energy crisis, caused by patterns of unsustainable consumption, the progressive exhaustion of fossil fuels, and the resulting price increase and speculation around oil, has caused the United States and Europe to reorganize their energy supply policies, substituting fossil fuels for so-called "renewable energy," including agrofuels. Along with a series of tax programs to stimulate its production, both the United States and

the European Union (EU) have accelerated the global production of these apparently "green" energy sources to meet their pressing need to reduce their oil dependency in the medium term.

In the case of the United States, in 2007 a strategy was introduced and promoted to reduce gasoline consumption by 20 percent in 10 years, thus reducing its oil dependency on Venezuela and the Middle East. Europe set a goal in 2006 of producing at least 20 percent of its energy from renewable sources and, of this, 10 percent from agrofuels.[3]

International prices of a barrel of oil have varied widely, with a tendency to increase in recent years. In response, Mexico reduced its export volume and continues to import gasoline. This is especially serious for the country, almost totally dependent on oil revenues. Amidst heated debate, agrofuel production has already begun in Mexico. The problem of producing it from corn has important implications, because this grain is the population's main food source. The production deficit has led us to depend on importing 40 percent of our requirements.

In June 2007, Felipe Calderón inaugurated the country's first ethanol plant, owned by the Mexican company Destilmex, which was to begin operations in May 2008 and would consume 290 000 tons of white corn to produce 30 million gallons of ethanol for export to the United States. In 2007 another plant was built in Los Mochis, Sinaloa, by Mex Starch, with a capacity for processing 50 000 tons of corn. Plans existed to process 150 000 tons of the grain in another plant in Guamúchil, also in the state of Sinaloa. So far, these plants are on hold, not precisely due to public opposition, but because of the bureaucratic procedures related to obtaining government loans. In any case, it appears that the criticisms have had some impact, because recent plans indicate that the agrofuel production will be based on sorghum, not corn. This may appear to be a solution; but in order to produce agrofuels for export to the United States, agricultural land will be used that could otherwise have been allotted to food production.

Projects are also being promoted to produce biodiesel from African palm, jatropha, and castor beans in the country's Southeast. In the state of Chiapas, one of the main producers of these crops, the state government has been promoting its production by supposedly ensuring that basic crops are not displaced; however, the prospect of reconverting perennial crops sooner or later has removed the incentive to produce food for self-consumption.

The jatropha project has been promoted by the National Forestry Commission (Conafor). The main argument is that it will foster the recovery of deforested or "marginal" land, and so the peasant farmers who entered the program from 2009 received Mex$7 400 pesos per hectare from Conafor, as well as the seeds or plants.[4] The program's incentives accelerated the reconversion of important areas that had been used for corn, even given the context of high corn prices. Thus, peasants in Chiapas began to suffer a double dependency: toward the private jatropha market as well as the purchase of food at high prices.

It will be difficult to recover Mexico's food sovereignty in the short term, and even though it continues to be an oil producer, costs and its financial dependence place production in difficulties.

To date, one plant exists that uses jatropha to produce biodiesel in Puerto Chiapas; however, it is not in operation, apparently because the technology to produce the fuel is not yet available. The vegetable oil obtained is allotted to the baking industry; the raw material is sent to the Bimbo-Marinela plant in Guadalajara.

What has not halted is the expansion of surface area sown with African oil palm in Mexico's Southeast. Between 1995 and 2001 the surface devoted to this crop increased by more than 1 000 percent, while production increased by 213 percent. Paradoxically, Mexico is an importer of palm oil, occupying twenty-seventh place among the 171 countries that imported more than US$50 million worth in 2001.[5]

There are nine palm oil extraction plants in the four southeastern states, six of which are located in Chiapas. Seven are private, only one is a capital stock company, and one is mixed capital. Even though many of the plantations have reached a productive age, the extractors continue working at only 50-percent capacity, far below their installed capacity.

Mexico's vulnerability is quite evident both in terms of food and energy. In the first area, it will be difficult to recover its food sovereignty in the short term, and in the second, even though it continues to be an oil producer, the extraction costs and its technological and financial dependence place production in a difficult situation, attenuated by rising price trends in the energy market. In addition, the country is responding slowly compared to other competitors in producing alternative forms of energy, among which we may include agrofuels, not to mention Mexico's potential in solar

energy production and the need to seek out other sustainable energy sources.

Today, thousands of Mexican peasants preserve their land and their ties to it. Their deeply-rooted culture and their way of thinking mean that the production of approximately 60 percent of our food is still in their hands. In this sense, promoting agrofuels in Mexico threatens our food sovereignty. VM

NOTES

[1] In this essay we use the term "agrofuels" because, although it is now technologically feasible to obtain energy from different sources of biomass, these new fuels (basically ethanol and biodiesel) are obtained from agricultural crops. The term "agrofuels" carries an implicit criticism, because the term "biofuels" lends a "green" tinge of non-contaminating renewable energy to a new form of agricultural capitalism.

[2] Rosa Luz González and Michelle Chauvet, "Biocombustibles y cultivos farmacéuticos: ¿oportunidades o amenazas?" *El Cotidiano* no.147, Eón/UAM Azcapotzalco, 2008, pp. 51-61.

[3] Alberto Alonso Fradejas, "Agrocombustibles, derecho humano a la alimentación y soberanía alimentaria: un triángulo dialéctico de poderes," *Territorios* (Guatemala: Institute of Agricultural and Rural Studies, CONCOOP, 2007), http://www.soberaniaalimentaria.com/textos/AgrocombustiblesAlimentosGuatemala.pdf.

[4] "La Jornada del Campo," supplement to *La Jornada* (Mexico City), April 16, 2011.

[5] Pablo Castro, "La palma africana en México. Los monocultivos desastrosos," Eco Portal.net, www.ecoportal.net/Temas_especiales, June 15, 2009, accessed August 2011.

Biofuels, a Chance For Energy Self-Sufficiency In Mexico's Countryside

Julieta Evangelina Sánchez Cano*

Biofuels, part of the renewable energy sector, are combustible liquids such as ethanol and biodiesel produced from biomass, that is, from organic matter. Among their advantages are their ability to reduce energy dependence on fossil fuels, which helps reduce CO_2 emissions and other greenhouse gases, and the creation of high value-added subproducts for various industries, while representing a revolution in the energy, productive, commercial, and rural sectors.

A wide variety of raw materials are used in their preparation, such as agricultural crops, wood, or cane and seeds. They can also be produced from beets, fruit, rice, and even from used oil and solid fats, as well as from lingo-cellulosic material and pyrolysis oil used in more advanced processes.[1] Biofuel production should also be accompanied by the cultivation of high energy-yielding crops, and at the same time require fewer inputs.

Renewable resource such as biomass, however, are put at risk by improper use; therefore caution should be exercised in the production of this type of energy on a large scale, since production cycles may have harmful effects on the environment due to deforestation and encroachment on nature reserves. Thus, biofuel production should be carried out in a sustainable, controlled, local way on a small and medium scale, so that the insertion of small and medium producers into the biofuel production energy chain contributes to revitalizing and promoting self-sufficiency in rural areas. Mexico

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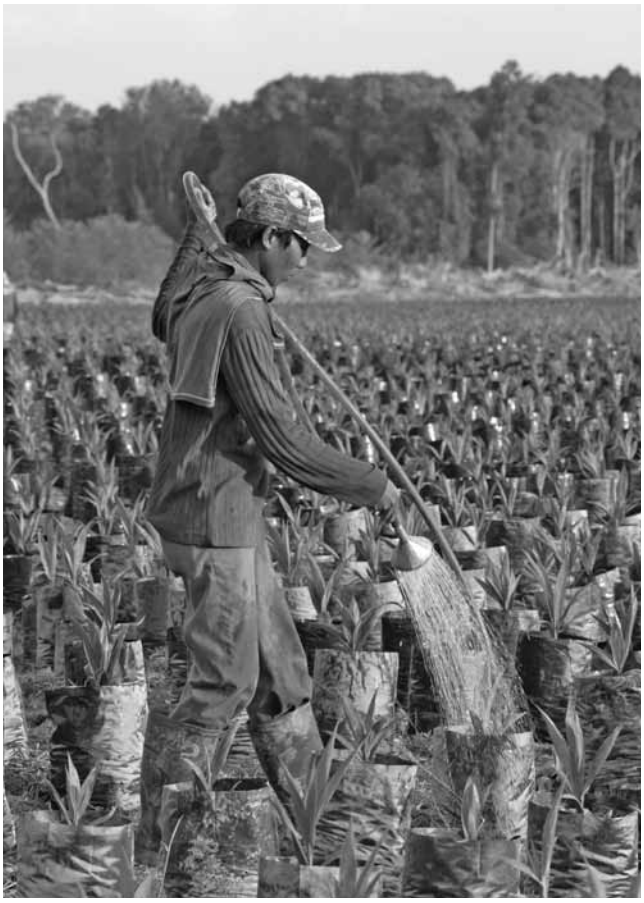

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needs public policies to foster both the production of food products and energy crops sustainably, without neglecting the balance of the two.

