Our Voice

Thirty Years

Graciela Martínez-Zalce

In August 2019, we began a series of activities to make the importance of the CISAN's production of knowledge in North American studies even more visible than it already was.

Originally created as the Center for Research on the United States of America in the year the Berlin Wall fell and the Cold War ended, it was an innovative step in the university. It recognized the fundamental importance for Mexico of having a deep understanding of U.S. society, economy, and ways of doing politics domestically and abroad. This was clearly even more important in the context of the signing of NAFTA, when the center established our country's first Canadian studies area.

This special issue of *Voices of Mexico* is one of those commemorative activities. Since the magazine was created in the CISAN to disseminate our country's thinking and culture through —as its name implies— our voices, in many cases university voices, in order to eradicate simplistic stereotypes, we thought that it was

vital that our voices from the CISAN express our opinions about the development of the region over the last three decades.

The way we approach our object of study has changed. Initially, the then-multidisciplinary research was divided into geographical areas: the projects fit into Mexico-U.S. studies, U.S. studies, and Canadian studies.

Historical and geopolitical circumstances made it clear that the mere territorial approach did not describe the wealth of research being carried out. So, the areas were then designated within three broad themes: strategic studies, globality, and integration.

However, over the last decade, our work's growing interdisciplinary nature has led the projects to move in those three areas situated in seven flexible lines of research that often overlap: security and governability; economic, integration, and development processes; migration and borders; cultural identities and processes; social actors, structures, and processes; and political ideas and institutions. Through these lines of research, we are able to cover the complexity of relationships established not only among nations, but also among the communities they host.

This special issue of *Voices of Mexico* shows how we have changed and who we are today. It is a kind of patchwork, with combined swatches of different colors, patterns, and textures based on an underlying theme that results in a harmony based on contrast.

The CISAN is not only the projects developed in these lines of research and that then result in articles, books, and academic events like colloquia and conferences. The technical-academic areas complement the research, precisely by making it possible to make that knowledge visible through dissemination. The CISAN is, of course, the people who do their work in it and whose personalities and styles can be found in the articles in this issue, some through the analyses of the different moments that stand out over these three decades, others through theoretical reflection, and still others through the life stories that mesh with the development of their research that is also a life project.

As another way of celebrating, we share with our readers works by artists who offer a different vision of the themes we deal with in the social sciences and the humanities. This means that our art section is also a remembrance of our activities. In addition, this commemorative issue celebrates the close, academically fruitful personal relationships that the CISAN has maintained with colleagues from universities in the United States and Canada.

The issue is also special because it is being published during the Covid-19 pandemic, a time that has forced us to work differently. For that reason, since we cannot distribute it physically, we hope that its virtual version reaches our collaborators and readers in time so that they can celebrate with us as they work. VM

Graciela Martínez-Zalce
Director of the Center for Research on North America

Graciela Martínez-Zalce

Mónica Verea*

Remembering the Creation of The CISEUA-CISAN

A Historical Recounting Of the Creation of the CISAN

I am proud to celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the foundation of the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA), later to become the Center for Research on North America (CISAN). And I am honored to have been charged with creating them and heading them for their first eight years. I take this opportunity to explain how they were created and consolidated.

As the founding coordinator of the Master's Program in Mexico-United States Studies, at what was then the National School of Higher Studies in Acatlán (ENEP Acatlán), the first teaching program in Mexico —or, to my knowledge, in the United States— to concentrate on this bilateral relationship, I was always on the lookout for specialists in U.S. politics, economy, society, and culture to teach classes. Unfortunately, there were very few "Americanists," and even fewer dedicated to the study of different aspects of bilateral relations. So, I began to search through different UNAM institutions; that led an interdisciplinary group to organize the First Mexico and Latin America *vis-à-vis* the United States Congress in 1987. At that time, it became clear that the study of the United

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The study of the U. S. is a priority for Mexican scientific research, and the UNAM has singular potential for playing a key role in institutionalizing the analysis of the region using a plural, inter- and multi-disciplinary approach.

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The Humanities Coordinating Office asked the interdisciplinary group to formulate a project to create a study center on the United States. In August 1988, I enthusiastically and happily accepted the honor of UNAM Rector Jorge Carpizo's appointment as the person in charge of creating a regional center.

In the beginning, the project was a program; later, in February 1989, the University Council approved it as the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA). A few months later, I was appointed its director, and since then it has gradually incorporated academic personnel from different institutions such as the Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE) and El Colegio de México (Mexico College). The CISEUA boasted academics from different disciplines whose research proposed diverse nuances and perceptions about the same object of study, the United States, considering it as part of the North American region, to achieve greater comprehension of the complex regional reality.

In the early 1990s, we saw growing debate about the possible creation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). That prompted me to begin the paperwork needed to include the study of Canada in our institution. So, in May 1993, the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) was created to include research on Canada and its relationship with the region's other two protagonists. If I encountered great difficulties in finding specialists in the United States, doing the same for Canada was even more arduous and complicated, and it was necessary to motivate academics to delve into the study of this country, until then unknown to Mexicans.

For the eight years I was the director of CISEUA-CISAN, we had important economic support from inside the UNAM for the creation of research positions, to encourage collective projects, organize congresses, and to create an important library about the region. We also received almost US$1 million in support from the MacArthur Foundation, which rewards unique/brilliant projects, as well as from the Hewlett Foundation, Mexican banks, and the embassies of both the United States and Canada. In this period, we were also charged with renewing the publication of the magazine *Voices of Mexico*, which has won a great many prizes and honors for its excellence. The journal *Norteamérica*, created later, registered with the National Council for Science and Technology (Conacyt), has received many awards and is recognized nationwide; today, specialists from many international academic institutions send their essays to be published in it because of its international prestige. Lastly, in 2004, in order to ensure that all the researchers participate in a teaching project, we began the classroom and long-distance diploma course "Multidisciplinary Perspectives about North America," which I have coordinated since its foundation. This course has educated many holders of bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as professionals who need to update their expertise in the many topics related to the region from different disciplines and perspectives.

The CISAN has continued to become stronger and stronger daily and has created a highly recognized institutional space nationally and internationally. All of us at CISAN, the staff, former directors, as well as the current director,[1] all of whom have invested so much effort into this important project, are very proud of this. Today, the researchers specialize in different topics indispensable for understanding the North American region and the impact they have on bilateral and trilateral relations. VM

Lucas Jackson / REUTERS

Juan Carlos Barrón Pastor*
Oliver Santín Peña**
Roberto Zepeda Martínez***

Topics and Challenges in 30 Years Of North American Studies
A Three-way Conversation

For 30 years, the CISAN has had a central objective: generating original, cutting-edge knowledge that explains the political, economic, social, and cultural dynamics of the North American Region. Its mission and object of study have become important because phenomena like globalization and the creation of regional blocs of countries have strengthened and become hegemonic. The center has also transitioned through different visions about what research should be, and more particularly, what research about North America should be. Its four women directors and one male director have each contributed her/his own style and contributed to enriching the pluralist, multi-diverse vocation that has characterized it since its foundation.

Pluralism and diversity may well be the values that are the common thread running through the scientific work of a center that took on the task of using an interdisciplinary approach to studying a concrete reality, countering to a certain extent the paradigms that existed three decades ago in the social sciences and international relations: the creation of North America as a regional, supranational unit, which even then already displayed high levels of interdependence among its three countries.

Pluralism and diversity were the research horizons. This has led to creating a very heterogeneous academic community, whose members come from very different

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disciplines and training backgrounds and also defend very different theoretical and epistemological positions, using considerably dissimilar methodologies and approaches. "We know about the commitment we have to the country, which encourages us not only to cultivate ideological pluralism, but also pluralism in the methodologies that can be used at the center. And, of course, all its members enjoy freedom of research, of selecting the epistemological approaches that best fit their topics and aims," says Dr. Juan Carlos Barrón, a researcher at CISAN since 2012 and today its academic secretary.

In this context, *Voices of Mexico* began a conversation with some of the researchers who most recently joined the CISAN, or, in other words, with some of the representatives of the new generation of specialists who have come in to bring a breath of fresh air and consolidate with their contributions the trajectory of an academic institution that posed very complex challenges for itself from the very beginning. One of these researchers is Dr. Barrón, a specialist in the media in North America and promotor of what has been called critical theory as a theoretical-methodological tool for analyzing social phenomena. The second participant in the conversation is Oliver Santín Peña, the coordinator of the Strategic Studies Area, already a renowned expert on Canada, particularly its political and party systems, one of whose most recent contributions has been the study of the specific form that the Westminster system adopted in the Canadian Parliament. The third voice in this conversation is Roberto Zepeda Martínez, who inaugurated the line of inquiry about paradiplomacy at the center, and who today is one of the most outstanding Mexican scholars studying the role played by subnational actors in world and North American governance. Zepeda's most recent book analyzes precisely the multiple relationships —above all economic, but also political, social, and cultural— that Canadian provinces undertake with their counterparts, the states in the United States and Mexico, and with equivalent sociopolitical actors in other parts of the world. We exchanged views with all three of them about the CISAN's achievements in the last 30 years, as well as about the expectations, pending tasks, and relevance of continuing to promote this strategic area of study.

VM (Voices of Mexico): The celebrations and festivities surrounding the CISAN's 30-year anniversary lead us to retrospectively analyze the research that has been done here. You joined the center relatively recently and are collaborating with new voices, innovative topics, and different points of view about the research. In that sense, could you please tell us how you perceive the center's past, current, and future research from the viewpoint of your topics?

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RZ (Roberto Zepeda): I would start by underlining that in the last 30 years, from 1989 to 2019, there have also been huge changes globally. I would emphasize the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the end of the Cold War, the rise of globalization, and the creation of regional blocs, which is the case of North America, which in this three-decade period negotiated, signed, and put into operation NAFTA. This allowed certain actors who previously had not been part of international relations to play a more outstanding role; this is very clear, for example, for Canada's provinces. I think that these big transformations in the region allow us as researchers to identify and analyze these kinds of dynamics, and, in my particular case, subnational dynamics, as an important part in relations among Mexico, the United States, and Canada. We didn't have this kind of approach 30 years ago, and now we do. Now, we stress these subnational relations more.

JCB (Juan Carlos Barrón): These actors are also present in my line of investigation. Roberto and I both participate in a seminar about emerging actors. We call them that because, when North America, NAFTA, etc., were born, people often supposed —above all the public— that the region was made up of three monolithic countries. However, Mexico has a huge diversity of cultures and actors, whether they be political, shall we say, state or public, and private or business. And the same is true for Canada and the United States. In that sense, Roberto's work and mine complement each other in that seminar, where we can observe how certain interactions, for example between Arizona and Sonora or between California and

Baja California, and others, with a certain logic —let's say, a twentieth-century logic— would have been considered actions by local actors. Actually, today, they have an impact on the international sphere, and emerge forcefully as the integration of the region deepens. And this isn't just economic integration, but also cultural integration. Recently, someone asked me if we could make suggestions about Mexico's northern border. I responded by asking where we would situate that: in Tijuana, in Illinois, in East Los Angeles, or in the territory where agricultural day-laborers work in Canada. That is, we're increasingly aware that this idea of the three monolithic states that interact with each other doesn't really correspond to the region's complexity; and that other actors, like the Canadian provinces, or U.S. and Mexican state governments, but also, for example, media corporations that have promoted telecommunications, the social networks, the Internet, television channels, etc., also participate in this regional governance.

VM: The same thing happens in art, for example, the collective of painters and graphic artists from Tijuana with San Diego. They are much closer to each other than to New York, which is where the galleries, the exhibitions are, and they're both very far away from Mexico City. This is very interesting because it touches on all spheres of activity, and I imagine that it will also promote new research epistemologies.

RZ: That's right. That's why I think that what this shows is that the current context is very different from the one that existed 30 years ago, and that necessarily has to affect research agendas from different approaches. It seems to me that the CISAN is fulfilling that objective in a very diverse, interdisciplinary way. This identifies us as a center that enriches the publications about North America and, above all shows that our researchers contribute to a better understanding of that reality. I'd also add to what Juan Carlos said that this new group of actors contributes to a new form of governance, another of the fundamental issues in my project, and that today there's also a more complex international system, different from the one we had: we have gone from the bipolar Cold War world to a unipolar world commanded by the United States in the 1990s, and in the last two decades, to a multipolar world. That's why this complex, heterogeneous international system, as Dr. Barrón pointed out, allows other actors to intervene in international relations. Today, they go beyond the foreign policies designed by central governments; that's what I have called governance. This model is replicated on other levels, even at the UNAM: today, our university is part of an intense interaction with other universities abroad through agreements that allow us to also interact with professors from the United States and Canada. With them, we have common research agendas and also generate publications from Mexico, which are obviously complemented by the projects originating in Canada and the United States. Because of all of this, the CISAN has become one of the regional leaders in studies of North America.

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JCB: In my opinion, most of the researchers (both men and women) at CISAN have sought to apply the most cutting-edge innovative methodologies, and epistemologies in general. In my case, the first challenge I faced was to realize that, even though my research dealt with a very important issue, the communications media, the methodologies available were in different disciplines individually, like communications, politics, geopolitics, etc. But, that comprehensive, interdisciplinary vision that the CISAN requires for understanding regional space in a complex way did not exist. In that sense, my first challenge was to design a new theoretical framework. It was very important to develop it because I was faced with a practical problem: I did not have a clear methodology for studying the media. This new theoretical and methodological proposal, which I continue to work with and I have called "critical socio-cybernetics," is basically the fusion of two epistemologies that usually operate separately and which I am now attempting to merge. On the one hand there's socio-cybernetics, the application of systems theory to the understanding of how social systems are led. This is because, for me, it was important to prove that the system of communications media functions with a leadership; it is run; that certain factors weigh more for things

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to go in one direction or another. On the other hand, I also based myself on some of the axioms and postulates of "critical theory," a series of diverse, heterogeneous authors who attempt to understand how power relations operate in different contexts. In this way, I use variations of the dialectic method, of psychoanalysis, or schizoanalysis, and this helps us get the idea that the communications media are, on the one hand, an immense communications network, as systems theory postulates, but that we cannot view as a non-political system. Rather, they have broad influence, an agenda, a will that they impose on us and, at the same time, that integrates us little by little as a region, precisely because of the weight of the U.S. actors. This is because, more and more, both Canada and Mexico are huge consumer markets for U.S. cultural products, but also, things become more complex, since, increasingly, Mexican actors emerge who want to participate in that market, such as the film industry, photography, or art galleries. Paradoxically, if we look at this from a purely economic perspective, we could get things wrong by thinking that we're dealing with the domination of the region. But, when we observe carefully, we realize that there's a dialectical interaction in which, of course, the relationships of power are not even. But processes of Latinization and Mexicanization definitely exist, not only in territorial terms, but also in terms of cultural products or of how the Internet is used (web pages, memes, movies, etc.). What we have in the last analysis is a huge diversity of issues that make up the media system, thus creating a series of theoretical and methodological problems. In my case, this has served to collaborate with other colleagues in our center who have already ventured into trying to apply some of the methodological hypotheses that I work with; and so, we get a look at how they function and we adjust them as we move forward. The important thing regarding our research at CISAN is that a wide range of approaches exists. This means that next to very orthodox work and more stable or well-known research methods, we also find research projects that try to create new routes to not only understand phenomena as such, but also to propose specific ways of understanding the region's concrete issues.

VM: Roberto, we know you have highlighted and would agree with two very important points about the evolution of research at the CISAN: one is the interrelation of regional actors as an object of study, their transversal nature; and the other is interdisciplinarity as a methodological approach. These two aspects were most certainly difficult to conceive of and implement in the early days of the center, perhaps because the paradigms of the era did not require them as much since these issues were not on the table for discussion.

RZ: Yes, I think that a great deal of freedom exists to do research at the center, to recombine diverse quantitative research methods from an interdisciplinary framework that enriches the publications, to understand social phenomena, which are very complex, in the framework of Mexico, U.S., Canadian relations. I think that, in this sense, the center fulfills its function of producing knowledge for understanding these dynamics that characterize the different regional relationships: Mexico-United States, United States-Canada, Canada-Mexico. North America is a varied mosaic in which an analysis from a national perspective would leave us with many doubts. That's why it's important to look at what's happening in the regions, the cities, the states, with a magnifying glass. California isn't the same as Texas, even though both are border states and two of the United States' biggest economies. But, they have very different characteristics from other equally important state or regional economies like New York, Illinois, or Florida, or the Great Lakes economic region. That's why I've opted for using an interdisciplinary approach that goes beyond the theories and tools available in the disciplines of international relations, which can sometimes become a straitjacket for understanding those processes. I also use an eclectic perspective that combines different disciplines with the aim of answering the main questions put forward in my research project.

VM: Undoubtedly the issue of emerging actors in the North American regional dynamic is one of the innovations that the CISAN can boast of. This is an issue that contributes new ways of understanding phenomena and even new terms that didn't exist 30 years ago. In this con-

ceptual evolution, Oliver Santín, it seems that you have strengthened and made important contributions to the study of Canada. How would you describe this evolution of Canadian studies at the CISAN? How did you become part of it, with what project?

OS (Oliver Santín): I first came into contact with the CISAN in 1994 and 1995, when NAFTA had only recently come into effect. It was then that the center decided to take Canada more into consideration, which coincided with my interest in doing a bachelor's thesis about Canada and its relations with Central America. Since then, I've observed how the center has dealt with more specific topics in different fields about Canada. Since I joined the CISAN in 2011, we have sought to institutionally diversify studies about Canada, so that they aren't dealt with solely from a political perspective or as a regional actor. Some colleagues who recently joined CISAN, whose objects of study are not mainly focused on Canada, do touch on Canadian studies from different viewpoints. I myself have focused particularly on the study of the Canadian political system, since I'm convinced that to understand how that country's political operators function, beyond what we see in the media or from a non-specialized academic viewpoint, we must of necessity know the origins of how they carry out that political operation. That's why, recognizing that for some time now studies have been done on the issue, my efforts have concentrated above all in trying to analyze Canada's parliamentary structure, which is very complicated. Parliamentarianism is a very old system, but it's also very complex. That's why understanding its customs and traditions is important, but above all, what's noteworthy about that system is that, despite its being very old, it is still relevant, and it even modernizes constantly, adapting with certain facility to change. It's very important to know about Canada's parliamentarianism, since all Westminster parliamentary systems basically operate in the same way; and that's the interesting thing, because, by studying the Canadian system, you also learn how the British, Australian, New Zealand, and all Commonwealth systems work in general. That's one of my my objectives: fully understanding and disseminating the background about Canada's political system so researchers who follow can concentrate on interpreting their current realities. It seems to me that it's a complicated task because it demands that you have a command of topics like the Commonwealth system or British common law, and you have to study them in their original sources.

For these and other reasons, I think we're pioneers in Canadian studies in Mexico. For example, we generated a conceptual framework; we created concepts like the "Canadianologist," that even Canadians were somewhat surprised at. They're concepts that we handle quite naturally because we've worked on the issue for more than 25 years. In short, the work I've done in the Canada area is, above all, creating conceptual and theoretical frameworks. That is to say, we're just setting out on a road that includes many opportunity areas and possibilities for study, which would require the effort of many colleagues. And we'll move along it little by little. I'm sure that in the future, the center will not only remain in the avant-garde of Canadian studies, but will grow significantly, because these are part of what the country needs, and, in addition, they are very linked to studies about the United States.

VM: How has the research you do —in many senses pioneering research— had an impact on our relations with the Canadian government, with the embassy, with colleagues from other universities?

OS: The value added we have at CISAN is that we deal with domestic U.S. and Canadian issues from a Hispanic —and especially a Mexican— perspective, and that definitely helps us look at things from another point of view. From the conversations I've had with government officials or other scholars of Canadian politics, I have seen that my ideas are very revealing to them. The concepts we've developed, the positions I hold, my visions of the future, are usually very well accepted. But that's not because I'm some kind of magician, but because it's a very traditionalist system, it leaves very little room for improvisation. That is, Canada and the United States are politically very predictable.

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Making statements about the U.S. or Canadian political system from Mexico surprises academics and other social actors in those countries very much. This is, first, because they have a tendency to be egocentric; they think, "We study ourselves; nobody knows about our political systems like we do." I argue that, of course, this has a certain degree of validity, since we could say, for example, that nobody knows the Mexican Revolution better than Mexican historians. But the fact is that there are also U.S. and European historians who are very good at their jobs, perhaps precisely because they have that different viewpoint that distances them from the national researchers. That characteristic is value added that our center, our university, contributes to U.S. and Canadian studies. The proof is that many academic bodies invite us to participate in projects; and more and more media outlets and other actors see us as a reference point precisely because, since its origins, the CISAN has been an innovative, unique academic institution that has always been open to different branches of study. Others here have already pointed out the multidisciplinary activity as the center's methodological vocation. I also think that something that has helped a great deal in its evolution is that it doesn't stay bogged down in the same issues and the same approaches. In fact, I've seen that it reinvents itself with each change in direction, and this opens up new opportunities. This isn't a weakness. On the contrary, I think this characteristic is an added value because when you have colleagues from different disciplines, the new academic authority who comes on the scene has assorted elements available to her/him that he or she can use to move her/his project forward. In that sense, the center is reinventing itself constantly, and, even though it's small, it has big, big potential. Personally, I think it has a spectacular future.

JCB: I'd like to address just how very deep-rooted stereotypes can be. For example, in other university spaces, it's still common to hear people talk about U.S. citizens as "North Americans." Well, aren't Canadians North Americans? I think that this helps us to show that at this center we've built our distinctions. We know when we're referring to Canada it's not the same to talk about Quebec as it is to talk about Toronto, about Ontario, Vancouver, Alberta, or Saskatchewan. This is the case, for example, of Oliver Santín, who is leading a project that allows us to deal with these different visions about orthodox and conservative political functioning in Canada. In my case, I joined this project through the study of how the Canadian media system functions, as a system that is completely different from the U.S. system. Perhaps it resembles the British system a little, but it also has its particularities because they have television, radio, a publishing industry that works for them and they're supported from the provinces. They're not just one more element inside a corporation with capitalist interest, like what happens in the United States. Rather, they try to be similar to certain cultural projects that exist elsewhere, like in France or the United Kingdom. And that's why it's noteworthy that I can join a project of this kind through the construction of a frame of reference that allows us to deal with problems not only from the political sphere, but also from the spheres of the environment, elections, the media, and cultural products and industries. This puts us on the cutting edge in practical terms of this kind of studies. The other aspect that differentiates us from others is the CISAN's identity as an innovative space. It makes us different from other regional research studies centers even in the UNAM itself, that focus their attention on things that have already happened —we do this, of course, when necessary—, a focus that means that they concentrate on issues from the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries as a priority. The CISAN has managed to take advantage of this avant-garde vocation in its very issues, and, for that reason, its members continually appear in newspapers, on news programs, and at press conferences. Journalists call them for analyses, for example, of what is happening regarding the U.S. presidency in real time, or what's going on in U.S. and Canadian elections. So, not only do we recognize the importance of work like Oliver Santín's, which allows us to create a historic precedent and understand how certain dynamics have operated from their beginnings, but at the same time we respond to the challenge of analyzing what's going on, for example, this very week. This media participation of the CISAN also distinguishes us as an innovative center. We're not a center looking only backward, which is undoubtedly

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necessary for research, but we're also responding to the challenge of taking the risk of contemporary analysis, a prospective analysis. This interaction with journalists and with the events as they happen pressures us to come up with other ways of doing research. It poses new questions about our own work that force us to maintain a lively dialogue with today's society. On the other hand, our connection to other schools at the university, with the students, also allows us to dialogue with young people who were born just 18 years ago, before events like the fall of the Berlin Wall, or even before the destruction of the Twin Towers in New York, and for whom, then, these events seem remote. That's why at the CISAN, we have also decided to innovate with new communication strategies. How do you explain the historic changes taking place in the United States or Canada to someone who doesn't know that Justin Trudeau comes from a long family line of politicians or who doesn't know that Donald Trump made his money in real estate, but began his television career in U.S. wrestling? These kinds of questions help us to keep our capacity for dialogue fresh, because these young people question us with their freshness, their criticisms.

RZ: I'd like to add that the presence of CISAN in the media speaks to its fulfilling a leadership role, not just in the scientific, teaching community, but also in the mass media, and now, also in the electronic media. Clearly, this also speaks to the quality of our research and that we have the ability to transmit it to radio listeners and TV viewers, who are a heterogeneous audience. In that sense, the pertinent question is how do we get that knowledge out there to all audiences, because we don't just give an opinion: we generate public opinion through knowledge obtained through scientific research. This guarantees the validity of CISAN members' comments during elections or international crises. The fact that we're sought out already indicates the high level we've achieved.

Stephane Mahe / REUTERS

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Our activities and publications are also complemented with teaching. For example, I give classes on North America and international relations, and I use my publications based on my work at the center for my courses. This way, the center contributes on a daily basis to the university's main substantive activities (research, teaching, dissemination, and training of human resources). Our university, the UNAM, is the most important in Latin America. This helps position the CISAN as a leading center, for example, in the acquisition of bibliography. This is fundamental because it generates an academic debate that the CISAN is part of, because not only do we disseminate our research, but we also actively participate in international journals because we publish in English. In fact, our academic journal *Norteamérica* includes articles in English, which facilitates that you're read by other researchers in different parts of the world, who then cite your work.

OS: I think that we should take into account that belonging to a public university implies that there's a very important social commitment. So, the fact that the immense majority of the material we consult is in English speaks precisely to the result of a public investment to the benefit of society, because most young people don't read English, but might be interested in this content, and we can facilitate it for them through our books and articles published in Spanish, analyzing and, above all, interpreting this knowledge generated in other languages, but from our own perspective. It's a commitment that

the university itself has to its potential readers, who first must be its own students and then the general public.

JCB: One thing that should be underlined is that the CISAN supports students in its social service programs;[1] there, they can acquire professional skills related to research and publications. When they work with specialists in the different issues involved in North America, they're motivated to learn English and French. As part of one of the most important universities in Latin America, we must publish in English; in addition, a large part of the informational inputs we use are in that language. But at the same time, it's true that we have a commitment to Mexico's Spanish-speaking community. We almost always think of North America as English-speaking, but it also has an important Spanish-speaking component. In fact, the United States is the country with the second-largest Spanish-speaking population, after Mexico. In a certain way, this discussion connects to the question: Why is it important to study the United States and Canada in Mexico? Why not put more resources into researching other topics apparently more linked to Mexican interests? I would argue that we cannot situate ourselves in the world separately, outside what happens in the United States. What happens to us as a country is to a large extent linked to what happens in the United States and in other parts of the world. That's why situating and understanding the multiple facets of our position in the world is a matter of national interest.

On the other hand, freedom in research allows us, for example, to ensure that at our institutional seminar we see the very diverse forms of posing a single topic. There are those, of course, who present tables, frequencies, variations, and modes inherent to their objects of study, but there are also those of us who focus more on the symbols, the narratives, the representations; and, amidst all of this, we get the unbeatable opportunity of doing plural and interdisciplinary work about the region.

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It's true that there are many U.S. studies centers in the United States itself and many on Canadian issues in Canada. There are also some U.S.-issues centers in Canada and several centers in Canada and the United States that focus on Mexican studies. But, we're the only one in the entire region that does trinational research: we study Canada and the United States and their relations with Mexico, and our colleagues from other centers are always surprised by this perspective. It turns out that they focus almost everything bi-directionally. But we make the effort to delimit the specifically trinational and these phenomena —whatever they are, from how politics works to ratings for a Netflix series— offer us a different, broader view about the North American region.

RZ: I don't want to let the opportunity go by without underlining the atmosphere of freedom that exists at the center to do original, novel research; the atmosphere of respect and tolerance that allows us to generate and participate in an international theoretical and academic debate.

We also have the popular magazine *Voices of Mexico*, published in English, with its international projection, because it's read in other countries and is on line, plus the peer-reviewed journal *Norteamérica*, which includes articles in French, English, and Spanish.

JCB: One of the things I enjoy the most is when I have a chance to shock an audience when they ask me to talk about Latin America and I start by talking about our interaction with Quebec and how to fight this idea that Latin America is only to the south. And then I go on with the statement that there's a Latin America in Canada and another in the United States. This kind of geographic identity is not as clear when we do interdisciplinary studies; in that sense, the case of Canada is quite noteworthy, where, for example, speaking French is an incredibly important element in the Quebec identity, but it's also part of how Canada projects itself to the world. Paradoxically, our interaction with Quebec is so prolific precisely because they're also Latinos. VM

Note

1 The UNAM requires its students to perform social services for six months in order to graduate with a bachelor's degree; this social service can be done in a variety of places, including the CISAN. (Translator's Note.)

Larry Downing / REUTERS

Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla*

Thirty Years at the CISAN: An Academic and Personal Journey

This contribution to the commemorative issue of *Voices of Mexico* dedicated to the CISAN's first 30 years will trace an internal journey to discover the roads —at times twisting and turning, but definitely happy ones— that have led me to my current research. I studied my bachelor's in sociology at the UNAM, an exceptional academic space where I had outstanding teachers like Dr. Víctor Flores Olea, Dr. Arnaldo Córdoba, Dr. Luis Salazar, and Dr. Gustavo Sáinz. I later did a master's degree in sociology at the University of Tulane in New Orleans. There I discovered and consolidated my interest in political sociology, which is why I later asked to be admitted to the Political Science Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where I was accepted. At that renowned university I also had extraordinary teachers: Joshua Cohen and Charles Sabel, who motivated me to participate in academic discussions of the highest level, and with whom I forged close friendships. Both were central figures in my education because of the passion and dedication they brought to each of their classes, and above all because they were two thinkers who have always been on the cutting edge of the production of knowledge in the social sciences. My gratitude to them is immense. I also took classes with prestigious professors like Walter Dean Burnham, Susanne Berger, and Thomas Ferguson. Peter Smith and John Womack, two distinguished teachers at MIT and Harvard respectively, helped me open up perspectives in research. In addition, I had the incomparable opportunity to take class from Noam Chomsky, who introduced me to the inquisitive attitude needed for finding data. Curiously, certain other professors recom-

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The general distrust of the United States also meant that people had misgivings about those of us interested in deepening our knowledge of that country, but it was fundamental to study the social dynamics and historic processes of our neighbor to the north.

mended that I only take courses about Latin America, but I rebelled and signed up for some courses about politics and U.S. political thought. This awakened in me a whole new area of interest. My experience at MIT was wonderful also because of my schoolmates, with whom I enjoyed long hours of memorable conversations. The final result of this adventure was my becoming a doctoral candidate.

It was in that year, 1982, that I returned to Mexico. Almost immediately, I was presented with the marvelous opportunity of being hired by Dr. Germán Pérez del Castillo, at what was then the Center of Political Studies (CEP) of the School of Political and Social Sciences. This filled me with satisfaction, and I will always be profoundly grateful to him for opening the doors to me of our university, the wonderful UNAM. The seminars he organized and the publications he coordinated were the basis for the CEP's very high academic level.

When I began giving classes at the School of Political and Social Sciences, I centered on political theory courses, a topic that has always fascinated me. I should mention that when I was pregnant with my first child, Juan, I took the exam for the permanent teaching job and won the post. Some of us professional women can't separate our academic work from our family obligation; it's the balance between the two that allows us to deepen our research.

At that time, I realized that the bachelor's program didn't include courses about the United States; so, I decided to give a course with that content. The general distrust of the United States also meant that people had misgivings about those of us interested in deepening our knowledge of that country. In a certain way, they were avoiding an imperious need, regardless of the ideological position they defended, to recognize that it was fundamental to study the social dynamics and historic processes of our neighbor to the north. That's why I firmly insisted, until they accepted, that they open up a space for a course on the United States. They also appointed me the coordinator of the new area of studies about the United States so that I would organize lectures on the topic.

It was in that period that Mónica Verea contacted me to organize a congress with scholars and people interested in the U.S. The idea was to find in the UNAM's enormous academic diversity researchers who, each from his or her own discipline, would deal with issues linked to the United States. Starting with those first efforts, the authorities proposed that Mónica present a proposal to form a center. She invited Raúl Benítez Manaut, Luis González Souza, Teresina Gutiérrez Haces, and myself to participate in it. We met to design a common project, each contributing from our different visions. That's why the center was a pioneer in fostering an interdisciplinary research perspective.

Finally, in 1989, the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA) was created, and Mónica invited me to come on board as her academic secretary. Already having had my second daughter, Paz Consuelo, I accepted the challenge. That was how Mónica as the director and myself launched ourselves into the arduous task of consolidating a new academic body in the UNAM. This implied, among other things, establishing national and international contacts and getting funding and other kinds of support from some of the most important existing foundations. It should be mentioned here that some of the new researchers were already familiar with the United States, but others were only armed with the desire and willingness to learn about this important topic. So, Mónica and I took on the by no means simple task of fostering the professional training of the new academics in this area. To do that, we organized seminars and international congresses on the highest level. Later, when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect in 1994, the field of study had to be broadened out in order to better understand the region. That was when we became the Center for Research on North America (CISAN).

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phers no longer dared to talk about the big issues, and Rawls did just that in a foundational, revolutionary way in his *A Theory of Justice*. Joshua Cohen, my professor for an MIT course on political thought, was one of his favorite students, and it was precisely he who introduced me to Rawls's body of work, undoubtedly marking my intellectual development forever. At that time, all the universities in the United States and in many others throughout the world, courses were given about that great work. And, of course, entire academic discussions in the main academic journals of the time hinged on one point, a certain section, or one of the conclusions of that book, which inaugurated the new political philosophy. My husband, Juan Rebolledo, was lucky enough to be Rawls's assistant for a time, so the discussions in our little apartment in Harvard's Peabody building also hinged on this topic. All this was a huge challenge for me.

