



**Justicia internacional. Ideas y reflexiones**

(International Justice. Ideas and Reflections)

*Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla*

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**D**r. Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla launched her book *Justicia internacional. Ideas y reflexiones* (International Justice. Ideas and Reflections), published by the UNAM's Center for Research on North America, during the academic activities surrounding the opening of the doctoral pro-

gram in international security and the creation of the School of International Studies, formerly a department, at the Mexico North Anáhuac University.

This prestigious Mexican researcher has written an academic work of high quality, worthy of the thinking that we

all need to contribute in order to make the first quarter of the twenty-first century fruitful.

Although the study of international relations theory occupies a privileged place in any undergraduate international relations program, very few of the future internationalists comprehend its fundamental importance. And, when due attention is paid to the issue, very few successful attempts are made to exit traditional paradigms and sketch new routes to search for better opportunities for the human community.

In other words, although the international system has changed, many authors abuse clichés and abominable extrapolations, applying incorrect paradigms to unprecedented circumstances that demand new ways of dealing with them.

The book *Justicia internacional* is obligatory reading for training any scholar in international relations committed to having a positive impact on the transformation of contemporary society and offering elements for change today and for future generations.

There seems to be no other way forward. More than ever, we live in a chaotic, violent, unjust world, but after a century of scholarly work in international relations, we have accumulated more knowledge in the area than any other generation. This has made us more aware of our own deficiencies and limitations, and this work can make us more committed to responsible change.

The volume is the result of in-depth research based on a meticulous review of classical texts and contemporary theories of international relations. It is a reflection for paving the way to a world with limits on injustice, avoiding romantic Utopias or dark pessimism. This 11-chapter work must be appreciated through its various contributions.

The first will seem obvious and, therefore, that it does not require mention, but it is a virtue all too infrequent in contemporary works about international relations theories: the author situates her work in the inner depths of globalization, with all its crude realities and complex challenges. These include economic dependence, financial interdependence, technological interconnectivity, social inequalities, guaranteed power clashes, assured intricate conflicts, and momentary, and therefore, insufficient, forms of cooperation.

Given the premise that a federalist theory of justice allows us to aspire to establishing equal relations that will not only be rational, but also fair, and will promote order and cooperation, Márquez-Padilla seeks to complement what John Rawls dealt with insufficiently in two of his texts, *A Theory of Justice* (1971) and *The Law of Peoples* (1999). The aim,

inspired in institutionalist theory, is to force all nations, equal to each other, to establish a conversation so that they can come to a minimum consensus acceptable to all parties, in which they can act according to the agreements that come out of that consensus.

Thirdly, while it is not only necessary, but urgent, to talk about international justice, it should not be done exclusively from the Western—that is, European or U.S. American and also neoliberal, supposedly superior—interpretation of culture. The author suggests a moral compass for achieving a balance between economic growth and social justice, or international justice in which a common responsibility is recognized as inclusive to avoid conflict.

Every attempt to approach the Kantian idea of perpetual peace runs the risk of a minimum dose of idealism, a tendency the author corrects by insisting on concepts like “well-ordered societies,” “acting rationally” by not leaving aside what, as even Rawls did when he referred to the “outlaw states,” are an important part of the international scenario vulnerable to unending injustice.

Changing our present circumstances is no easy matter, but, as has already been pointed out, it cannot be postponed upon risk of imminent extinction.

The community of humankind has limited itself to being a lethargic witness to the multiple scenes of extermination in absolutely all the world’s latitudes in recent months—granted, with different causes, but all in response to a thirst for justice, proof of the repudiated injustice that prevails all over the global village.

Márquez-Padilla planted a tree; she raised three children to become good people; and today she presents us with a new publication that aims to contribute its grain of sand to the debate about how to conceive of new mechanisms to prevent the propagation of conflict.

For any professional, teacher, or undergraduate or graduate student of international relations, this work focuses on hope and arduous work. More than a book about the theories of international relations, we have here a work by a humanist thinker for the twenty-first century. We recognize in it the Tulane sociology teacher and the MIT political scientist who calls on us to carry out a profound reflection to foster the changes that humanity demands. ■■■

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