This article aims to address the importance of the agricultural sector in improving the production and use of crops and their waste products to the advantage of both food production and energy, ensuring that the countryside is self-sufficient in food and energy.[2]

Public Policies and Regional Strategies

Since each region has different characteristics in terms of production as well as variations in weather, geographic, social, and cultural conditions, public policy in Mexico should encourage the establishment of regional strategies to promote a particular rural profile as well as promoting food and energy self-sufficiency in each region, suitable for its special features and needs. Their successful operation should not depend on fixed development models brought in from outside.[3]

Mexico should encourage regional strategies to promote a particular rural profile as well as promoting food and energy self-sufficiency in each region, suitable for its special features and needs.

It is important to recognize the contribution of small and medium-sized producers to food security, their participation in job creation, and environmental conservation, as well as the role they play in social stability. Whether small and medium-sized producers' output is on a subsistence or small or medium scale, they should represent the social equality goals; their contribution should thus be reconsidered. At the same time, public policies must be reoriented to improving their conditions since these people are a key part of the Mexican population, embodying characteristics compatible with the notion of a sustainable community in terms of local development, care for the environment, and regional identity, besides having a great capacity for overcoming adversity and regenerating themselves.[4]

The Environmental and Socioeconomic Effects of Biofuels

The effects of the large-scale processing of biofuels and associated products are highly controversial. However, controlled production on a small and medium scale can have social benefits: it can be linked to improvements in production and quality of life in rural areas as well as representing an opportunity to generate higher-value-added products, achieving food self-sufficiency, and meeting the energy needs of these areas. Among the advantages for farmers participating in this production are:

1) helping to reduce pollutants harmful to human health;
2) creating more employment and self-employment opportunities;
3) fostering social cohesion;
4) learning about the specialized production of biofuels and the management of inputs used in their production; and
5) energy self-sufficiency on a small and medium scale.

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Producing biofuels is more labor-intensive than producing fossil fuels. However, with suitable public policies, they could represent an opportunity, primarily to supply raw materials and to operate self-sufficient bioenergy plants. Even though this requires specialization, it could be a new source of employment for the rural population. The strategic objectives of public policy for the ideal development of the energy generating industry are:

1) to transform the energy matrix with a view to sustainability;[5]
2) to bring about the conditions for an increased share of bioenergy sources in the energy matrix;
3) to create the conditions for regional development, based on expanding agriculture for energy and optimal value-added in the production chain;
4) to generate additional job opportunities in agribusiness;
5) to open up wider business opportunities with equitable distribution among the participants;
6) to contribute to the care of the environment and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions;
7) to contribute to a reduction in the use of petroleum; and
8) to contribute to increased energy self-sufficiency.[6]

Strategic planning and decision making are thus essential in the choice of the most suitable crop varieties to use as little additional land as possible while achieving the highest yields, in order to obtain fuel without detriment to food supplies. This should be possible given the variety of organic sources that can be used in processing biofuels. Here, government intervention to represent national interests will be crucial, rather than relying on the market, which traditionally has not taken social and environmental factors into account. However, a sustainable growth model is called for that is competitive, socially inclusive, and environmentally friendly, with a significant share of the biofuel production chain.

It is possible to fulfill these aspirations in Mexico because the factors exist that favor this scenario over the medium and long term, but several of them must be brought together in advance. In the first place, global demand for food is growing. Secondly, global demand for renewable energy (agro-energy) such as biodiesel and ethanol has increased. In addition to these, there is growing demand for non-durable consumer goods (natural fibers among others) and durable consumer goods (including bio-plastics and bio-products in general) that use agricultural and biological raw materials to replace fossil fuels.[7]

Specific goals are already being established in Mexico. The Ministry of Energy has stated, "In order to replace 5 percent of diesel oil in the country, it will be necessary to install 10 plants, each with a capacity of 100 000 tons/year, or more than 140 small plants, each with a capacity of 5 000 tons/year."[8] To optimize the supply of agricultural crops and reduce the distribution cost of biodiesel and its by-products, production plants

> should be set up close to refineries or plants producing vegetable oils. Integrated plants for the production of vegetable oils and biodiesel are the best option from a logistical standpoint.... The estimated investment to reach the 5-percent biodiesel stage is Mex$3.1 billion,[9] given that each large-scale plant costs Mex$311 million. Although the production of biodiesel would target the domestic market, fuel could also occasionally be exported to other markets such as Europe or the United States.... The production costs of biodiesel range from Mex$5.3 to Mex$12.4 per liter equivalent, depending on the raw material used to produce it.[10]

In this manner, the crops used for the production of oil, and hence biodiesel, are considered more suitable for family farms and therefore for small and medium-sized production, since there are crops like the castor oil plant and jatropha (*Jatropha curcas*) that are adapted to less favorable conditions and do not require much water or care; the latter can even be grown in poor soil and with a much lower investment. The advantages of producing these crops include, on the one hand, that they can be used alternately in multiple-crop systems, since it is possible to plant beans between the rows of castor oil plants or jatropha, to provide food, and they also fix nitrogen in the soil, improving fertility. On the other hand, the organization and cooperation of several small producers would be sufficient to acquire a small biofuel production plant that would provide for local energy needs and open new business opportunities for their products, which could be sold as raw materials and that could add value through the extraction of

the oil they contain and its conversion into biodiesel. It is also important to mention that the price of some of the crops with potential for processing into biofuels has risen, and this could increase farmers' revenues.[11] VM

Further Reading

Sánchez Cano, Julieta Evangelina, "Biocombustibles, la era de la nueva revolución agrícola," *Casa del tiempo* nos. 22-23, vol. 2 (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, August-September 2009), pp. 79-84.

Notes

[1] Wood consists of lignin, cellulose, and hemicellulose. "Ligno-cellulosic" refers to the processes that combine lignin and cellulose, for example those in which both substances are decomposed. "Pyrolysis" is the process of decomposition of organic matter by heating in an atmosphere devoid of oxygen. It is a method for converting biomass into biodiesel.

[2] J. Reichman, "Biomasa y agro-combustibles: veinte tesis," *Ecología política* no. 34 (Barcelona: Icaria, 2007).

[3] Tomas Loewy, "Indicadores sociales de las unidades productivas para el desarrollo rural en Argentina," 2006, http://www.infoagro.com/desarrollo/indicadores_sociales_desarrollo_rural_argentina.htm.

[4] Ibid.

[5] By "energy matrix" I mean the range of energy sources used by a country as a whole.

[6] Government of Brazil, *Plano nacional de agroenergia, 2006-2011* (Brasília, F.D.: Ministério da Agricultura, Pecuária e Abastecimento-Secretaria de Produção e Agroenergia, Embrapa Informação Tecnológica, 2006), 2nd revised ed.

[7] Food and Agriculture Organization, "Land resource potential and constraints at regional and country levels," based on the work of A. J. Bot, F.O. Nachtergaele, and A. Young, Rome, FAO, UN, Land and Water Development Division, 2000, ftp://ftp.fao.org/agl/agll/docs/wsr.pdf.

[8] Secretaría de Energía et al., "Potenciales y viabilidad del uso de bioetanol y biodiesel para el transporte en México (Proyectos ME-T1007–ATN/DO-9375-ME y PN 04.2148.7-001.00)," November 2006, http://www.sener.gob.mx/res/169/Biocombustibles_en_Mexixo_Estudio_Completo.pdf.

[9] At the exchange rate of Mex$10.9694, published in the *Diario oficial de la federación*, Monday, May 8, 2006, ftp://ftp2.sat.gob.mx/asistencia_servicio_ftp/publicaciones/legislacion06/tc20060508.doc.

[10] Secretaría de Energía et al., op. cit.

[11] Omar Masera, "La energía renovable como catalizador del desarrollo sustentable en México," working paper (Mexico City: UNAM, August 17, 2007), http://www.snitt.org.mx/pdfs/bioenergeticos/ Perspectivas_Bioenergia_Mexico.pdf.

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Agrofuel Plantations in Chiapas And Their Socio-Environmental Impact

Miguel Ángel García Aguirre*

The state governor of Chiapas, Juan Sabines, has championed the growth of agrofuel plantations (controversially dubbed "*biocombustibles*," or biofuels, by his administration) ever since he took office in December 2006. The African oil palm tree (*Elaeis guineensis*) and the jatropha are particular favorites and are showcased as "the great Chiapanecan contribution to the fight against climate change." His first decree, issued on his first day as governor, was to create the Chiapas State Bio-energy Commission, later renamed the Bio-energy Institute, and now called the Institute for Productive Reconversion and Biofuels.