The classes that I began giving in the Graduate Division of the School of Political and Social Sciences dealt with U.S. political thought, and this became my main academic interest. I am fascinated by another foundational text, *The Federalist Papers*, which contains the keys to understanding the United States. From there also stemmed my later decision to study U.S. federalism and in general spend my career researching U.S. politics and elections. This field always keeps me up to date, since I've always managed to be prepared to offer clear, timely answers to the many demands constantly made upon us by the media.

When I became CISAN director in 1997, my third child, Pablo, was the one who understood the juggling I had to do to be everywhere at once. My project as director was to continue and consolidate researcher training. To do that, we organized international seminars on different issues; they were not only well attended, but they also resulted in products that would have an acknowledged influence on North American studies in our country. The fundamental idea was to achieve better communication among researchers by offering them topics they could analyze from their specific perspectives, their disciplines, or their areas of interest. That is, to ensure that interdisciplinary work produced more profound knowledge.

One of those seminars focused on the study and discussion of U.S. foreign policy toward different regions and nations. Another zeroed in on the bilateral relations between Mexico and the United States, analyzing in depth the different topics on the agenda. Yet another important topic we dealt with was globalization. We also organized a congress that convened specialists on the United States and Canada from Latin America at which our aim was to bring together the different visions from the South of the two nations. To our surprise, the response by Latin American academics was extensive.

Finally, with regard to my own research at that time, "the new federalism," I convened and brought together several of the main specialists in the federal systems of the United States, Canada, and Mexico for a seminar. It turned out to be fascinating because few academics knew about the federalism in the other two countries. The dynamics of the sessions were very open and critical, facilitating all of us learning a great deal about the realities of the others and deepening our overall understanding about the region and its common dynamics. We had the opportunity of making comparisons and sharing reflections about the contributions of each of the federal systems, as well as the influence of federalism in general on each of the three political systems. I remember another very pleasant, productive event, the course we organized about the U.S. Congress and its fundamental role in that country's politics. To our satisfaction, it was very well received, and to our surprise, even Mexican senators and deputies came, interested in learning about the topic. At that time, Mexico's Congress was gradually beginning to play its role of counterweight, above all because a long period was beginning in which no party or coalition had an absolute majority.

At the end of my period as director of the Center for Research on North America, I decided to take up a task

that I had left pending: getting my doctorate. That is when I joined the Graduate Program at the UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences to take up my doctoral studies with a specialty in international relations. I wrote my thesis in the general area of U.S. political thought; it centered on the presentation of a federalist proposal for international justice based on the ideas of that country's different thinkers, especially John Rawls. That effort would culminate in the publication of my book, *Justicia internacional: ideas y reflexiones* (International Justice: Ideas and Reflections). For several years now, I have organized and coordinated in that same field the module dedicated to the political dynamics of the North American region and also taught its sessions on U.S. political thought, as part of the renowned diploma course on North America conceived and coordinated at the CISAN by its first director, Mónica Verea Campos.

My vocation and interest in understanding better and better each day the region of North America and contributing to the understanding of Mexico's place in it, as well as participating in the dissemination among specialized audiences, niches of experts, and the general public of all the knowledge generated at the center led me to accept two of the responsibilities that have brought me the most satisfaction and joy in my journey through the history of the CISAN. For about three years, I was the director of the popular magazine *Voices of Mexico*; I must say, this was one of the jobs that I have most enjoyed in my professional career. And, more recently, I also acted as the editor-in-chief of the peer-reviewed journal *Norteamérica*. This was a real challenge since, in the couple of years that I headed it, we established the bases for its being recognized in different ways in the most prestigious academic journal indices like Scopus and Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology (Conacyt) System of Classification of Scientific and Technological Journals. The latter included us in its second quartile, a level that few Mexican journals in the social sciences and the humanities have achieved.

Later, research and reflection about democracy became my main focus. At first, I concentrated on studying the possible consequences of globalization on democratic systems. I later went on to analyze the different conceptions and positions in democratic thinking in the United States. My main interest was to understand how political practice and theory relate to each other. I studied how the different conceptions of democracy have their own consequences *vis-à-vis* political practices, which, in turn, have diverse effects on institutions. The central idea of my most recent book was, initially, to explain the differences between the different conceptions of democracy to understand how they have been enriched by and at the same time influenced political practices, which generally speaking have been becoming more democratic. When I was about to conclude the book for publication, a new political phenomenon emerged in the world: the rise of populisms —populisms, plural, because they are diverse and situated both on the right and on the left. This led me to decide that I had to deepen my understanding about this novel and, to a certain extent, unexpected turn of events. I finally titled the book *El populismo: la democracia amenazada* (Populism: Democracy Under Threat), and it now contains a significant part dedicated to an explanation of populism in order to analyze the extent to which it is a threat or not to U.S. democracy. The study of this topic is so innovative that I was recently invited to a renowned, influential seminar about political philosophy in Salzburg to lecture on the new populism in the United States.

The research topics that have been my passion throughout my life have been and continue to be changing. Most require ongoing, detailed knowledge to be able to understand them. It's an endless road. What I am sure of is that the sometimes complex, inexplicable twists and turns of life have brought me to the best possible place for my intellectual, academic, and professional development, which I owe to a great extent to all the colleagues who have been part of the CISAN community for three decades. VM

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Jonathan Ernst / REUTERS

José Luis Valdés-Ugalde*

My Research at CISAN-UNAM

I have been a fulltime researcher, professor, and academic since 1983, when I entered the Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE) Institute of United States Studies (IIEU), where I worked until 1987. I was the then-IIEU-director Luis Maira's research assistant. My experience at the CIDE's IIEU was the spark that ignited my commitment to studying a master's in political sociology and a doctorate in international relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. And it also led me to later fully dedicate myself to an academic career.

I returned from the United Kingdom, a researcher repatriated by the National Council for Science and Technology (Conacyt). Then, I joined the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) thanks to the good offices, generosity, and trust of Mónica Verea and Silvia Núñez, estimable colleagues and worthy former directors of the center. Since 1994, I have been honored to be a member of the center's faculty as a full-time researcher, committed to the UNAM's three substantive activities: teaching, research, and dissemination.

As a political scientist and internationalist, and both a theoretical and empirical scholar of the international, I have been firmly convinced of the strategic importance of studying the United States. This conviction has been the basis for my teaching and research for the last 25 years of uninterrupted work. I am certain that the study of this country and Canada from a Mexican perspective can help to reach a full understanding of the problems we face in the framework of this three-fold relationship and of the opportunities we have before us, with the idea of meeting Mexico's challenge of well-being, security, and modernization. Carrying out this task from academia and from the CISAN has been a judicious decision by the UNAM, which I believe has had an important impact —sometimes more, sometimes less— on decision makers. But, above all, we have been able to create close working relationships with sister institutions in Mexico and around the world, which have given birth to projects and collaborations on topics of great importance in North America. Building international networks for carrying out regional studies —in this case North America— has been a strategic mission for the CISAN.

Studying the United States has not been a random choice; this is an international actor, a super-power, still

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very competitive and superior in several aspects with regard to others like China or the European Union, and involved in a large part of the world's affairs and events. The United States is the host country of the headquarters of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, ergo, the most active spaces of the world's politics and economy are based there. After 1945, Washington became the broker of the world system. Like never before, a single country would exercise world hegemony, which it would dispute with its Cold War rival, the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, the United States took sole responsibility for supporting the reconstruction of Europe, and for a long period, the total domination of the seven continents (Antarctica, North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania). Although that has changed now, since the United States is in relative decline *vis-à-vis* its counterparts, Washington continues to be a dominant actor in the global system.

My academic mission has been the study of the power of the U.S. hegemon in the context of foreign policy. Thus, based on different theories of international relations, I have drawn up a balance sheet of the U.S. historic presence in Latin America, particularly in the context of the Cold War. This was the basis for my book *Estados Unidos. Intervención y poder mesiánico: la guerra fría en Guatemala, 1954* (The United States, Intervention and Messianic Power: The Cold War in Guatemala, 1954) (2004), which was reprinted in 2005. This study required understanding the globalizing process and its enormous socio-political, economic, and cultural complexity, in order to be able to evaluate the existing relationship of forces that separates or brings closer the international system's most important actors. It also required understanding the functioning of the international bodies created to achieve and preserve the world balance of power. I analyzed the latter in the work *El multilateralismo, la reforma de la* ONU *y los desafíos del siglo* XXI (Multilateralism, UN Reform, and the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century) (2007) and in other texts on this issue, published in books and peer-reviewed journals.

Since 9/11, we have experienced a process of global securitization, which has subjected the great issues of the multilateral agenda such as migration, trade, borders, labor markets, and human rights, to the strategy of defense at all costs. This involves the United States and its allies as well as its rivals. After the Al Qaeda attacks against the United States, I dedicated my work to trying to explain the problems of conflict and war in the international system. In this research, I highlighted the importance of identifying and differentiating the non-state actors from state actors, and how the former can achieve the destabilization of entire government systems. From that concern emerged the book *Globalidad y conflicto. Estados Unidos y la crisis de septiembre* (Globality and Conflict: The United States and the Crisis of September) (2005), which, like the previous one, was reprinted in 2007.

In my research, I have emphasized the observation of what has been called "The New American Century." This is a process built on noteworthy domestic political stability in order to make it possible to arrive at a position of dominance. The stellar moment in this evolution actually happened in the past century: a generation ago, the United States led the world with confidence in what supposedly would be a millennium of peace, prosperity, freedom, and a profound sense of community. What we are witnessing today, however, is a foreign policy disaster, led by an irrational, completely unpredictable leadership. The dysfunctionality of the Trump administration's foreign policy is evident from Russia to Venezuela, from North Korea to China, and from Europe to Australia: no rationality exists at all. When Trump took office, the quality of democracy collapsed and, together with this systemic phenomenon, the quality of U.S. international policy also plummeted. In the words of Fareed Zakaria, "Under the Trump Administration, the United States seems to have lost interest, indeed lost faith, in the ideas and purpose that animated its international presence for three-quarters of a century."[1]

What happened is that with the arrival of Trump's autocratic power, the traditional spaces that the Washington establishment had maintained for decades were twisted out of shape, fracturing the institutional spaces the country had for creating consensus. Trump violently took over the Republican Party and the U.S. state. And no-

body in that party has dared confront the biggest enemy of democracy the United States and the world have ever had. The GOP's behavior during the impeachment process is a sample of the absence of democratic republicanism, previously one of the United States' historic crowning glories.

My commitment at the CISAN has included being its director between 2001 and 2009. Important events took place in U.S. history, and therefore in the North American sub-region, in that period, events that had an impact on the world and the CISAN's agenda. The 9/11 attacks were one, and Barack Obama's election as president is another. On September 11, 2001, the Al Qaeda terrorist organization destroyed the Twin Towers and damaged part of the Pentagon. Time stopped, and the future dissolved in the hands of millions of U.S. Americans. That inevitable, unexpected, brutal, tragic future was brought into the present under the clear skies of that New York morning when American Airlines Flight 11 smashed into the ninety-fourth floor of the north tower of the World Trade Center, only 20 minutes before United Airlines flight 175 did the same between floors 78 and 87 of the south tower, at a speed of more than 600 kilometers an hour with almost full tanks of jet fuel, more than 25 000 liters. Literally two bombs, unique in kind and use: commercial airplanes full of passengers aimed against a civilian population just as innocent as their victims and direct targets, carefully conceived as deadly charges whose objective was to demolish both buildings and fulfill an ambition originally planned —though frustrated— on February 26, 1993 by Ramzi Yousef, an Islamic terrorist of Pakistani origin.

This terrible event was the beginning of a radical change in life in the United States. The perfect society in the perfect nation was penetrated by an external threat: "We have lost our innocence," is perhaps the most representative of the many thoughts expressed on the very day of the attacks that indicate what they meant for U.S. Americans. If we review the huge amount of literature about the attacks, full of testimonies by chroniclers or ordinary citizens, the fact that after September 11, U.S. Americans were more afraid of losing control than of dying is what really stands out. Their stupefaction fundamentally arose out of the idea that they had been submerged in an apocalyptic future, which, though the mass media and literary fiction and the cinema had already masterfully depicted it in the country's iconographic culture, society itself was not prepared to face in *such a real* world as the one they were confronted with so decidedly on that day. And, just as this changed the United States, it also changed Mexicans and Canadians. It changed the entire world. And, of course, it had an impact on our research agenda.

> Studying the United States has not been a random choice; this is an international actor, a super-power, still very competitive and superior in several aspects with regard to others like China or the European Union.

Obama's election in 2008 was also a very important change. He took office as what Collin Powell called a transformational president. His was an unprecedented election: the first representative of an ethnic minority would now govern from the White House in a developed country. A mulatto, Obama opted to present himself as an Afro-American candidate and beat by a huge margin the Republican Party and an outgoing president exhausted by their foolish exercise of republican governance. George W. Bush had broken all existing democratic protocols and etiquette in U.S. political life —as we would see from 2016 on, we only needed Trump to confirm that even more vileness was lacking. He used surveillance tactics typical of the worst times of the Cold War and the McCarthy era and invaded Iraq, shattering the regional relationship of forces, mainly in relation to Iran. The Obama presidency promised a return to the golden mean of democratic liberalism —later destroyed by Donald Trump.

These are only some of the events that have marked me as a CISAN researcher. And there are more to come. How can Trump be defeated? In time. In these years, including the time as director, I have witnessed how an institution strategic for both the UNAM and for Mexico like the CISAN has evolved enormously, and how it has been able to respond to the huge challenges that the international and regional situation poses. Long life to the CISAN and congratulations to all its members for being part of this great project! VM

Notes

1 Fareed Zakaria, "The Self- Destruction of American Power. Washington Squandered the Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2019, pp. 10-16.

Larry Downing / REUTERS

Paz Consuelo Márquez-Padilla*

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Finally, in 1989, the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA) was created, and Mónica invited me to come on board as her academic secretary. Already having had my second daughter, Paz Consuelo, I accepted the challenge. That was how Mónica as the director and myself launched ourselves into the arduous task of consolidating a new academic body in the UNAM. This implied, among other things, establishing national and international contacts and getting funding and other kinds of support from some of the most important existing foundations. It should be mentioned here that some of the new researchers were already familiar with the United States, but others were only armed with the desire and willingness to learn about this important topic. So, Mónica and I took on the by no means simple task of fostering the professional training of the new academics in this area. To do that, we organized seminars and international congresses on the highest level. Later, when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) came into effect in 1994, the field of study had to be broadened out in order to better understand the region. That was when we became the Center for Research on North America (CISAN).

While I was at MIT, a book by philosopher and Harvard professor John Rawls came out that would have an enormous impact on universal political thinking. Philoso-

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phers no longer dared to talk about the big issues, and Rawls did just that in a foundational, revolutionary way in his *A Theory of Justice*. Joshua Cohen, my professor for an MIT course on political thought, was one of his favorite students, and it was precisely he who introduced me to Rawls's body of work, undoubtedly marking my intellectual development forever. At that time, all the universities in the United States and in many others throughout the world, courses were given about that great work. And, of course, entire academic discussions in the main academic journals of the time hinged on one point, a certain section, or one of the conclusions of that book, which inaugurated the new political philosophy. My husband, Juan Rebolledo, was lucky enough to be Rawls's assistant for a time, so the discussions in our little apartment in Harvard's Peabody building also hinged on this topic. All this was a huge challenge for me.

The classes that I began giving in the Graduate Division of the School of Political and Social Sciences dealt with U.S. political thought, and this became my main academic interest. I am fascinated by another foundational text, *The Federalist Papers*, which contains the keys to understanding the United States. From there also stemmed my later decision to study U.S. federalism and in general spend my career researching U.S. politics and elections. This field always keeps me up to date, since I've always managed to be prepared to offer clear, timely answers to the many demands constantly made upon us by the media.

When I became CISAN director in 1997, my third child, Pablo, was the one who understood the juggling I had to do to be everywhere at once. My project as director was to continue and consolidate researcher training. To do that, we organized international seminars on different issues; they were not only well attended, but they also resulted in products that would have an acknowledged influence on North American studies in our country. The fundamental idea was to achieve better communication among researchers by offering them topics they could analyze from their specific perspectives, their disciplines, or their areas of interest. That is, to ensure that interdisciplinary work produced more profound knowledge.

One of those seminars focused on the study and discussion of U.S. foreign policy toward different regions and nations. Another zeroed in on the bilateral relations between Mexico and the United States, analyzing in depth the different topics on the agenda. Yet another important topic we dealt with was globalization. We also organized a congress that convened specialists on the United States and Canada from Latin America at which our aim was to bring together the different visions from the South of the two nations. To our surprise, the response by Latin American academics was extensive.

Finally, with regard to my own research at that time, "the new federalism," I convened and brought together several of the main specialists in the federal systems of the United States, Canada, and Mexico for a seminar. It turned out to be fascinating because few academics knew about the federalism in the other two countries. The dynamics of the sessions were very open and critical, facilitating all of us learning a great deal about the realities of the others and deepening our overall understanding about the region and its common dynamics. We had the opportunity of making comparisons and sharing reflections about the contributions of each of the federal systems, as well as the influence of federalism in general on each of the three political systems. I remember another very pleasant, productive event, the course we organized about the U.S. Congress and its fundamental role in that country's politics. To our satisfaction, it was very well received, and to our surprise, even Mexican senators and deputies came, interested in learning about the topic. At that time, Mexico's Congress was gradually beginning to play its role of counterweight, above all because a long period was beginning in which no party or coalition had an absolute majority.

At the end of my period as director of the Center for Research on North America, I decided to take up a task

that I had left pending: getting my doctorate. That is when I joined the Graduate Program at the UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences to take up my doctoral studies with a specialty in international relations. I wrote my thesis in the general area of U.S. political thought; it centered on the presentation of a federalist proposal for international justice based on the ideas of that country's different thinkers, especially John Rawls. That effort would culminate in the publication of my book, *Justicia internacional: ideas y reflexiones* (International Justice: Ideas and Reflections). For several years now, I have organized and coordinated in that same field the module dedicated to the political dynamics of the North American region and also taught its sessions on U.S. political thought, as part of the renowned diploma course on North America conceived and coordinated at the CISAN by its first director, Mónica Verea Campos.

My vocation and interest in understanding better and better each day the region of North America and contributing to the understanding of Mexico's place in it, as well as participating in the dissemination among specialized audiences, niches of experts, and the general public of all the knowledge generated at the center led me to accept two of the responsibilities that have brought me the most satisfaction and joy in my journey through the history of the CISAN. For about three years, I was the director of the popular magazine *Voices of Mexico*; I must say, this was one of the jobs that I have most enjoyed in my professional career. And, more recently, I also acted as the editor-in-chief of the peer-reviewed journal *Norteamérica*. This was a real challenge since, in the couple of years that I headed it, we established the bases for its being recognized in different ways in the most prestigious academic journal indices like Scopus and Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology (Conacyt) System of Classification of Scientific and Technological Journals. The latter included us in its second quartile, a level that few Mexican journals in the social sciences and the humanities have achieved.

Later, research and reflection about democracy became my main focus. At first, I concentrated on studying the possible consequences of globalization on democratic systems. I later went on to analyze the different conceptions and positions in democratic thinking in the United States. My main interest was to understand how political practice and theory relate to each other. I studied how the different conceptions of democracy have their own consequences *vis-à-vis* political practices, which, in turn, have diverse effects on institutions. The central idea of my most recent book was, initially, to explain the differences between the different conceptions of democracy to understand how they have been enriched by and at the same time influenced political practices, which generally speaking have been becoming more democratic. When I was about to conclude the book for publication, a new political phenomenon emerged in the world: the rise of populisms —populisms, plural, because they are diverse and situated both on the right and on the left. This led me to decide that I had to deepen my understanding about this novel and, to a certain extent, unexpected turn of events. I finally titled the book *El populismo: la democracia amenazada* (Populism: Democracy Under Threat), and it now contains a significant part dedicated to an explanation of populism in order to analyze the extent to which it is a threat or not to U.S. democracy. The study of this topic is so innovative that I was recently invited to a renowned, influential seminar about political philosophy in Salzburg to lecture on the new populism in the United States.

The research topics that have been my passion throughout my life have been and continue to be changing. Most require ongoing, detailed knowledge to be able to understand them. It's an endless road. What I am sure of is that the sometimes complex, inexplicable twists and turns of life have brought me to the best possible place for my intellectual, academic, and professional development, which I owe to a great extent to all the colleagues who have been part of the CISAN community for three decades. VM

I am fascinated by another foundational text, *The Federalist Papers*, which contains the keys to understanding the United States. From there also stemmed my later decision to study U.S. federalism and in general spend my career researching U.S. politics and elections.

Jonathan Ernst / REUTERS

José Luis Valdés-Ugalde*

My Research at CISAN-UNAM

I have been a fulltime researcher, professor, and academic since 1983, when I entered the Center for Economic Research and Teaching (CIDE) Institute of United States Studies (IIEU), where I worked until 1987. I was the then-IIEU-director Luis Maira's research assistant. My experience at the CIDE's IIEU was the spark that ignited my commitment to studying a master's in political sociology and a doctorate in international relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science. And it also led me to later fully dedicate myself to an academic career.

I returned from the United Kingdom, a researcher repatriated by the National Council for Science and Technology (Conacyt). Then, I joined the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) thanks to the good offices, generosity, and trust of Mónica Verea and Silvia Núñez, estimable colleagues and worthy former directors of the center. Since 1994, I have been honored to be a member of the center's faculty as a full-time researcher, committed to the UNAM's three substantive activities: teaching, research, and dissemination.

As a political scientist and internationalist, and both a theoretical and empirical scholar of the international, I have been firmly convinced of the strategic importance of studying the United States. This conviction has been the basis for my teaching and research for the last 25 years of uninterrupted work. I am certain that the study of this country and Canada from a Mexican perspective can help to reach a full understanding of the problems we face in the framework of this three-fold relationship and of the opportunities we have before us, with the idea of meeting Mexico's challenge of well-being, security, and modernization. Carrying out this task from academia and from the CISAN has been a judicious decision by the UNAM, which I believe has had an important impact —sometimes more, sometimes less— on decision makers. But, above all, we have been able to create close working relationships with sister institutions in Mexico and around the world, which have given birth to projects and collaborations on topics of great importance in North America. Building international networks for carrying out regional studies —in this case North America— has been a strategic mission for the CISAN.

Studying the United States has not been a random choice; this is an international actor, a super-power, still

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The dysfunctionality of the Trump administration's foreign policy is evident from Russia to Venezuela, from North Korea to China, and from Europe to Australia: no rationality exists at all.

very competitive and superior in several aspects with regard to others like China or the European Union, and involved in a large part of the world's affairs and events. The United States is the host country of the headquarters of the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, ergo, the most active spaces of the world's politics and economy are based there. After 1945, Washington became the broker of the world system. Like never before, a single country would exercise world hegemony, which it would dispute with its Cold War rival, the Soviet Union. During the Cold War, the United States took sole responsibility for supporting the reconstruction of Europe, and for a long period, the total domination of the seven continents (Antarctica, North and South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania). Although that has changed now, since the United States is in relative decline *vis-à-vis* its counterparts, Washington continues to be a dominant actor in the global system.

My academic mission has been the study of the power of the U.S. hegemon in the context of foreign policy. Thus, based on different theories of international relations, I have drawn up a balance sheet of the U.S. historic presence in Latin America, particularly in the context of the Cold War. This was the basis for my book *Estados Unidos. Intervención y poder mesiánico: la guerra fría en Guatemala, 1954* (The United States, Intervention and Messianic Power: The Cold War in Guatemala, 1954) (2004), which was reprinted in 2005. This study required understanding the globalizing process and its enormous socio-political, economic, and cultural complexity, in order to be able to evaluate the existing relationship of forces that separates or brings closer the international system's most important actors. It also required understanding the functioning of the international bodies created to achieve and preserve the world balance of power. I analyzed the latter in the work *El multilateralismo, la reforma de la* ONU *y los desafíos del siglo* XXI (Multilateralism, UN Reform, and the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century) (2007) and in other texts on this issue, published in books and peer-reviewed journals.

Since 9/11, we have experienced a process of global securitization, which has subjected the great issues of the multilateral agenda such as migration, trade, borders, labor markets, and human rights, to the strategy of defense at all costs. This involves the United States and its allies as well as its rivals. After the Al Qaeda attacks against the United States, I dedicated my work to trying to explain the problems of conflict and war in the international system. In this research, I highlighted the importance of identifying and differentiating the non-state actors from state actors, and how the former can achieve the destabilization of entire government systems. From that concern emerged the book *Globalidad y conflicto. Estados Unidos y la crisis de septiembre* (Globality and Conflict: The United States and the Crisis of September) (2005), which, like the previous one, was reprinted in 2007.

In my research, I have emphasized the observation of what has been called "The New American Century." This is a process built on noteworthy domestic political stability in order to make it possible to arrive at a position of dominance. The stellar moment in this evolution actually happened in the past century: a generation ago, the United States led the world with confidence in what supposedly would be a millennium of peace, prosperity, freedom, and a profound sense of community. What we are witnessing today, however, is a foreign policy disaster, led by an irrational, completely unpredictable leadership. The dysfunctionality of the Trump administration's foreign policy is evident from Russia to Venezuela, from North Korea to China, and from Europe to Australia: no rationality exists at all. When Trump took office, the quality of democracy collapsed and, together with this systemic phenomenon, the quality of U.S. international policy also plummeted. In the words of Fareed Zakaria, "Under the Trump Administration, the United States seems to have lost interest, indeed lost faith, in the ideas and purpose that animated its international presence for three-quarters of a century."[1]

What happened is that with the arrival of Trump's autocratic power, the traditional spaces that the Washington establishment had maintained for decades were twisted out of shape, fracturing the institutional spaces the country had for creating consensus. Trump violently took over the Republican Party and the U.S. state. And no-

body in that party has dared confront the biggest enemy of democracy the United States and the world have ever had. The GOP's behavior during the impeachment process is a sample of the absence of democratic republicanism, previously one of the United States' historic crowning glories.

My commitment at the CISAN has included being its director between 2001 and 2009. Important events took place in U.S. history, and therefore in the North American sub-region, in that period, events that had an impact on the world and the CISAN's agenda. The 9/11 attacks were one, and Barack Obama's election as president is another. On September 11, 2001, the Al Qaeda terrorist organization destroyed the Twin Towers and damaged part of the Pentagon. Time stopped, and the future dissolved in the hands of millions of U.S. Americans. That inevitable, unexpected, brutal, tragic future was brought into the present under the clear skies of that New York morning when American Airlines Flight 11 smashed into the ninety-fourth floor of the north tower of the World Trade Center, only 20 minutes before United Airlines flight 175 did the same between floors 78 and 87 of the south tower, at a speed of more than 600 kilometers an hour with almost full tanks of jet fuel, more than 25 000 liters. Literally two bombs, unique in kind and use: commercial airplanes full of passengers aimed against a civilian population just as innocent as their victims and direct targets, carefully conceived as deadly charges whose objective was to demolish both buildings and fulfill an ambition originally planned —though frustrated— on February 26, 1993 by Ramzi Yousef, an Islamic terrorist of Pakistani origin.

This terrible event was the beginning of a radical change in life in the United States. The perfect society in the perfect nation was penetrated by an external threat: "We have lost our innocence," is perhaps the most representative of the many thoughts expressed on the very day of the attacks that indicate what they meant for U.S. Americans. If we review the huge amount of literature about the attacks, full of testimonies by chroniclers or ordinary citizens, the fact that after September 11, U.S. Americans were more afraid of losing control than of dying is what really stands out. Their stupefaction fundamentally arose out of the idea that they had been submerged in an apocalyptic future, which, though the mass media and literary fiction and the cinema had already masterfully depicted it in the country's iconographic culture, society itself was not prepared to face in *such a real* world as the one they were confronted with so decidedly on that day. And, just as this changed the United States, it also changed Mexicans and Canadians. It changed the entire world. And, of course, it had an impact on our research agenda.

> Studying the United States has not been a random choice; this is an international actor, a super-power, still very competitive and superior in several aspects with regard to others like China or the European Union.

Obama's election in 2008 was also a very important change. He took office as what Collin Powell called a transformational president. His was an unprecedented election: the first representative of an ethnic minority would now govern from the White House in a developed country. A mulatto, Obama opted to present himself as an Afro-American candidate and beat by a huge margin the Republican Party and an outgoing president exhausted by their foolish exercise of republican governance. George W. Bush had broken all existing democratic protocols and etiquette in U.S. political life —as we would see from 2016 on, we only needed Trump to confirm that even more vileness was lacking. He used surveillance tactics typical of the worst times of the Cold War and the McCarthy era and invaded Iraq, shattering the regional relationship of forces, mainly in relation to Iran. The Obama presidency promised a return to the golden mean of democratic liberalism —later destroyed by Donald Trump.

These are only some of the events that have marked me as a CISAN researcher. And there are more to come. How can Trump be defeated? In time. In these years, including the time as director, I have witnessed how an institution strategic for both the UNAM and for Mexico like the CISAN has evolved enormously, and how it has been able to respond to the huge challenges that the international and regional situation poses. Long life to the CISAN and congratulations to all its members for being part of this great project! VM

Notes

1 Fareed Zakaria, "The Self- Destruction of American Power. Washington Squandered the Unipolar Moment," *Foreign Affairs*, July-August 2019, pp. 10-16.

Adrián Orozco Arceo

Dreamers visit the UNAM.

Estefanía Cruz Lera*

Chronicles of a Universe with Multiple Rules and Moving Pieces
U.S. Domestic Politics

The study of U.S. domestic politics can be a labyrinthine, uphill effort plagued with contradictions. Faced with that, many tend to reduce it to simplistic or redundant arguments. However, for a large number of political scientists, U.S. politics is a living, enthralling story written in different colors of ink in multiple sizes. It is a story that makes us think profoundly to be able to untangle processes, interactions, and behavior that make it more intelligible for those who might have to look into what is going on in Washington, D.C.

One of Barack Obama's most celebrated phrases explains, "The change we need doesn't come from Washington. Change comes to Washington."[1] That is exactly my job: explaining how and why parsimony or political change on the different agendas revolutionize U.S. politics, and, from there, global politics. Although in the fifth century before our era Plato explained that we all carry a political animal within us, and even though in our time the U.S. television series *House of Cards* has made many viewers think they are experts in U.S. politics, reality is stranger than fiction.[2] The complexity of U.S. politics requires profound analyses that mean we have to refer to and dialogue with classical and contemporary theoreticians to try to explain political behavior and processes, some of which follow patterns while others transform paradigms.

In a 1946 interview that would later be immortalized in a *New York Times* column, Nobel Prize laureate and

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Political science demands that political scientists know how to navigate the oceans of theory, be rigorously methodical, but above all, constantly observe reality.

physicist, founder of the theory of relativity, Albert Einstein was asked by a journalist, "Dr. Einstein, why is it that when the mind of man has stretched so far as to discover the structure of the atom, we have been unable to devise the political means to keep the atom from destroying us?" [3] Aware of what his work had meant as the basis for scientific revolutions, some with effects as terrible as the atomic bomb and others as praiseworthy as its application in biomedical research, Einstein responded, "That is simple, my friend. It is because politics is more difficult than physics." [4] Politics and society truly do defy logic and rationality; they have a greater degree of entropy, complexity, and dynamism.

Political science demands that political scientists know how to navigate the oceans of theory, be rigorously methodical, but above all, constantly observe reality. In the face of so much information, scales of enquiry into this science have been defined (local, national, regional, and global), as well as levels (micro, meso, and macro). However, we researchers of U.S. politics frequently have to move across scales and play with levels of analysis to be able to find our research niche and even find in that discipline universe a space appropriate for developing our knowledge concerns.

This process takes many years and is in an ongoing state of construction. It flowers better when it happens in a university of world-class excellence, with a humanist mission, and that cultivates critical thinking within its walls. It thrives better in a specialized, interdisciplinary research center that fosters creativity and has steadily become central to its field. That is why the hermeneutics school blossomed at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research and political ecology flowered at the University of Chicago.

The UNAM Center for Research on North America (CISAN) has been pivotal for my interest in understanding and explaining U.S. society and government. It is a space where, since my time as a graduate student, I found forums for listening to and dialoguing with my teachers, whom today I proudly call colleagues and friends. The CISAN has been one of my best schools, where I started out as a researcher and began to learn how to make discerning socio-political analyses. In addition to being my workplace, it is an incubator for my critical thinking and a source of motivation for increasing the quality of my research.

Curiously, I published my first academic article in the CISAN's *Norteamérica. Revista Académica* in 2016.[5] It was a piece that analyzed how the Dreamer movement had politicized a considerable sector of U.S. youth. Those massive mobilizations, imbued with symbolism, had given the Latino collective organizational capital and greater visibility in U.S. politics. My article concludes that young Latinos will only be leaders if they manage to understand and take advantage of a political scenario in which changes are slow but possible. Based on that research, I began to look more deeply into migratory policy and Latino politics in the United States.

Those aims led me to do field work in Chicago, a city that was my political school, just as it has been for many Mexicans who have their feet firmly planted there despite having left part of their heart in Mexico. Chicago was the main sociological and political laboratory for the twentieth century. The city hosts one of the largest political machines in history, and therefore, has developed very interesting co-ethnic political dynamics. It is not by chance that the first Afro-American to become president of the United States also had his political schooling there, first as a community organizer and later as senator. Added to this, the largest mass mobilizations in the history of the United States, the so-called Immigrant Spring of 2006, were organized out of Chicago's Latino neighborhoods.

My work about Chicago led me to specialize in political sociology and, more concretely, in the political incorporation of minorities in the United States. From then on, I worked on an explanatory model based on political opportunity structure theory. This model elucidated three tensions in contemporary Latino politics.

The first involves ethnic organizations that deploy a dual dynamic of mainstreaming vs. autonomy: simply put, Latino organizations align with the establishment in institutional activities motivated by maximizing political channels and resources, but simultaneously maintain autonomy in their internal structuring, their decision-making mechanisms, and their plan of action. The sec-

ond involves mobilization: Latinos have learned that the protest mechanisms that work in the streets are not always effective in political institutions. Finally, the third tension is related to how a critical mass of Latino leaders deploy ongoing politization strategies for the collective to avoid the de-politization of their ethnic agenda inside institutions.