This decree declares that the state has a potential 900 000 hectares suitable for African oil palm plantations, mainly in the northern and southern sections of the Lacandon Jungle

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Chiapas has five African oil palm nurseries, around a million and a half plants distributed to indigenous and peasant communities, who receive them as "presents" in return for providing their land and labor.

and in the Soconusco Coast region. The official target for the 2006 and 2012 period was to increase the African oil palm plantation area from 17 000 to 100 000 hectares, 60 000 hectares in the jungle region and 40 000 in the Soconusco. Additionally, the plan was to plant 110 000 hectares of jatropha in the low-lying subtropical jungle regions: the Isthmus, Frayleska and Central Valley.

In fact, with this project, the Chiapas government found an echo in Felipe Calderón's federal government: "biofuel" plantations became one of the five key project areas of the Mesoamerican Project for Integration and Development (or simply known as the Mesoamerican Project), a recycled and pared down version of the famous but deflated Puebla-Panama Plan, the PPP).

In Chiapas, some 45 000 hectares are now planted with African oil palm trees, making it the state with the largest plantation area for this crop and the country's biggest producer of this type of oil, followed by Veracruz and Tabasco. We should mention that these single-crop plantations of exotic species —not from the region or even the country— are located at the edges of highly biodiverse regions that have been declared protected natural areas, such as the biosphere reserves of Montes Azules, Lacantún, la Encrucijada, and El Triunfo; the natural monuments of Bonampak and Yaxchilán; the Palenque National Park and the Chan Kin, Nahá, and Metzabok flora and fauna sanctuaries, all traditionally populated by indigenous communities.

Chiapas now has five African oil palm nurseries, the largest in Latin America, located in Soconusco-Coastal, North Jungle, and South Lacandon Jungle regions. According to official reports, they contain around a million and a half plants that are being distributed to indigenous and peasant communities, who receive them as "presents" in return for providing their land and labor.

The design of the production process of these agrofuels deprives peasants of control over any stage of the process; instead they depend on technicians from private and government institutions, and once the product is ready for sale they are in the hands of greedy intermediaries. In the best case scenario, producers are obliged to hand over the bunches

of fruit to a captive market controlled regionally by each of the oil-extracting companies, amounting to a quasi-feudal system.

That said, it has to be added that most Chiapas peasant producers of African palm trees are currently pleased with the high demand and "good prices" for their product, especially in comparison to the depressed and dire prevailing situation of the prices and market conditions for basic grains such as maize and beans.

Mexico has 11 palm oil extraction factories, 8 of which are in Chiapas; one, set up in Puerto Chiapas with consultancy services and co-financing provided by the government of Colombia, can produce so-called "biodiesel." The companies control the entire production process, from the extraction of the palm oil to its eventual sale in a market monopolized by the food and cosmetics industry and in which there is a palm oil deficit of over 80 percent, thus requiring the oil to be imported from Central America to make up for the shortfall.

This industrial deficit creates a strong demand, triggering explosive expansion of these plantations in Chiapas and leading some of the oil production companies to buy or rent, on unfair terms, large swathes of *ejidal* collectively-owned land on which to grow this monoculture crop; they can do this by taking advantage of the government's Official Program to Sub-Divide and Deed Collectively-Owned Land (Procede).

The jatropha, meanwhile, is an endemic jungle shrub from Chiapas and Central America, traditionally used by the indigenous and peasants of Chiapas as living fences to demarcate pasturelands and plots of farmland, as well as for medicinal purposes. It was also included in the official mega-expansion plans as a commercial crop, to be used exclusively for creating "biofuels." Juan Sabines's government therefore set itself a goal of pharaonic proportions: planting 110 000 hectares, for which his government imported from India thousands of tons of jatropha seed. The plan failed utterly because these seeds did not germinate properly and only around one percent of the entire planted area survived.

In response, the state government decided to launch an aggressive program of collecting cuttings of native jatropha to set up central tree nurseries, mainly located in the Isthmus-Central Valley and Fraylesca regions. From there, the government is only just starting to collect and distribute cuttings among neighboring communities to create plantations through propagation. At the same time, and with great fanfare, a pine-nut oil and "biodiesel" processing plant was inaugurated in the city of Cintalapa, Chiapas, but has now been abandoned due to a complete lack of raw material.

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Any boasting in Mexico and abroad about the state of Chiapas's extensive production of "biodiesel" and "jet biofuel" is actually the government making demagogic, fraudulent noises: today the state does not produce a single liter of these fuels on a commercial basis. There is, however, an accelerated and brutal expansion of these harmful single-crop plantations, especially of the African oil palm that is in so much demand from the food industry. But these crops cannot be described as biofuels at all; instead, they cause serious and irreversible socio-environmental damage because they entail the deforestation of areas with high biodiversity of native plants known in Mexico's southeast as *acahuales*, jungles in the process of regeneration. Similarly, the peasants' land, now being used to produce basic grains in the traditional, environmentally-friendly poly-cultivation, is replaced by them and by pastureland to be used for cattle to produce meat for human consumption, further damaging the already diminished local, regional, and national food sovereignty.

Furthermore, vast quantities of pesticides have been applied indiscriminately to achieve a rapid and high level of productivity. These contaminate soils and water and seriously harm the health of peasant families, while also deepening local communities' economic dependence on an international market that is increasingly monopolized, thus increasing inequality and poverty in the medium term. And finally, in the specific case of the African oil palm, there is the real risk of creating in the long term a process of genetic contamination and alteration of natural systems in regions of very high biodiversity such as the Lacandon jungle and the Soconusco. And this is all in the service of indefinitely replicating an unsustainable, consumerist, globalized model of urban industrial development, tendentiously manipulating public opinion by talking of plantations that in fact have nothing biological or ecological about them, solely in order to maintain the waste of energy of economically powerful countries, companies, and sectors that are ultimately those that have led humanity down the cul-de-sac of global warming.VM

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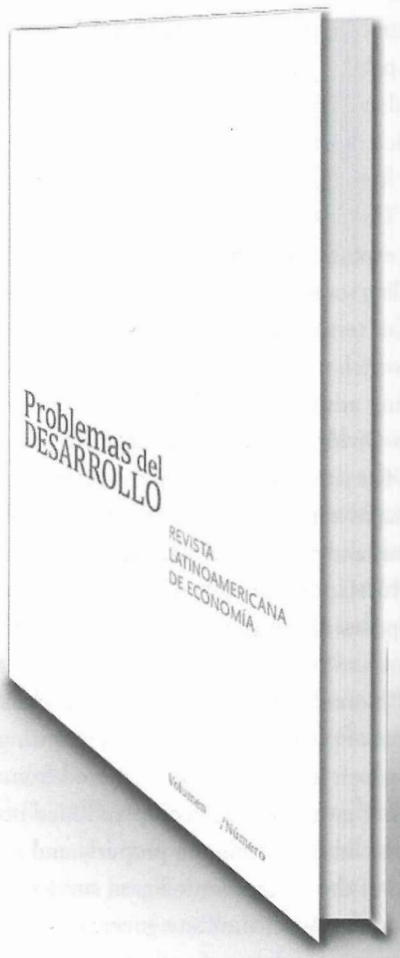

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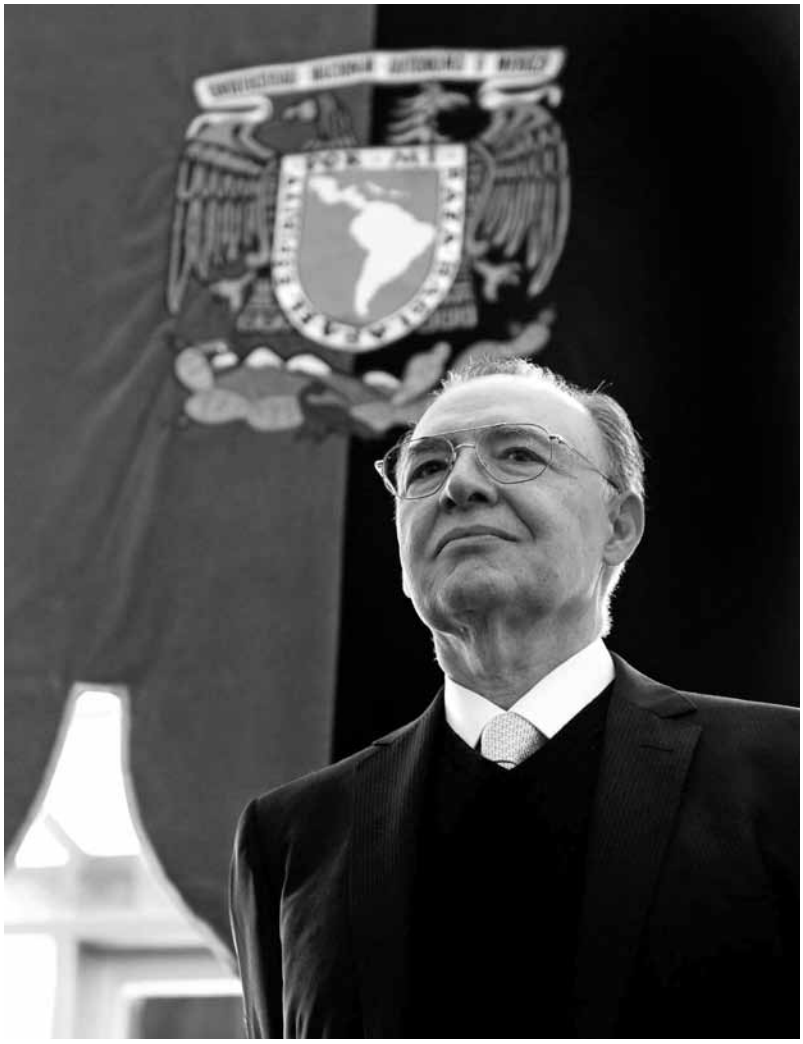
Jorge Carpizo and His Generation

Héctor Fix-Fierro*



Undoubtedly, many tributes will be made and the necessary eulogies written paying homage to the dimensions of the loss the university, the country, and the international community of constitutionalists have suffered with the passing of Dr. Jorge Carpizo McGregor.

In this article, I do not wish to refer to Jorge Carpizo's exceptionality as an individual, or to his fruitful personal labors, but to his being part of a generation of jurists that has made great contributions to the construction of new democratic institutions. This is because his membership in that group helps understand better his singular role as a bridge between generations, as Miguel Carbonell put it, but also as a mediator between the university, the state, and society.

Jorge Carpizo belongs to a generation born in the mid-1940s that gradually arrived at the conviction that it was necessary to prepare the reform of the Mexican state's public institutions through the study of comparative law. What formative experiences could have brought about such an idea in that generation? Its members studied law in the National Autonomous University of Mexico's Law School in the 1960s. It was the decade when different political conflicts (the doctors in 1964-1965, the university conflict in 1966, or the 1968 movement) demonstrated the existence of middle-class urban groups that did not clearly fit into the state corporatism that had developed since the 1930s. The novel

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Photos in this section, courtesy of DGCS-UNAM

thing about these movements, as Ricardo Pozas Horcasitas would point out about the doctors, was that the kind of organization that the new social actors were fighting for had a strong component of professional identification and a fundamentally civic, autonomous feel. Their labor organization project was conceived as a fundamental part of citizens' civil rights, and less and less as a pact between the organizations and the state.

If the final response to these movements was repression, this was neither the Mexican government's first nor only reaction; but it was clear that at that time it had limited capacity for processing the unconditional demand for certain rights established in the Constitution, beginning with freedom of association and of expression. In contrast with those who thought that government repression canceled any possibility of peaceful political change and therefore opted for guerrilla struggle in the 1970s, these young jurists were receptive to the new social movements' "language of rights." That is, they were receptive to the idea that the path to change was marked by the 1917 Constitution itself —which, paradoxically, the political regime itself gave constant lip service to— and that the gradual reform of the institutions through law constituted the only peaceful, desirable alternative for

It is the great merit of this generation, with Jorge Carpizo at its head, that it took advantage of the natural reformism of the legal system to articulate it favorably with the regime's willingness to change since the end of the 1970s.

the country, even if it would still take an indeterminate but long time.

It is true that we jurists are reformists almost by necessity, because legal reform can only be done gradually and partially if it utilizes and respects the procedures for change established in the legal system itself. It is the great merit of this generation, with Jorge Carpizo at its head, that it took advantage of the natural reformism of the legal system to articulate it favorably with the regime's willingness to change since the end of the 1970s. The critical work that necessarily preceded the creation and reform of public institutions in the 1980s and 1990s was done under the protection of university autonomy. For that reason, it was also not mere chance that these same jurists struggled arduously to guide the 1970s university unionism through legal channels and to establish university autonomy in the Constitution, including freedom of thought in teaching and research, which are its constituent parts.

However, the generation I am referring to here would have achieved much less than it did, and its work would have run the risk of being ephemeral if it had not been capable of assimilating the legacy of previous generations, or transmitting it to the young jurists of today, and of contributing in the eyes of society to the legitimacy of and confidence in the new institutions that the old ones had already lost.

Jorge Carpizo's generation received the legacy of at least two previous generations: first, that of the jurists born in the last decade of the nineteenth century and the first decade of the twentieth. I am thinking here of figures of the stature of Don Mario de la Cueva, Don Antonio Martínez Báez, Don Antonio Carrillo Flores, Don Felipe Tena Ramírez, or Don Eduardo García Máynez, who collaborated decisively in the 1930s and 1940s in the creation of the new post-revolutionary legal institutions. All of them, by the way, were closely linked to what was then the National School of Jurisprudence.

The second legacy was that of the generation born in the 1920s. Some of its members, in turn, were enriched by the heritage of comparative law received from Spanish jurists in exile at a time when our country was subjected to the effects

In contrast with those who thought that government repression canceled any possibility of peaceful political change and opted for guerrilla struggle, these young jurists were receptive to the new social movements' "language of rights."

of intense nationalism, which also affected legal ideas. That seed, cultivated discretely by jurists of the stature of Héctor Fix-Zamudio and Sergio García Ramírez, brought forth abundant fruit, above all in the sphere of human rights and justice, when it became necessary to open and democratize existing institutions.

Luckily for us, a new generation of young jurists, educated mainly in our UNAM School of Law, has come upon the scene and taken up the reforming impetus and the example of Jorge Carpizo and the colleagues of his generation. Born mainly in the 1970s, this generation is already visibly displaying outstanding participation in public affairs. Its members did not have to suffer under the asphyxiating presidentialism of old; rather, their education and professional careers have developed in an increasingly free and open environment. It is understandable, then, that these young people have proposed contributing to broadening and deepening democracy by defending new causes, like legalizing the termination of pregnancies; same-sex marriage; the rights of little girls, little boys, and adolescents; gender equality; and transparency and access to information. It will also fall to this generation to defend on a daily basis the conquests of its predecessor: there is no such thing as definitive conquests, much less in these turbulent times in which many have an interest in undermining and even destroying them.

Lastly, it should be mentioned that Jorge Carpizo and his generation's reform efforts were successful because they achieved a transformation in the intellectual capital derived from academic legal study carried out in impartiality, credibility, and confidence in the sphere of the new institutions. But above all —and this is a grave deficiency in the country today— they were carried out with a high, irreducible degree of institutional commitment.

What I have written here by no means aims to detract from Jorge Carpizo's work. Quite to the contrary: that work acquires even greater stature because he achieved a profound comprehension of the close ties that existed, in the circumstances in which he lived, between the rigorous study of the law, the interrelationship of generations, and the imperious need to foster changes in Mexico's public life. His life appears now as a unique synthesis —perhaps unrepeatable— of those three existential crosscutting threads. This is where I believe lies his most profound and enduring legacy. To be worthy of him, we must now do everything possible to preserve and enlarge it. VM

Jorge Carpizo
An Exemplary University Career

Héctor Fix-Zamudio*

Our dear friend and colleague Jorge Carpizo distinguished himself as a brilliant academic and senior official of our beloved National Autonomous University of Mexico, where he was a popular teacher in his School of Law; an outstanding researcher at the Institute for Legal Research, which he also headed up as director; and as UNAM president in a period that is still remembered for its many achievements and contributions. But he was also an outstanding public official, known for his exemplary honesty, dedication, and commitment: he was a member of the Supreme Court; founder of the National Human Rights Commission, of which he was president; attorney general, minister

*Researcher emeritus at the UNAM Institute for Legal Research.

of the interior, president of the General Council of the Federal Electoral Institute, and Mexico's ambassador to France. Given space limitations, I will only briefly outline here his brilliant work as an academic and distinguished member of the university community.

I worked long years —almost 20—in the federal judicial branch, first as an employee and then as a judicial official, particularly at the Supreme Court, and for several years I was clerk to the court. But in 1964, I decided to focus completely on my academic work. It was then that I applied for a job as full-time researcher at the UNAM Institute of Comparative Law, now known as the Institute for Legal Research, where I had already been collaborating since 1956. I quit my job in the judicial system and entered the institute.

This gave me the privilege of coming into contact with an inquiring, brilliant student at the School of Law, Jorge Carpizo, who had a scholarship from the Humanities Coordinating Department, at that time headed up by his teacher, the illustrious Mario de la Cueva, who had also been the academic advisor for Carpizo's bachelor's thesis on the Constitution. The young Carpizo constantly visited the institute to work in the library, which, thanks to the efforts by Spanish exile jurist Javier Elola Fernández, was considered to have the most modern method available at the time. We got to know each other because Jorge consulted me about his thesis, and we established a friendship that would endure, unchanged, from then, 46 years ago, until his death.