I had the good fortune of carrying out this research in the United States, Spain, Switzerland, France, and Mexico. In each of these places, I presented my initial findings and received feedback from internationally renowned academics. That was where I had the opportunity to put my academic training to the test and compare the quality of the work done in Mexico. These positive experiences motivated me to return to Mexico, and my main dream was to rejoin the CISAN, but now as an academic.

Another piece of work that has given me great academic satisfaction has been an article in which I propose a classification to differentiate sanctuary policies in the United States.[6] Through the analysis of ordinances, laws, public policies, and my own fieldwork with political organizations in Illinois, California, Denver, New York, Philadelphia, and Texas, I explain the differences in design and implementation between a rhetorical sanctuary ordinance and the new horizons such as the sanctuary states and the digital sanctuaries.

In this process of "getting to know the monster from the inside" —to copy the celebrated phrase from José Martí's political testament—,[7] through fieldwork and training in their advanced research institutes, I have been able to understand and explain U.S. society and politics better. If Chicago allowed me to understand the real political functioning of communities in the United States, if cities like Boston, New York, and Philadelphia allowed me to understand how the economic elites are fundamental interest groups, it was Washington, D.C. that made me understand the magnitude and degree of exceptionalism of the federal pact and governmental structure that make *E Pluribus Unum*, that is, that the many link up in a nation.

Outside the United States people have the mistaken idea that the White House and its occupant are practically the only protagonists in politics. However, the real political action is in the Capitol, which is even why it is the central and largest building on the District of Columbia's National Mall. U.S. congressional politics is so important that it is the object of the first article of the Constitution.

Washington, D.C. made me understand the magnitude and degree of exceptionalism of the federal pact and governmental structure that make *E Pluribus Unum*, that is, that the many link up in a nation.

Studying U.S. domestic politics is ambitious and difficult. You have to understand national political conventions and the powers delegated to the states. You have to know in detail the way the mechanisms of checks and balances work. You have to be able to follow electoral processes and frequently get used to making wrong predictions.

You have to know many, many names because you have to situate posts and key political profiles. You have to know how to untangle the politics of money and its consequences. You have to precisely situate interest groups, caucuses, and political action committees. You have to understand how political redistribution and civil rights operate in the processes of political change. It is, in short, a universe with many rules and many moving pieces.

In *The Federalist Papers*, James Madison wrote that the fundamental aim of the U.S. Constitution was to restrict the ability of majorities to suppress minorities.[8] My main research project at the CISAN, "Minorities on the U.S. Legislative Agenda. Agents for Change or Political Disruption?" deals precisely with how these dynamics work. The main objective is to analyze the conventional, contentious mechanisms that political minorities are using to influence the design of the U.S. legislative agenda. It studies ethnic minorities, women, and also extreme right-wing groups to infer about the current political state of play, characterized by the divergences among the political elites in the legislative branch and the political perceptions of these social sectors, who are political outsiders.

The historic facts that a woman, Speaker Nancy Pelosi, presides over the House of Representatives, and that in 2018, a record number of women members of Congress were elected, who also come from very diverse ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds, indicate that there is a new distribution of power in U.S. politics; and in this

process, women are key agents. These dynamics led me to write my most recent article, "Establishment Women vs. 'The Squad': Styles of Women's Political Representation in the U.S. Congress."[9] By chance, this article, like the first, was also published in the CISAN's journal *Norteamérica, Revista Académica*.

This article led me to embark on a new research odyssey: learning the history of how U.S. women had developed four waves of a progressive movement to be part of politics in a country that has "Founding Fathers" and does not recognize any "Founding Mother." The celebrated U.S. Supreme Court judge and liberal feminist activist Ruth Ginsburg wrote in her autobiography about U.S. politics, "As women achieve power, the barriers will fall. As society sees what women can do, as women see what women can do, there will be more women out there doing things, and we'll all be better off for it."[10]

In this research project, I use the spheres of political representation (objective, substantive, and symbolic) as well as the analysis of legislative behavior to contrast two profiles of congresswomen. One is of the senior group of congresswomen, from the Establishment, a group led by Nancy Pelosi, who is betting on the gradual incorporation of women into politics without abrupt political changes. The second profile is of the media-savvy, defiant "squad" made up of four congresswomen from more diverse backgrounds, led by Latina Alexandria Ocasio Cortez, the youngest congresswoman in history.

In this research, I analyzed public discourse, the bills they presented, their votes, and the funds they raised to see if there were contrasts in their legislative performance or if the differences are merely in discourse. I conclude that Alexandria Ocasio and Nancy Pelosi only represent two kinds of political leadership style, but with similar performance in Congress: "One fires up youth with their speeches and incorporates issues in their platform that impact inclusive social spheres; the other keeps Trump at bay and pushes through complicated legislative negotiations."[11]

> "As society sees what women can do, as women see what women can do, there will be more women out there doing things, and we'll all be better off for it."
> –Ruth Ginsburg

These interactions between two generations of congresswomen take place in the broader context of U.S. politics. The elections, the census and redistricting, the impeachment process, and the path that public policy will follow take over the time and mind of the specialist in U.S. politics. Fortunately, the university's dynamism, through its lectures, workshops, seminars, its student community, and even its challenges, allows us to share our reflections, be questioned, and receive feedback.

One of the challenges of Mexican academia and academia the world over has been the need to incorporate new generations of researchers to revitalize research groups through more balance between youth and experience. We young researchers are very enthusiastic about learning and know that we are immersed in a training process. We're more motivated to question and not waver when we make proposals, sometimes naively and without any experience; we're more daring in our lines of research; and we stand by our methodological proposals more. However, in our work we also cite and discuss the classics and our teachers. So, the process of academic regeneration is not only an arithmetic one, but also one of progressive changes anchored in learning, un-learning, and re-learning together. This is the objective of the UNAM Sub-Program to Incorporate Young Academics, which I am fortunate enough to be a part of.

I have realized that some books on the shelves of the CISAN's Rosa Cusminsky Library have been there longer than I have been on this Earth. The three decades of work that my colleagues have forged in studies about the North American region, in which they are pioneers in Mexico and who have become very prestigious in their lines of research, are admirable; and making a place of the kind that they have created in Mexican academia seems like a titanic job. As Vince Lombardi used to say in his speeches to beginners, "The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary." That is why I have decided to turn what seem like challenges into examples, motivations, and opportunities.

As part of a new generation at the CISAN, I am very motivated for this research center to continue to be a very important reference point nationwide for North American studies. In the field of U.S. domestic politics, I have found the place from which I want to contribute my grain of sand to all the research, dissemination, and projects developed here. VM

Nick Oxford / REUTERS

Rosío Vargas*

Following the Trail of U.S. Energy Strategy
An Academic Biography

This article traces my career as a researcher at the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) along with the changes in the international energy context —that of the United States and Mexico itself—, which have made for changes in approaches and methodologies, in order to understand the current situation.

I began my work in the early 1990s with a research project about "U.S. Energy Policy: Implications for Mexico," at the same time that the UNAM launched the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA). My research has followed the institutional changes at the research center and developed parallel to the changes in the international energy system. My work's organization has evolved and matured epistemologically in a process that began with the use of the analyses of other specialists and moved to the development of my own hypotheses, using interdisciplinary and wholistic approaches to explain different elements of the research object.

The first important issue to address at the time was the negotiation of the Free Trade Agreement, later the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). This was an opportunity to look at the United States beyond its activities as a rational, unified actor and instead begin analyses of the different existing interest groups, based on recognizing asymmetrical perspectives and negotiations. These approaches have continued to be valid.

At that time, I also began to analyze the U.S. from the point of view of energy security; over time this has changed

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in terms of the role of oil resources and the Mexican market. The changes stem from the different conditions of the U.S. and Mexican oil industries, their geological moments, and the market agreements for bilateral energy trade.

The events of 9/11 in New York and the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003 led me to adopt a realistic perspective of that country's behavior in taking over other countries' resources and oil rent, its interest groups, regime change, and the imposition of market models in countries where they had not been predominant before. I wrote about the neoconservatives' project and their vision for the future of the control of the Middle East. This made many think that the aim of the Iraq invasion was not oil but territorial control. The review of the oil contracts negotiated by Saddam Hussein with many countries except the United States and the United Kingdom made me certain that the invasion was to ensure the supply of oil, since these powers attempted to recover it and their profits *vis-à-vis* other competing countries already operating in the Iraqi oil industry.

Since joining CISEUA —later CISAN, which included the rest of North America as an object of study—, I have worked on the energy policies of the different U.S. administrations. Therefore, I have written about the administrations of both George Bushes (father and son), and those of Bill Clinton, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump, attempting to underline the changes in energy policy domestically as well as U.S. behavior in the international sphere.

Mexico's lining up with the project of integrating the North American region also meant changes in my methodological approach to incorporating the region's process of energy integration and the comparative analyses of Mexico's energy sector with its counterparts in the United States and Canada, from which numerous articles on the topics were derived.

Because U.S. policies have an impact on Mexico, I continued to follow Mexico's 2008 and 2013 energy reforms since outside elements have been determining factors in them. Their driving force comes from the think tanks in the powerful countries, U.S. governmental agencies, NGOs, embassies, and other lobbyists for transnational energy corporations, who lobbied for those reforms. My interest led me to try to understand what was being negotiated based on analyzing the laws and their implications for the energy sector and Mexican society in general. My access to the Senate as an advisor to one of the congressional caucuses was key for doing this.

My interest led me to try to understand what was being negotiated based on analyzing the laws and their implications for the energy sector and Mexican society

The U.S. energy revolution, starting with fracking for exploiting non-conventional resources, has been analyzed by U.S. Americans themselves with a geopolitical vision due to the project's global scale. Their situating it in their think tanks as a geostrategic project forced me to delve into geopolitical approaches by incorporating hard data, history, and politics in their interaction with geography. That allows me to teach a class in the graduate division of the School of Political and Social Sciences for those who want to understand the geopolitics of energy.

In my career, I have encountered at least two systemic transitions that have marked changes in orientation of my research and another, in the U.S. energy sector itself that has led me to change topics and hypotheses due to their importance for Mexico as a nation and the world in general:

1. From the preeminence of oil to low-carbon sources

While I continue to work on oil issues, it has been necessary to delve into other energy sources such as what are called renewables (fundamentally solar- and wind-based); and, in the electricity sector, to monitor the changes in the world energy system and their implications. I have found that the geopolitical approach is a tool that allows us to look at all energy and fuel sources without losing sight of the technical aspects that, while they are important, distract us from the interest in focusing on the power behind the participants and the geostrategies designed in the developed countries.

2. From the preeminence of oil-producing countries to oil consuming countries

After the United States' 1973 oil embargo of the Arab countries, prices soared, peaking during the 1994 crisis. At that point, the developed nations implemented a series of measures to reduce their vulnerability *vis-à-vis*

the oil-producing countries. Among them were reducing consumption, building strategic reserves, and developing other energy sources. One of the U.S. policies that most impacted Mexico was favoring the producers that did not belong to the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Among those were Mexico and the countries of the North Sea. Recycling petrodollars during the first crisis was the other situation that they aimed to change. Plummeting oil prices in the early 1980s were the first indicators that the producers' control was weakening. Today, control of the oil market has not only passed into the hands of the consuming countries, but the OPEC has retreated in the face of the United States as a producer and the threats of sanctions given the attempt to accuse it of monopolistic practices, showing the way that the United States uses the oil market as a political strategy.

3. From dependence on oil to the Trump Administration's energy dominance

From 1947 to 2008, the U.S. energy sector was mainly characterized by high oil consumption; it reached a maximum of 21 million barrels a day, which domestic supply could not cover. The deficit had to be covered by imports from neighboring countries (Canada and Mexico), as well as those in other latitudes such as the Middle East. Thus, for more than 40 years, the United States guaranteed its security and the diversity of its supply of oil from abroad. This led to a continual increase in its dependence on foreign imports, which peaked in 2005, when they reached 60 percent of national consumption. Thanks to energy efficiency policies beginning in 2008, demand began to drop so that, by 2010, consumption was down to 18 million barrels a day, almost a million and a half less. At the same time, the supply of hydrocarbons began to rise in a trend that has continued until today, 2020.

By 2018, the energy security strategy had left the historic objective of seeking "energy independence" in purely official discourse. Today, the Republican administration focuses on handling foreign policy based on the new energy context, which allows for its energy dominance over the fundamental variables of the international oil market and U.S. foreign policy.

Nevertheless, despite having turned itself into an energy powerhouse, the United States continues to consider the energy issue a matter of national security. This is due to its purchases abroad, the strategic nature of oil, and having made energy part of its foreign policy, in which the power of energy is fundamental in its competitiveness strategy —"America First"— and its preeminence *vis-à-vis* its rival powers (China and Russia).

During the time I have worked at CISAN, I have had the opportunity to write about these systemic changes, possible only if one can follow them over time. I want to thank the CISAN and the UNAM for having given me the privilege of learning about this vast, inexhaustible topic. VM

Edit Antal*

Climate Change, Treaties, Science and Technology, . . . and Consciousness

My research topics have gone through an enormous transformation over the last three decades. Here, I illustrate those changes and some of my research findings in that period.

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Today, climate change is on everyone's lips, repeated *ad nauseum* by ordinary people, the media, and politicians. That was not the case 30 years ago, in the mid-1990s, when I began working on an issue that at that time was practically unknown, above all among social scientists. The matter of climate change itself, as well as global warming,

began to take on worldwide importance when the bi-polar era ended, creating an environment in which, given the apparent disappearance of communism, a new enemy was urgently needed.

The Kyoto Protocol

The forum known as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was created in 1992 and came into effect in 1994 for the scientific, political, economic, and social study of climate change. At that moment, it was a great innovation thanks to its singular organizational structure, which consisted of intense interaction among different working groups of experts recruited from all over the world who analyzed climate change not only as a meteorological or physical phenomenon, but at the same time took into account its economic, social, and political consequences. This way of approaching a problem would be the equivalent of a simultaneous, interactive translation of a problem from the realm of the hard sciences to the language of politics. This is why the issue has immediately been situated in the terrain of the social study of science and technology. This means that, from the very beginning, what was being studied was what had to be done to stop or slow the phenomenon, in part caused by human beings, and without a doubt harmful to humanity. This period was a stage of raising awareness in the world about the problem of climate change.

In the first period, from the 1990s to 2005, characterized by the Kyoto Protocol, the study of climate change centered on world actions against it and on the definition of the corresponding responsibilities. At that time, the main actors were the United States and the European Union, whose member countries for the first time acted together on an issue of great importance, which was considered a promising achievement.

After a great deal of discussion about the responsibilities, what won out was the principle of common and differentiated responsibilities, based on the idea of leaning toward charging the industrialized countries with solving the problem and not demanding the developing ones reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, technological and financial resource transfers were established from the rich to the poor countries. This was due to the assessment that the industrialized world had caused the high greenhouse gas emissions problem, ergo, it was who should pay for the repairs.

Initially, the United States signed the Kyoto Protocol, but it has never ratified it. This turned it into the "black

George Frey / REUTERS

Climate change and global warming took on worldwide importance when the bi-polar era ended, creating an environment in which, given the apparent disappearance of communism, a new enemy was urgently needed.

sheep" of the history of climate change, above all because, at that time, it was by far the largest emitter of greenhouse gases, responsible for one-fourth of total emissions. The United States has also lost prestige worldwide because it has unashamedly shown that it does not want to cooperate with the rest of the planet or help the developing countries. Instead, it has insisted on establishing an international treaty that gives equal treatment to all countries regardless of their capabilities and levels of development. Naturally, this argument of not being obliged to reduce emissions referred basically to the large countries: in the first place, China, but also others like India, Brazil, and South Africa.

In these global negotiations, the European Union undoubtedly turned out to be the world leader for the environment, and the international regime, which has managed to establish obligatory commitments for the industrialized countries, has been widely celebrated and applauded as an excellent instrument for resolving a problem of global dimensions.

With time, enthusiasm for the Kyoto Protocol has waned given its mixed or not entirely satisfactory results in terms of effective reductions and the creation of carbon markets. Regarding carbon markets, I should mention that at the beginning of the negotiations, market mechanisms did not exist and were even considered highly uncertain in terms of being able to offer positive environmental results. For that reason, the Kyoto Protocol has seriously limited their use for reduction, putting more emphasis on direct methods such as the establishment of quotas and carbon taxes.

Canada was also badly perceived: it was the only country that gave itself the luxury of formally abandoning the Kyoto Protocol, thus winning the fury of the world's environmentalist community.

Later, the United States tried to improve its image and lead the climate change negotiations, particularly during the Obama administration. By the first decade of the new millennium, the concept of climate change morphed radically, above all in the sense of its economic and political projection. This was due mainly to the fact that China has become the world's largest producer of greenhouse gases and other large emerging countries —previously classified as developing countries— have also very rapidly increased their emissions.

So, posing the issue of climate change from the perspective of rich and poor has lost ground in the global forum since, under current technological conditions, in two decades, the emerging industrializing countries —mainly China— have emitted as much as the biggest industrialized countries did in an entire century. This is why the reputation of these countries as poor and therefore net receivers of resources to alleviate the effects of climate change began to come under serious question.

Despite the fact that the per capita emissions by highly industrialized and emerging countries continued and still continue to be enormous, what is mentioned above has caused a true turn in the political and social formulations about climate change.

Some Figures

North America as a whole produces 18 percent of the world's carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions; the U.S. is responsible for 15 percent, Canada for 2 percent, and Mexico for the remaining 1 percent. However, this same figure calculated per capita gives us a very different picture: The United States and Canada produce 16 metric tons per person each, while Mexico only produces 3.8 metric tons. It is also interesting to observe that though China is the largest producer in absolute terms, when measured per capita, it still emits less than the United States or Canada, or 7 metric tons, while India produces even less, only 1.8 metric tons. If we compare these amounts with the European countries, in per capita terms, the United States continues to have the worst record, while on average, the European Union emits 6.38 metric tons, and even the largest producers such as, for example, Germany, are much lower than it, with 9.7 metric tons.

If we look at which countries have increased their emissions the most since the beginning of the global negotiations in 1990, things change considerably: the leaders

Private Sector Actions against Climate Change in North America

Country	Non-State Actors	Cities	Regions or Provinces	Companies	Civil Society Organizations	Private Investors
United States	899	209	16	530	84	59
Canada	156	41	8	88	1	18
Mexico	82	34	3	42	0*	2

Source: United Nations, Global Climate Action, Nazca, 2019, https://climateaction.unfccc.int/views/about.html, accessed January 23, 2019.

* NAZCA is a portal created by the United Nations Conference on Climate Change that shows the climate actions taken by cities, regions, investors, companies and civil society organizations. For 2014, the portal had no registered actions by civil society organizations in Mexico.

are China, with 316 percent, and India with 293 percent. In North America, Mexico took the dubious lead in this area with 46 percent, followed by Canada, with 21 percent, and the United States in last place, with 4 percent. At the same time, the European countries as a whole have managed to decrease their emissions by 21 percent, not a small feat.

The levels of fossil fuel-driven energy use in the world continue to be of great concern. In North America in particular, the prospect is by no means encouraging: coal, gas, and oil together still account for 74 percent in Canada, 80 percent in the United States, and —the worst case— 88 percent in Mexico. In large part, this is because despite many speeches and pretty words, subsidies for coal and the fossil fuel industry worldwide continue to be high and, unfortunately, even come to four times more than those given to renewable energy.

The Paris Accord

Given the new panorama of the distribution of emissions worldwide, the United States and China have proposed another kind of global architecture to deal with climate change, diametrically opposed to that of the Kyoto Protocol. In the first place, it is voluntary, and secondly, the goals and instruments for compliance are freely chosen by the parties. The new instrument, known as the Paris Accord, was created in 2015. From the point of view of the study of international cooperation, it is of course novel, but also much laxer and more flexible than the previous international regime. We can even say that the accord is not a treaty in the strict sense because it neither mandates nor sanctions anything or anyone concretely. It is rather a free forum of exchange of experiences and discussion based on voluntary commitments that meets periodically. Its defenders have called it a new, more democratic architecture than the Kyoto Protocol since in this case every country is free to decide what it can and wants to do and the way it will achieve it. However, for its critics, the Paris Accord has been dubbed a clearly weak, insufficient instrument for achieving positive environmental results.

North America produces 18 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions; the U.S. is responsible for 15 percent, Canada for 2 percent, and Mexico for 1 percent.

Despite its flexibility, when Donald Trump took office, even this commitment considered by the environmental community low level and "light" has been thought "too much." Accordingly, the U.S. government decided not to pay the monies committed to renewable energy projects throughout the world and, a short time later, completely pulled out of the accord.

In North America, the current federal governments do not present a very encouraging prospect regarding climate change. In the United States, President Trump does not believe that it is a real danger; Mexico's López Obrador seems convinced that it is worthwhile to sacrifice the environment in order to develop a country with high poverty and inequality rates; and in Canada, despite its environmentalist discourses, in the face of the profit-hungry business interests, Justin Trudeau's Liberal government has not been able to defend nature as much as was hoped.

However, not all is lost. Fortunately, other actors, subnational governments, companies, and civil society have

been very active on this issue. Despite a generally negative attitude from the U.S. federal government, we have to recognize that the country has reduced its emissions faster than, for example, Germany or Canada, precisely thanks to those other, non-governmental actors.

Radicalization of Society and the Media

Meanwhile, worldwide, above all in the mass media, the idea has gained ground that there is no way to move ahead on the issue of climate change except by a radical lifestyle transformation to achieve a society that in the short term can slash greenhouse gas emissions. This new vision that is currently spreading has become more and more apocalyptic. This includes proposals such as no longer traveling in airplanes, stopping the consumption of meat, and even stopping having children on a planet that is destined to disappear. This kind of end-of-world narrative is also gaining ground in literature: cli-fi (climate fiction) has become a new literary genre dealing with themes involving climate change and global warming. This perception contradicts the belief preferred by the world of companies and businesses that the solution is to be found in new technologies both to help the world adapt to climate change and to foster and accelerate energy transition.

On the other hand, discussion continues about the responsibility for paying the high costs of the struggle against climate change, in an attempt to achieve environmental and climate justice: Who should pay for the weighty effects of decarbonizing the world? And, how can we ensure that environmental laws are applied in all spheres of society, among and within every country equally? The issue of climate change justice originated mainly from the fact that the regions of the world most affected by climate change damage are not the ones that pollute the most and emit the most greenhouse gases. We know, for example, that half the population of the world is responsible for only one-tenth of total emissions.

With regard to the different levels of enforcement of the law and the differing degrees of vulnerability to climate change in the world, other new lines of research have also emerged such as, for example, climate migration. Climate migration, estimated at 18 million people, is usually initially internal, but has the potential to become worldwide. An estimated 1.7 million of today's migrants head for the United States, and 195 000 migrate toward Mexico from the dry triangle of northern Central America. By 2050, an estimated 143 million people could become climate migrants, 3.9 million of whom would head for Mexico and Central America.

Other expanding research areas are those that study the social movements of workers protesting against having to pay the heavy costs of decarbonization and the scope of the social movements of younger generations vehemently demanding a more inhabitable world for their future.

According to the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the current situation is a climate emergency; that is, the policies adopted today will determine the future of the planet and humanity. Human inhabitability of the planet is increasingly an artificial rather than a natural category. This is why new research areas are opening up about the planet's inhabitability, which is dangerously decreasing, above all in certain regions, as well as the social phenomena associated with it, such as poverty, inequality, and more and more common social clashes.

From the point of view of the planet's inhabitability, it is important to remember that science and technology as human activities during the 1990s created more scientific knowledge than in all of human history, and it is estimated that that knowledge doubles every 10 years. At the same time, these advances have contributed to improving society's comfort, wealth, and living standards, increasingly distancing human beings from nature.

A broad discussion is also taking place about the point to which the solution to climate change is to be found in science and technology or rather should be sought in a radical change in our way of life, moving toward a less consumerist, wasteful society. This dilemma is being discussed more and more; in fact, it is an entire area of research in the field of climate change. Clearly, it is imperative that we accept the fact that, generally speaking,

Worldwide, the idea has gained ground that there is no way to move ahead on climate change except by a radical lifestyle transformation to achieve a society that can slash greenhouse gas emissions.

our unbridled consumption is behind the climate and environmental problem. This undoubtedly suggests that the solution does not lie exclusively in new technologies, but in our lifestyle. Changing that is no small task and will depend on the consciousness of the main actors, such as governments, companies, and social groups. And, in that vein, questioning and research cannot and must not stop. VM

Kevin Lamarque / REUTERS

Claudia Maya*

The USMCA and Exchange Policy: Implications for Mexico[1]

Introduction

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has been replaced by the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), a new legal regime to regulate trade and investment in North America. In general, the new treaty has few significant amendments, except for the case of the automobile industry, where higher domestic content and a minimum wage that will probably increase production costs are required. Nevertheless, the most relevant provisions of the USMCA are in Chapter 33, in reaction to policies of macroeconomic stability and emulated exchange rates, which mark a significant shift away from traditional treaties toward greater subordination of Mexico's economic policy, revealing Washington's defense of U.S. commercial and financial interests.

The USMCA prohibits manipulation of the exchange rate and defines macroeconomic stability as the fundamental goal of each party's economic policy, thereby restricting manipulation of monetary policy to serve competitive interests through exchange rates, in particular by Mexico. The agreement inhibits the promotion of eco-

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nomic growth and development in order to control inflation, provide macroeconomic stability, and ensure compliance with the terms of the treaty.

It should be remembered that the exchange rate plays a fundamental role in an open economy that depends on its international dealings in both goods and services and financial transactions. In an unregulated economy, the value of the currency affects the definition of prices of goods and profit levels of capital, which, depending on such factors, enter and leave the country in question.

This article analyzes the implications for Mexico of relinquishing control of its monetary policy in the interest of macroeconomic stability and prudent management of inflation, to comply with the USMCA.

Beyond Trade Wars: The Fight for Leadership of the Global Economy

The United States' trade war with China is based on Donald Trump's fundamentalist "America First" foreign policy and is the product of a series of structural problems that have intensified over time: the weakening of the U.S. economy, job flight, progressive inequality in an increasingly financialized economy, and our northern neighbor's chronic tax and trade deficits. Thus, renegotiating NAFTA and the free trade agreement between the United States and South Korea and signing bilateral trade agreements "on the basis of equality and reciprocity" have marked the course of U.S. foreign policy.

In this discourse, the operating rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and other multilateral organizations are detrimental to U.S. interests. As a result, the U.S. has proposed abandoning its dispute settlement mechanisms and opted to claim national security as a pretext to impose sanctions and other coercive measures against alleged unfair trade practices that affect its interests. The logic behind this is to actively reduce the U.S. deficit with the world, and in particular *vis-à-vis* Germany, China, Japan, South Korea, Mexico, and Canada, while creating greater demand for U.S. products and services by imposing rules of origin and labor regulations in other countries. The repatriation of U.S. companies and pursuit of international competitiveness in manufactured goods are also on President Trump's agenda as a means of fulfilling his campaign promise of more jobs for U.S. American workers.

> In general, the new treaty has few significant amendments, except for the case of the automobile industry, where higher domestic content and a minimum wage that will probably increase production costs are required.

The NAFTA renegotiation is part of Trump's America First policy and entails some substantial changes from traditional trade agreements, governed by multilateralism and the WTO's authority in settling disputes. We appear to be moving ever faster toward a global corporate government where the transnationals have the last word in settling disputes over and above the interests of national governments in strategic sectors like investment, energy, telecommunications, financial services, ecommerce, and patents.

This process is neither natural nor peaceful. Large corporations, especially U.S. and Chinese, are facing off in violent competition defined by the guidelines of new trade agreements in their areas of influence.

Macroeconomic and Exchange Policy

The exchange rate plays a fundamental role in an open economy, which depends on international transactions of both goods and financial services. In an unregulated economy, the value of the currency affects the definition of prices of goods and profit levels of capital, which, depending on these factors, enter and leave the country in question. Thus, the exchange rate directly affects the growth of the gross domestic product (GDP), foreign debt, trade balances, and capital accounts in the balance of payments; hence the relevance of controlling monetary policy and its influence on the exchange rate without preconditions, since the decisions made about management of exchange rates positively or negatively affect the economy's performance as a whole, not only at the macroeconomic level, but for companies as well.

As mentioned above, USMCA Chapter 33 seeks, at least in theory, to strengthen cooperation among the parties in the area of macroeconomic and exchange rate policy. It states that they must adhere to International Monetary Fund (IMF) guidelines and avoid manipulating exchange rates or the international monetary system to benefit their

own exports. The chapter contains provisions on transparency, to ensure that the parties make their information public; it allows them to consult among themselves on their macroeconomic and exchange policies and also provides for the creation of a Macroeconomic Committee to oversee the chapter's implementation in North America. Chapter 33 also affirms that market-determined exchange rates are fundamental for smooth macroeconomic adjustment and promote strong, sustainable, balanced growth. It states that the USMCA parties must:

a) Achieve and maintain a market-determined exchange rate regime;
b) Refrain from competitive devaluation, including through intervention in the foreign exchange market;
c) Strengthen underlying economic fundamentals, which reinforces the conditions for macroeconomic and exchange rate stability;
d) Promptly inform another Party and discuss if needed when an intervention has been carried out by the Party with respect to the currency of that other Party.

If any Party breaches these provisions, a state-state dispute proceeding may be initiated to reach a settlement.

It should be noted that Chapter 33 provisions did not explicitly exist in NAFTA. Although the treaty's implementation demanded macroeconomic stability and economic policies to contain inflation, it respected the signatories' decision to manage their exchange policy based on their own commercial needs; now, that possibility has vanished.

With the USMCA's passage, Donald Trump has achieved something historic for U.S. corporations, directly addressing a problem that had undermined his country's interests and which the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) also sought to eliminate: currency manipulation by commercial competitors. For a long time, the United States had tried to discourage manipulation of foreign exchange markets by partners or competitors seeking to gain commercial advantages. The practice has provoked a political reaction against trade agreements and globalization in general.

Thus, currency manipulation became a central issue of trade policy from 2003 to 2013, when the countries most active in this field intervened extensively in foreign exchange markets, with a yearly average of over US$600 billion. Keeping their currencies devalued, they made their exports less costly for the rest of the world and imports

We appear to be moving ever faster toward a global corporate government in which transnationals have the last word in settling disputes in strategic sectors over and above the interests of national governments.

more expensive for domestic markets, boosting their competitive level and increasing their trade surplus. Exchange rate manipulation was used mainly by Asian oil-exporting countries and financial centers, especially Switzerland and Singapore. Nevertheless, China was the leading currency manipulator, accumulating US$4 billion in reserves and increasing its current account surplus to an exceptional 10 percent of its GDP, which in turn upped the pressure on the U.S. trade deficit. However, China sharply reduced its currency manipulation after 2013, and its current account surplus has dropped to less than 2 percent of its GDP. Nonetheless, some countries have continued to manipulate their currencies at times and may do so again unless trade agreements include provisions to limit the practice.

It should be noted that currency manipulation resulted in transfers of some US$250 billion a year in trade balances from countries with deficits to others with surpluses. As a result, the United States lost at least a million jobs, especially during the Great Recession, when unemployment was already high. European countries also sustained heavy losses. This is precisely what Chapter 33 seeks to avoid.

For Mexico, currency manipulation to devalue the peso is unlikely due to the country's high levels of public and private foreign debt. Also, the obligation to maintain low inflation and macroeconomic stability to guarantee the inflow of capital already restricts its monetary policy. The Mexican Central Bank insists on controlling inflation and maintaining macroeconomic equilibrium and avoiding devaluation of the peso at all costs, as it states in a recent report.

In the executive summary of its October-November 2018 quarterly report, the Central Bank states that Mexico's monetary policy aims to keep inflationary tendencies in check and reinforce the downward trend of annual general inflation to reach its 3 percent target. In its October-November 2018 meeting, its Board of Directors decided to keep its target one-day interbank interest rate at

8.0 percent and closely monitor how inflation performed against the expectations of its medium- and long-term forecasts, also tracking variations in exchange rates and relative monetary positions between Mexico and the United States, as well as the evolution of economic indicators.

Mexico's Central Bank states that, to overcome potential challenges to its economy, Mexico should favor policies of fiscal discipline, price stability, and free trade; thus, it ratifies its commitment to maintain solid macroeconomic conditions as the foundation of an economic policy that, in its view, will drive the nation's growth.

From a macroeconomic perspective, the exchange rate influences the rise and fall of trade flows and the entry or flight of direct foreign and portfolio investment and affects the money market, investment decisions, costs of international credit, and the volume of foreign debt. If an economy opens to international trade, in theory it must maintain high levels of productivity and efficiency to be competitive. If this fails to materialize, the fallback option is a flexible exchange rate that adapts to price differentials between commercial rivals as a means of boosting exports or lowering prices on their imports.

Controlling exchange rates should help a country achieve competitiveness; however, in a context of financial globalization, it serves another important function. Financial liberalization demands macroeconomic stability, which means a stable peso/dollar exchange rate, to guarantee profitability for incoming capital and free convertibility, which ensures earnings in dollars.[2] On the other hand, a policy to control inflation is needed, which entails constant interest rate hikes and guarantees valuation of capital accompanied by constant appreciation of the local currency; in other words, an over-valued peso.

Stable exchange rates are crucial for capital and foreign exchange markets, since they guarantee conditions of confidence and acceptability of the local currency, influx of capital, and acceptance of the country's public and private debt instruments. Thus, a monetary policy that favors the free flow of capital prevents the exchange rate from adapting to the needs of a foreign trade policy where the exchange rate must adapt to differences in prices of goods and services to keep them competitive, favoring productive sectors that drive economic growth and, in theory, reduce trade deficits in the balance of payments.