At that time, the institute had four full-time researchers: the distinguished Spanish jurists Niceto Alcalá-Zamora y Castillo, an illustrious expert in procedural law who I consider my academic father; Javier Elola Fernández; Modesto Seara Vázquez; and myself, the only Mexican citizen of the four. Six or seven jurists, both Spanish and Mexican, also collaborated with the institute on specific projects, and there were two research assistants.

In April 1966, a serious conflict in the university ended with the resignation of one of the UNAM's most illustrious presidents, Dr. Ignacio Chávez, who was replaced under very difficult circumstances by the no less outstanding engineer Javier Barros Sierra. At that time, the director of our institute, renowned Mexican jurist and diplomat Roberto Molina Pasquel was appointed legal director of the Ministry of Foreign Relations and had to withdraw from the UNAM. Because of this, and since I was the only one who fulfilled all the prerequisites for the post because I was Mexican by birth, together with the need to have a full-time director —which the previous directors had not been— and despite my lesser qualifications, my colleagues decided to ask the UNAM president to propose my name to the Board of Governors, and I was appointed to the post that year.

Once in the job, I remembered young Carpizo, who was about to take his final examination for this bachelor's degree. Despite the fact that his enormous capacity had earned him a rather important appointment in the Ministry of Public Edu-

When Jorge Carpizo returned after completing his doctoral studies in England, he was so well known that, when he reentered the institute in 1970, President González Casanova appointed him UNAM sub-director of legal affairs.

cation, I invited him to act as the institute's academic and administrative secretary, an invitation he immediately accepted, marking the beginning of his admirable academic career.

As the new director, I had the great fortune that Barros Sierra implemented the Program for Educating Academic Personal, originally proposed by President Chávez. This program selected the most brilliant students from each school and faculty for a scholarship that would allow them to finish their theses, and, after receiving their bachelor's degree, provided another scholarship for graduate studies abroad, either in Europe or the United States. The first generation of scholarship winners, all students at the School of Law, who entered the institute in 1968, was quite brilliant. Among them were Diego Valadés, José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, Manuel Barquín, and Ignacio Carrillo Prieto, who have all had outstanding careers both in academia and in important public posts. They all successfully concluded their graduate degrees and came back to the institute. Even though I had friendly relations with all of them, the friendship that emerged with Jorge Carpizo and Diego Valadés became fraternal and permanent. Despite the age difference between them and myself, we were able to work together on many academic and university projects.

When Jorge Carpizo returned after completing his doctoral studies in England, he was so well known that, when he reentered the institute in 1970, President González Casanova appointed him UNAM sub-director of legal affairs; despite his youth, González Casanova's successor, President Soberón, appointed him consul general in 1973. Those were very difficult times for our house of higher learning, and Carpizo, as was his custom, made a very efficient, unerring job of that complicated post. In 1977, he moved on to head up the Humanities Coordinating Department, which was also a complicated job, as, in addition to coordinating the institutes, it was responsible for the UNAM's General Publications Office. He was also charged with coordinating the celebrations of the fiftieth anniversary of the UNAM being declared autonomous in 1929; this implied numerous academic, cultural, and artistic activities. To give the reader an idea of the size of this job, the studies presented during those festivities were published in 14 large-format volumes in 1979.

When I finished my second six-year period as director on October 15, 1978, by almost unanimous request by the academic and administrative staff of our institute, the outgoing president included Jorge Carpizo in the three-person proposal he presented to the Board of Governors. He was chosen as director for a six-year period, with the possibility of being reelected for another. Since the festivities for the fiftieth anniversary, which Jorge had coordinated very successfully until then, had still not concluded, President Soberón requested that he continue doing so until they came to an end.

Despite this additional task, Director Carpizo intensified the quality and quantity of research activities at the Institute for Legal Research, not only by raising the number of academic, technical, and administrative personnel, but also thanks to a significant increase in regular publications that resulted from new research. This required forming a technical editorial team that even today continues to distinguish itself for its efficiency and quality, as is shown by the institute's growing number of publications. In addition, Jorge Carpizo fostered the development of several transcendent collective works. Some were published during his tenure as director; others were finished shortly afterward; and all continue to appear in new, revised editions. Among them should be mentioned the *Diccionario jurídico mexicano* (Mexican Legal Dictionary), which has been integrated into the *Enciclopedia jurídica mexicana* (Mexican Legal Encyclopedia), published under the tenure of Diego Valadés as the institute's director; and the *Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos. Comentada y concordada* (Constitution of the United Mexican States, Commented and Tallied), whose first edition came out in 1985, when Jorge Carpizo was president of the UNAM.

In October 1984, Jorge Carpizo finished his first six-year period as director of the institute, and, in accordance with his own most cherished belief that reelection to university and public posts was incorrect, he would not seek another appointment. At the end of that year, when the first period of President Rivero Serrano was about to conclude, an important sector of the university community expressed its wish that Dr. Carpizo be designated his successor. Since I was at that time a member of the university's Board of Governors, I was able to perceive during the consultations that numerous

As UNAM president, Carpizo called on the best university experts, and presented in 1986 the best diagnostic analysis ever done of the university's situation.

groups of academics, students, and administrative workers were expressing their support for Carpizo being chosen as president. The Board of Governors convened the candidates mentioned by the university community, and, after listening to their work plans, decided to appoint Jorge as the new president.

It should come as no surprise that Jorge Carpizo took on these high-ranking responsibilities with his customary dedication, enthusiasm, and diligence. I want to mention something very important: President Carpizo's concern with greatly increasing the university's academic quality in its essential functions, research, teaching, and the dissemination of culture. To achieve this ambitious project, he called on the best university experts, and with their support, presented in 1986 the best diagnostic analysis of the university's situation that had ever been done, *Fortalezas y debilidades de la Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México* (Strengths and Weaknesses of the National Autonomous University of Mexico), which was widely disseminated in university circles and nationwide. Based on this diagnosis, the president proposed and the University Council approved a series of concrete, immediate measures for overcoming grave university problems.

However, as has often happened, different student leaders emerged who, with support from outside and using mass assemblies, objected to the measures. They unleashed a movement that culminated with the paralysis of numerous schools, faculties, and institutes, several of which were occupied by force. As a result, both the president and the University Council had to change this ambitious project and adopt other measures of lesser scope to avert greater damage. However, even with the obstacles he had to overcome, President Carpizo achieved transcendent academic advances, widely recognized even today. For all these reasons, he would have had no trouble being appointed for another term. Despite the numerous requests that he accept, he declined to be a candidate for president again.

I have made my best effort to summarize and simplify Jorge Carpizo's academic career, which, I confess, has turned out to be very difficult. I have made no reference to his strictly academic body of work, which was vast and distinguishes him as one of the Spanish language's main theoreticians of constitutional law. His work concluded only with his unfortunate death, and many of his projects were left unfinished. VM

Jorge Carpizo
No Twilight for a National Hero

Diego Valadés*

Jorge Carpizo, a unique figure in Mexican legal thought, died March 30. In the strictest sense of the term, he was an authentic national hero. His entire life was one of exemplary coherence; he never compromised on matters of principle or lost sight of his objectives. Born in Campeche on April 2, 1944, he is quite justly considered one of that state's most outstanding citizens in the twentieth century, and he was always proud of his origins.

His untiring activity kept him studying, writing, and teaching throughout his life. He was a full-time educator. The quality of his work and institutional endeavors cannot be measured numerically, but certain expressions I have culled from the many pieces written on the occasion of his death are useful for estimating it.

His death caused shock waves. Highly representative voices expressed the prevailing grief and the admiration and respect that Jorge Carpizo inspired. At the March 31 memorial service held for him by the Institute for Legal Research, President José Narro made an eloquent, moving speech that justified classifying his predecessor as "a giant of our country" and defined his profile exactly: "A man of great capacity for analysis and synthesis, he constantly rejected insignificant rhetoric. He was always committed to truth and justice,

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A privileged intelligence, an exceptional cultural level, an unbreakable will, and unsurpassable honesty, joined with his firm sense of justice, made Carpizo one of those people who only come around once in a great while.

to secular ethics and values, to work and the defense of the dignity of all persons."

UNAM General Counsel Luis Raúl González Pérez recognized him as a "forger of generations who look to him as their source of inspiration," and Miguel Carbonell showed that he was "a bridge between generations" to whom he transmitted "his creed of love of a job well done, his passion for the university, his unimpeachable moral code, and his commitment to human rights."

Expressions of grief also poured in from the international legal community. "Outstanding in all his public activities and a personality of notable quality and human dimensions," said Jorge Reynaldo Vanossi, president of the National Academy of Moral and Political Sciences of Argentina. Professor Luis Pegoraro of Bologna called him "a beacon of culture and constitutional science."