Mexico has experienced strong support for the financial sector to the detriment of its productive industries; the constant was a reduction in public spending in an effort to control inflation, triggering greater social imbalances, unemployment, migration, and public and private debt, producing a prolonged economic slump as government failed to implement policies to promote growth and increase domestic productive capacity, including Mexican rural areas and farms. It focused instead on designing austerity policies, which perpetuate sluggish conditions; nevertheless, these austerity policies are the basis for this growth of the financial sector.

With the USMCA's passage, Donald Trump has achieved something historic for U.S. corporations, directly addressing a problem that had undermined his country's interests: currency manipulation by commercial competitors.

Conclusion

The implementation of Chapter 33 only reinforces the lines of economic policy in place since NAFTA was signed. What is new is that now they are not optional, but rather a legally mandated imposition, backed by the threat of terminating the treaty if any of the parties fails to comply. Mexico obviously lacks the freedom to manage its monetary policy at will due to its fragile financial operating conditions. However, the new treaty offers Mexico the chance to improve its situation and regain autonomous control of an economic policy that fosters growth, development, employment, and more robust domestic markets. Our country needs substantial increases in public spending, a shift away from austerity policies, and stronger domestic markets to pull out of the economic slump, all of which are stifled by the chapter in question. VM

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Notes

1 This article is an abridged version of the chapter of a book currently at press.

2 Arturo Huerta, *Obstáculos al crecimiento peso fuerte y disciplina fiscal* (Mexico City: Facultad de Economía, UNAM, 2012), p. 32.

Carlos Barria / REUTERS

Mónica Verea*

A Look at Research into the U.S. Immigration Debate and Policy

Since the 1970s, I have researched Mexico-U.S. relations, mainly in the field of migration. I worked at Mexico's Finance Ministry's Office of International Financial Studies, and later at the Mexican Commission for Aid to Refugees in the early 1980s, where I created a documentation center about migratory issues. Since that time, and at what is now the Acatlán Faculty of Higher Studies (FES-Acatlán), I have researched this issue from the bilateral standpoint and taught courses in the Master's in Mexico-United States Studies program. Later, at the CISEUA/CISAN, my research delved into migratory policies in North America. So, I will briefly reflect here on U.S. migratory debate and policy during this period, which has led me to review my publications on the matter.[2]

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the flow of undocumented migrants increased considerably, sparking sharp public debates in the United States. This led to the approval of the Immigration and Control Act (IRCA) in 1986,[3] which provided amnesty and regularized the legal status of three million undocumented migrants, two million of whom were Mexican. By the end of the 1980s, the topic of international competitiveness had become very important in the debate in the framework of globalization. The economic role immigrants played in an increasingly technology-oriented economy was widely discussed. Simultaneously, low birth rates also gave credence to the

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advisability of admitting new flows of migrants. That is why the Immigration Act of 1990 was passed, with the object of admitting better educated, more skilled migrants. In the early 1990s, despite the high expectations created by a Democrat occupying the White House, beginning in 1993, the Clinton administration launched three different border operations that created the basis for a new border enforcement policy: Gatekeeper in California, Blockage and Hold the Line in Texas and New Mexico, and Safeguard in Arizona. Despite the fact that that decade was characterized by considerable economic growth, and, with it, increased demand for immigrant labor with or without visas, a highly anti-immigrant debate also emerged, centering its attention on the negative aspects of migrants and their effects on the economy. As a result, proposals, bills, and legislative reforms negatively affecting migrants' interests and security multiplied, such as California's unconstitutional, xenophobic, nativist Proposition 187, which stipulated denying migrants access to social services. This proposal was a watershed for the creation of other anti-immigrant bills and propositions in many other states. In 1996, Congress passed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), which attempted to control undocumented immigration more effectively and to reduce legal immigrants' access to social welfare programs.[4] Simultaneously, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA) was passed, stipulating that undocumented migrants only had the right to medical services in the case of emergency, among other restrictions. This, plus the passing of Mexico's Law of Non-Loss of Nationality under President Zedillo in January 1998, prompted many undocumented Mexican migrants to request naturalization, something they had not frequently done before.

A few months into his first term, President George W. Bush had intimated to his Mexican counterpart, President Vicente Fox, the possibility of discussing a migratory accord, proposed formally by our government a few days before the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Bush had mentioned the possibility of establishing a guest worker program, a novel proposal after the Bracero Program was terminated in 1964. However, after 9/11, the Bush administration's priorities changed drastically, freezing any possible negotiations. From then on, Bush spent his time reviewing immigration policy guidelines, mainly to drastically reinforce border surveillance. Considering the latter insufficient, he reformed the structure of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), creating the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as part of his strategy to increase territorial security.[5] To further that end, Congress passed the USA Patriot Act and the Enhanced Border Security and Visa Entry Reform of 2002 (ESVERA) to control money laundering and the entry of possible terrorists and drug traffickers. Bush tried to reach a bi-partisan consensus to approve his plan, proposed in early 2004.[6] However, in 2006, Congress approved the Secure Fence Act to build the famous 700-mile-long double wall, just as James Sensenbrenner had so polemically proposed.[7] This sparked surprisingly well organized, unprecedented multitudinous demonstrations of documented and undocumented migrants. In 2007, the U.S. Senate had the opportunity to pass an ambitious, previously inconceivable, comprehensive, bi-partisan immigration reform bill, the Secure Borders, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Reform Act of 2007. And, for the third time in two years, it failed to do so. President Bush intervened late in the process and had scant influence with increasingly ultra-conservative Republicans, and could not persuade the majority of the Senate of the importance of passing this vital legislation. The restrictionist conservatives mainly objected to the amnesty program and criticized government monitoring of the border.

> In the early 1990s, we saw growing debate about the possible creation of NAFTA. That prompted me to begin the paperwork needed to include the study of Canada in our institution.

Since the federal Congress was not taking action around the immigration issue, the debate about immigration reform practically disappeared until 2012. Meanwhile, many state legislatures passed very aggressive immigration control measures against the presence of undocumented migrants. This fostered an important increase in anti-immigrant sentiment and attitudes. So, for example, in 2010, Arizona approved SB1070, which set a historic precedent for several other states.[8] The passage of this law had key consequences in many other states, causing unprecedented damage to undocumented migrants, sending a clear message of exclusion and rejection, and polarizing

I am confident that national and international organizations as well as U.S. civil society will continue to act in favor of unauthorized immigrants, who are among society's most vulnerable.

the debate on the federal level even more. From then on, the states had a much more determining voice than in the past as a result of many actors and sectors' frustration with the immigration reform, stymied for so many years.

During his first term, Barack Obama did not present any immigration reform bill to Congress as he had promised in his electoral campaign because the Obamacare program took all his energy and attention. So, what we saw was a very severe enforcement-only policy, with Congress approving enormous funding to reinforce the border and improve technology. Unfortunately, Obama deported thousands of unauthorized migrants, mainly those the government dubbed "criminals": 2 700 000 deportees, more than the 2 000 000 deported in Bush's two terms. Concerned with his reelection, at the end of his first term in 2012, President Obama implemented the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program as an executive action.[9] In 2014, Obama faced the problem of the unauthorized immigration of "unaccompanied foreign children and adolescents" from Central America, mainly the northern triangle of Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, but also from Mexico. Obama pressured the Mexican government to take the pertinent action on its southern border to stop the growing flows.

The first three years of Donald J. Trump's presidency were a watershed in immigration policy. They have been characterized by explicitly xenophobic, anti-immigrant, racist rhetoric, which has become the common denominator of his policy. From the time of his campaign, Trump has used violent hate speech, making incendiary statements about immigrants. He has been eloquently insulting and "Mexicanophobic," particularly characterizing Mexican immigrants as criminals, drug traffickers, rapists, and "bad hombres," among other negative attributions.

As part of his hardline immigration policy, he has imposed several significantly punitive directives and actions: a continual insistence on building a border wall that Mexico must pay for, despite Congress's repeated rejection; the deployment of thousands of soldiers and members of the U.S. National Guard to reinforce the supposedly "porous" border; the establishment of a zero-tolerance policy that has caused family separation and the clear violation of elemental human rights; the prohibition of requesting asylum at ports of entry, and, later, simply rejecting asylum requests; excessive pressure exerted on Mexico to formally accept the "remain-in-Mexico" policy; and the constant threat of cutting off federal funding to sanctuary cities. When he made the decision to put an end to the temporary DACA and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) programs, knowing that 80 percent of the one million immigrants benefited were of Mexican origin, he showed up his anti-Mexican bias. The substantial decrease in the admission of refugees and the imposition of the travel ban showed his anti-Muslimism. These openly anti-immigrant policies have made life much more difficult for immigrants, legal residents, and even citizens.

Trump's extremely aggressive position *vis-à-vis* Mexico in 2019 led him to threaten the López Obrador government with incremental tariffs if he did not reduce the flow of immigrants from Central America in a specific time span, plus the constant threat of classifying the country as a "safe third country." In response, López Obrador assigned 30 000 members of Mexico's National Guard to stop and deport migrants in transit toward the United States. This means that, in effect, Trump has achieved his goal of Mexico becoming his wall at our expense. His "Mexico phobia" has severely damaged the bilateral relationship that had been strong and solid in recent years. Trump is already on the campaign trail for his reelection in 2020, and I think he will continue his highly violent rhetoric, his hate speech, and the continual harassment from a position of white supremacy that will continue to create fertile ground for perverse racism to flower in the form of nativist, discriminatory attitudes against non-white immigrants.

Without congressional approval, Trump has established a wide variety of highly anti-immigrant, intimidating directives that have caused enormous harm to undocumented immigrants and legal residents alike. The real wall is being built inside the United States through cruel measures and imposed policies that have divided an already fractured society even more. The objections and reverse decisions handed down by the courts have been crucial and decisive, and have played a significant role in coun-

tering Trump's anti-immigrant stance. The Democrats in Congress have a fundamental role to play, and we hope they will be able to move ahead to a true comprehensive immigration reform. I am confident that national and international organizations as well as U.S. civil society will continue to act in favor of unauthorized immigrants, who are now among society's most vulnerable. I expect very little from the López Obrador government, which I believe will continue to evade the issue and, therefore, please Trump. VM

Notes

1 Mónica Verea (1989-1997); Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla (1997-2001); José Luis Valdés-Ugalde (2001-2009); Silvia Núñez (2009-2017), and, beginning in 2017, Graciela Martínez-Zalce.
2 The publications are available at micisan.unam.mx.
3 This law included sanctions for the first time for employers who knowingly hired undocumented workers; it has been only laxly enforced since it was passed, and undocumented workers have been more criminalized than their employers.
4 The aim of the IIRIRA was to bolster border surveillance, punish traffic in undocumented migrants, punish document forgers, apprehend and remove deportable and inadmissible foreigners, and levy new restrictions on employers. It abolished deportation and removal hearings, thus eliminating many of the individual rights of undocumented migrants subject to deportation.
5 The INS was replaced by the US Citizenship and Immigration Services (CSIS), part of the DHS, which handles visas, naturalization, and refugee and asylum status; Customs and Border Protection (CBP); and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), which enforce federal immigration law since they surveil and review the goods and persons passing through all points of entry into the United States.
6 The plan included measures such as "normalizing" the status of certain foreign workers, reinforcing border control, and establishing a possible guest worker program, among other proposals.
7 The Wisconsin congressman had proposed the bill (HR4437) in 2005.
8 SB1070 stipulates that state agents or authorities can verify the immigration status of any person they suspect is in the country without immigration papers. Despite the fact that the Supreme Court struck it down, the state has continued to apply the "Show me your papers" policy to anyone who "looked" undocumented and to prohibit issuing them driver's licenses, as well as other punitive measures.
9 DACA allows for the temporary suspension of the deportation of undocumented immigrants between the ages of 15 and 31 who arrived in the United States before their sixteenth birthday and who have been in the country for at least five years; gives them a two-year work visa; and requires that they pay a US$465 fine.

Camelia Tigau*

From Brain Circulation to Talent Restrictions: A Personal Insight into Skilled Migration Studies

Introduction

Writing on skilled migration discussing the paradigms of brain drain, brain gain, brain circulation, and diaspora networking has flourished over the past 50 years. Even though this issue of *Voices of Mexico* is dedicated to the celebration of the CISAN's three decades and, implicitly, to the evaluation of the last 30 years in North American scholarship, my contribution to the field began only 12 years ago.

My previous background is in international communication studies and diplomacy. As an international stu-

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Jason Reed / REUTERS

dent who ended up a migrant in Mexico and, later, a Mexican citizen, the UNAM offered me the opportunity for self-reflection as part of a brain drain process from my native Romania. When I left the country of my birth in 2002, 21.83 million Romanians were living inside the country. In 16 years, the population dropped by 11 percent, to 19.53 million in 2018, mainly due to intense migration to the European Union.[1] Most of these people are educated, hold bachelor's degrees, or at least have technical studies. Most live in Spain and Italy, countries of similar Latin backgrounds, where cultural integration may be easier. For the first time in its history, Romania became a country of outmigration, due to the European Union's mobility policies.

Similar to the Romanian case, but in a different context, the migration of skilled Mexicans has been rising in recent decades, both in percentage and absolute terms. Both Mexico and Romania are in line with a more extended international trend: migration nowadays seems to be young and selective, with increased participation of women. The majority of Mexican professionals who migrate choose to live in the U.S. Skilled migrants made up 7 percent of the total flow of Mexicans to that country in 2017. The percentage is higher for Mexican women in the U.S., among whom 7.7 percent have undergraduate or graduate studies.[2]

Both Mexico and Romania are in line with a more extended international trend: migration nowadays seems to be young and selective, with increased participation of women.

Apart from the serendipity of my presence at the CISAN, there is a reason behind delving into this particular topic at this kind of research center. The United States and Canada are the countries that have received the most skilled migrants in recent global history. This is "the region" to study the dichotomy between brain gain and brain drain. The U.S. is the world's main recipient of skilled migrants, who totaled 10 281 124 foreign professionals in 2000, followed by Canada with 2 705 370 for the same year. More than half (51.3 percent) of the skilled migrants in the world went to Canada and the United States in 2000, a percentage that has increased steadily since the 1970s, almost doubling from 26.6 percent in 1975.[3]

With this short introduction, I may now recall my own contribution to the study of skilled migration in North America, the field that I have been asked to address at the CISAN. My findings mainly deal with qualitative research that has involved life-history and in-depth interviews with over 200 skilled individuals, most of them living in

Canada and the United States. In particular, I got a very close look at the Mexican diaspora, in some cases through participative observation and creating profound empathy.

First Level: Brain Drain Caused By Violence and Insecurity

I began my research with a project in which I avoided using the term "brain drain" for its possible derogatory meaning to the migrants. In this first phase of my research, I carried out an online survey with Mexican migrants living on five continents. I was looking for the right migration policies, seen from a main country of origin such as Mexico, in order to benefit from the experience of long-term skilled migrants who do not necessarily return after long periods in the U.S. After publishing a scientific booklet on scientific mobility that introduced the overall puzzle of mobility versus migration of skilled human capital,[4] I arrived at deeper and sometimes more disturbing findings.

My results pointed to the fact that economic and labor conditions were not necessarily the main cause of professional migration; these were accompanied by factors such as violence, insecurity, corruption, and sometimes, even smaller annoyances like traffic or long working hours. I arrived at the conclusion that brain drain is not an isolated problem with a simple solution, but a result of other issues that may be fixed through correct government interventions, such as increasing spending on research and development, improving the hiring conditions in the labor market, and decreasing inequality, all these as indirect ways to tackle insecurity.

As a complement to other outstanding works produced at the same time, my book *Riesgos de la fuga de cerebros en México: Construcción mediática, posturas gubernamentales y expectativas de los migrantes* (Risks of Brain Drain in Mexico: Media Construction, Governmental Positions, and Migrants' Expectations)[5] showed the incipient efforts of networking with the diaspora, along with the heartbreaking testimonies of entire families of Mexican professionals in their 40s or 50s who sold their homes and belongings to seek a better life. It is worthy of note that part of this research was done during a short stay at the University of York in 2010 and throughout the war against drug trafficking that resulted in a high rate of casualties in Mexico. A great part of Mexican skilled migrants in Canada ran away from what they called "bad living conditions," with working hours that practically meant not seeing their loved ones except on weekends. Their decisions were often made thinking about the future of their children, whom they were afraid to allow to walk by themselves as adolescents, due to kidnappings and muggings. Very often, they did not directly experience this violence, but they were aware of it through their friends, family, and the news.

Once abroad, be it in the U.S., Canada, or elsewhere, the Mexican professionals interviewed enjoyed the 40-hour work week, in which staying late at the office meant they were not efficient in their work. They admired the meritocratic culture in which people are valued for what they produce rather than according to their social relations. They all missed the warmth of the Mexican culture, its cuisine, lifelong friends, and their families, whom they visited once a year.

Second Level: Diaspora Diplomacy

In 2015, I initiated a new project combining my previous experience in skilled migration and diplomacy research, called "Contact zones for skilled diasporas in North America: Public diplomacy for co-development." My starting point was the idea that skilled diasporas are active agents of public and cultural diplomacy, who act independently from governmental action through professional networks and associations. Similarly to my previous project, I continued with qualitative studies that included interviews, focus groups, and analysis of media discourses around brain drain in North America. This time, I was able to re-experience the migrant condition during a six-month

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stay at the Mexico Center at Houston's Rice University. I looked for new methodologies to complement my previous experience, and therefore included more comparative studies of the Mexican professionals with the ones from Brazil, Colombia, China, India, Iran, Lebanon, Romania, and Sri Lanka. Apart from that, I also took the opportunity to do historical research at the Nattie Lee Benson Latin American Collection at the University of Texas at Austin, consulting original documents that give accounts of the integration of the U.S. Mexican-American minority since the beginning of the twentieth century.

As many other previous studies have pointed out, the internationalization of science and longitudinal field research provide original working material, allowing for new findings. As part of this more mature and internationalized perspective, I produced at least two works that may be recalled for the purposes of this short essay.

One, recently published in an India-based journal, gives arguments that contextualize the long-debated "medical brain drain."[6] The data I collected during my stay in Houston proves that medical doctors from developing countries may be a brain drain to the research systems in their own countries of origin even without migrating, when those countries do not invest in their medical research. On the contrary, their presence abroad may actually help their scientific systems more if they cooperate with colleagues back home, give talks, and implement systems of virtual patient treatment or bilateral/multilateral working teams. From my perspective, medical brain drain may be evaluated considering the size of the country of origin, its need for medical doctors, and the support for medical research, and dealt with under ethical recruitment considerations in countries of origin. In my research, medical doctors interviewed in the U.S. are willing to give something back to their countries of origin, receive postdoctoral scholars, and actively collaborate with their countrymen, as actors in scientific and medical diplomacy through their professional networks.

Third Level: New Trends and Discrimination Patterns in Skilled Migration Studies

One can be wrong when self-evaluating. I'll take the risk to say that I consider my most important contribution to the brain drain literature to be my most recent book on discrimination patterns in skilled migration (forthcoming), based on the experience of Mexican skilled migrants in Texas compared to a contrast group of professionals from seven other countries. In this book, I study the relationship between skilled and unskilled migrants and between privilege and prejudice against certain migrants. Before migrating, skilled migrants are part of a professional elite and many times, of a respected middle class with access to a good education, social and cultural capital, domestic help, and personal transportation. After they migrate, professionals become foreigners and have to reintegrate into a community comprised of educated and uneducated alike. In this way, Mexican skilled migrants experience the global perception of being "Mexicans in the U.S.," a heterogeneous group dominated by undocumented migrants with low skills; therefore, their hiring positions are lower when compared to native workers or to "model minorities" such as Asians.

Virtually all professionals interviewed agree on the lack of opportunities in Mexico compared to the United States. The testimonies show that no single truth about the migration process exists, but that each experience is unique. Furthermore, the overall statistics on brain drain from one country to another may become irrelevant if one outstanding individual who may significantly improve particular fields in science or economy is working abroad rather than in her/his country of origin.

In my research, I propose a dual model for analyzing the migration of skilled individuals, considering the privileges of life in the United States compared to Mexico and identifying certain common reasons for the migration for all professions. Based on this model, I discover differences in how certain professionals from particular fields behave in the migration process. For example, engineers are the ones who care most about discrimination; doctors highlighted their extensive cooperation networks with Mexican colleagues, while they observe the lack of opportunities for medical research back in Mexico; and

Entrepreneurs and workers in business administration are perhaps the most flexible professionals in terms of the possibility of finding a job or creating a company abroad.

young students seem to be mostly scared about insecurity in Mexico.

Entrepreneurs and workers in business administration are perhaps the most flexible professionals in terms of the possibility of finding a job or creating a company abroad. In their case, mobility is greater and many have reached their destination by intra-company transfer. Some did not choose Texas, but were sent there by a transnational. Their migration process did not imply choosing a particular destination, but involved opting to leave. In this sense, they are similar to diplomats, who do not generally choose the countries where they will work.

The contrast group of professionals from other countries showed the existence of certain general global trends in contemporary skilled migration. Among these, I will highlight the impact of public policy in fields such as education, science, and technology. While governments of origin seem to care about investing in better university and graduate education, they must also promote human capital as a social value and create adequate development conditions in their countries. The way many migrants see it, small things matter, such as pollution, the perception of overpopulation, and the availability of public transport.

High-context cultures of origin,[7] such as Mexico's, India's or China's, put high value on family, friendship, and family relations. This may create a conflict when migrants integrate into meritocratic low-context societies in Western countries. I found that migrants in general, and professionals in particular, may feel uncomfortable or not very adapted to the culture of destination, not necessarily because of prejudices, but because of cultural incompatibilities.

While many skilled migrants do not contemplate returning, I discuss the "networking solution." In general, professional networks that occur naturally in various fields of scientific or business cooperation prevail over governmental diaspora networks. This may be due to ideological reasons: that is, migrants' incompatible political perspectives *vis-à-vis* the governments in their countries of origin, a finding that should make us question the effectiveness of the programs of networking with the diaspora.

Conclusion: The Recent "Brain Rejection" Paradigm

A decade ago, we were but few researchers dedicated to skilled migration in Mexico. As a starting point, our main goal was to give an account of how many skilled Mexican were living abroad. How big was brain drain? Now we know the numbers, the destination countries, and, apart from that, the conditions of outmigration and attraction that set the path for this type of migration.

One of my first publications on the topic, *¿Fuga de cerebros o nomadismo científico?* (Brain Drain or Scientific Nomadism?),[8] identified three stages in the studies and policies for skilled migration: a) the nationalist stage, corresponding to critical brain drain theories that lamented losses in the countries of origin; b) the internationalist, in which brain circulation theories determine policies of networking with the diaspora; and finally, c) the transnational, emphasizing the continuous mobility of skilled personnel between various countries of origin and destination. Are we in a different moment now?

Fortunately for my topic, my research in Texas was conducted immediately before and after Donald Trump's election, a period of heightened concern for migrants with temporary migrant status in the U.S. My results point to the emergence of a new political paradigm in skilled migration, in which the benefits of skilled migration are questioned for the first time by traditional destination countries. As such, in a context of populist response against globalization, some politicians in the countries from the "global North" are responding to the historical critique of brain drain from the countries of origin with a "brain rejection" policy in order to protect their cultures, economies, and native workers.[9]

High-context cultures of origin, such as Mexico's, put high value on friendship and family relations. This may create a conflict when migrants integrate into meritocratic, low-context societies.

The study of populism as a communicative act and the state of the art of media discourse on skilled migration before and after Trump's takeover has been central to demonstrating this change of paradigm or, at least, an important change in the political discourse on the brain drain that existed since the postwar period. Indeed, new historical moments create new needs in social science studies.

When it looked like we knew everything —or had the main parts of the puzzle—, the recent conditions of populist politics in three of the main historic destination countries for human capital (the U.S., the UK, and Australia) gave us a surprise. The attraction of foreign human capital is now being questioned along with the overall cohorts of migrants. Is skilled migration harmful to native workers? Is it disturbing societies of origin culturally? Is skilled migration bad when it is too much?

The recent discourse of populist leaders like Donald Trump or Teresa May gave the topic a different reading altogether, when questioning brain gain as a strategy of economic and social development. We already knew brain drain understood as a massive exit of professionals and talented people from their countries of origin was harmful; but never before did we see questioning from the winners or brain gain countries. Reading the news is stimulating and, as a researcher, gives me new reasons to keep studying the same topic. But it is never boring. VM

Notes

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3 C. Defoort and G. Rogers, "Long-term trends in international migration: an analysis of the six main receiving countries," *Population* 63, no. 2, pp. 285-317.

4 C. N. Tigau, *¿Fuga de cerebros o nomadismo científico?* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de Humanidades, and Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, 2010).

5 C. N. Tigau, *Riesgos de la fuga de cerebros en México: Construcción mediática, posturas gubernamentales y expectativas de los migrantes* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Coordinación de Humanidades, and Centro de Investigaciones sobre América del Norte, 2013), reprinted in 2015, available online at http://ru.micisan.unam.mx:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/16694/L0097.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

6 C. N. Tigau, "The Scientific Diplomacy of Medical Diasporas: A Case Study of Foreign Medical Doctors in Texas," *Migration and Diasporas: An Interdisciplinary Journal* vol. 1, no. 2, July-December 2018.

7 Edward T. Hall proposed a classification of high-context cultures and low-context cultures based on the way they communicate and their history. While the former give more importance to a person´s status, body language, and tone of voice, the latter mainly use language and clear communication rules. E. T. Hall, *Beyond Culture*. (New York: Anchor, 1989).

8 C. N. Tigau, 2010, op.cit.

9 R. D. Wise and D. T. Martin, "The political economy of global labour arbitrage," in K. Vander Peil, *Handbook of the International Political Economy of Production* (Cheltenham, UK, and Northampton, Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2015), pp. 59-75.

Ariadna Estévez*

A Mexican Epistemology for Studying Migration in North America

I have been a researcher at the UNAM for 13 years and throughout my academic career here, my fundamental research interest has been to produce analytical frameworks to be able to critically study social phenomena like migration and asylum in a way that would not feed into the colonialism of knowledge and power that Aníbal Quijano points to and that can be found in English-speaking academia, including the United States and Canada. I have sought to produce a Mexican epistemology to analyze power relations in North America in this

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Joshua Lott / REUTERS

The conflict migrants find themselves in is the product of the systematic negation of universally recognized rights.

area from a situated perspective (Donna Haraway), a transmodern perspective (Enrique Dussel), a post-structuralist perspective (Michel Foucault and Achille Mbembe), and a feminist perspective (Sayak Valencia).

This article is a recapitulation of what I think has been my contribution to that Mexican epistemology, which places neocolonial power relations and migrant subjectivities at the center of the analysis. To do that, I will present my first theoretical proposal, decolonized global justice, the product of a comparative study of migratory policy in North America and the European Union (2007-2010). Then, I will explain my proposal of necropolitical wars as the cause behind men and women Mexicans seeking asylum in the United States, which has an asylum biopolitics that throws them to their deaths (2010-2015). Finally, I'll explain my proposal of a necropolitics *dispositif* (apparatus) of the production and management of forced migration, in a book I am currently working on derived from my research project on asylum (2016-2020).

Decolonized Global Justice

This was my first theoretical proposal and I developed it in the book *Derechos humanos, migración y conflicto: hacia una justicia global descolonizada* (CISAN, UNAM, 2014), published in English as *Human Rights, Migration and Social Conflict. Towards a Decolonized Global Justice* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). Here, I argue that the conflict in which migrants find themselves is the product of the systematic negation of universally recognized rights. Analyzing this causal relationship provides clues as to how certain elements of current migratory policy in North America and Europe, such as securitization of cooperation for development and of borders, detention centers as part of a toughening of asylum policy, the criminalization of migration, and the social marginalization derived from discrimination against migrants, have caused problems for receiving countries. The conflict is the predictable, but not inevitable, result of the structuring relationship between globaliza-

Despite the fact that denial of human rights would be economically convenient for migrants' receiving and transit countries, in the long run, that denial is the basis for social volatility expressed in conflict.

tion and migration. Structuration supposes the partial autonomy of immigrants to change their conditions and have a positive or negative effect on globalization, which incorporates structural properties that always provide resources that give impetus to subjects' agency, such as human rights. More specifically, the book explains that human rights are structural resources whose recognition or denial can incline the balance to the positive or negative side of that agency.

The empirical evidence examined highlights the fact that despite the fact that denial of human rights would be economically convenient for migrants' receiving and transit countries, in the long run, that denial is the basis for the social volatility expressed in conflict. The clear way to avoid the conflict is to recognize migrants' universal human rights. This is normatively possible through 1) broadening out citizenship, and 2) recognizing and applying human rights.

The book evaluates both possibilities. First, it explains the different political traditions of citizenship and the dimensions they emphasize: rights in liberalism; participation and obligations in republicanism and communitarianism; and identity and difference in multiculturalism. Nevertheless, I underlined that despite their emphases, none of these perspectives can escape the ontological tendency to exclude this category, because all of them preserve the state of membership or nominal citizenship to keep foreigners on the sidelines.

Given this limitation, citizenship theoreticians see human rights as a way of transcending territorial limitations. There are four proposals for reformulating citizenship based on human rights: 1) being concerned with the recognition of labor rights and their related rights; 2) focusing on migrants' cultural incorporation and the transnationalization of political rights; 3) justifying the gradual or immediate acquisition of a broader series of rights in the destination country; and, 4) post-citizenship, whose aim is to transcend the tendency of citizenship to exclude, and focus on the universal, humanist character of human rights. By adhering to the fourth proposal, transcending citizenship, I proposed the reformulation of the hegemonic concept of human rights so that, through the intertextuality of human rights instruments, it would be possible to extend a broad gamut of human rights to both documented and undocumented migrants.

To apply universal human rights, I made a broader normative proposal that would transcend the epistemological interests of receiving countries and that would make migrants' rights the fundamental objective, obeying the *real* priorities of the so-called Third World. I proposed decolonized global justice that would elucidate how, in the fulfillment of ethical and legal responsibilities, the international can have an impact on lessening conflicts linked to the denial of and disregard for human rights.

I then proposed an epistemological decolonization of liberal ideas of global justice to replace the emphasis on abstract morality with one that recognized the material aspects of migrants' individual and collective rights. Decolonized global justice is based on the application of the universal material principle of ethics as part of the international obligations generated by the general principles of the right to development. This implies that states have the obligation to take measures to prevent people from leaving their countries, not only in terms of aid, but as a global economic policy (for example, free trade and production). At the same time, these countries also have the obligation to help those who have been denied their human rights, especially if that has to do with trade policy and its side effects. However, that help should not come through economic aid, but by committing themselves to people's decision to seek better opportunities in wealthy countries if they so desire. To the extent that people cannot satisfy their needs in specific areas due to development-related issues, the concert of nations has the obligation to recognize migrants' human right to mobility within their territory.

Necropolitical Wars and The Biopolitics of Asylum

My interpretation of the war against drugs begun in 2006 by then-President Felipe Calderón, which forcibly expelled thousands of Mexicans to Canada and the United States, was that it was a necropolitical war. This is developed in the book *Guerras necropolíticas y biopolítica de asilo en América del Norte* (Necropolitical Wars and the Biopolitics of Asylum in North America) (CISAN,UNAM, 2018). In this study, I began to give my research a gender perspective; the result was to point out that this criminal violence is no different from feminicidal violence. That is why the reasons that men and women requested asylum were different, even though they are treated the same way in the courts: that is, to let them die. To develop these ideas, I utilized Michel Foucault's idea of biopower and Achille Mbembe's concept of necropower.

Foucault did not develop a theory of power, but he did venture "an analytical philosophy of power," which he did not try to define, but rather to establish how it functions and dominates subjects.[1] This analytical work notes the systems of differentiation, instrumental modes, and the forms of institutionalization of power. In this philosophy, power consists of "driving behaviors"; that is, not acting on persons but on their actions, inducing them, facilitating them, making them difficult, limiting them, or preventing them. Power relations become domination when they are joined with techniques that make it possible to dominate the behavior of others.

However, due to the violent processes linking Mexico to the United States in forced migration, the project led to the study of necropolitics, which is the post-colonial reading of biopower. Different theoreticians from Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe have underlined that biopower does not operate in the same way everywhere, and that it is insufficient for explaining the objectives of power relations in the Third World, where criminal violence and the state reveal that the objective is not the regulation of life, but death. In other words, in the Third World, instead of biopolitics, what exists is necropolitics. This does not mean that biopower and necropower are counterposed, but that it is necessary to pinpoint the ends of each (the regulation of life and death, respectively) to situate precisely how their apparatuses and strategies intertwine in transborder situations like those of Mexican exiles in the United States.

The concept of necropower can be attributed to Achille Mbembe. He maintains that biopolitics is not enough for understanding how life subordinates itself to the power of death in Africa. He states that the proliferation of arms and the existence of worlds of death (places where people are so marginalized that they actually exist like the living dead) are an indicator that a politics of death (necropolitics) exists instead of a politics of life (biopolitics) as Foucault understands it. Mexican philosopher Sayak Valencia agrees with Mbembe in his reinterpretation and radicalization of Foucault's biopolitics, and like them, she believes that death, more than life, is found at the center of biopolitics, transforming it into necropolitics. However, she distances herself from these perspectives saying that in the Third World it is not enough to incorporate the analysis of the deadly impact of neoliberalism and the activities of private necro-empowered entities, but that the analysis has to be geopolitical and contextually specific. She reflects about necropolitics in societies that are simultaneously impoverished and hyper-consumerist like Mexico's border cities, where extreme violence and hyper-consumerism are elements that structure dissident —though illegitimate— subjectivities that resist the power of the state.[2]

These ideas suggested the category of necropolitical wars for conceptualizing the legal, paralegal, and supralegal violence that systematically victimizes women and men in Mexico. Necropolitical wars are those that exist within the state instead of between states, and as a result of the neoliberal dismantling of both, because they occur in situations in which the state enters into play less due to a weakening of the economy and the propagation of criminality, corruption, and inefficiency. Violence is privatized

States have the obligation to take measures to prevent people from having to leave their countries, not only in terms of aid, but as a global economic policy.

as a result of the growth of organized crime, the emergence of paramilitary groups, and the loss of political legitimacy. The state loses control over parts of its territory to criminal groups. The new wars happen, then, in the struggle for necropower. These wars have their specific expression in the Third World, where necropower not only revolves around delinquency, paramilitarism, and mercenaries, but around the control of gore capital. I characterized at least two kinds of necropolitical wars according to their objective: 1) war for political alliances, key in the reproduction of criminal capital in general, called the wars for the necropolitical governmentalization of the state; and, 2) wars waged against women to dispossess them of their bodies for private sexist domination and sexual exploitation in gore capitalism, which I called wars for the dispossession of women's bodies.

The necropolitical governmentalization of the state was the concept I used to characterize the power of the Mexican state, which has been reconfigured by the alliances of political power with the cartels. I explained that the necropolitical governmentalization of the state is the effect of neoliberal governmentality, an appropriation of its elements by necropower in the Mexican state. Necropolitical governmentalization of the state implies delegating positions of state authority and techniques of domination of the populace to criminal gangs to act through practices that produce death (murder, torture, persecution, human smuggling, sexual trafficking). Necropolitical governmentalization of the state uses political discourses like the war against drug trafficking or the crisis of insecurity as apparatuses to regulate death, with the securitization of the public space as its central strategy and the criminal economy as its main motivation. Necropolitical governmentalization of the state leads police and military behavior toward a situation in which expert handling of technologies of death becomes a comparative advantage in a context of miserable wages and the subordination of ethics to the market and consumption.

Necropolitical governmentalization of the state implies delegating positions of state authority and techniques of domination of the populace to criminal gangs to act through practices that produce death.

The Necropolitical Apparatus Of Production and Managing Forced Migration

The apparatus of necropolitical production and managing forced migration is an interpretation of forced migration, and not just of asylum, in its relationship to extractivist capitalism and the closing of borders in North America. Even though I have published several articles on this topic, I am writing a book on it to be published jointly by the UNAM and Lexington Books in 2021. The apparatus refers to how people subjected to criminal and legal violence, to death, to sexual and labor trafficking, to forced labor, and to the criminal economy are allowed to die in their countries of origin or when they try to cross increasingly securitized and dangerous borders because of making undocumented migration illegal, the obstacles to asylum, and deportations. This definition suggests that apparatuses, technologies, and mechanisms are used to guarantee that poor people, the marginalized, and the disposable die as they try to migrate.

Taking as a case study the Mexico-U.S. border, the book will propose that the necropolitical apparatus of production and management of forced migration contains three interrelated necropolicies: forced de-population, which produces asylum applicants, refugees, and so-called undocumented migrants; asylum as the administration of suffering, which uses legislation and the institutions of asylum to control the time and space of asylum applicants, refugees, and migrants instead of offering them legal protection from persecution; and the pockets of disposability, which are the spatially defined places of death, where asylum applicants and migrants and deportees are confined when asylum as a technology of the management of suffering finds against them. VM

Notes

1 Edgardo Castro, *El vocabulario de Michael Foucault: un recorrido alfabético por sus temas, conceptos y autores* (Bernal, Argentina: Universidad Nacional de Quilmes, 2004), p. 204.
2 Sayak Valencia, *Capitalismo Gore* (Barcelona: Melusiana, 2010).

Raúl Benítez

Raúl Benítez Manaut*
Leonardo Curzio Gutiérrez**

20 Years of Security In North America

When the UNAM Center for Research on North America (CISAN) was founded in the late 1980s —originally as the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA)—, it opened up paradigms for new knowledge: what was needed was to transform the idea prevalent in Mexico in the twentieth century that the United States was an empire and that we hadto to build a nationalist defense shield against it. The United States was feared; and we knew that, sooner or later, our Mexican compatriots there would number in the millions and would build a huge political force. However, we were not fully knowledgeable about the empire.

Regarding security issues, at that time, the governments that had emerged from coups d'état in Latin America and civil wars in Central America were coming to an end. During the 1990s, the winds of globalization swept through North America giving rise to interdependence, beginning with the interactions that arose out of the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement and its entry into effect in January 1994. The process of European integration, the dismantling of the Soviet Union, and the discourse of positive globalization influenced the three countries of North America. In the case of Mexico, the most important influence of the United States and Canada was to pressure to resolve the political crisis unleashed by the 1994 Zapatista uprising through dialogue and negotiation.

Interactions in security and defense came later, when the United States was attacked on September 11, 2001 and needed the help of its neighbors, Canada and Mexico, for its own defense. Mexico signed the Smart Border Agreement in March 2002, initiating an era of cooperation required by the U.S. for its defense in the face of the new radical-religious terrorism. The interdependencies in North America due to its noteworthy interconnections

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Photos by Raúl Benítez Manaut. Frontera El Chamizal, Cd. Juárez, Mexico.

in trade turned into cooperation under the aegis of "shared responsibility" in issues of security and defense.

For the United States, the dark side of trade was the rise of terrorism, and for Mexico, the empowerment of criminal groups. The criminal organizations exporting cocaine from Colombia saw a huge opportunity for introducing their product through Mexico's porous land borders with the United States. They shored up the Mexican criminal groups like the old Sinaloa and Gulf Cartels, and many others were born to take advantage of the opportunities. Now, it was Mexico asking for help, and the Mérida Initiative was signed in 2007. And the "war on drug trafficking" began.

Thus, the security paradigms among the three countries were changing, from focusing on national security to a shared tri-national security approach.

TIME LINE: SECURITY IN NORTH AMERICA

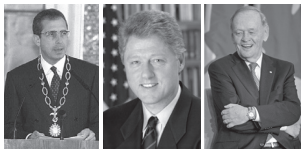
From National Security to Shared Security 1990-2006

1990-1994 Trinational Security Takes Off

George Bush, 1989. Fall of the Berlin Wall and world trade integration accelerates. William Clinton takes office in the U.S. in 1993. NAFTA is decidedly encouraged: in Canada, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney supports it and Mexico's President Carlos Salinas de Gortari makes it the cross-cutting issue of his policy.

1994-2000 NAFTA

The three heads of government, Clinton, Chrétien, and Zedillo, consolidate the treaty and many talk about strengthening cooperative mechanisms with Mexico for security, defense, and border control. Mexico is required to improve its human rights situation due to the uprising of the 1994 in Chiapas and to consolidate democracy. The change in administrations in Mexico in 2000 strengthens trinational integration.



2000-2006 President Vicente Fox takes

office in December 2000, and George W. Bush does the same in the United States in January 2001. The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States determine a change in the security agenda, strengthening border protection measures. The three countries of North America enhance cooperation. Mexico's southern border is the most vulnerable flank for the region's security. The Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America (SPP) is launched in March 2005 as a trilateral effort to increase security and enhance prosperity among the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

From Terrorism to Drug Trafficking 2006-2012

2006-2012 Drug trafficking emerges as

the most important threat to Mexico, and Mexico and the United States construct a model for cooperation through the Mérida Initiative. President Felipe Calderón takes office. Between 2008 and 2019, aid given through the Mérida initiative came to US$2.88 billion.[9]

2006-2016 With the inauguration of

Conservative Party leader Stephen Harper as Canada's prime minister in 2006, the country returned to a schema of national security and did not join in the fight against drug trafficking. Harper even imposed visa requirements for Mexican citizens in 2009, which were removed when Liberal Party Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took office in 2016.

2009-2017 President Barack Obama's

inauguration in January 2009 changed the paradigm of the Mérida Initiative, emphasizing prevention programs and the reform of Mexico's justice system.

2012-2018 President Enrique Peña Nieto

takes office in December 2012 and begins questioning the Mérida Initiative. Peña Nieto centralizes the security cooperation program and the amounts of aid decrease. However, the strategy of the war against drug trafficking continues.

Migration and Nationalism 2016-2019

2016 Donald Trump's presidential campaign centers on criticizing free trade and its "big winners," Mexico and China. He promises to pull out of NAFTA when he takes office in January 2017. He harshly criticizes Mexican migrants and maintains that "Mexico will pay for building the border wall." This marks a return to old Cold War conceptions of national security, but now the threat is the migrants. His campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again," is a *de facto* negation of free trade and the trinational concept of North America.

2017-2018 Andrés Manuel López Obrador's campaign

for the Mexican presidency centers on a traditional left-wing discourse rejecting Trump's nationalist positions and reconstructing Mexico's lost nationalism. It is a return to a discourse typical of the golden years of the twentieth century, based on statism and national values, and it roundly criticizes "neoliberalism" and "conservatives." AMLO wins in July 2018 and little by little his original discourse fades. He decides not to enter into a confrontation with Donald Trump. Mexico defends NAFTA and fosters the negotiations for its redesign with Canada.

2019 Good relations among the United States, Mexico, and Canada are rebuilt. Donald Trump also decides to reformulate NAFTA. Numerous Democratic congresspersons, business groups, and U.S.-Mexico border states bring great pressure to bear to not break trade relations with Mexico and Canada. The three countries decide to renegotiate NAFTA and build the United States, Mexico, Canada Agreement (USMCA). U.S. aid to Mexico for security and defense is also reactivated in May 2019. A new paradigm for cooperation emerges: the three leaders, Trump, Turdeau, and AMLO do not share political ideologies, but build mechanisms for understanding, dialogue, and cooperation. Mexico cooperates intensely with U.S. security through controlling migration from the south. In the United States, between October 2018 and August 2019, the most apprehensions of migrants in history are made: 926 769. Between January and November, 179 335 migrants are detained in Mexico.

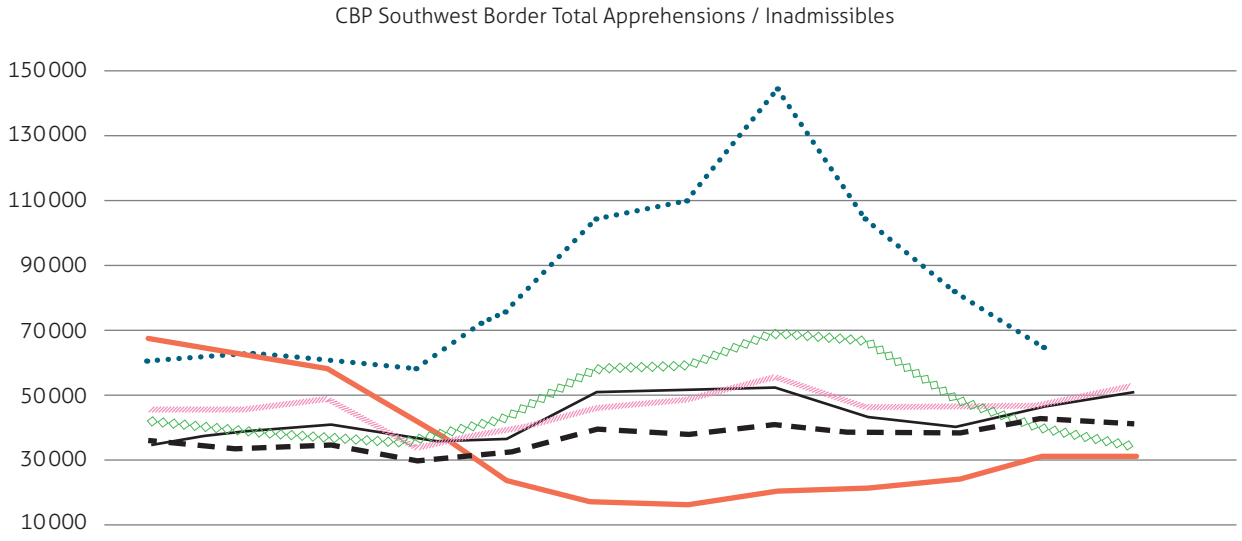
The Donald Trump Challenge

The Mexico-United States-Canada relationship has changed radically since Donald Trump took office. Concisely put, we could say that we went from being partners seeking joint solutions to global and regional challenges to neighbors clashing on many issues that determine daily coexistence.

In security, relations have been institutionalized between the United States and Canada since the Cold War. It was not until 2002 that relations with Mexico began to include operational commitments. In this case, Mexico barely defines the rules with its North American neighbors. The topics are the fight against terrorism (the U.S. and Canadian priority), the fight against organized crime (Mexico's main issue), and migration (which the Trump administration has given absolute priority to in the United States, beginning with the president's first electoral campaign in 2016). In all three issues (defense, justice, and border security), the aim is to strengthen the North American perimeter. Thus, the management of the common border gave rise to a series of normative instruments, but, above all, to a shared agenda to cooperatively manage the vibrant border between the two countries. They called it a "twenty-first-century border." This position of limiting migration has not been shared by important sectors of the Democratic Party, particularly by some governors —the most important being the governor of California—, and by many local authorities, who have even decreed sanctuary counties.

For the new Mexican government headed by Andrés Manuel López Obredor (AMLO), it is no simple matter to adapt to the new logic in which we have gone from being partners with converging interests to a new stage in which Mexico's interests are seen as contrary to those of the great world power. Since his campaign, Trump questioned the Mexican administration of Enrique Peña Nieto, and AMLO took office with an unprecedented adaptation to the sign of the times marked by the rhythm of Trump's new strategic vision.

Detentions on the U.S. Southwest Border (FY2014-FY2019)



	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	Total
FY19	60785	62467	60791	58311	76542	103732	109463	144255	104362	82055	64006		
FY18	34871	39051	40519	35905	36751	50347	51168	51862	43180	40149	46719	50568	521090
FY17	66842	63218	58379	42359	23557	16794	15798	19966	21673	25069	30582	31280	415517
FY16	45516	45755	48742	33657	38311	46118	48511	55386	45671	46909	46909	51893	553378
FY15	35903	33032	34243	30180	32550	39162	38296	40683	38619	38611	42415	41165	444859
FY14	41828	38685	36695	35181	42399	57405	59119	68804	66541	48819	39758	34003	569237

Source: Customs and Border Protection, https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/media-releases/all.

AMLO and His Dilemmas *vis-à-vis* the North

The AMLO administration has defined its relations through a series of letters. One, dated May 30, 2019, reacted to the U.S. threat of imposing tariffs if Mexico did not stop the flow of Central Americans, which in the month of May had surpassed 144 255. In this letter, President López Obrador reiterated his willingness to dialogue and be prudent to avoid falling into a pattern of symmetrical reprisals ("an eye for an eye") and his desire to find solutions to the base cause of the migratory problem. Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard accepted (*nolens volens*) a temporary procedure for the U.S. to unilaterally verify —that is, without parameters, independent arbitration, or mediation— that Mexico was complying with its commitment to militarize its southern border (the states of Chiapas, Oaxaca, Tabasco, and Veracruz) to contain the flow of Central Americans. That was the only way to avoid the imposition of tariffs and halting the negotiations for a new trade deal. With this agreement, signed in May 2019, the Mexican government reversed its migratory policy and made a 180-degree turnabout that bore results in 45 days. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo approved the deployment of Mexican troops to control the Central American population, and Trump has publicly thanked the country on multiple occasions for it. For Trump, this means the "wall" is being paid for by Mexico. Surmounting the hurdle of the tariffs not only did not change, but in fact deepened, this new assignation of roles in which Mexico appears as the problem and not as a partner contributing mutually beneficial solutions. In other words, Mexico's migratory control was provided to favor the signing of the new North American trade deal.

Mexico's public presence in influential media outlets in the United States is capital. There still has not been a single speech or article in which Mexico's president defines his broad foreign policy strategy. AMLO has opted to delegate in his foreign relations minister, Marcelo Ebrard,

> The Mexico-United States-Canada relationship has changed radically since Donald Trump took office. We could say that we went from being partners seeking joint solutions to neighbors clashing on many issues.

the development of the country's foreign policy and even its immigration policy, which, formally speaking, is the responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior. In these terms, in which Mexico has significantly cooperated to contain the flow of Central Americans, the foreign minister should defend Mexico's position in the U.S. media, positioning three messages:

- Mexico is trustworthy;
- Mexico is key for providing stability; and
- Mexico can provide solutions.

In the field of security, the following question remains open: What are we going to do with the Mérida Initiative and the paradigm of co-responsibility? Here, it is fundamental to execute an internal analysis to determine what Mexico wants from cooperation with the United States. Does it require intelligence for operation? Does it need funds to reinforce its own capabilities? Or, does it need a fully sovereign relationship in which each of the countries fulfills its functions and equally shares the development of the strategy. At the same time, Mexico has much more to say about the tragedy caused by the illicit traffic in drugs and weapons.

Raúl Benítez

The Victims of the Failed War against Drugs

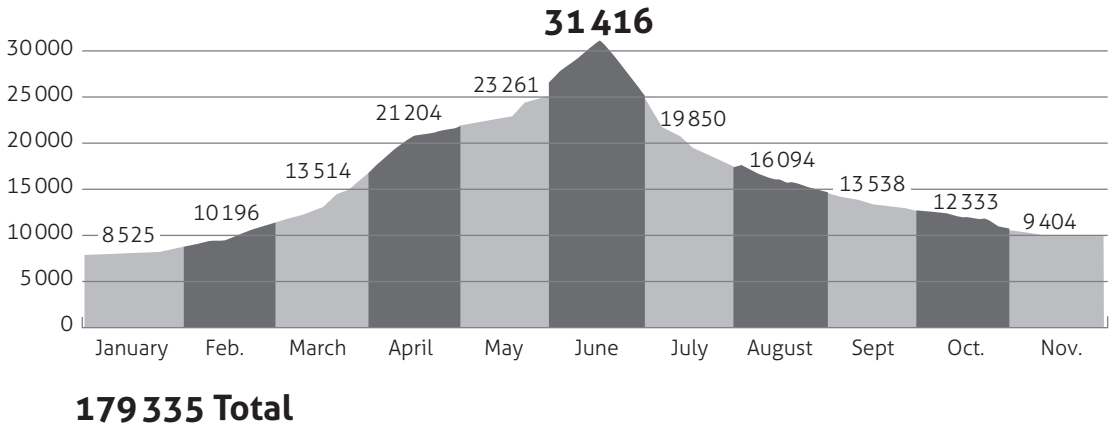
In Canada, the deaths due to opioid and fentanyl overdoses are considered a grave health crisis. More than 13 900 apparent opioid-related deaths occurred between January 2016 and June 2019.[1] In western Canada, particularly British Columbia and Alberta, drug consumption and drug-related deaths are higher.[2] The last U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) report on the number of deaths in the United States and their causes (directly or indirectly related to drugs) is shocking. In 2017, the number of injury deaths by drug poisoning was an alarming 70 237, while other deaths were due to suicide (47 173), homicide (129 510), firearms (39 773), and motor vehicle crashes (40 231). This comes to more than 300 000 deaths, in many cases directly or indirectly linked to drug consumption. In 2019, these figures continued on the rise, with an estimated 72 000 due to opioids.[3] The DEA attributes the massive distribution of these drugs to Mexican criminal groups:

> Although offshoots from previously established Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) continue to emerge, the DEA assesses the following six Mexican TCOs as having the greatest drug trafficking impact on the United States: Sinaloa Cartel, New Generation Jalisco Cartel (CJNG), Beltran-Leyva Organization, Juarez Cartel, Gulf Cartel, and Los Zetas Cartel. These TCOs maintain drug distribution cells in designated cities across the United States that either report directly to TCO leaders in Mexico or indirectly through intermediaries.[4]

In Mexico, the figures for homicide deaths caused by the violence unleashed with the war against drugs has increased year after year. In 2019, government estimates put the figure at 35 588.[5] The humanitarian crisis is also growing: official figures cite 61 637 disappeared persons between 2006 and 2019.[6]

Because of this great humanitarian tragedy that North America is experienc-

Migrants Detained in Mexico (January-November 2019)



179 335 Total

Source: Secretaria de Gobernación, Unidad de Política Migratoria, January 2020, http://portales.segob.gob.mx/work/models/PoliticaMigratoria/CEM/Estadisticas/Sintesis_Graficas/Sintesis_2019.pdf.

ing, despite borders, combatting drug trafficking is a humanitarian obligation for the three governments, since it is the public who is the main victim of this scourge.

Subordinate Cooperation: Control of Migration

The United States and Canada are countries of migrants. Thinking of migrants as enemies is a change to the paradigms that gave birth to both nations. However, the Trump administration perceives them as the new great challenge and links migrants to the threats to its security. It is difficult for Mexico to be constantly certified by the U.S. government, since no clear parameter exists to identify the success of migratory control to determine Mexico's cooperation with the United States. What would the risks be if we were to become a safe third country, showing that, when required, Mexico can be a reliable partner? The humiliations experienced in May-June 2019 must be presented as a willingness to cooperate. In other words, making the need imposed by our neighbor the condition for "shared responsibility" is a huge challenge for Mexican policy.

This is no minor issue for Mexico, and, of course, we must look more deeply at the implications of a strategy of containing Central American migrants. As shown by the graph, migrants detained in Mexico in 2019 totaled 179 335; added to this is the fact that the closure of the U.S. border has meant that the population of Central American origin has grown by between 700 000 and one million in Mexico, according to different sources. All of them are surviving in very fragile conditions. Among them, almost 500 000 were returned from the United States to Mexico between October 2018 and October 2019.[7] What are the future consequences of their stay in Mexico going to be, taking into account that poverty levels of broad sectors of the Mexican population are also very high?

For this reason, in the medium term, it is a priority to raise the political costs of anti-Mexicanism and the rejection of the Central American population in the United States. Any actor in U.S. public life can easily talk badly about Mexico and Mexicans. If the guarantee of Trump's reelection in 2020 is playing the anti-migration, anti-Mexicanism card and insisting on "payment for the wall," as happened in 2016 —and is continuing to happen—, it is a priority to make it costlier to do that. Even more so when the AMLO government has displayed what can be called "subordinate cooperation" to be able to continue with a *no-conflict policy*.

The United States and Canada are countries of migrants. Thinking of migrants as enemies is a change to the paradigms that gave birth to both nations.

Trump Empowered And Mexico's Stability

After getting through the impeachment process in the first week of February 2020, President Trump's election campaign has the advantage over his Democratic Party rival. We have already seen the high price of Trump's bad-mouthing his neighbor to the south. That is why it is vital to reinforce the idea that Mexican stability is the most important aspect of North American security. Weakening a moderate left government in Mexico offers the United States no geopolitical advantage. Mexico's government, with a cautious foreign policy with no anti-U.S. rhetoric, could change if it is harassed by the U.S. nativist, nationalist discourse. This could open up the door in Mexico to ultra-nationalist, anti-globalization, anti-Yankee currents, as has happened in several Latin American countries.

Mexico becoming Venezuela-ized would be catastrophic for North America. It is a huge paradox that AMLO's Morena- party government is the champion of free trade, abiding by the rules of the trilateral agreements in effect since the 1990s, and the responsibility of providing prosperity and common goods in a region devastated by criminals like Central America and many states of Mexico. For that reason, we have to insist that this is a bad narrative to relay to the U.S. public. On the contrary, despite the nationalism on both sides of the border, borders actually fade in the face of reality, and convergence between governments becomes obligatory despite their differences.[8]

Finally, this logic of situating Mexico as the enemy has eroded one of the most solid pillars of international politics in the post-Cold War period, which was to create a convergence between two distant neighbors who have a thousand reasons to be enemies, but millions of reasons to cooperate. VM

Notes

1 https://health-infobase.canada.ca/substance-related-harms.
2 https://www.france24.com/es/20180918-la-crisis-de-los-opiaceos-deja-8000-muertos-en-dos-anos-en-canada.
3 Drug Enforcement Administration, Department of Justice, 2019 *National Drug Threat Assessment* (Washington, D.C.: December, 2020), p. 142.
4 Ibid., p. 99.
5 Secretariado Ejecutivo del Sistema Nacional de Seguridad Pública, https://www.animalpolitico.com/2020/01/homicidios-2019-violencia-asesinatos-record/.
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Lucy Nicholson / REUTERS

Silvia Núñez García*

Discovering the Wealth of U.S. Society

Joining the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA) —today the Center for Research on North America (CISAN)— at the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) as a researcher when it opened in 1989 was not merely a unique opportunity in my professional career, but the opening of the possibility to explore new research topics that had spurred my intellectual curiosity. They were the result, first of all, of my academic background in sociology, and secondly of my prior experience collaborating on a project in U.S. history, whose aim was to develop an interpretation of that nation's evolution over time from a Mexican perspective.

The combination of these two factors produced a special interest in focusing attention on topics unexplored by Mexicans who were already studying the United States or who concentrated on analyzing issues relevant for the two countries' diplomatic agenda at the time. It bears mention that, in the case of the former, a large number were historians, whereas diplomatic subjects were studied by lawyers, economists, and —needless to say— internationalists. One of those was, precisely, Daniel Cosio Villegas, at El Colegio de Mexico, who became an important leader, covering studies of the past, the economy, and diplomacy equally.

I should also emphasize that, in the intervening years, the main benefit of joining the CISEUA as an academic has been the freedom the UNAM provides to expand knowledge and teaching. This is sufficient reason to explain from the outset that I have chosen topics for this article because of how enlightening and gratifying their exploration has been.

The U.S. Middle Class and Social Inequality

The study of the U.S. middle class constituted my first challenge as a researcher at the center. I sought to understand how it acquired and determined its particularities in the general context of its class structure. My interest was drawn then to a statement which I personally found intriguing when discussing the decisive importance of sectors of the middle class in constructing the basic sociopolitical consensus that made the U.S. democracy strong.

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After applying the Weberian *Verstehen* method, based on the possibility of recovering the subjective or individual dimensions of social life, I used an eminently deductive methodology to arrive at the fundamental premise of that study: to accept that social scientists had not come to a universal agreement on how to conceptualize and analyze the divisions or hierarchies of social class. Therefore, in this particular case, the most appropriate meaning of the concept of social class would be very simple: a social group that shares a similar occupational range and educational level, combined with a value system that identifies it.

In addition, my accumulated knowledge of colonial history, the Revolutionary War, and the founding of the United States started to take on greater meaning when I was able to identify the origins and relevance of social mobility as the cornerstone of the American Dream. The unquestionable value of the right to private property and its protection and defense was the driving force behind a model of colonization based on granting freedom to white colonists, and consequently was also their reason for rebelling when, in 1765, the British Crown imposed taxes denying them the right to self-determination and likewise barring them from representation in Parliament.

Strictly speaking, the struggle for independence was a reaction in favor of preserving existing freedoms —a key element in the success of the 13 colonies— and not achieving it for all, given that in the Colonial Assemblies, participants were required to meet several prerequisites, one of which was that they be property owners.

This would support an understanding of the capitalist system as the central axis of U.S. social structure, rooted in the existence of a broad material base (vast territory and an abundance of natural resources, capital, and labor), while factors like competence and meritocracy would be imperative for understanding the role and rise of the U.S. middle class, shaped by individualism, ambition, and an obsession with preventing its own decline.

Another important factor to stress is that sociologically pinpointing the middle class went hand in hand with a social stratification in which differences between upper and lower classes were also typified. At the same time, a feature very unique to the U.S. case appeared, based on the fact that, in countless studies, when asked where they saw themselves within those categories, a common response among U.S. citizens was to self-identify as members of the middle class.

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Based on surveys by the PEW Research Center conducted in 2008 and 2012, in the first of those years, 53 percent of interviewees classified themselves as middle class, whereas four years later the figure had fallen to 49 percent. Only 2 percent identified as upper class, a finding that remained stable in the two years surveyed. On the other hand, 25 percent identified as lower-middle and lower class in 2008, increasing to 32 percent in 2012.[1]

For the year 2017, the Gallup Report would confirm a further drop in the number of U.S. citizens who identified as middle class, only 43 percent, confirming a progressive decline. Although income has always been a key factor in defining social class, in addition to education and prestige or social status, newer studies of the middle class use more sophisticated cross referencing, in which age, region of residence, ethnicity, or place of residence (rural, urban, or suburban) mark the difference.[2]

The 1980s, then, saw the beginning of the threat to the U.S. standard of living, as a result of the adjustment and redefinition of the capitalist model. Poverty, homelessness, single-parent households, and loss of industrial jobs all increased, giving rise to a growing national debate on the future of the middle class, which continues to this day.

The debate is divided into two currents. The optimists have argued that the strength of the middle class is rooted essentially subjectively. Their fallback would be the ability to distance themselves from attachment to material wealth in critical situations, relying instead on the value of *hope*. Here, it is interesting to observe in passing how the word "hope" was, precisely, part of the campaign slogan of the nation's first African-American president, Barack Obama, in 2008.

The second current would defend skepticism, questioning the viability of the middle class's persistence as the country' predominant social group in a context of rampant neoliberalism. Its proponents would base their position on economic forecasts, which already anticipated technological dynamism, migratory pressures, the service

sector's inability to provide adequately paid jobs, and even a lack of political will as factors that shaped political rhetoric in the leadup to the 1996 general elections.[3]

We are assisted in this instance by the expository clarity of the emblematic U.S.-Russian sociologist Pitirim Sorokin, the fifty-fifth president of the American Sociological Association, who summarized and fully understood the elements dividing social classes: an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, gratifications and privations, social power, and influence among members of a society.[4]

Values

One of U.S. society's greatest strengths from its beginnings has been its ethnic, racial, and religious diversity, which has gradually expanded to encompass sexual and gender diversity, despite the fact that the latter began to gain visibility in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. With particular codes, this has represented an enormous social, political, and cultural challenge, compelling us to briefly examine its framework of values and meaning, as elements to link up trust, solidarity, and social cohesion.

While it is known that, for C. Wright Mills and U.S. sociology, U.S. Americans have two shared values, freedom and rationality, my overview of other perspectives in the 1970s led to a study by Robin Murphy Williams,[5] who made a list of 15 core values.

Without a strict order of precedence, these values include democracy, individualism, liberty, success, and personal realization, plus moral orientation. The latter is especially relevant in light of U.S. foreign policy at critical junctures in its relationship with Mexico, as President Trump has campaigned for a border wall, making claims of his country's legitimate right to apprehend "bad hombres" who cross into the U.S. from Mexico, stigmatizing undocumented migrants as criminals and rapists. Patriotism is another value that takes on special relevance in the same context, by feeding feelings of national pride that bleed over into admiration for the heroism of members of the armed forces, police officers, and the border patrol.

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On the other hand, progress, pragmatism, material prosperity, rationality, and the scientific method are all values identified with a capitalist world view, based on the pursuit of profits.

Williams also recognizes the principle of equality, not only because it is enshrined in the U.S. Declaration of Independence, but to underscore his argument that it is not a universal value, since women and ethnic, racial, and religious minorities continue to be excluded. Therefore, it is important to bear in mind that it is a controversial subject in the U.S., as some choose to limit it to equality under the law or equality of opportunity, which they uphold as bastions of the American dream.

Williams would become a visionary, having framed the discussion of the relevance of identities and their interactions in the social sphere 20 years ago.[6] In his analysis of subjectivity, he elucidates its links to action and cultural and social institutions. Contrasting his arguments with those set forth by Francis Fukuyama in 2018 in his deliberations on the impact of globalization,[7] the rise of populist nationalism, including Trumpism, and the struggle for political recognition of a host of new identities, is work that remains to be done in these times marked by uncertainty and conflict.

Women

I must now refer briefly to the singularity of U.S. American women's struggle, in the context of the recognition of gender identity and the emergence of the #MeToo movement, which, beginning with its firm opposition and systematic repudiation of Trumpism, has achieved global reach. Very few references exist in Latin America about women's unquestionable role in what would be the United States between the colonial period and the late nineteenth century. Largely relegated to domestic work, motherhood, and family life, those who were slaves or members of native communities did agricultural labor as well. The constant for them all was absolute submission to the authority of the father or husband. In the case of white society, marriage was a natural and necessary consequence.

Although in the sixteenth century the New England Puritans allowed girls to attend elementary school so they could learn to read and write, the social motivation was religious, since reading the Bible was mandatory. In a male-dominated environment, the ethnic and racial components of social class further deepened the vulnerability of non-WASP girls and women, to the point that, even in the twenty-first century, according to Sabrina Barr, belief in their intellectual inferiority prevails in the United States.[8]

All this notwithstanding, it must be acknowledged that institutions of higher learning that admitted women multiplied across the nation throughout the nineteenth century, with female enrollment reaching a cumulative level of 20 percent by 1870 and surpassing 33 percent in 1900. A few years later, perhaps as a consequence of their victory in the struggle for universal suffrage in 1920, women held 19 percent of bachelor's degrees in the United States. In graduate studies, by the 1980s, women held 49 percent of the nation's master's degrees and almost 33 percent of its PhDs.[9] Therefore, education has been a fundamental instrument for women's empowerment and a vehicle for their training and effective exercise of leadership.

In this regard, it is noteworthy that women's gains in the political arena in the United States were particularly significant in the November 2018 midterm elections, with a record 117 winning candidacies nationwide. In all, women now make up 51 percent of the U.S. population, which means that they are still far from achieving parity with men in Congress, where they control only approximately one out of every five seats.[10]

If we compare figures from 1992, the year women set a precedent with 54 elected to Congress, in 2020 they hold 127 seats distributed among 101 congresswomen and 26 senators (105 Democrats and 22 Republicans).[11] Women's struggle in the political arena must continue and show that every obstacle is a learning opportunity, while recognizing that many more battles are being fought in the realm of everyday life, where societal change is strategic.