Among the messages from Brazil, the deans of that country's constitutionalists, Paulo Bonavides and José Afonso da Silva, were effusive in their comments. Professor Bonavides deplored the loss of "a man with a vocation for good, for the law, for justice, for freedom, and for democracy. It is not only Mexico that loses one of its best jurists, but rather all of Latin America." Professor Da Silva emphasized the fact that Jorge Carpizo always carried out all his responsibilities "with the most noteworthy vision of a public man, always leaving his mark of competence and seriousness in his pursuits." The director of the São Paulo School of Law, Marcelo Figueiredo, referred to the loss of "natural jurist and a colossal public man."

Domingo García Belaunde traveled from Peru to Mexico to offer his touching, elegant tribute: "Jorge Carpizo was not only an essential mainstay for me, but for the entire Latin American constitutional milieu." Professor Álvaro Gil Robles, the European Union's first ombudsman, mourned "the passing of a man who has given everything for his homeland, taking great personal risks and offering inestimable services to consolidate Mexican democracy." Jorge Carpizo's absence happens at a bad time for the country. As Manuel Camacho so rightly said, "Jorge is leaving us when he was going to be needed most."

He left a memorable mark on every post he held. With just a few brushstrokes, I can exemplify this: as UNAM counsel general, he recovered three and a half hectares of land that had been occupied by private individuals in the wealthy residential neighborhood of Pedregal; as the director of the Institute for Legal Research, he organized Latin America's first automated legislative informational system; as UNAM president, he built the Humanities Research City, created the National University Prize, promoted the transformation of the Research Technical Councils, and introduced important innovations in the spheres of academia, the budget, publishing, and computer systems. He founded and consolidated the National Human Rights Commission; at the head of the Attorney General's Office, he waged a head-on battle against criminal activities that was memorable for its intensity and successes. In the Ministry of the Interior, he fostered the democratic transformation of the electoral system.

I cannot hide how much I will miss Jorge. The last time I saw him was a few days before his death at the Academic

In Mexico's institutional history, Jorge Carpizo will figure alongside those who dedicated their lives to broadening the horizon of freedoms, improving the condition of the weak, and expanding the world of ideas.

Club with Héctor Fix-Zamudio, a meeting that had become habitual with us. The previous week, my wife Patricia, my son José Diego, and I had enjoyed memorable repast at his home, prepared, as always, by Mary Quiterio. And in March, I was also with him in the company of two friends he loved very much, Carlos Marín and Miguel Lerma. There was happy, cordial conversation that we three will always remember.

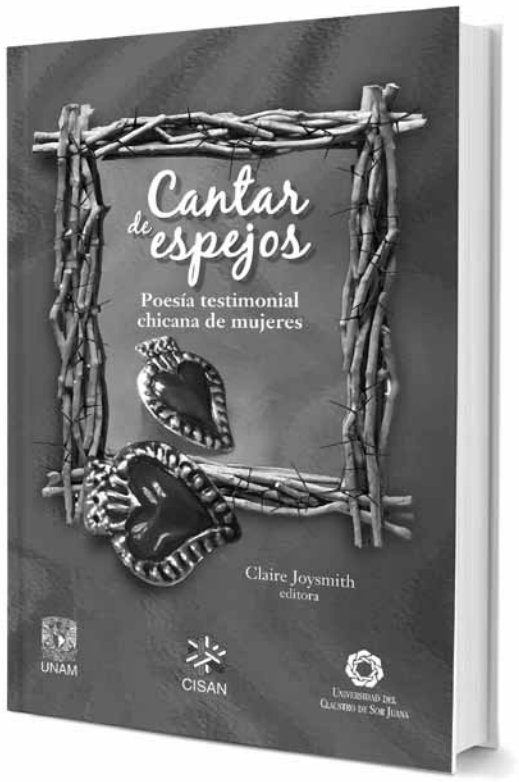
A privileged intelligence, an exceptional cultural level, an unbreakable will, and unsurpassable honesty, joined with his firm sense of justice and democracy made Jorge Carpizo one of those people who only come around once in a great while. His curiosity about science was accompanied by a cosmopolitanism that led him to explore many corners of the globe prompted by his thirst for knowledge. He never practiced tourism as recreation: his travels were to inquire, systematic and serious. His solace was learning.

In 1997, when he represented us as ambassador in France, I visited him with my daughters Jimena and Sofía. He lodged us in the official residence, and one day, he invited me to an informal breakfast with a group of French deputies. Each legislator introduced himself, saying which district he represented. Then, our ambassador spoke to each of them in turn about their respective places of origins, mentioning monuments, public figures, and historic events that very often even the deputies were unaware of.

The best summary of his life is to be found in his own words, to be published posthumously by his brother Carlos Carpizo, and which can be considered the great epitaph of a splendid human being: "I tried to live the best way I could given my circumstances, and to serve Mexico and its national university with devotion….I leave loving with all my strength, convictions, and emotions our country and its —and my— national university."

As a man of conviction, Jorge Carpizo did not hide his affections or his antipathies; that is what all men of his caliber are like. What remains to us of Jorge is a dazzling body of work and the indelible presence of a personality that will continue to inspire respect and admiration. In Mexico's institutional history, Jorge Carpizo will figure alongside those who dedicated their lives to broadening the horizon of freedoms, improving the condition of the weak, and expanding the world of ideas. The years and decades will pass, and Jorge will continue illustrating with his thinking and illuminating with his example. We can say, as Manuel Gutiérrez Nájera did, that he will not die completely.

Jorge Carpizo reached the zenith and stayed there. For posterity, he will remain in that place where his intelligence, his culture, his passion for truth and justice, his love of Mexico and the university, his social commitment, his unswerving character, and his humanitarian conviction put him. Jorge said a swift, serene goodbye; night fell without passing through twilight. VM



Cantar de espejos. Poesía testimonial chicana de mujeres
(Cantar de espejos/Singing Mirrors. Chicana Testimonial Poetry)
Claire Joysmith, ed.
CISAN/Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana
Mexico City, 2012, 222 pp.

Cantar de espejos (Singing Mirrors) is not a book "written in pencil" because, as one poet would say, "[That] is for those / who would / erase."[1] Since editor Claire Joysmith began the project, her full intent was to leave a mark. This is a book we must not "erase" from our library because, in addition to being an excellent selection of the most representative voices of Chicana women's testimonial poetry of the three final decades of the last century, *Cantar de espejos* is the first anthology of Chicana poets translated into Spanish published in Latin America.[2] No one is missing: Lorna Dee Cervantes, Demetria Martínez, Bernice Zamora, Gina Valdés, Pat Mora, Cherríe Moraga, Norma Cantú, Gloria E. Anzaldúa, and many others.

Cantar de espejos is testimony to the honesty, madness, and freedom of women who are daughters or granddaughters of Mexican women, who grew up in the 1970s amidst feminism, Xicanism@, Black Power, and the peace movement.

Chicana women have
a different relationship with each
of the languages and cultures
that traverse them.

These are women of Mexamerica, gazing through the memories of their parents, between Tin Tan romances and the songs of Pedro Infante. Their longings are siren songs of something lost that they never knew, but that the poet recognizes, recreates, and appropriates through her words: poem-testimony, a reflection that seeks a reflection, an eye/voice that hears the duplicities of her identity. As Joysmith herself says, *Cantar de espejos* is an anthology of texts smuggled across the border "back to" Spanish, written by women who in this way give us the wisdom of their mothers and grandmothers:

Never write
with pencil,
m'ija.
Write with ink
or mud,
or berries grown in
gardens never owned,
or, sometimes,
if necessary,
blood.[3]

Claire Joysmith, also the translator of many of the songs included in this compilation, has spent years with her eyes on the bicultural experience, particularly that of Chicana women.[4] Claire is from an English family and, with those blue eyes and "corn-stalk hair," nobody would believe she is 100-percent *chilanga*, or Mexico City-born and bred. She must have seen her own experience reflected, she must have felt like/known herself to be foreign/rejected and "the other" in her own country. Since she received the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture fellowship to do this book, Claire has traveled a long road, fording that wide wild river where so many microcosms swim: academia, writers, agents, publishing houses, budgets.[5] Thanks to her persistence, she finally brought this singing mirror into the light, giving it texture and sonorousness.