Final Comment

Based on three decades of systematic observation of U.S. society, we can identify countless adverse elements that corroborate Joseph Stiglitz's statement that inequality in the United States is the tip of the iceberg, a product of prevailing economic rules and structures.[12]

Good jobs that permit upward mobility for the middle class are increasingly scarce, compared with rising costs in areas like higher education, access to housing, and healthcare, while the gender gap, in terms of wages and income, like the scourge of racial segregation, has closed very slowly.[13]

U.S. society is polarized, although at the same time the present political conditions attest to the U.S. American people's associative vocation, driving the growth of resilient movements to combat Trumpism and support Bernie Sanders, a testimony to an irreversible sociocultural transformation. VM

Notes

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2 Robert Bird and Frank Newport, "What Determines How Americans Perceive Their Social Class?" Gallup, https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/204497/determines-americans-perceive-social-class.aspx, February 27, 2017.
3 James W. Russell and Silvia Núñez Garcia, *Clase y sociedad en Estados Unidos* (Mexico City: CISAN, UNAM, 1997).
4 The author rose to prominence as a political activist and through his contributions to the theory of social cycles. See Pitirim Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Mobility* (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1959). As a professor at Harvard University, he founded the Center for the Study of Creative Altruism.
5 John D. Carl, "Fifteen US Values, According to Sociologist Robin Williams," *Think Sociology* (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2010).
6 See R. M. Williams, *Making Identity Matter: Identity, Society and Social Interaction* (Bloomington, Indiana: Sociology Press, 2000).
7 Francis Fukuyama, *Identity. Contemporary Identity Politics and the Struggle for Recognition* (London: Profile Books, 2018).
8 Sabrina Barr, "Girls and women more likely to be regarded as intellectually inferior to their male peers," INDEPENDENT, https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/women/girls-women-intellectual-brain-boys-men-inferior-bias-prejudice-study-a8677391.html, Dec. 11, 2018.
9 "Women's History in America," *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia 1995 CD-ROM*, Compton's New Media, 1995.
10 Maya Salam, "A record 117 women won office, reshaping America's leadership," *The New York Times*, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/07/us/elections/women-elected-midterm-elections.html, November 7, 2018.
11 Data published by the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP), Rutgers University, www.cawp.rutgers.edu/current-numbers, February 10, 2020.
12 Joseph Stiglitz, *Rewriting the Rules of the American Economy* (New York: Roosevelt Institute, 2015), p. 8.
13 Ibid.

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Ignacio Díaz de la Serna*
Nattie Golubov**

Research about Two Moments In U.S. History

Voices of Mexico: Natie Golubov and Ignacio Díaz de la Serna both joined the CISAN in 2004. Although their research differs in the time period (the U.S. today and the country's origins) and epistemologies, they share a single meaning: the moments and conditions in which transformations in U.S. historic and cultural processes take place.

Nattie Golubov: I joined the CISAN in 2004 and started out with a project about higher education in the United States. I had total freedom to pick how I wanted to approach the topic, and I did historic research into how the U.S. educational system has been transformed. While I was doing that, I received financing to carry out a short project about migrant communities in the United States. I wanted to explore the concept of diaspora, which is very useful in dealing with the different kinds of migration. At that time, the concept of diaspora wasn't being used to think about the Mexican community in the United States. One of the products of my project was an anthology of translated classic essays about the concept to open up the conceptual and methodological discussion for studying diasporas.

I found something interesting in the course of the research about higher education: in a certain way, universities are microcosms of U.S. society. They are marked by region, by class, etc. So, I began to lean away from institutions and orient my thinking in terms of cultural conflict in the United States and its manifestations of all kinds: social, racial, gender, and a very long etc. Starting with that research, my next project was very specifically about cultural wars in the United States, because in the 1980s a discussion emerged about affirmative action and political correctness. That discussion was widespread in universities, and great strides were made in policies in favor of different kinds of equality.

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Another project came out of that, one that was more methodological, oriented to cultural studies, because, at that time, no introductory book existed in Spanish for the field of cultural studies. When I realized that my students were increasingly interested in them, I decided to write a book about it. That book can be downloaded on the CISAN web site, by the way.

The book was oriented toward understanding different dimensions of U.S. culture using the theoretical tools offered by cultural studies. That also opened up a vein of research I'm following now about romantic novels. This literary genre is the biggest seller in the United States. I think that more romantic novels are sold than detective and fantasy novels put together. In fact, romantic novels are the mainstay of publishing conglomerates and are what allows them to publish books that almost nobody reads. It's not that this project diverted my line of research; rather, what happened is that the research branched out. The study of the romantic novel involves a project about popular literary genres that I was invited to participate in and headquartered in the UNAM School of Philosophy and Letters.

With a more contemporary reflection, I have linked this up to my more recent research into literary geography in U.S. literature. This project is in its initial stages; I'm still in the process of selecting the literary corpus and identifying certain recurring themes in the literature published in the twenty-first century. For example, for the theme of the romantic novel, I'm writing something about mercenaries, because there's an entire sub-genre of romantic novels in which the heroes are mercenaries. It turns out that mercenaries are veterans who the U.S. government uses in overseas wars, and some predict that in the not-too-distant future they will fight practically all the wars. We could say that, starting with romantic novels, I reflect on other kinds of problems, because these novels deal with themes like the fate of war veterans when they come home, the impossibility of reintegrating into daily life, the lack of a home, the horrendous experiences they've had in the war, among other things. These novels also express women's concern when they see when their husbands or their sons come home from the war and aren't able to reincorporate themselves into daily life in the United States. And that's how I approach literature, establishing a relationship in keeping with the context, the concerns that certain sectors of the population have and the literatures they create, because reading and writing feed off each other.

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VM: From a gender perspective, how have you seen the United States evolve in your research, as a country or as more specific communities?

NG: The feminist interpretation of U.S. culture is that since September 11 it has undergone a process of "remasculinization." That had already happened after Vietnam, since it seems there's a more or less direct relationship between war and the effects it has afterwards. And what that implies is that a metonymical relationship exists between family and nation, in which women and children are vulnerable citizens who have to be defended by these men, usually highly specialized members of the armed forces, the army, and mercenaries. There are images of Bush that are very striking and iconic where he's wearing a helmet on an aircraft carrier next to a U.S. flag; that was how a connection of images that exalted everything military began. But, of course, there's also the other side of the coin: the failed masculinities that don't protect their women. That's where Bush's discourse about freeing Muslim women who are subjugated by men and taking democracy to those countries comes from. Also, they exalt the failed masculinity of the external enemy who's failed because they can't protect their own women, but also because they're labeled cowards because they don't show their faces; what you get then is a kind of feminization of men.

On the other hand, the political right wing is hammering away at all the achievements that had been made, like the decriminalization of abortion. This has always been a very hot topic in the United States, and it's ideologically important because people vote —or don't— for a candidate based on his or her position on this issue. The U.S. imaginary is also seeing an escalation of militarization and of white supremacist ideology, which promotes white maternity. Women as mothers fulfill a very important function in these movements because they're the ones that are going to strengthen the white race; they're the ones who are responsible for raising and educating future white citizens. We could say that conservatism isn't

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a plot, but different political conflicts take place on different levels that tend to look to or want to reinstate the gender identities of the 1950s.

All of this permeates knowledge, the universities, and cultural imaginary. But the universities have always been in the vanguard; from the origins of the feminist movement in the United States, they were always present. I don't know about now, though, if women's studies or gender studies departments are being closed because of the cuts in higher education. But I suspect that they are. It's not just those departments, though; the same thing is happening with ethnic studies, which were achievements in the 1980s and now, for economic —and obviously ideological— reasons, if they're not being dismantled, they're at least being reshuffled. That's the impression I have, but I'm not certain.

VM: What do you think the future of research looks like?

NG: I don't like making predictions because they often turn out to be wrong. I prefer to look to the past for my reference points.

Ignacio Díaz de la Serna: I joined the CISAN in 2004; I've been here for 16 years and when I came on board, I already had an academic career behind me. Not only had I finished my doctorate, but I had broad teaching experience in both public and private universities; I had published articles, books, etc. Before coming to the CISAN, I worked in contemporary French philosophy and French Enlightenment philosophy. All my studies were in philosophy. Later I specialized in political philosophy, which is a vast field covering many topics and authors. I confess that when I came here it was very exciting because for the first years, I literally became a student again, because I had to study the United States. What I knew about it was what anyone who reads the newspapers knows, but the topic that I came to work on was the origins of the U.S. federation. As I said, this was not my specialty. So, I literally had to hunker down and study, not only their authors, who were several of the founding fathers, but also the history of the eighteenth century, that is, all the historic conditions that made it possible for the U.S. to be born constitutionally and politically. Everything I do here at the CISAN is permeated by my discipline, philosophy; that's why I essentially work on a conceptual level.

The methodological orientation that has allowed me to work on my previous projects and what I'm working on now is the genealogical perspective. What is genealogy? It's not only going back into the past, like for example, with a family tree; the genealogical perspective is something that Nietzsche inaugurated in his *On the Genealogy of Morality: A Polemic*. It's a look into the past, and he's always interested essentially in certain historic conditions because every historic phenomenon, as Nietzsche says, is produced through certain circumstances that point toward a meaning, toward a goal; and there are very concrete conditions that not only make its occurrence but its development possible.

So, my previous research project was the analysis of the historic conditions in which not only the U.S. federal political system emerged, but also the importance of U.S. constitutionalism as a whole. You have to remember that this was the first Constitution written in the world through the genealogical vision and analysis. That is, historiographically speaking, the meaning of that historic moment was affirmed, in which exceptional, just, virtuous men constructed that political reality absolutely unprecedented in the history of the West. That is the image that lives in the U.S. American imaginary.

It's not a matter of questioning here whether they were, in effect, as virtuous as that image has been constructed in U.S. history. But one thing has clearly been covered up in U.S. historiography: that in that world there are social groups —I won't say social classes—, but there's a social group of property owners, landowners, that is very powerful economically and politically. And if you scratch the Constitution a little, it's not all that favorable for the population in general. The political project, the institutions designed starting at that moment do not only favor that great majority; rather, it was a political project designed essentially for that class of landowners. So, genealogically, we can understand that process in a different way: the ultimate objectives of that historic experience did not exactly point to that glorious, fair goal.

I worked on this issue for a long time: I wrote several book chapters, articles, and two complete books. So, it's an issue that I've exhausted. Well, maybe I haven't completely exhausted it, because I would be interested sometime in writing precisely about that U.S. historiographic tradition, because having familiarized myself with the different groups of historians in the different eras up until now has allowed me to understand how the United States as a nation has seen itself in a pretty virgin territory, because the first U.S. historians were Europeans who had not been born in the Americas. Those historians, as a group, did not see themselves that way. For example, after the War of Secession, a group of historians constructed an idealized image of the nation, trying to put a lid on what had been precisely the secession, a nation absolutely divided and torn apart. This is something that cannot be left out of the history of the United States. For me, looking at historiography or the historiographic tradition of any nation or country is the way to understand how its inhabitants see themselves throughout their history.

Today, I'm working on a topic rooted in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Starting with [Europeans'] discovery of the Americas, all culture, modern culture since its origins, modern European culture, began to conceptually develop a categorization related to that "other" completely different from European Man found in the American world. This process is understood to reach from the sixteenth century with the "discovery" to the second half of the eighteenth century, with colonization, as the consolidation of the modern world and the spirit of the Enlightenment; not only the French process, but the entire European process. That process doesn't consist of understanding the "other," but in how European Man understands himself. It would have been impossible to construct that identity of modern Man if there had not been that highly contrasting figure. In the sixteenth century and part of the seventeenth, the relationship with that "radically other" was extermination and enslavement. In the eighteenth century, as part of the Enlightenment spirit, European Man decided not to annihilate the other, but to understand it. And to do that, he had to develop a certain categorization to fit it into the field of identity of civilized European Man. In the eighteenth century, part of Enlightened culture is precisely that endeavor of categorizing otherness, which is no longer circumscribed exclusively to the original American peoples. The Europeans had already gone to Asia and Africa. It is a huge cultural endeavor not only of European Man, but of Western Man. So, I began to be interested in a much-forgotten literature that consists of a series of English and French chronicles narrating the process of colonization of North America. I have concentrated essentially on the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French chronicles, although there are fascinating items in the sixteenth-century writings, like the French Huguenot or Protestant attempts to establish a colony in Brazil, which the Portuguese did not allow. And that's where the saga begins that led the Protestants to North America.

The French seventeenth- and eighteenth-century chronicles are very symptomatic, first of all because they're, if not the first, among the first examples of Western ethnographic literature. In contrast with the Spanish colonizers, the French and English were not as interested in conquering territory or the minds of the others, but in opening up trade routes. This implied dealing with the peoples or the human settlements that they encountered along the way. Most of the chronicles are literally an ethnographic recounting of the fascination these Europeans felt at seeing and trying to understand customs, learning the languages, and everything about the beaver fur trade, one of the most important in Europe at that time. As I delved into that literature, I noticed that most of these chronicles have not been published today, except a few about the foundation of Canada. And I will venture the hypothesis that that experience and that literature did not interest either the Canadians (the Quebecois) or the French because Napoleon was not interested in territories in the Americas. And that's why they sold them to Jefferson, who bought them. Napoleon was completely absorbed by his imperial policy in Europe, so the American territories were an expense or a waste; they held no strategic interest. On the one hand, the French don't see that literature as something that is essentially theirs, and on the other hand, with the whole demand for independence for Quebec, it would be quite contradictory to try to base it historically on that colonial past. So, this literature has literally been left between the two conti-

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nents; they're chronicles that are practically forgotten. That's the literature I've been reading, since it seems to me that it's the origin of modern anthropology, because there's an ethnographic viewpoint. And anybody could tell me that that viewpoint is also found in Bernal Díaz del Castillo and in other historians of the chronicles of the Indies, but that viewpoint of the two countries, England and France, debuts essentially through the experience of the colonization of North America.

Every genealogical viewpoint understands historical processes as something symptomatic that remains as a historical process that is shunted to one side, hidden, overlooked. And that is precisely a symptom of something. Actually, my training is as a historian, but I'm not doing history of North America or of anything. But no one here at the center is doing historiography.

NG: Regarding Nacho's mention of imaginaries, I'd like to add that cultural processes are very slow. Cultural transformations take a very long time; culture changes in unpredictable but slow ways. That is, political and economic phenomena are too fast paced, and sometimes they coincide with the culture they're rooted in, but other times they don't. Peoples have imaginaries, but I believe that now it's very difficult to talk about a single one. Of course, in the eighteenth century it was possible, because the population was smaller. Today, those who have the power to define the situation in any country —we could be talking about Mexico, the United States or Canada, where many social groups have their own cultural expressions— are very active in introducing their own identities and interpreting those of others *vis-à-vis* their own histories and in telling their own narratives. So, I would resist saying that there's a U.S. American imaginary. Rather, I would think there is a multiplicity of them, and I think that generally speaking there's a tendency to simplify U.S. culture and the United States itself. It's a country full of conflicts, very diverse, not only racially, but also culturally. Each region has its history, its literature, its music, its geography, which in a certain way have a direct impact on culture. That's why I think we tend to simplify a country that's very complex, and people always argue that it has no history. But, of course it does; if we compare it with Europe's, it's brief, but not non-existent.

IDS: In that sense, Nattie, it seems to me that all those cultural phenomena like the ones you study are what have created the way that country has developed over time. VM

Alejandro Mercado Celis*

CISAN Research on North American Cultural and Creative Industries

The creative and cultural industries are defined as all those whose product or service has a high symbolic and aesthetic content and whose meaning is more important than their utilitarian function.[1] Among the most important sectors are all branches of formal artistic endeavors: audiovisual activities such as cinema and television; the publishing industry in all its formats; publicity, which uses different media and languages; the new technological sectors like videogames and other digital narrative forms; and all fields of design and architecture.

David Hesmondhalgh points out three reasons why the cultural and creative industries are important for contemporary societies: first, their capacity to produce narratives that influence our knowledge and understanding of the world and how we experience it; secondly, because they play the role of systems of organization of creativity and knowledge in contemporary societies; and third-

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The immense production of U.S. audiovisual and musical content and their domination of the Mexican market have affected our own creative and cultural industries, particularly film.

ly, because their actions generate transformations and economic, social, and cultural effects.[2] They are not only important because they cover a series of economic activities with common traits like symbolic and aesthetic content, but also because, to a greater or lesser extent, these characteristics have permeated most economic and service activities to the degree that, according to Allen Scott, the era we live in can be defined as cognitive-cultural capitalism.[3]

For Mexico it is very important to study North America's creative and cultural industries. For decades, the United States has been the world's main producer and distributor of cultural content; it has dominated, above all, in the production of films, television programs, and the music industry. In Mexico, the consumption of these U.S. cultural products has been intense and, therefore, it has affected the vision we have of the United States. Of course, U.S. cultural products' content are not unidirectional nor do they have a coherent, invariable intentionality. While narrative patterns exist through which U.S. society represents itself, we can say that the diversity of cultural products and the fragmentation of U.S. industries' creative sources have generated a broad, contradictory universe of narratives. Understanding and monitoring the changes and continuities of these products is central for understanding the United States and our vision of it.

Another aspect that makes the study of these industries in North America from the Mexican viewpoint important is their economic effects. The immense production of U.S. audiovisual and musical content and their domination of the Mexican market has affected our own creative and cultural industries, particularly the film industry. The negative effect of Hollywood domination can be seen

Canada fields a large number of strategies and public policies to encourage its creative industries, and Mexico can learn a great deal from them.

around the world, even in countries with important film traditions and considerable governmental support, such as Canada and France. On the other hand, the large migrant and Mexican- and Latin American-origen population in the United States has created a very important demand for Spanish-language and Mexican cultural content. This has undoubtedly been key for the development of television and other sectors such as music, publishing, and radio broadcasting. These economic effects require continual research efforts to monitor and explain the transformations in audience dynamics, the penetration of Spanish-language media and content, and the discourses and representations in their content and in the organization of companies.

The creative and cultural industries have been tremendously affected by the swift evolution of information and communications technologies. On the one hand, both independent and commercial content production has expanded exponentially. On the other hand, the digital distribution of cultural content, above all music, film, and literature, has put within the reach of individual consumers an extremely broad supply of products that is hardly conditioned at all by their place of residence. Cultural consumption in the new streaming platforms for music and audiovisual products has increased access to U.S. products, but it has also opened up spaces for Mexican and Canadian production. One aspect to be researched is the extent to which these new distribution channels have benefitted or complicated production for Mexico.

The social and technological dynamic between Mexico and the United States has brought with it the emergence of collaborative networks for creative and cultural production. These transformations have had an impact on production relationships in North America. More and more co-productions by Canada, the United States, and Mexico are in the offing, and their artistic and creative communities are participating in tight-knit networks for work and temporary collaboration. Mexican talent has always migrated to the centers of U.S. cultural production, but in this century, this has accelerated and become more noticeable. Studying the effects of technological change in cultural consumption and production must be a priority for understanding the evolution of North American creative and cultural industries and the role Mexico plays and will continue to play in the region.

Canada fields a large number of strategies and public policies to encourage its creative industries, and Mexico can learn a great deal from them. Given the cultural proximity of Canada and the United States, the pressure on Canadian cultural markets is much greater than in Mexico. The Canadian government has made different sustained efforts for the production and distribution of Canadian content. The support goes not only to the fine arts, but support for folk culture is also broad and innovative. Popular music and audiovisual film and television production are successful examples of these policies. Mexico has a lot to learn from the Canadian experience and the regional and national dynamics of its cultural and creative industries. To do that, we study these processes from the CISAN.

Since its beginnings, the CISAN has produced important multidisciplinary research about North America's cultural and creative industries. The lines of research have produced important teaching and research materials in the areas of cultural, literary, and film studies. Research into the cultural industries in the trade agreements has recently been incorporated, including their socioeconomic functioning in each country and the organizational and creative links that tie the cultural producing and consuming communities together in North America. VM

Notes

1 Dominic Power and Allen J. Scott, "A Prelude to Cultural Industries and the Production of Culture," in Dominic Power and Allen J. Scott. eds., *Cultural Industries and the Production of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 3-16.

2 David Hesmondhalgh, *The Cultural Industries* (Los Angeles and London: Sage, 2012).

3 Allen J. Scott, "Beyond the Creative City: Cognitive–Cultural Capitalism and the New Urbanism," *Regional Studies* 48, no. 4 (2014), pp. 565–578.

Stringer Mexico / REUTERS

Aaraón Díaz Mendiburo*

The CISAN, a Ray of Hope In Today's World

To speak of the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) is to speak of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). And this inevitably guides my look at the past and the present, and, of course, also makes me imagine the future.

A few yesterdays ago, or, to be more precise, in the mid-1980s, the sound of a motorcycle made me run repeatedly up the stairs to that little box, magnanimous in its ability to receive, hold, and release stories from different parts of the world. That call, usually in the morning, that gave me goosebumps, stopped worrying me one day (probably in summer) because fortunately, the little envelope that the mailman left notified me of my admission to high school at the UNAM.

The Sciences and Humanities High School, southern campus (CCH Sur), where I was assigned, was in many ways a very good option. Among other things, it allowed me to exchange knowledge and perspectives with fellow students and teachers —horizontally, and sometimes, in a more orthodox way— and use the sports facilities, which would benefit my physical, psychological, and emotional health. It also let me visit the University Cultural Center more often, where what I experienced and dreamed of in its different venues has influenced not only what I produce through light or letters, but also my day-to-day actions, and also strengthened my desires to deconstruct the patterns that do not help to create other possible ways of living, patterns that repress the imagination in order to reproduce conventions bursting with special interests.

This profound quest to construct friendlier, more inclusive, and just spaces for everyone, women and men, who live on this planet has intensified over time. And my alma mater has been there to lead me in solidarity to places that have allowed me to interact with those who persevere in the fight for the abolition of all forms of violence, building and imagining just societies. So, I had the good fortune to be admitted to the School of Political

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and Social Sciences, and, years later, to the National School of Social Work, where I received my master's. I then continued with my doctorate from the Institute of Anthropological Research and a post-doctoral stay at the International Migration Research Centre at the Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, Canada.

In that last year, after having moved around constantly, with everything that that implies, from rural to urban communities both in Mexico and Canada, I was looking for a place to continue my endeavor. Once again, I had the good fortune to focus on a space designated almost 15 years ago as a World Heritage Treasure, traditionally known by young and old, Mexicans and foreigners, as University City. There, at its center, standing out because of its monumental functionalist architecture, stands the Humanities Tower II, previously the Sciences Tower, currently home to the CISAN.

History of and in the CISAN

On November 10, 1988, the University Program for Research on the United States of America was founded, although months later, the University Council transformed it into the Center for Research on the United States of America (CISEUA). On May 19, 1993, given the need to analyze and explain the geopolitical, social, and cultural transformations occurring in North America, it was decided that Canada should be included as an object of study, thus giving rise to its new and current name.

It seems like the force and intent of José Chávez Morado and Rosendo Soto's murals in the Alfonso Caso Auditorium, just a few feet away from the center, inspire in those of us working here to share the fire that passes through the glass mosaics of one of them and illuminates us to stride ahead to gain knowledge about North America, including our country. That fire helps us understand what goes on in the areas of the CISAN's areas of inquiry: Migration and Borders; Identity and Cultural Processes; Social Actors, Structures, and Processes; Economic Processes, Integration, and Development; Ideas and Political Institutions; and Security and Governability.

And only a few months after having joined the CISAN, my expectations are very high. I should mention here that I have collaborated and participated in the CISAN as a volunteer for several years now. I remember as though it were yesterday the outstanding organization of the 2015 Metropolis International Conference, where I had the opportunity to coordinate a working group, The International Division of Labor and Precariousness of "Temporary" Workers: The Case of Mexico-Canada. One of the guests, Javier Vargas, the former principal dancer of the National Dance Company and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, performed an exciting choreography about the life of migrant agricultural laborers. The fact that the center was open to this initiative and lent it support so it could happen showed me that it was a space open to multidisciplinary, unconventional proposals; this motivated my imagination to continue participating.

> Mexico occupies a key position in the region economically, politically, socially, and culturally.

Years later, continuing my work on Mexico-Canada migration, my colleague Andrea Meza and I proposed a book, *¡Tú, migrante! La construcción de las representaciones de la migración en el contexto de América del Norte y Centroamérica* (You, Migrant! The Construction of Representations of Migration in North and Central America). Researchers from different Mexican and Canadian universities, as well as a curator of the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, contributed to it.

In this communion of ideals, convinced that circumstances must change for groups that have been made vulnerable for generations, both in Mexico and elsewhere, I decided to support the director, Graciela Martínez-Zalce, in preparing *Cruzando la frontera. Narrativas de la migración: el cine* (Crossing the Border. Migration Narratives: Cinema). This book came out in 2019. On the back cover, CISAN academic María Cristina Hernández underlines that it is a "polyphonic work in which the voices with different formative origins offer critical thoughts about an ancient human fact, migration, and, based on that transcendental decision, everything that comes with it and defines it."

Continuing this passionate work, I accepted being a collaborator in a pertinent, inspiring project: gathering information linked to the prevention, health, rights, and security of migrants, to be disseminated in three popular fanzines: *Return*, *Destination*, and *Transit*. This task was very enriching, among other reasons, because of the collaboration of the migrants from Casa Tochan, who contributed their critical empirical perspective.

The year 2020 will see the debut of my third documentary, *Migranta con M de Mamá* (Female Migrant with an "M" for "Mom"); the theator-dance project *La herencia. Cosecha de migrantes y maleta de sueños* (Inheritance. Harvest of Migrants and Suitcase of Dreams); and the conclusion and, I hope, swift publication of some articles about the Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program (SAWP), viewed from the standpoint of the anthropology of the state. This material deals with the sexual rights of men and women Mexican migrants in the context of the program's labor dynamics, maternity at a distance among migrants, the narratives of fiction and reality, deportation of Mexican migrants and its emotional impact, the challenges of the migrant's joining the workforce in Mexico, and alternative proposals for the agenda of people of sexual and affective diversity in Mexico City. With all of that, I will bring to a close 15 years of work with and for the community of migrants who go to Canada to sustain that country's agricultural industry and seeking better life options. Very often, however, they cannot achieve this, since the structures of exclusion, violence, inequality, and inequity do not yield despite the enormous efforts of the women and men involved.

I will conclude this stage in academic terms, but the human connections will remain, I hope, until my last breath, since they are part of my selfness and my relationship to and understanding of the world.

The year 2020 adds something different to this impassioned creative work that needs to be shared in order to spark reactions that benefit the "others" and, therefore, "us," by having become a full-time researcher at CISAN.

This beginning involves the challenge of exploring apparently unknown terrain. Let me explain: at first, I thought that I would be moving into surroundings that were alien to me, but I have gradually discovered that that is not the case. Companies can be studied not only from the economic perspective or according to the logic of businessmen. They can also —and must also— be studied from the perspective of the human and social dimension, considering the vision of each of their members, that is, that of each interest group.

It also would be unacceptable that in the medium or long term our country had to import marihuana for therapeutic or recreational or any other use.

For a little over a decade I worked on matters linked directly to men and women agricultural laborers who year after year migrate "seasonally" to Canada without their families, in the framework of SAWP. But always present in the debate and the research were the *farmas* and *farmeros* (that is, the companies and business owners).

Now, in the new line of research I will be delving into in the coming years, my relationship with the topic will expand since I will try to link up to every one of the actors involved in the companies commercializing cannabis or marihuana both in Canada and the United States. I will approach all of them as "social universes that have distinctive ways of life, norms, and values," and the companies as "builders of hegemony in the framework of specific production regimes"[1] and that energize the field of society they are part of.[2]

In our time, companies have increasing involvement and impact on the lives of human beings, since, according to Alejandro Saldaña, in these spaces the destiny of millions and of the environment, which therefore includes the life of the planet, comes into play.[3] This means that it is essential to analyze profoundly from the point of view of daily life and the sphere of the men and women actors who make up the interest groups in the marihuana industry, whether these companies act with social responsibility as a philosophy or they simply do it because it's "fashionable," "to clean up their image," or as a mere publicity strategy that disguises their neoliberal ideals with the sole intention of being more competitive in the market through, among other measures, influencing the creation of public policies.

Discovering these perspectives will make it possible to observe innumerable nuances that will nurture understanding. Concepts like legality, illegality, security, stigma, criminalization, precariousness, profitability, competitiveness, market, justice, rights, responsibility, education, recreation, and public health, among many others, will most certainly make visible problems that urgently need to be brought out into the light and explained to the different levels of government so that they can design less contradictory public policies more in line with everyone's needs.

The research that I am beginning now will make it possible in the medium term to contribute elements needed to design a theoretical-methodological assessment

proposal in line with the discourse of social responsibility and with the practice of the marihuana industry companies themselves.

I'm certain that marihuana, conceived as a social fact, is one of the most complex and interesting. Dealing with it from the social sciences and the humanities opens up a vast range of topics that urgently require analysis. This is because in recent decades, discussions on the matter have brought into play sectors of the population that, in one way or another, continue to be impacted by the fate of this industry. For that reason, I think it is essential to research the contradictions that arise both in Canadian and U.S. marihuana processing, since both countries are certain to very shortly become world leaders in the sector.

In this sense, Mexico occupies a key position in the region economically, politically, socially, and culturally. This means that if we do not create work strategies to understand the facets of this market in terms of global and local structures which, in turn, allow us to design public policies that benefit not only the large multinationals, but fundamentally the working class and the members of the communities where these companies operate, we will certainly repeat the mistakes and abuses committed in other industries, like mining, energy, construction, tourism, and agribusiness, among many others.

It would be discouraging to wait until H2A visas and the "exemplary" SAWP program turned Mexico into the main supplier of men and women to go to the United States or Canada to plant, cultivate, and pack marihuana. That is, they would be sustaining an industry not their own in the same precarious conditions that they have been doing for decades. It also would be unacceptable that in the medium or long term our country had to import marihuana for therapeutic or recreational or any other use.

I agree with Alejandro Saldaña that we academics must take a critical stance regarding social corporate responsibility and its impact on public policies. We must base our work on innovative theoretical epistemological approaches and methodologies that capture the different ways of looking at things that they imply. In this sense, I consider it fundamental to generate analyses that make visible the problems surrounding these issues from the perspective of workers, their families, consumers, and the communities where these companies operate, in addition to that of shareholders and managers. We must not just take into account the points of view of corporations and multinationals, but work together with small and medium-sized companies. Research projects into this continue to be very few and far between.[4]

We academics must take a critical stance regarding social corporate responsibility and its impact on public policies.

From our sphere of work, it is essential to be ethically committed to critical, pro-active research projects that can spark transformations that foster the construction of just societies, respectful of all the men and women in them regardless of their particularities. And what better place to do that than the CISAN, a space I am familiar with and that has embraced me for years? I profoundly respect everyone there for their commitment to their work. We must not forget that what we are trying to do is to build a better world for all, regardless of our nationality, economic level, sexual orientation, ethnic identity, or other particularities that make us each unique. Amidst our differences, we coincide in the need to belong to groups that allow us to develop skills and knowledge that we can only achieve together.

I hope that in this new stage of work and together with the CISAN I will be able to contribute more to the construction of a less unjust, more inhabitable world for all. Work in universities is fundamental for this task, and I hope that the UNAM will continue to encourage this enormous endeavor more and more intensely. VM

Notes

1 María Julia Soul, "La antropología del trabajo contemporánea: Una revisión histórica de la constitución de su campo disciplinar," *Revista de la Escuela de Antropología* vol. 30 (November 2015), pp. 3-5.
2 Patricia Torres Mejía, "Nuevo capital transnacional en México. El caso de Polaroid," *Nueva Antropología* vol. 11, no. 40 (1991).
3 Alejandro Saldaña Rosas, "Las empresas socialmente responsables en México: Auge, paradojas y perspectivas," *Ciencia Administrativa* vol. 2 (2009), p. 6.
4 Gonzalo Maldonado Guzmán, Gabriela Citlalli López Torres, and José Felipe Ojeda Hidalgo, "¿Es posible hablar de Responsabilidad Social Empresarial en las Pymes?: Una reflexión sobre adopción," in Martha Beatriz Santa Ana Escobar and Esther Morales Franco, comps., *Organizaciones y responsabilidad social. Narrativa y crítica* (Colima: Hess/Universidad de Colima, 2015).

Eduardo Vázquez Martín*
Photos by Gretta Penélope Hernández **

Migrants of Clay[1]

Alejandro Santiago was born in San Pedro Teococuilco —today, Marcos Pérez—, Oaxaca, in 1964, and died in 2013 before the age of 50 in the city of Oaxaca. His vital, creative, exuberant spirit made him a select human being and artist. Those who knew him say that he spent his childhood in the countryside, in Zapotec lands, where he spoke the language of his people, joyously roved the dirt roads in sandals and barefoot, and delighted in swimming in the cold river. His childhood taught this little boy, the son of Isabel and Juan, a teacher, to play; and playing taught him to be a child for his whole life.

His father wanted him to be a lawyer, but Alejandro went from collecting little the reproductions of landscapes that came with Clásicos matchboxes to entering the Miguel Cabrera Center for Artistic Studies when his family moved to the city of Oaxaca. There, he channeled his vocation for music and learned to play the piano, the violin, the saxophone, the accordion, and the flute, at the same time that he danced the part of Moctezuma in the town's fiestas and wore tights to try his hand at ballet.

Writer Braulio Aguilar Orihuela, Santiago's friend, collaborator, and biographer, says that when he finished the Fine Arts School, he went to the Rufino Tamayo Visual Arts Workshop, directed by Roberto Donís, from Venado, San Luis Potosí, where he met the maestro himself, Rufino Tamayo. Later, he would turn up in the Oaxaca Free Graphic Workshop, headed by Juan Alcázar, where he would meet Zoila López, his lifelong partner and the mother of his two children, Lucio, the elder, and Alejandra. His

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talent was so evident that, at his first exhibition, when he was just over 20, he sold all his work. With that happy achievement under his belt and the money from the sale, he launched into life, visiting cities, museums, and the world; in 1998, he moved to Paris with Zoila and their son Lucio.

Two years later, in 2000, the Santiago family returned to Oaxaca, and in Teococuilco, Santiago experienced the desolation of a town that migration had practically emptied of everyone, where there were many more absences than presences. Driven by the need to understand the fate of his own, Alejandro Santiago undertook a journey to Tijuana, where he contacted the smugglers who would take him across the border to follow the footsteps of so many other Mexicans and migrants of the world. He lived in

Santiago created 2501 bodies, with their own history, flesh, and soul, like the first beings the *Popol Vuh* progenitor deities created, but these migrants are made of clay.

the United States as an "illegal": he saw and experienced the life of migrants. One day, he saw a sea of crosses on the border, where someone told him, "There are 2 500 of them."

When he returned to Oaxaca, Santiago decided to create 2 501 bodies, each different, with its own history, its own flesh and soul, like the first beings the *Popol Vuh* progenitor deities created before the men of maize; Santiago's migrants are made of clay.

Between 2001 and 2006, the "mountain-dwelling artist," as his countryman Aguilar Orihuela called him, worked on what to him had restorative meaning: the idea was to repopulate the vacuum left by those who had emigrated. It was a way of bringing back those who had to emigrate, but also those who had died. The result is hundreds of sculptures, beings who manage to stay upright, but at the same time are the representation, shadows fired in clay, projected by those absent in space and in the minds of those who remember and miss them. They are also ghosts, who, like Pedro Páramo, never stop dwelling in their homeland and remain among us.

This act of transformation, of transit between the world of the living and the dead, between restoration and healing, worthy of the grandson of a healer grandmother, a Zapotec "witch," turned into a collective work process that involved 35 young people, local inhabitants, and his entire family. On a little ranch he acquired for the purpose that he baptized "Where the Buzzard Dances," the artist experimented with different materials, different processes, until he found the hardy Zacatecan clays. From

that moment on, his hands, and the hands of all those who assisted him in the task, were dedicated to kneading, like those ancient gods, these primordial beings. At the same time, he was designing the ideal kilns to fire the pieces in and determining the pigments and paints that would give their skin color. Simultaneously, the Santiago family raised goats and planted corn to feed his collaborators who were learning the necessary trades as well

This act of transformation, of transit between the world of the living and the dead, between restoration and healing, turned into a collective work that involved 35 local inhabitants, and his entire family.

as the friends, colleagues, and the ever-present curious onlookers. The artist had a Mixtec ball court built and brought in the most noble mezcal so nothing had to stop, so the work could become a game, so the game could become a ceremony, and the ceremony, a fiesta.

Faces with frantic eyes, covered in the white dust of the desert, breasts of mothers and grandmothers, men whose leathery skin is weather-beaten, women traveling the world barefoot carrying children, all naked with their genitals exposed, arms crossed across their chest like the dead, with the expression of thirst, hunger, fear, desire, and hope that the living have. In 2006, Alejandro Santiago finished creating this migrant Oaxacan town, this clay community; a little girl would be the very last piece, his daughter Alejandra, born in 2001, migrant 2 501.

When the process had just finished, some of Santiago's migrants visited the Oaxaca Contemporary Art Museum (MACO), one of the many spaces founded by the generous creativity of Francisco Toledo. Later, in 2007, the full "2501 Migrants" exhibition was mounted for the first and only time until now, at the Monterrey Foundry Park as part of the Universal Forum of Cultures, curated by Jorge Contreras.

Between 2007 and 2013, when Alejandro Santiago died, the artist supported the Huella Gráfica (Graphic Footprint) workshop created by his son Lucio and Francisco Limón; inaugurated the Spiderweb Sculpture Museum; and mounted the exhibition "20 Love Murals and a Desperate Woman." After his death, Santiago's family has taken on the task of preserving the sculptures at the Where the Buzzard Dances ranch, but the clay migrants, like all the world's migrants, continue to look for their destination. They need —as do we all— to find a welcoming land, a refuge where their stories, their expressions can find shelter, and where their symbolic power, the metaphors they invoke, and the reality they name can express themselves with the vital generosity that Alejandro infused in them, as homage to the millions of human beings who every day leave the land of their birth, pushed by the hunger plaguing them, by the violence that threatens and sacrifices them, by the lack of opportunities that our unjust, cruel societies impose upon them, emboldened by the legitimate desire to create a better life for their children.

While all this is happening, Santiago's "migrants" continue their nomadic existence, seek out new routes to meet up with us, look at us every time we look at them, question us when we speak to them, ask us about those who remain behind, about those who have been lost along the way, and tell their stories, which is the great odyssey of a humanity discontented in the face of all the adversities, that once and again and always stands up and goes in search of new horizons. If we pay attention, if we prick up our ears, we can hear their voices, sometimes a murmur, other times a far-off song; it is the hushed echo of those who had to leave.

The San Ildefonso College has presented "2501 Migrants" with an exhibit of 501 pieces as part of the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the UNAM Center for Research on North America. The center's mission is the creation of knowledge focused on understanding national and global problems in order to respond to the challenges the contemporary world is throwing up in the path of humanity, where capital and goods circulate practically unhindered, but human beings confront ever more rigid borders and higher walls. Undoubtedly, the pieces in this exhibit are a contribution, from the point of view of the artist's subjectivity and empathy, to the construction of an urgent, humanist, solidarity-based vision, of those who leave their homes every day, launch themselves onto the world's roads and seas,

and cross borders with the earth of their homeland on their skins, but with their eyes focused on a new world. VM

Notes

1 This article was published previously in the book *2501 migrantes*, by Alejandro Santiago (Mexico City: CISAN, UNAM, 2019).

Teresa Jiménez*
Photos by Lourdes Almeida **

"Terra Incognita-Migrants' Shoes" The Path of a Dream

From among the thousands and thousands of images in Lourdes Almeida's archives, we have chosen a few photographs that were the result of the three years between 2015 and 2017 when she walked in the footsteps of, wore the shoes of, and shared the suffering of migrants on both sides of the border between Mexico and the United States.

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** All photos are from the project Terra Incognita- Migrants' Shoes (2015-2017), courtesy of the artist.

Voices of Mexico: Lourdes, why were you known as the Polaroid photographer when you were starting out?

Lourdes Almeida: At the end of the 1970s, the Polaroid SX-70 cameras were booming, and I came on the scene with that technique. When I began working with a Polaroid, I came under a lot of criticism, and "established" photographers didn't take me seriously. They would say, "Oh, sure, you do instant film." But today, 40 years later, it seems to have been really important, and in Mexico, I seem to have been the only one that really deep dove

into Polaroid, and that's why I was known as the master of Polaroid. And well, now they're asking me for a lot of my photos. For example, there's going to be an exhibit at the Fine Arts Palace in August that will be called "Mexicrom," and the only photo of mine to be included is a Polaroid. It seems that the new generations of photographers very much appreciate that technique.

But, for me it wasn't just taking instant photos. I always liked playing and making constructed image photographs. I would take the emulsion off the Polaroid photos and put them in water, so then they'd have angels floating in water in pharmacy jars, or I'd glue the Polaroids on other things, or do transfers. I played a lot; maybe that's why people remember my work in Polaroid.

VM: What's your feeling today about how that period evolved?

LA: I don't think it actually evolved. Rather, I think they're different languages, different techniques and tools that you have at any specific time. You work with those tools and you learn all the techniques. What you don't learn is actually what you want to say, and that, of course, does evolve. It's true that, with time, I've become more introspective and what I want to say becomes vitally important to me. My teacher Manuel Álvarez Bravo used to talk about that a lot to us. He was very wise and had impressive vitality. He didn't teach us technique; he taught us about life, about how he saw life. That's where an artist truly evolves, in the shades of how he or she sees life.

VM: How do you pick the themes for your projects? Or do the themes pick you?

LA: I believe that the themes pick me. Life has taken me down different roads. Since the 1990s, I've worked on family-related themes. And the theme of the family has brought me to everything I'm doing today. The theme of the family leads me to act. It's incredible, but everything has its time and its moment; one thing leads to another and another. You put off some themes and then others emerge. "Terra Incognita-Migrants' Shoes" initially came about because of my granddaughters. They're twins, and this year they'll be 19. From the time when they were born, I began saving their shoes so that when they turned 15, I could give

"My teacher Manuel Álvarez Bravo was very wise and had impressive vitality. He didn't teach us technique; he taught us about life, That's where an artist truly evolves, in the shades of how he or she sees life." LA

them the footsteps of their lives. I kept their shoes for 15 years. Then I shot them and did an installation with them. When my granddaughters were 13, they migrated; they went to the United States to live. Having them far away was painful for me; when I'm emotionally upset, I always try to work it off. And that's how I got involved in something that made me even more upset. That's when I began to understand, as I was doing it and as I understood why my grandfather emigrated to an unknown country, why my granddaughters left, why people move. Today, we're surrounded by movement; many people migrate. Is it that movement is in our nature? We each tell our stories from our own perspective, from our own little corner of the world, and when you speak from your depths, the facts take on a different meaning.

VM: What did this project consist of?

LA: I applied to the National Fund for Culture and the Arts, and they gave me a fellowship. The idea was that I had begun the project in the sphere of my family, with my granddaughters' shoes, and I wanted to move it into the sphere of society, to the migrant

"My project focuses only on the Mexican migrants who cross the border on foot. That's why I decided to go to the different deserts and walk through several border crossing points and look for shoes and talk to migrants both in the United States and in Mexico." LA

community. At that time, my project was much more limited because the work I eventually did was very extensive.

My project focuses only on the Mexican migrants who cross the border on foot. That's why I decided to go to the different deserts and walk through several border crossing points and look for shoes and talk to migrants both in the United States and in Mexico. I talked to people who were already established and also with people who had been deported to see if they would let me photograph their shoes. When I did, I was able to create my own metaphors with constructed image photography; all the rest was fieldwork.

With time, I realized how valuable fieldwork was for showing the different kinds of deserts, deserts and the extreme difficulty in crossing them: with white sand, you walk and you sink in; it's very, very difficult, and yet, there's a little bit of the desert where you can cross. In the desert, the climate is extreme: in the daytime,

it's blazing hot and at night, tremendously cold. And then there's the ambiguity of its fruit: some cacti are edible and help you to keep from getting dehydrated —there have been people who were lost for four days and survived thanks to the cacti—, but then at night, which is when the migrants walk, there are very light cacti, like cholla, that jump out at you and have millions of barbed spines that can cause injuries that sometimes get infected and can kill you. The migrants crossing have a dose of adrenaline in them that lets them survive such an inclement environment. It's amazing what these people can do with so much hope, so many expectations, and so many that unfortunately are left along the wayside.

VM: How did you conclude the project?

LA: I shot some of the shoes where I found them, and there were others that I didn't find, but others did, and I was able to shoot them. But they all come from the Arizona or the California deserts, and many also from the banks of the Rio Grande; because I started in Tijuana and ended up in Matamoros. Between 2015 and 2017, I went back and forth, back and forth, and tried to go over all the crossings on the border to be able to understand this world of migrants. I walked along some of the tracks that they leave in their wake; that really was hard for me. We're used to homogenizing migrants' stories, but each one is unique, and each story touches you according to your mood. That's why it's very important to listen to people to be able to transmit their real feelings and that way make sure that the people who see your work empathize with them.

VM: You said it: "Nothing is like putting yourself in other people's shoes."

LA: Well, Ryszard Kapuscinski used to say, "You want to do a project? Live with it, eat with it, sleep with it." I met a lot of people who crossed the border three or four times. For example, one woman told me, "The only thing that terrified me about crossing were the snakes, and one night while I was sleeping, I suddenly woke up feeling a huge weight on me. When I opened my eyes, I saw the snake on me, but it was crossing over me. So, I stayed still and it crossed and left. But I was in shock." And, well, they told me so many things. I ask myself how many children saw their mothers raped or stumbled on a dead body —because there are lots of dead bodies on those roads.

VM: What is the most beautiful and the ugliest thing you've photographed?

LA: It's hard to say. I'm very afraid of physical violence, no matter who's perpetrating it, men or women. I run away from that; I haven't photographed that; I can't. And beautiful . . . everything, from the corniness of a landscape to scenes of affection, of love, like my daughter-in-law nursing her twins, breasts bursting with milk, making life. VM

Patricia Fernández Robinson*

New Perspectives for Mexican, U.S., And Canadian Cultural Diplomacy

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Solar Equation*, Quebec National Fine Arts Museum, 2018.

According to Nicholas Cull's definition, public diplomacy is the attempt by international actors to manage the international environment through a commitment to a foreign public. In traditional diplomacy, these actors were limited to national states and the agreements they reached.

Rapid changes in the international system in recent years, caused mainly by technological advances in transportation and communication and the strengthening and proliferation of private and civic organizations (among other phenomena), have opened up the exercise of public diplomacy to many new actors inside and outside government. This has made it possible for states and local governments, non-governmental organizations, companies, academic institutions, and diverse groups or communities to make their voices heard and communicate with each other directly.

One of the most commonly used concepts in the framework of the new public diplomacy has been "soft power," defined by internationalist Joseph Nye as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than through coercion or rewards. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, its political ideals, and its policies." However, as Nye himself explains, this concept has also been evolving.

Cultural diplomacy is one of the possible fields of action of public diplomacy. For the purposes of this article, I will refer to its more positive meaning that arises as a source of understanding between people and a fertile field for the development of agendas of common interests, in this case, among Mexico, Canada, and the United States.

As we all know, dialogues among the three countries have always been marked by a complex agenda and arduous negotiations. Frequently, cultural topics are not considered important and are included as secondary points in some of the most important governmental dialogues, as we just saw in the recent months during the negotiations for the Agreement between the United States of America, the United Mexican States, and Canada (USMCA), where cultural industries where hardly mentioned.

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In addition to this, Trump's mandate has come to obscure the regional landscape, making it more difficult to bring up the big issues such as migration, drug and arms trafficking, environment, and trade. His discourse has promoted and validated hate and racist speech against Latino communities in general, and especially against those of Mexican origin.

But it is in these times of special complexity when culture could be adopted as a strategic factor for the dialogue and understanding between countries. History has taught us how, during many of mankind's most difficult and darkest moments, human beings have sought and found answers in culture.

As a clear example, we just need to remember the period at the end of World War II, during the London conference for the creation of the UNESCO, in November 1945, in which representatives from 44 countries came to comprehend the need to encourage understanding among diverse cultures and the importance of culture as an agent of change and builder of peace.

Cultural relations between Mexico, the United States, and Canada have developed particularly in the field of cultural promotion. Several projects of varying scope, size, and themes have been carried out by multiple actors from both the public and private sectors, paying more attention to particular interests.

Excluding the successful cultural diplomacy campaign carried out by the United States, more in the world of entertainment than of the arts, through which it has managed to embed the "American way of life" deep within the collective imaginary of people from both Canada and Mexico, the other two countries had not implemented a forceful cultural diplomacy strategy between them. Cultural exchanges seem to be more fluid at the binational level between Canada and the United States and between the United States and Mexico.

Cultural exchanges between Mexico and the United States are continuous and numerous. Despite this, since the end of 1921, when the first international curator of Mexican art, Katherine Anne Porter, organized the first Mexican art exhibition in the United States, and during the entire twentieth century up to the present, the Mexican government has focused its cultural diplomacy strategy particularly on major art and history exhibitions as well as projects in other disciplines, especially folk art, in the United States and Canada.

Although some of these exhibitions have been very successful in North America and in many other countries, this practice has limited the way of presenting Mexico in the region and around the world; on many occasions they support a stereotypical image of Mexicans and limit the presentation of other disciplines, contemporary content, or even a different group of artists. It is urgent that we change this practice in Mexico's case, mainly by government institutions, and re-think and re-design the way we want to present ourselves in the United States and Canada.

However, some projects have managed to show other aspects of contemporary Mexican artistic production in the United States, maintaining a participation and a dialogue on the most important issues for both countries. We can highlight the numerous artistic projects that have been carried out on the U.S.-Mexican border that have maintained a constant voice questioning the current situation, giving visibility to the issues, and implementing new ways of connecting people on both sides of the border.

One recent example is "Border Tuner,"[1] a project organized last year by Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, which managed to connect people in El Paso, U.S., and Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, through a participatory artistic installation on a grand scale. Through this intervention, people could direct huge rays of light that, when intersecting with other rays emitted from the other side of the border, activated a sound and communication channel between them. In addition to connecting them visually and through real-time sound, the installation allowed participants to feel the beating of the other person's heart.

Frequently, cultural topics are included as only secondary points in the most important governmental dialogues, as we just saw in recent months during the negotiations for the USMCA.

Pablo López Luz, *Border*, National Gallery of Canada.

"Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

Preamble to the UNESCO Constitution

Canadian breakdance group II-ABILITIES[tm] crew at the Cervantino Festival in Guanajuato, Mexico, October 2018.

Philip Glass with Huichol musicians at Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts, October 2018.

This project is a clear example of cultural diplomacy exercised by the artistic community itself. In the voice of an artist of some renown, it managed to send a message of unity through a collaborative platform between different actors of the communities in both cities, such as schools, private companies, and people who decided to support the artist to symbolically and spiritually reconnect the people of both cities.

On the other hand, in recent decades, cultural contacts between Mexico and Canada have been less numerous and less frequent compared to those between Mexico and the United States. This phenomenon was probably influenced by the growing number of immigrants of Mexican origin in the United States and by the differences in Canadian and Mexican foreign policy interests during the long period from 1945 to 1990, as well as the difficult negotiations between both countries under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).[2]

Even so, some Canadian cultural events and visual arts, scenic arts, and cinema projects of different dimensions and scope have been carried out in our country. Similarly, Mexico has mounted some exhibitions and presented projects of performing arts, cinema, and literature in Canada. Nevertheless, there is no clear record that both countries have developed a strategy of cultural diplomacy between them until very recently.

However, in recent years, the Canadian government has strongly encouraged the reinforcement of cultural relations between Mexico and Canada. It has clearly shown its growing interest in strengthening these relations with Mexico, supported by a new model of cultural diplomacy,[3] which includes innovative mechanisms to promote Canadian culture in Mexico based on their cultural diversity and in their powerful cultural and creative industries.

Canada's participation as a guest of honor at one of the most important performing arts events in Mexico in October 2019, the Cervantino Festival, is a good example of the Canadian government's new cultural diplomacy in Mexico. Following a collaborative work model between various federal agencies with provincial governments along with private companies, the Canadian government probably coordinated the largest project of Canadian presence in Mexico, sending dozens of its most prominent dance, theater, and music companies to perform for thousands of people in Guanajuato.

In addition, as part of a strategy of differentiated cultural diplomacy, the Canadian government carried out the Casa Canada

project to establish a closer conversation between artists, specialists, diplomats, and festival audiences, taking into consideration certain Mexican cultural codes and references and even including Mexican personnel in the design and execution of their project.

Casa Canada allowed the Canadian government to broadly present Canadian culture through literary activities, films, concerts, contemporary art exhibitions, immersive experiences, and gastronomy, but above all to effectively transmit its values, establishing conversations on topics of interest such as education, citizenship, environment, cultural diversity, and indigenous communities, among others, and achieve an understanding with the various Mexican audiences.

Frida Kahlo, ***The Two Fridas***.

Conclusions

Even when many of the actors have constructed cultural ties, the awareness of the need for a more organized cultural collaboration at a regional level has been increasing recently in the minds of many of the three countries' cultural agents.

A redefinition of the role of culture is urgently needed in the countries' regional agendas, as well as the implementation of differentiated cultural diplomacy strategies with specific orientations. These would not only help us to understand each other better but also to address the most sensitive issues that concern us all and explore new trends of collaboration.

In this context, the possible contributions made from the "new actors of cultural diplomacy" from the private sector, educational, and cultural institutions, and especially from civil society, as generators of counterweights, could be particularly relevant for the creation of community networks, beyond geographical boundaries. These networks could take up the role of art and culture as driving forces for reflection and transmission of knowledge, but above all, as agents of social change and builders of critical citizenship. VM

Mexican children visiting Casa Canada.

Isuma TV, *One Day in the Life of Noah Piugattuk*, video installation, October 2019, http://www.isuma.tv/movies/noah-piugattuk.

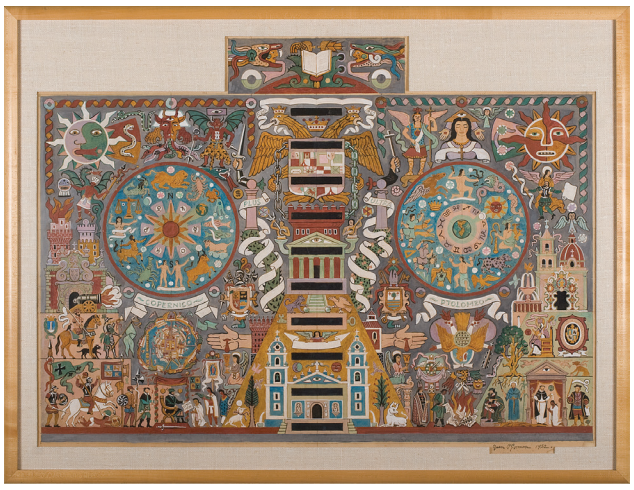
Notes

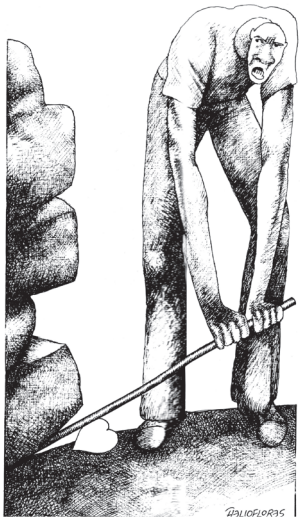
1 Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, "Border Tuner" project, November 2019, https://www.lozano-hemmer.com/artworks/border_tuner__sintonizador_fronterizo.php.

2 Athanasios Hristoulas, "Canadá y México en el contexto de TLCAN: Veinte años de relaciones problemáticas," in *Canadá y México durante la era de Harper* (Mexico City: CISAN-UNAM, 2017).

3 Simon Brault, Director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts. Interview on Radio Canada, "In defence of a renewed cultural diplomacy," June 4, 2019, https://canadacouncil.ca/spotlight/2019/07/in-defense-of-a-renewed-cultural-diplomacy?.

OUR ART





Brenda Lameda-Díaz Osnaya*

Disseminating Knowledge About North America From Flyers to Instagram

Thirty years: a whole working lifetime for many of the colleagues who began this adventure and a professional commitment for those of us who have joined along the way. It has also been 30 years in which dizzying technological, epistemological, and methodological advances have been made in all the disciplines, and especially intensely in the area of dissemination and popularization of scientific and academic knowledge.

Making the transition from traditional strategies and instruments of dissemination to contemporary digital tools has been a challenge for adapting and a test of the resilience of those of us who have taken on the task. It is easily said, but it requires an enormous mental effort and many learning experiences to adapt to the lightening-paced evolution in disseminating and creating a presence, moving from traditional print media, such as the less and less frequent posters, triptychs, and pamphlets, to today's social networks with all their immense digital and virtual possibilities.

Moving from traditional printed books to reading on different and increasingly versatile electronic devices or to broadcasting academic events through video-conference or streaming, plus electronic pages like information and communication portals, presupposes a transformation almost as radical as the Copernican revolution in the sciences and philosophy. Doing it implies a change in mentality and an effort in adaptation, not only by

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those who work as disseminators, but also by our target audiences.

Today a video uploaded to YouTube can have more impact than a lecture to a full house; audiovisual discourses prevail over texts and concepts, and reading habits and practices and access to information have been radically transformed. Times have been shortened and distances reduced. Today, being timely has more value than perfection; coverage is more important than focus; visibility, more than selectivity. Nevertheless, technology also gives us the possibility that that symbolic keynote address can be seen simultaneously in many places by many audiences, although, generationally speaking, some of us still prefer visual contact and being in the same room with the speaker.

The new paradigm of social communication seems to be connecting more than informing, selling, or entertaining. Immediacy and perhaps also the ephemeral are advancing on the traditional place of paused reflection and reasoned discussion and debate. That is why the challenge of disseminating academic content is more and more demanding and complex every day. The idea is to be present in the largest number of places and times possible, to achieve greater visibility and obtain better positioning in the field of intense global competition for content, but at the same time to foster and make known high-quality research results. These results have necessarily traveled a slow, winding road of analysis, reflection, state-of-the-art review, formulation and proof of hypotheses, fieldwork, and discussion with peers, including peer review, which are the irreplaceable underpinnings of the generation of knowledge.

In this context, the anniversary of an academic center is always a reason for celebration and also for reflection about the work done. It is also an excellent opportunity to rethink its challenges. The CISAN is celebrating 30 years of generating rigorous —but also creative— research, of dealing with different problems, and of deepening the knowledge about the three countries of the region, with the idea of contributing to the construction of a trilateral agenda with common themes, as well as delving into each country's specificities in order to achieve better mutual understanding.

Dissemination is fundamental for the results of our daily work to be distributed to specialized audiences, such as students, professors and researchers, and crafters of public policy. It is also important that they reach society in general so that, ideally, that knowledge can be useful for all: the idea is not to create it and accumulate it in closed circles, but rather to maximize its social function.

> Making the transition from traditional strategies and instruments of dissemination to contemporary digital tools has been a challenge for adapting and a test of the resilience of those of us who have taken on the task.

In addition to dissemination, through popularization, we can reach broader audiences through the interpretation or translation in the hermeneutic sense into language accessible for people outside the specialized fields, that is, to transmit it in a way that facilitates comprehension. We university popularizers need all the possibilities that technology offers us and also to create synergies among teachers, researchers, and students to have the inputs that we want to transmit.

Dissemination is one of our university's three central functions, and the CISAN has an ongoing commitment to this task. We carry out a vast program of academic extension and continuous education activities every year in order to put in the hands of Mexican society all the products derived from our research and to make our daily work known. We do this through seminars, colloquia, analytical roundtable discussions, courses, workshops, and diploma courses about the most important topics, whether at a specific juncture or because of their impact on the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres of North America. In these 30 years, all of them have gone through dizzying transformations regionally, and undoubtedly in their role on the international stage.

Throughout these three decades, in the CISAN we have worked consistently to attract those interested in our field of studies and to link up with government bodies and civil society to try to reach broader audiences. We have fruitfully strengthened interinstitutional relations with numerous U.S. and Canadian universities. And we have done the same with state universities in Mexico and beyond our national and regional boundaries, making our mission more visible.

The use of the media in the popularization and promotion of the culture of scientific and academic knowledge has become very important in an era in which media like television, radio, Internet, and the social networks for the new generations are an inherent part of today's individuals and societies. In this sense, our presence in the media has been the challenge of positioning ourselves as the most important experts in the area, with the participation of all the researchers for the analysis of the issues in their different specialties.

For part of these 30 years, we had air time on the program "North America Today: Society, Politics, and Culture," broadcast on Radio UNAM. Although no longer on the air, this program was undoubtedly an important aspect of making our center better known. We also participated in university television with an annual week of episodes of the program *University Viewpoint*, coordinated by the Open University and Distance Learning Coordination Office and TVUNAM. Beginning in 2018, the monthly program *North American Viewpoint* was created, broadcast on the last Sunday of every month. This very special space has become a valuable window through which to debate current issues with CISAN researchers and colleagues from other university institutions.

Our institutional web site holds all the information about the CISAN, including the catalogue of publications and access to the pages of the MiCisan repository, the Rosa Cusminsky Mogilner Library, the academic journal *Norteamérica*, and the popular magazine *Voices of Mexico*. The portal also has its own English-language version.

Undoubtedly, social networks are today the main means of dissemination, which is why we are present on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Instagram. On these digital platforms, we disseminate our academic activities, publications, interviews with researchers, articles about the North American region, and photo-stories about our day-to-day work, maintaining close interaction with our followers.

> Immediacy and perhaps also the ephemeral are advancing on the traditional place of paused reflection and reasoned discussion and debate. That is why the challenge of disseminating academic content is more and more demanding and complex every day.

In the last year, the CISAN launched an initiative to create a research network of specialists in North America, called Redan. The aim is to join forces to make it possible to socialize research results and the very different experiences in academia regarding the study of the region, thus creating an incentive for interinstitutional links and dialogue among peers. This network is an important resource for dissemination because of its potential in propagating knowledge about our field of studies nationally, regionally, and internationally by promoting individual and institutional links on a global level.

The Area of Research Dissemination and Popularization has the objective of defining and implementing the main strategies and tasks that can be developed for making the research done at the center known, and to promote the products derived from all the academic activities carried out. This is to aid in fulfilling the CISAN's mission: "The generation of cutting-edge knowledge to deal with national and global problems by deepening our understanding of priority issues for specialized knowledge of the United States and Canada and the relations of Mexico with them both. We do this by carrying out inter- and transdisciplinary research, complemented with teaching, extension, dissemination, and networking activities as the National Autonomous University of Mexico's substantive aims, which allow us to meet the challenges that today's world poses for humanity."

Much remains to be done in dissemination and popularization to increase our visibility and have an impact on public policies and other spheres of national and regional life. Nevertheless, we should also underline that, along the way, we have gained a great deal of ground in teaching, training human resources, and generating highly specialized products, and dissemination has been fundamental in this. We can say that the CISAN has positioned itself and consolidated as a unique center, above all because of its vocation of studying our geopolitical surroundings using a multi- and interdisciplinary approach embedded in the social sciences and the humanities. Our horizons consist of remaining at the cutting edge with relevant research proposals that attempt to meet the challenges we have faced for these 30 fruitful years and gaining greater visibility for our day-to-day work. VM

Astrid Velasco Montante*

Publishing about Our Region Is Understanding Who We Are

The University Research Program on the United States of America, created in 1988, was the predecessor to the Center for Research on the United States of America (1989) and the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) (1993). The CISAN has consolidated with the aim of generating "cutting-edge knowledge focused on dealing with national and global problems by deepening our understanding of priority issues for specialized knowledge about the United States and Mexico and Mexico's relations with both. We do this through inter- and transdisciplinary research that, complemented by teaching, extension activities, dissemination of results, and outreach as substantive objectives of the UNAM, allows us to meet the challenges that today's world poses for humanity."[1]

However, what better way of fostering the generation of knowledge than extension activities and its dissemination through academic events and, more durably, through publications?

This publishing effort began in 1989, and in 1994, the young CISAN not only published about the United States, but also about Canada and both countries' relations with Mexico. One very important specificity of this center is precisely the dissemination of studies about Canada.

Three decades after its foundation, the CISAN has consolidated as a reference point for research and the development of trans-disciplinary knowledge for a profound understanding of the political, economic, social, and cultural phenomena of North America. To date, the CISAN's catalogue boasts 141 books, 16 North American Notebooks, 109 issues of *Voices of Mexico*, and 31 issues of *Norteamérica*.

The catalogue of books built over 30 years, and for several years now through a double-blind peer review process, includes works about the region's different problems by individual authors, compiled essays, or by two or three co-authors. The issues include, among other topics

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The books were initially published in printed form; today, they have migrated to other formats. Those that are more than five years old are free on open access, and newer works are sold to reach readers beyond our borders.

essential for the region, the systems of government and institutions of each of the countries; the trade agreements among them; economic and political issues; cultural industries (specifically, film, literature, television, and music); history; security; the environment; energy policy; the border, the Chicano community; human rights; elections; narratives; socio-cybernetics; necro-politics; health; and women.

The books were initially published in printed form; today, they have migrated to other formats: a couple of them are pdfs and epubs. Those that are more than five years old are free on open access, and newer works are sold to reach readers beyond our borders.

The magazines have divided the task of disseminating knowledge. One, a specialized academic journal, *Norteamérica*, is a bi-annual, indexed publication of academic excellence, whose articles are double-blind peer reviewed. It publishes multi- and interdisciplinary articles about North America, which it considers an object of analysis in and of itself: its processes, its history, and its dynamic, whether looking at a specific aspect of each country or linking, comparing, or situating them in their international context. This journal has been recognized not only by its peers, but also by institutions that have prominently featured it on their indices.

The other publication, *Voices of Mexico*, where this article appears, has a popular format and has evolved with the idea of breaking down overly simplistic clichés about Mexico found abroad. *Voices* is published in English and deals mainly with issues about Mexico and its relations with its regional partners, the United States and Canada. However, to fulfill its vocation of reaching a broader audience, it also uses images, photographs, illustrations, and graphics to spread knowledge more directly.

But, beyond a mere description of the CISAN's publications, I understand that researching about the North American region implies looking at ourselves, putting under a magnifying glass the matters of interest to our country about our neighbors and partners, which are strategic nations in the political, economic, and cultural make-up of the world. This allows us to understand them and ourselves, not only to get that knowledge, but to generate information that will make it possible to create public policy or rethink what is already being done. It makes it possible for our societies to know each other and discover what is different about us and what unites us, and discern our regional identity. It is essential that the work in CISAN is based on a multi-, inter-, and transdisciplinary approach, since this modifies the results and opens up new fields for understanding the phenomena that our region has experienced in the short and long term so we can respond to the challenges the world poses today. VM

Notes

1 http://www.cisan.unam.mx/mision.php.

Norma Aída Manzanera Silva*

On Memory, Visibility, Impact, And Preservation

MiCISAN, Institutional Repository is a modern, centralized platform that contains CISAN publications in four digital collections: Books; Notebooks; *Norteamérica, Revista Académica;* and *Voices of Mexico*. The collections' topics span issues like the economy, trade, security, energy, migration, human rights, science and technology, foreign policy, the environment, as well as social and cultural studies, outstanding among which are social inequality, health, gender, cinema, and literature. Also included in the repository is the CISAN History Collection, made up of founding and commemorative documents and center directors' annual reports.

These collections make up the CISAN's institutional memory. Creating it required gathering, digitalizing, and making a detailed description of each document, all of which, under international standards makes it inter-operational with other national and international platforms. That is, it has automatic intercommunication that strengthens the visibility and impact of research results. Due to its degree of disaggregation in chapters and articles, and minimal units of theoretical-methodological content, today, MiCISAN has 5 072 information resources.