One of the first things lost in migration is the original mother tongue, since it is used less and less frequently and more and more "incorrectly." Many stories that used to be told in that language will never be told again. That's why it is so

important to continue to write testimonials, through corridos, poems, songs, and stories to revitalize the collective memory. It doesn't matter if the Spanish sounds "strange." As a poet with a forked tongue, Claire Joysmith appreciates all the nuances of the humor or the image the poets play with, regardless of which language they do it in. She writes, "In these poetic texts, we can also see some spelling variations…like the lack of accents and question or exclamation marks at the start of sentences, deliberate absences in this edition, whose intention is to make clear in the final text in Spanish the Mexican legacy in the U.S. background."[6] One poem reads,

When I couldn't pay the rent
the landlord came to see me.
Y la pregunta, que ofende:
Ain't you Meskin?
How come you speak
such good English?
Y yo le contesto:
Because I'm Spanglo, that's why.[7]

Chicana women have a different relationship with each of the languages and cultures that traverse them. In the case of Spanish, "the pool of deep emotions, silent tracing-scar of its forced crossings and its de-re-territorializations, where the American Dream lives, fails, and creates the worst nightmares;"[8] it is "a safe, homely murmur, compared to the English-to-be-conquered in the outside world. English is also the public language, a weapon of defense, with which to face U.S. society, even when you're part of it. It is a subtle poetic language that also incites certain intimacies…forbidden in Spanish… the language of intricate theoretical bastions…in which her consciousness is forged."[9] In it, "Spanish then constitutes a language/resistance, a celebratory differentiating mark, a banner of forked-tongue speech, a wink of the eye, and a shared code."[10]

The first part of this compilation is made up of two chapters, "Mirrors I" and "Mirrors II," that multiply with pain like the pinch of nostalgia, the —untranslatable?— *saudade*, or, as Joysmith would say, "the nopal thorn in the heart."[11] The first chapter is a reflection of "Borders and Mexicos," because there, up north, multiple little versions of Mexico are created. Tortilla mills, sandwich shops, even tetrapacked hot sauce and tamarind candy with chili powder are sold in the supermarket; but the border between our countries continues to be an arid, violent desert, and also a river, a river that

takes its toll
It hungrily devours brown bodies
The tale of two rivers
Told in two languages
Misunderstood in both.[12]

But it's not two rivers; it's one with two names; in Mexico it's the Río Bravo, but on the other side, in "the other Laredo," they call it the Grande.

Mi Río Grande crawls
towards the Gulf,
with dreams bound
by nightmares
for those bloated
bodies shrouded
in dark weeds
like mummies.[13]

Whether river or desert, the border is an enormous symbol that weighs on them, poets, women, equally: "Llega entonces la niebla / llena de tantas manos / y aves peregrinas, / … acallando la indocumentada angustia / del illegal en su propia tierra" (Then comes the mist / full of so many hands / and migratory birds / … silencing the undocumented anguish of the illegal in her own land).[14] The second mirror (chapter), "Crossings and Pathways," offers the image of the crossroads, that Anzalduano "land-in-the-middle" of being and not being from here nor there, of having grown up wandering the tightrope of the identity limbo; and nevertheless, these poets managed to forge ahead where there was nothing. "Their songs and poetic crossings testify to their singular experiences; they are mirrors in which the past, always in sight, is the harbinger of the present, reminding them that their work is to leave a mark for future generations."[15] The twenty-first century mestiza's path will be easier, since the song of her grandmothers is kept alive, documented, and transferred/mirrored in other languages and geographical spaces.

The history of these poets' ancestors begins and transpires in Mexico, in Spanish; and yet, Mexico shows disinterest or frank contempt for what goes on in the Mexican cultural community in the U.S.

The second part is made up of two songs. The first, "Women, Mothers, Myths, and Icons," is a look at the construction of their persons, gender, and other variations, and the second song and final chapter is the subsequent recounting, a song to themselves in their multiple incarnations, "Rewrites and Re-creations":

> …blessed be the *relámpagos*…
> the illegal citizens of American lit.
> The syntax-leapers.
> The language-benders.
> The cross-pollinators.[16]

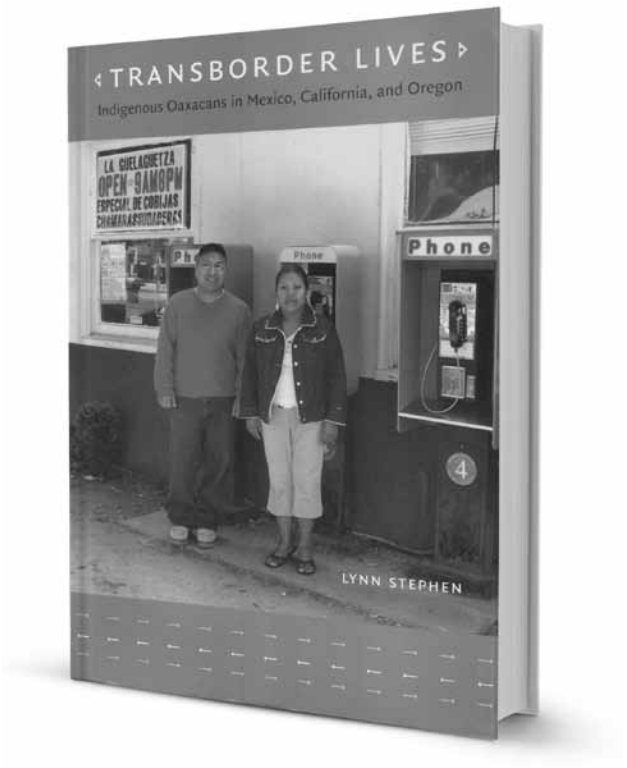
To paraphrase, blessed be the flashing syntax-leapers that Joysmith has included in this scenario of her book that is almost a circus, and offers the reader, with the voice of a carnival barker, women with serpents' tails, transgressors, shameless, reckless, and undoubtedly marked before man and poetry, between the country of their mothers and that of their daughters: women who with their voices stand up/stop themselves to then be destroyed in a constant cycle.

The history of these poets' parents and grandparents begins and transpires in Mexico, in Spanish; and yet, Mexico continues to show disinterest or frank contempt for what goes on in the Mexican cultural community in the United States. *Cantar de espejos* makes it possible for the words of these Xicanas to finally be read by those men and women compatriots of their ancestors, and by others avid for knowledge of the voice and *testimonio* of Chicanas, whose poetry, voice, and history are also ours, that of Mexicans. Without a doubt, Anzaldúa would say that *Cantar de espejos* is "work that matters."[17] VM

Pilar Rodríguez Aranda
Poet, videopoet, writer, and translator

NOTES

[1] Carmen Tafolla, "Marcada" (Marked), in Claire Joysmith, ed., *Cantar de espejos. Poesía testimonial chicana de mujeres* (Mexico City: CISAN/Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, 2012), pp. 194-195. [Editor's Note.]
[2] Despite this, one poem is published in its original form: Inés Hernández-Ávila's "Espejos/Mirrors," which is bilingual. Op. cit., pp. 45-46. [Editor's Note.]
[3] Tafolla, op. cit.
[4] Her research areas are literary, cultural, border, and gender studies, as well as Chicana and Latino/U.S. cultural production and cultural-linguistic translation. Joysmith is the editor, among other books, of *Las formas de nuestras voces: Chicana and Mexicana Writers in Mexico* (Mexico City: CISAN/Third Woman Press, 1995, and *Speaking desde las heridas. Cibertestimonios ransfronterizos/Transborder (September 11, 2001-March 11, 2007)* (Mexco City: CISAN/Whittier College/ITESM, 2008).
[5] The "wide wild river" is an allusion to the Río Grande ("wide") and the Río Bravo ("wild"), the U.S. and Mexican names, respectively, for the river that forms the border between the two countries. [Translator's Note.]
[6] Joysmith, op. cit., p. 29.
[7] Ángela de Hoyos, "La gran ciudad," Joysmith, ed., op. cit., p. 141.
[8] Joysmith, op. cit., p. 23.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., p. 31.
[12] María Herrera-Sobeck, "Historia de dos ríos" (A Tale of Two Rivers), in Joysmith, op. cit., p. 47.
[13] Raquel Valle Sentíes, "Río de sueños malogrados" (River of Lost Dreams), in Joysmith, op. cit., p. 50.
[14] Lucha Corpi, "Indocumentada angustia," in Joysmith, op. cit., p. 96.
[15] Joysmith, op. cit., p. 31.
[16] Sandra Cisneros, "Oración para el nuevo milenio" (Prayer for the New Millennium), in Joysmith, op. cit., p. 189.
[17] Gloria E. Anzaldúa, quoted in Joysmith, op. cit., p. 32.



Transborder Lives. Indigenous Oaxacans In Mexico, California, and Oregon
Lynn Stephen
Duke University Press
Durham and London, 2007, 376 pp.

We know that the only way of understanding globalization and macro-structures is by analyzing the local and micro-social spaces that directly affect subjects. For this reason, the best way to underline the creative responses of Oaxacan migrants for dealing with transborder life is by interweaving the narratives of Mixtec and Zapotec indigenous involved in the great economic and political orders that affect their daily lives.

This idea permeates the conceptual and methodological apparatus of *Transborder Lives. Indigenous Oaxacans in Mexico, California, and Oregon*, which presents a detailed and sometimes intimate ethnographic description based on the stories of those who stay behind and those who leave to vividly recuperate the links between the communities, the rest of Mexico, and the United States. The central idea —beyond the idea of transnationalism that explains the crossing of national borders and the marked mingling of different nationalities— is that the groups of Mexican indigenous migrants cross a great variety of frontiers and limits in their agitated existence: among the most visible are the ethnic, gender, generational, regional, and class borders. From here emerges the term "transborder," a way of naming not only the migrant because of his/her condition, but also the ways of life in intercultural, international, and inter-ethnic contexts.

Among other things, this book allows us to understand the tension between local histories and global structures.

Transborder communities are thought about and recorded by those who live in them and in addition, they invite us to rethink our own way of life and the way in which we do ethnography and write (hi)stories. To understand this transborder historical context, the author proposed writing multiple descriptions in communities in Mexico and the United States, replacing a vision solely centered on each country as a separate entity and thinking of regions as a comprehensive whole.

The researcher's challenge in this book was to conceptualize both the structural conditions that frame migration and labor relations (given the emergence of a consumer market for agricultural products in the United States), human relations, the experiences of workers, couples, and families that cross borders. The geographies of transborder migration are multidimensional, in accordance with structural issues like memories, narratives, and discourses.

This book is not just another study about migration. It goes beyond that to allow us to understand the tension between local histories experienced by specific subjects and global structures. This gives rise to a proposal coherent with the entire work: that of achieving "ethnographic collaborative, activist research" that the author constructs to conclude that it is necessary to pay attention to the research, the agenda, and the consequences for those participating, researchers and migrants alike.

This is a complex model of how to do anthropology that may take longer, but that goes way beyond the simple collection of data and their publication. If anthropologists cannot produce useful results for the people they work with and interest an audience of academics and students, their abil-

Theoretical discussion underlines the limits and advantages of the transnational approach, which keeps the nation at the center instead of the concept of "transborder" lives and communities, which refers to multiple borders.

ity to influence policy and public opinion will continue to decline.

Stephen's study was carried out mainly in two Oaxacan transborder communities, whose residents have migrated internally and internationally for more than three generations: San Agustín Atenango, a town located in the Lower Mixtec region, and Teotitlán del Valle, in the central valleys. For their inhabitants, the norm has been to live in multiple economically, socially, and culturally discontinuous communities. The places inhabited and traveled through are united through individual and collective ritual ties, work cycles, and symbolic resources, through different forms of family and *compadrazgo*.[1] This is nothing new, unchangeable, or unidirectional, since the multiple connections among those who leave, those who stay, and those who return become central to understanding the development of these communities.

Without seeking a comparative perspective, the study of different cases makes it possible to look at a broad spectrum of practices that characterize transborder life, beginning with exploring the numerous dimensions of the lives of Mixtec and Zapotec indigenous who live and move through the different spaces where their communities have spread.

In the text, a theoretical discussion develops around the different perspectives used for the study of migrant indigenous communities. It underlines the limits and advantages of the transnational approach, which keeps the nation at the center of the discussion instead of the concept of "transborder" lives and communities, which refers to multiple borders. We can understand that communities crossing borders is not a new phenomenon; rather, "transborder" refers to the historicity of the migratory process, which transcends the existence of nations by creating a "social field" that makes it possible to visualize the simultaneity of the connections that transborder migrants have in more than one locale. It also makes it possible to understand how the social, the economic, the political, and the religious reach across space and borders, where many laws, institutions, values, and conventions can interact, as well as the meshwork process, taken from Arturo Escobar,[2] that helps us observe how migrants are interconnected through family ties, *compadrazgos*, and transborder forms of association that link up with other organizations and networks in Mexico, in the United States, and in other latitudes across the globe.

In a historic and political context, the social fields of economics, politics, gender, and religion broadly embrace relations between migrants and people living in Mexico and the United States. This can be observed in the transborder communities of Oaxaca that have extended to California and Oregon, as well as the negative and positive impacts this has on the lives of the migrant subjects. This allows Stephen to suggest that Mexico is not only recreated from Mexico, but from the many communities where Mexican migrants have become territorialized, so that the country can be thought of beyond its national boundaries, through the emergence of transborder spaces.

This argument is based on the description of the different kinds of Mexican migrants who have settled in both states to underline the complexity of the places where more than half the inhabitants are of Mexican origin, inserted in relationships between the communities and the social fields of power, like commercial agriculture, migratory policies, hiring workers, transborder working lives in the harvest, domestic labor, gardening, and child care. All this has been documented in life histories of migrants who have been inserted into the labor structure of the United States in different ways: the Mixtec migrants through contractors in agriculture and the Zapotecs in the service sector in the cities.

This book analyzes Mexico's structural economic adjustment and its impact on the economy in rural communities. The history of Mixtec migration is tied to government policies for the Mexican countryside after World War II, the importation of agricultural products, and the development of agricultural production in the north of the country. Understanding the economic history of Mexico after the 1980s is essential to be able to comprehend the acceleration of migration in the communities studied. The specificities of domestic labor done by Zapotec women migrants are related to the characteristics of global cities and the drastic increase in the female work force in the United States. There, for working U.S. American mothers who are professionals to be successful in their careers, they must leave their children in the care of Zapotec women and purchase agricultural products that have been harvested and processed by Mixtec migrants.

This creates a racially segmented labor structure, a racism that can be seen in two phenomena: the *invisibility* of the indigenous on the farms and as domestic workers, and the *illegal status* of the workers who have been inserted into the fields of power, like commercial agriculture. This gives rise to a huge paradox linked to recent ideas about immigration policies, which, together with the integration of the U.S. and Mexican economies, have impelled the increase in undocumented migrants.

The concept of "illegal Mexicans," a historic construction, implies racial issues linked to surveillance of migrants and their position in the social structure of the United States, since it is taken for granted that these people are dark skinned and undocumented. When these categories are internalized, they give rise to migrants being treated according to their appearance and to surveillance mechanisms developing because it is presumed their status is illegal/criminal.

Stephen concludes that the border is present in migrants' memories and identities regardless of where they are or their legal status. They cross the border, but they must remain invisible to seem like they have not. Alternative identities are created, fake documents, new names; they play other roles like gender roles; they resort to varied means of communication with their families of origin; social organizations are built. The border moves with people, and they move across the border.

To understand the contradictions of today's globalization, Stephen reflects on the metaphor proposed by Homi Bhabha of the juxtaposition of the limits and possibilities generated by the globalization of capital, culture, migration, and politics.[3] This can be understood as the co-existence of

1) the integration of the U.S. and Mexican economies, immigration, and other government and corporate policies that result in a significant stratification in both countries and increased poverty in the lowest sectors of society; and
2) the increase in the flow of persons in the borders and of their political and cultural presence manifested in social movements, cultural production, demands of citizenship, and an ethnic differentiation beleaguered on many sides in the transborder context.

Now is the moment in history to inter-relate the structural limits imposed by global relations of political and economic power with the possibilities created by the increased movement of persons within and across borders and the recomposition of the local, regional, national, bi-national, and transborder spaces that results from that. It is for this reason that in the generation of knowledge, people seek to avoid conceptual dichotomies by using integrating concepts that facilitate understanding —also of a transborder kind— of legality and citizenship; work, gender, and family relations; and ethnicity and grass roots organization. The concepts proposed in this book are transborder lives and communities, the meshwork, the social field, cultural citizenship, and ethnicity. They offer ways of understanding the significant social, economic, cultural and political relationships that migrants are building in the era of neoliberal globalization and the new imperialism.

This work offers ways of understanding the significant social, economic, cultural and political relationships that migrants are building in the era of neoliberal globalization and the new imperialism.

In every study emerges a question. In this case, it is about the kind of emigration policy that will make the most sense for decreasing the risks migrants and transborder communities run, as well as the recognition and adjustment of the status of a large number of persons who are in the United States and contribute economically, socially, culturally, and politically in both countries. This implies rethinking the policies to militarize the border and paying attention to the criminal gangs who are the ones really controlling the main border points. VM

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NOTES

[1] *Compadrazgo*, strictly speaking, is the institutional social relationship between godparents and parents; speaking more generally, it can refer to close ties of solidarity. [Translator's Note.]

[2] Arturo Escobar, "Actors, Networks, and New Knowledge Producers: Social Movements and Paradigmatic Transition in the Sciences," in Boaventura de Sousa Santos, ed., *Conhecimento prudente para uma vida decente* (Porto, Portugal: Afrontamento, 2003), pp. 605-630.

[3] Homi K. Bhabha, "Scrambled Eggs and a Dish of Rice: W.E.B. Du Bois's 'Dark Princess,'" in *A Global Measure* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, forthcoming).