The CISAN is one of the UNAM's youngest institutions, but that has not prevented it from occupying some of the top spots in compliance with institutional norms. Our university has paid special attention to the different kinds and states of open access; therefore, we have incorpo-

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In addition to being a universal display window for CISAN publications, our repository is useful for foreign researchers interested in issues involving Mexico and its relations with North America. MiCISAN allows for free access to content in order to share academic and cultural information.

rated into the All-UNAM-Online Program and the UNAM Open Data Portal and have also participated in the National Council for Science and Technology (Conacyt) 2016 Call for the Creation of Institutional Repositories.

Today, MiCISAN is present on the UNAM's HUMANINDEX, Libros UNAM OA, BIBLAT, and CLASE platforms, as well as in the National Repository.

Internationally, MiCISAN has pioneered automatic intercommunication with Europe's OpenAIRE, BASE, and CORE, considered some of the world's most robust consultation sources for academic products.

I should also underline that our incorporation into OpenAIRE is very important because it is the definitive proof that the metadata has been scrupulously managed, since OpenAIRE is the institution that dictates the guidelines for guaranteeing interoperability, and our country joined the agreement in 2014. I should also point out that MiCISAN is the UNAM's first repository and the fourth nationwide to be part of this great platform.

Like all repositories, MiCISAN is designed so that search engines and other systems can recover its contents; one example of this is the incorporation of Google Scholar.

In addition to gathering and correlating texts on a single subject with similar texts, harvesting repositories also offer statistical services and allow ordinary users to find works from very diverse locations. They also let them situate little- or completely unexplored terrains, creating research opportunities; this is why they tend to become a fundamental element in open scientific communication.

Besides being a universal display window for CISAN publications, our repository is useful for foreign researchers interested in issues involving Mexico and its relations with North America. MiCISAN allows for free access to content in order to share academic and cultural information. This strengthens users' knowledge, not only for carrying out their academic activities, but also for understanding the world we live in much more fully and creating new proposals for positively changing society.

For all of the above, MiCISAN has been considered a model repository in the UNAM and has a promising future in data mining and constructing ontologies. Its success lies in its being a long-cherished project by a passionate documentarian, who has specialized in curating special digital collections. Allow me to share a little background.

I came on board at the CISAN as the manager of commercialization and distribution of publications and was given the task of emptying its overflowing publications warehouses. The first step was to put things in order, do inventories, and establish price policies. It was necessary to create a small data base to visualize all the publications' topics and authors. This made it possible to prepare promotional packets at very accessible prices, organized around a crosscutting theme or by a single author. We also donated collections to libraries and public institutions in Mexico and abroad so they could be consulted there. We reached our goal and always kept in mind the connection between the author and the reader, to ensure that the message arrived at its destination, was read, and, in the best of cases, was cited, to ensure high impact, the driving force behind academia. Parallel to all of this, we completed and strengthened the Historic Publications Archive, which holds three physical copies of each of our books, notebooks, and issues of magazines and journals. Here, we thought of using one of those three copies for digitalizing the materials that required it. Meanwhile, the data base grew and led to the CISAN's incorporation in the UNAM Open Data Portal and, later, to the creation of MiCISAN. Taking the United States, Mexico, and Canada: An International and Regional Dimension, 2015-2016 ongoing professional development diploma course allowed me to familiarize myself with the CISAN's authors and publications. This has been fundamental for weighing the importance of a valuable collection that deserves to be disseminated, to make it known to those interested in a little studied, vitally important region, and to preserve it as a valuable cultural heritage.

Most repositories are closely linked to libraries; MiCISAN is linked to the Publications Department, where we have formed an interdisciplinary group that has a direct positive effect on the visibility and impact of research results. All of this is why, as a specialist in information, joining the CISAN has been very fortunate for me. VM

CISAN

Socorro García González*

Thirty Years' Worth of Knowledge

I have had the good fortune of working at the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) for almost 25 years. I have worked all that time in the Research Support Department, from where I have witnessed important events on the world stage that have marked the way forward for researchers' studies of North America. As members of the center's academic personnel, we have had to follow up and monitor the issues that arise from those events, such as, for example the signing and entry into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement in 1994, or the 2001 attack on New York's Twin Towers. These events have undoubtedly marked a transformation of relations among Mexico, the United States, and Canada, and, as a result, have prompted profound changes in the way that, as a center and as a department in particular, we have had to respond to the challenges they pose.

In this regard, the evolution of technology is another of the surprising changes that personally and as a department we've had to adjust to. Several of us learned how to use a computer here, and the physical review of newspapers and culling of information to select news items, which were then filed in innumerable folders that could be photocopied so researchers could access the information for their projects, became things of the past. Thanks to technology, we began to consult libraries from our desks! We began to consult U.S. and Canadian newspapers the same day they were published and no longer had to wait five or seven days for the subscription to arrive! Those were some of the enormous changes that would make fulfilling our functions as the Research Support Department much quicker and more efficient.

This brief summary serves to glance at the past —which doesn't seem so far behind us— and allow me to realize that it was here, in this space, where I have grown as a person and as a professional. This is where my dreams began to materialize; thanks to the CISAN and the UNAM, I have met good friends and received invaluable advice. Happy thirtieth anniversary! VM

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Joel Estudillo García*
Francisco M. Ureña**

The Library, a Place of Ghosts

To talk about the library at the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) is to remember Mónica Verea Campos. She saw it as a place from which you could see everything in the universe at the same time and that you need for writing. Or, it brings to mind the memory of Rosa Cusminsky, walking along the aisles as though she were moving through the agora; as you could hear her reflecting aloud, flanked by her disciples, hurrying ahead, scattering phrases from the classics in her wake, or outright giving advice in a tone of reproof, scolding as a way of giving advice in that firm, assured voice characteristic of her, crossing the small reading room of the first Center for Research on the United States of America, to go directly into the stacks, which she knew as well as the library in her own house —after all, she had donated a large number of the almost 2 500 books the library began with.

Even as she would take a book off the shelf, she was already explaining its content to those with her, who were listening like people intrigued by something. Unhurriedly, she recommended reading specific chapters, pointing out the importance of the number of the edition and the writer of the prologue —someone she probably knew—, or simply suggesting that they take certain precautions with the translated version of the same text.

She always took a while to rest in the library, which wasn't very large, but was cozy. And then she would continue to explain the complex networks of political power in North America or the most important changes in the world economy and their consequences, just to cite an example. Despite being a senior citizen in the early 1990s, she had a masterful, energetic voice, with the intonation of someone who is completely convinced of what she was saying; this put the mark of truth on her words, received by a group of students like a gift that invited them to reflect and analyze.

In those first years, the library was built like the *Aleph*.[1] Since it was the first institution in Mexico dedicated to the study of North America, it also became the country's most specialized library on the topic, whose collections showed the degree of interest in certain topics. At the same time, they sketched the guidelines for future research, marking out the agenda for areas of study.

The Rosa Cusminsky Library also held the first fruit of the research done by the center's faculty as it grew, trained, and transformed itself. If we look at the formation of its collections historically, the first thing we notice is the transition, evolution, and transformation of the research areas according to different moments in time and paradigms. That is to say, the library responds to, adapts, and promotes the development of book and periodical collections in accordance with researchers' needs for new topics.

If the history of the center for the last 30 years is somehow imprinted on its library collections, it should also be underlined that the library's human resources are part of that constant transformation: we have turned into a filter between the flood of books and research itself.

We can remember scenes of how intense our work was when the library had few books and occupied a small space on the eleventh floor of Humanities Tower II and we needed information: we sought out books from different institutions. We remember the agreements with the Benjamin Franklin Library first, and then the Canadian Embassy, who solved to a great extent the center's informational needs, as well as other public and private research and higher education institutions. Part of our work consisted of finding bibliographical and documentary information. Those were times when access to information was more difficult than now; we literally did it on foot, backpack over our

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Joel Estudillo

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shoulders. That meant that a lot of our work time was spent moving around to get information.

Making the circulation of information key for developing the different projects implied moving the materials to the library and then to the cubicles of Silvia Vélez, Sofía Gallardo, Mónica Gambrill, and Rosa Cusminsky when one of them was convalescing from an illness but continued working and needed recently acquired materials.

We were the ones who formed the collections and provided information; we kept the library up to date and transformed it; the books and their readers testify to that.

The history of our working and professional lives has also played out in its aisles, reading room, stacks, and other spaces. We have watched generations of students, changes in technological platforms, and they have allowed us to see our library with the subjective focus that brings with it our distinctive mark. It is one of the points of the space that contains all the points, where the Aleph made it possible to have at hand a world of information —it now has more than 25 000 volumes and access to several data bases— and became a beacon of information.

Michel Foucault wrote, "The visionary experience arises from the black and white surface of printed signs, from the closed and dusty volume that opens with the flight of forgotten words; fantasies are deployed in the hushed library with its columns of books, with its titles aligned on shelves to form a tight enclosure, but within confines that also liberate impossible worlds."[2]

For us it is truly exquisite to be able to develop day-to-day in a space where you must arrive with a basic tool to decant its wealth: imagination. And, it is a place where you cannot be for an extended period if you do not have enormous curiosity about enquiry. If that is the case, it becomes a custom even to live with its ghosts, including the ghost of Reason. VM

Notes

1 This refers to Jorge Luis Borges's *Aleph*, the point from which everything in the universe can be seen.

2 Michel Foucault, "La biblioteca fantástica," *Revista Estudios* no. 9, (Summer) (Mexico City), pp. 97-113; *Fantasia of the Library*, https://es.scribd.com/document/353808989/Foucault-Michel-1967-1977-Fantasia-of-the-Library, p. 90.

Shannon Stapleton / REUTERS

Digital Tools for Sharing Knowledge

The Computer Services Area is an essential part of CISAN's operations in different spheres: security, communication, research, dissemination, training, advisory services, and ongoing technological development. Here is the work experience of the area's participants, who help users solve problems with their computers, mobile devices, and servers, ensuring that CISAN members can do their work more effectively.

The area has evolved enormously in the last 15 years. In the beginning, the only equipment was a small server that hosted the web site and another for the library system. The computers used Linux operating system, and the staff was just adapting to using it. The use of technology and the computers themselves was very basic. The networking equipment was already several years old, and the Internet was very slow. Little by little, people began to pay attention to technological requirements, and the personnel was giving training courses.

The work load expanded more and more as time went on at CISAN. We acquired servers to host the new web services like the sites for the CISAN itself and another for the Rosa Cusminsky Library. To disseminate knowledge through the Internet, new web pages were created for our academic publications, *Voices of Mexico* and *Norteamérica*, as well as the MICISAN institutional repository. Down through the years, these services have migrated little by little to more advanced platforms.

Another of the area's jobs has been to facilitate academic communication through the use of different platforms like videoconferences and online courses, such as the Continuing Professional Development Diploma Course on the United States, Mexico, and Canada, with its international and regional dimensions. In this sense, advisory services not only allow the researchers to develop web pages and blogs for their research projects, but also to communicate and participate in meetings through video conference calls with their peers in other parts of the world.

One of this area's important jobs is to guarantee the preservation of knowledge in virtual servers.

Other activities include uploading new contents to the CISAN's web site, managing the YouTube channel to upload videos of academic events, and sharing responsibility for incorporating content onto the center's social networking accounts like Facebook and Twitter. The continual updating of servers, software, and computing equipment has allowed us to disseminate research findings. For several years now, the CISAN has been active on social media; little by little, the work done by CISAN academics has been disseminated through different shorts, banners, and images on Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

Another of this area's important jobs is to guarantee the preservation of knowledge in virtual servers; for that purpose, small apps have been developed for the follow-up and control of the events the center organizes.

The Computer Services Area also not only guarantees security for physical assets: another part of its work focuses on controlling access to the center and to the video surveillance system, to guarantee the personnel's physical security and maintenance of its telecommunications infrastructure.

In all, the Computer Services Area carries out different activities to contribute to making the CISAN visible in the digital world, and day after day, each of this area's members make enormous efforts to ensure that. Undoubtedly, much still remains to be done; challenges exist not only regarding technology, but also with regard to our university's guidelines and policies. Our challenge as computer science professionals is to prevent technological lags and adapt to the needs of the information society. VM

Esmeralda Martínez Montes has a master's degree in information technology management. She has worked at the CISAN for the last five years carrying out different activities, among them as webmaster for the magazine *Voices of Mexico*, where digital copies of issues 26 to 108 can be consulted. She is also in charge of programming and designing the web site for the REDAN North Americanists Network and the web site for the First Bi-annual Congress of North American Studies "Are We a Region?"

Samuel Martínez Espinoza. After almost nine years at the CISAN, Samuel is the main contact for comprehensive IT technical support. He carries out computer equipment maintenance to facilitate its use by researchers and training in how to use the equipment and incorporate new tools into their educational kits. He is also responsible for maintenance and follow-up for the systems provided by the university itself, such as the Institutional Financial Registry System (SIRF), which keeps track of expenditures and financial movements, thus contributing to internal control of the center's finances.

Miriam Esther Olguín Hernández has a master's degree in business leadership and a doctorate in educational technology. She came on board at the CISAN 13 years ago to work in the Computer Services Area after completing her bachelor's degree in computer science. Today, in addition to managing social media and the CISAN web site, she collaborates in regular updates of the page created for the Binational Emerging Actors in Human Security Seminar.

Marcela Osnaya Ortega. Her job focuses on data management. She collaborates directly with CISAN researchers in their research and preparing their presentations by designing data bases, statistical tables, and presentations, particularly with regard to migration and the labor markets for migrants in Canada, the United States, and Mexico, and to energy security. Her activities focus on designing tables and graphs, as well as keeping certain frequently-used data updated.

McGill University website

The McGill University campus in Montreal.

Will Straw*

Interdisciplinary Cultural Research with the CISAN

Over the last 25 years, I have conducted much of my research and teaching in the interdisciplinary field known as Canadian studies. During this period, my greatest source of collaborative energy and productive exchange outside of Canada has been the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) at the National Autonomous University of Mexico. It is a distinct honor for me, then, to be part of this issue of *Voices of Mexico*, as we collectively celebrate the center's 30 years of high-quality research, publications, and international exchange. This honor is made all the more rewarding by the fact that my very first collaborator at the CISAN, Dr. Graciela Martínez-Zalce Sánchez, currently serves as the center's director.

My introduction to the CISAN, in 1994, might be called serendipitous. I was invited to the center by a former student who had taken a position working in the cultural section of the Canadian Embassy in Mexico City. She asked me to deliver a couple of talks at the CISAN on Canadian culture and the cultural industries, as part of events commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of diplomatic relations between Canada and Mexico. This was the beginning of a legacy of collaboration and collegiality that has endured over a quarter of a century and been one of the great joys of my personal and academic life.

In this short essay, I will reflect on the ways in which culturally-oriented research focusing on North America has developed at the UNAM. This is only a partial account, of course, based on those events I was able to attend or those projects in which I was involved. Nevertheless, across the long series of conferences, workshops, publications, and exchanges I have participated in, I have watched the center exemplify the very best features of interdisciplinary research. This research has been free of the sorts of marginalization —of regions, objects, methods, and perspectives— that so often marks academic collaboration at the international level.

The CISAN's website reminds us that its origins date back to an academic program (later a research center) devoted to the United States. This program's subsequent transformation into the Center for Research on North

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America signaled an expansion of its focus to include Canada. Canadianists like myself are familiar with the usual process whereby U.S. American studies centers, particularly in European countries, have come with time to add a small Canadian section, often in the way one adds a small extension to an already finished house. This extension often accompanies the move to embrace a "North American" focus —one that often forgets to include Mexico; the inclusion of Canada sometimes seems like the belated correction of an innocent oversight. In another model, centers emerge (or enlarge their focus) to study the "Americas" as a whole, a move which, while laudable in so many ways, often results in a significant marginalization of Canada and the dilution of Mexico within a more-or-less undifferentiated "Latin America."

One of the CISAN's great strengths has been its avoidance of these pitfalls. Its original expansion of focus, to include Canada, was more than the addition of a small sub-field. There are no doubt many reasons for this, but I suspect that it is linked to the fact that the CISAN, in Mexico, already occupies the North American space that is its terrain of investigation. While other centers of U.S. American or North American studies often operate at a distance, drawing their zones of interest on a distant map, the CISAN functions in a context in which the dynamics of continental identity are part of its surrounding atmosphere, perceptible in the center's everyday functioning.

In the beginning, the most important of these continental dynamics, obviously, was the project of continental economic integration, mostly notably through the North American Free Trade Agreement coming into effect in 1994. If this event spurred the growth of economic and political research on Canada within Mexico (and vice-versa), it also stimulated a broader reflection on other aspects of the Mexican-Canadian relationship. These other aspects included the possibility of cultural exchanges between the two countries, not merely as a lightly imposed cultural "supplement" to economic and political relationships, but as a way of generating solidarities that might slow the absorption of both Canada and Mexico into a cultural space dominated by the United States. From my perspective, as a scholar of media and culture, even as NAFTA fanned our anxieties over the possible loss of Canadian cultural sovereignty, it also invited us to pay new —or renewed— attention to Mexico as home to that other national culture that, like us, adjoined that of the United States.

What became clear, as Canadian and Mexican cultural researchers began collaborating, was that the familiar protocols of "comparative research" were of little value. In the decade that followed my introduction to the CISAN, a major focus of my research was the cultural industries, and the popular music industries in particular. As researchers at the center embarked on research in collaboration with Canadian institutions (like my own, McGill University), we realized quite quickly that comparison of these industries in the simplest sense was not particularly productive. The simple enumeration of differences between the cultural industries of Canada and Mexico would do little more than confirm the absolute distinctiveness of each national case.

The struggles of Canadian musicians to have their music played on the radio, for example, or available in recorded form, found few if any equivalences in a Mexican musical culture in which domestic musical styles and traditions were at the core of a national culture and scarcely absent from those media (like television and radio) that disseminated music. In the area of cinema, one could note the dominant place of U.S.-made films in present-day film exhibition in both countries. Over the century of cinema's history, however, this dominance played itself out differently between Canada and Mexico. U.S. ownership or control of all levels of the film industry (in particular, production and distribution) has been a constant of Canadian cinematic culture from the early twentieth century. It is the main reason for the late, fragile, and partial development of a Canadian commercial cinema, which one can scarcely trace back further than the 1970s. The history of cinema in Mexico, in contrast, has more closely resembled that of Western European countries. Like Italy, France, Great Britain, and others, Mexico had, until the 1970s, a vibrant, popular cinema that drew sustenance from the genres and talent pools of a national culture. Between one country, then, whose national cinemas (both French and English-language) were always under

construction, and another, whose *epoca de oro* (or "Golden Age") was behind it, the points of comparison were few. That both national cinemas now produced the occasional film consecrated in the world of international film festivals and art-cinema exhibition was not enough to obscure the very different histories that brought them to this point.

These vast differences, then, made the comparative analysis of the Canadian and Mexican cultural industries difficult to build. One could, as we sometimes did, focus comparison on Mexico and francophone Quebec, finding in the linguistic difference of both a detachment from Anglo-U.S. cultural hegemony that might nourish a more logical set of comparisons. Here too, though, differences in the position and history of these cultural spaces made comparisons of limited usefulness. The French language has served to protect much of Quebec culture (both popular and sanctified) from absolute U.S. domination, but it has not resolved the need for that culture to be subsidized and protected through elaborate forms of public support. Likewise, Mexican popular culture (its cinema, popular press, and music, in particular) has been hegemonic across the space of the Spanish-speaking Americas at different points in its history; French-language culture has played no such role within the global Francophone sphere. (The individual successes of Cirque du Soleil, Céline Dion, and Xavier Dolan are interesting, but limited exceptions to this.)

Generally, though, in the field of cultural research, it was easier for Canadian researchers to compare their cultural industries with those of Australia (another settler-colonial, predominantly Anglophone country) or the countries of Scandinavia (with their roughly similar policy frameworks for the support of national cultural production) than with those of Mexico. The fact that the popular, commercial cultures of both Canada and Mexico existed within the shadow of the United States was not sufficient to override very significant differences in the autonomy and historical rootedness of each.

The conventional protocols of national comparison, then, have remained a minor part of the collaborative work between Canadian cultural researchers and those working at the CISAN. Luckily, other, more fruitful and finely grained avenues of investigation presented themselves. In 1996, CISAN published the volume *¿Sentenciados al aburrimiento?: Tópicos de cultura canadiense* (Sentenced to Boredom? Issues in Canadian Culture). This book was edited by Graciela Martínez-Zalce and included contributions from myself and a number of Canadian scholars, some of whom the editor had met as a result of exchanges between McGill University and the CISAN, which took shape after 1994. The title of this book captured, ironically, the notorious reputation of English-Canadian culture (as perhaps uninteresting) even as the question mark cast doubt on that reputation. In fact, the phrase "Sentenced to Boredom" referred directly to a song by the English-Canadian poet-musician Leonard Cohen, a figure with a vast international following, including a significant fan base in Mexico. The various essays in this book dealt with the struggle to build a national theater culture in Canada, the relationship of Quebec cinema to Québécois identity, the weavings of language in Canadian literature, and a variety of other themes that represented the then-current stage of thinking on Canadian culture both popular and consecrated, "high" and "low."

The importance of this book rested in part on the fact that it was the first full-length volume on Canadian culture to be published in Mexico. This was possible, not simply because its editor was a "Canadianist," but because the CISAN itself was committed to the study of cultural issues alongside the questions of trade, immigration, and diplomacy one would expect in a center with close connections to public life and government. Re-reading this volume in 2020, however, one notices something else. Rather than culture being left to simmer on the margins of the CISAN's activities, as a virtuous ornament disconnected from the larger issues of North American integration or political change, *¿Sentenciados al aburrimiento?: Tópicos de cultura canadiense* pursued the traditional humanist questions of cultural value and meaning against the backdrop of the policy frameworks, economic systems, and global positioning that have made Canadian cultural production distinctive.

In this respect, I would suggest, the book was faithful to what I have always considered one of the distinctive features of Canadian cultural analysis. While, in other

The French language has served to protect much of Quebec culture (both popular and "fine" art) from absolute U.S. domination, but it has not resolved the need for that culture to be subsidized and protected through public support.

national cultural contexts (most notably that of the United States), the study of cultural policy is a specialization, pursued by those with little interest in textual substance or cultural representation, for most Canadian scholars, it is difficult to abstract culture from the resources (both public and private) that sustain it and the policy structures that are one of its enabling conditions.

The model of collaboration exemplified in *¿Sentenciados al aburrimiento?* was one I have happily followed in the quarter of a century since the book appeared. Rather than laboring to isolate the bases of a symmetrical comparison between Canada and Mexico (or among all the countries of North America), we have engaged in collective thinking about a wide range of objects, at multiple levels of specificity and from a variety of perspectives. In particular, I want to argue, the CISAN's legacy of collaboration in the field of cultural research has involved several strategies, explicit or implicit, that have transcended the enterprise of simple comparisons of one country to another.

One of these strategies has been to enlarge the variety of perspectives from which national cultural phenomena are viewed. Among the first CISAN events I participated in was a conference on "Canadian Identity through Its Cinema" (1994), which brought to bear, on Canadian cinema, the perspectives of Canadian, Mexican, and other scholars. Some of these were specialists in Canadian cinema; others were studying Canadian film, perhaps for the first time, in terms of other research interests (ranging from literature to migration.) Sixteen years later, a CISAN colloquium on "Crime, Society, & Media in North America" (2010) eschewed the conventional focus on comparing crime rates and policies across North America in favor of approaches that cast the themes of the event's title in new ways. Participants saw each nation's cultural treatment of crime as rooted in distinct articulations of textual form, political ideology, and media industry structures.

Like any good research center, the CISAN is home to expertise at very high levels on a wide variety of issues. It is distinctive, however, in the way it views the objects of research (such as crime or cinema) as open to multiple expert perspectives, bringing these together in events and publications that produce fresh insights and overcome the inertia and incrusted ideas so typical of academic specialization. The rituals of academic exchange and collaboration between my Canadian colleagues and the CISAN team (the extended research visits, the mentoring of each other's students, the teaching as a visiting scholar) have served to distribute new kinds of knowledge and expertise throughout this scholarly community.

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Other scholarly events hosted by the CISAN have followed slightly different strategies. I will comment briefly on three of these: a conference on "Globalization and its Manifestations in North America" (1999); another on "Road Movies in North America" (2011); and, more recently, an event devoted to "Cities and Their Nights: Montreal and Mexico City" (2014). Rather than remaining at the level of the nation-stage, and engaging in the sorts of comparison to which I referred earlier, these events all invited us to think about the two countries from novel vantage points. The first treated North America less as a collection of differences than as a space of circulation: one where cultural artefacts (music, literature, and cinema) traveled through different regimes of reception and valorization; in which readings and mis-readings made the continental dissemination of cultural expression a complex affair; and in which different market conditions or policy frameworks acted upon culture to accelerate or decelerate its ongoing movement.

This view of a circulatory space from above was distinct from the much more specialized focus of the 2011 colloquium on "Road Movies in North America." The road movie, of course, has flourished within both commercial, popular cinema and the "art" cinemas of numerous countries, even if it is seen quintessentially U.S. American in its preoccupation with movement and open spaces. To see the road movie as a North American phenomenon, however, was to encourage two fresh ways of looking at the genre. On the one hand, as the examples talked about in this colloquium showed, the road movie as an international form has been important to the cinemas of Canada and Mexico, and not simply to that of the United States. On the other hand, and of particular importance to the CISAN and its collaborators, the road movie, at different moments, has been a vehicle for conceiving new connections between Canada, the United States, and Mexico. What does it mean, researchers asked, if Canada —or

Mexico— is a point of departure in a road movie that traverses the continent, rather than a destination? How have the two very different borders dividing the United States from its neighbors (Canada and Mexico) been represented in continental road movies, and what has each border come to symbolize?

A number of recent events at the CISAN have focused on the night-time of cities, beginning with the international colloquium ""Cities and Their Nights: Montreal and Mexico City" (2014) and extending to the recent workshop on the same theme in December 2019. This research interest responds, in part, to the explosion of international inquiery into the urban night and of a wide array of policy initiatives (like the introduction of "night mayors") in cities around the world. In opening itself up to these developments, the CISAN continues its longstanding interest in urban questions, confirming once again that the scale of its focus is not simply that of the bordered nation-state.

From my perspective, these events on the night of cities, in which I am deeply involved, confirm the many strengths of the Center for Research on North America. The most important of these is one I have already mentioned: to look at the urban night is not simply to be interdisciplinary —that is, to bring together urban planners, economists, scholars of literature, and sociologists of nightlife— even though, in doing so, the CISAN is faithful to its long traditions of inclusivity and exchange. To welcome this work is also to ensure a space, within the center, in which the humanities will not be isolated, set to the side as an aesthetic supplement to the more "real" issues of public policy or economic development. Posing questions of equal import about the regulation of public order and the aesthetics of city spaces, the urban night is, in many ways, the perfect interdisciplinary "object." When these questions are applied to North American cities like Montreal, New York, and Mexico City, they invite that coming together of multiple knowledges for which the CISAN is so well suited. Finally, this focus, and the events just described, have emerged out of ongoing exchanges between the CISAN, my own department at McGill University and other networks in which we are implicated, together or separately. In this exchange, doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, professors, and researchers at all levels, from Mexico, Canada, France, and Brazil, have found a space of collaboration and innovation.

The generous and welcoming atmosphere of the Center for Research on North America may be sensed in the commitment and enthusiasm of those who work there. I am referring here, not only to the center's researchers, but to those involved in administrative coordination, publications, and the organization of events. All of these individuals carry out their work at the highest levels of professionalism, but all seem, at the same time, to partake of the lively and productive exchange that is the CISAN's greatest strength. I congratulate them on the occasion of this historic anniversary. VM

Manuel Chávez*

Academic Collaboration and Outreach To the Public and Policy Makers

The Presence of *Voices of Mexico* In North American Public Opinion

North American topics and issues have expanded dramatically in the last 30 years, precisely in the time since *Voices of Mexico* appeared. In 1990 when the magazine began circulating, the topics were no more than half a dozen; now the agenda is counted by pages not by topics. NAFTA coming into effect in 1994 opened new formal dimensions in Mexico's longstanding relationship with the United States and Canada, making it more deeply interdepen-

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The Michigan State University campus in East Lansing, Michigan.

dent. The significance of the bilateral relationship between the U.S. and its southern neighbor turned into a trilateral model that added Canada, giving North America as a region more content and visibility. This new model has been of the utmost importance for the governments and the people of the three countries as they live their daily lives and activities.

Historically, migration and border controls have played substantial roles in relations between the United States and Mexico; then manufacturing and trade became important in the relationship, and after those, it was the turn for energy, financing, direct investments, human rights, drug trafficking, and the environment. The CISAN and *Voices of Mexico* have recognized the relevance of all this beyond the traditional transit and movements of people and goods across the shared border. As the region grew more interconnected in the 1990s, other themes expanded, including environmental, labor, and security issues. And yet, after the September 11 events, it was clearly realized that borders ought to be a major vehicle of national security; in other words, it made Mexico a key partner on security issues for the region.

In 2005 with the passing of the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America, clearly Mexico, the United States, and Canada had cemented a more comprehensive region; *Voices* followed that, too. Mexico's role in enhancing U.S. national security cannot be ignored; the SPP led to the creation of programs for the safe transit of goods and trusted travelers, sharing law enforcement intelligence, the amplification of e-commerce, health, and energy research collaboration, and protection of natural resources.

Mexico-focused research has found a place in *Voices* that directs the attention of its analysis to policymakers and public opinion, and this is no easy task.

As the relationship continued to grow, the North American research agenda has continuously expanded: the three countries' populations and economies are more interconnected and interdependent, and reliable analyses are needed. Mexico-focused research has been able to find a place in *Voices* that directs the attention of its analysis to policymakers and public opinion, and this is no easy task. *Voices*'s editors have been able to identify not just the signature themes it always publishes, but the pressing issues added to each government's agendas.

The topics analyzed about North America with a Mexican focus include immigration, trade, drug and human trafficking, environmental issues, energy, national security, and social networks that have cemented cultural ties. When *Voices* publishes an issue, it is not just about international relations, but also about literature, poetry, the arts, music, and photography, the cultural basis for a friendly relationship especially between Mexico and the

Voices publishes about international relations, but also about literature, poetry, the arts, music, and photography, the cultural basis for a friendly relationship especially between Mexico and the U.S.

U.S. Early on, *Voices* recognized the importance of media topics, including cinema, print media, television, radio, and, of course, the study of social media, which has facilitated the communication of neighbors, families, and friends across borders. *Voices* also has paid attention to the dramatic violence against women working in maquiladoras and the tragic expansion of drug trafficking and its violence in Mexican cities across the border from the United States.

Voices is recognized as the prime outlet for analysis on these topics, making it necessary reading for those engaged in policymaking across North America. Many of the scholars who contribute their analyses are renowned academics who ensure that their research contributes to informing public opinion and, in turn, policy makers.

Academic Collaboration as Bedrock for *Voices of Mexico*

One of the magazine's most remarkable features is the rich cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary analysis of the topics it publishes. This has been the result of an active strategy of the CISAN leadership and the *Voices* editorial staff. The CISAN has built an active and successful academic relationship with dozens of universities, colleges, and think tanks across the world, and early on the directors recognized that for relationships to be successful, they needed to be built with constant interaction among scholars. That is why the CISAN has been visible not only in North America and the rest of the continent but in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. With more international presence, *Voices* has followed those relationships. As many of us travel for research internationally, it is encouraging to see issues of *Voices* in the libraries or offices visited; it is a message that Mexico's voice is all over the world.

One example of these institutional academic relationships built by the CISAN derived from the years before NAFTA was passed. Two years before the agreement was passed by the three countries' legislative bodies, researchers from the CISAN attended conferences in the U.S. and Canada to learn about how each nation debated the agreement's benefits and risks. One was hosted in Michigan and attended by scholars from the Midwest, from the University of Notre Dame, the University of Wisconsin, Michigan State University, Kalamazoo College, the University of Chicago, and DePaul University, among others. As a participant, I learned from CISAN researchers about their focus areas; and they also were eager to learn about most of our research derived from other perspectives far from Mexico. From those meetings, we built institutional relationships that have lasted until today. For instance, Michigan State University started an ongoing academic exchange, still underway today, which has included areas related to international relations, political and diplomatic processes, media influences, immigration, trade, and environmental issues. Faculty from both institutions have conducted research in each other's campuses and have produced dozens of peer-reviewed publications; many of them have even received awards.

When NAFTA needed to be evaluated after ten years of operation, the CISAN and *Voices* were there to examine the impacts on Mexico. From the U.S. and Canadian perspectives, the agreement was assessed, contrasted with Mexican views; and scholars from institutions working with the CISAN were there to shed light at such a controversial moment. The Bush administration proposal in 2004 to construct additional governmental relationships was based on national security concerns, to reshape the relationship on a more interconnected bureaucracy. The proposal was signed at the presidential and prime ministerial levels, and since then cooperation and collaboration have undoubtedly not been missing in North America. Mexico's major concerns about the proposal were discussed and analyzed by scholars who were part of the CISAN's extended academic relationships. Without those academic linkages, finding expertise in the area would have been dauting, if not dreadful.

For scholars, policymakers, and the media, *Voices* is absolutely required reading about the everyday North American experience. At the time of this writing, the three North American countries are facing a major health challenge due to the spreading of the coronavirus disease COVID-19. The previous H1N1 experience in 2009 has prov-

en that the United States cannot underestimate the governmental actions and policies about important issues that affect the population of both countries. When it was time to react, Mexico moved resources and activated policies to reduce the impacts of that virus and *Voices* was able to inform the public as well as policymakers about how the goodwill of two neighbors worked in synchronicity to reduce the spread of H1N1. The writings about the experiences were also the result of that academic collaboration.

This time with Covid-19, health is an issue that will test the cooperation and collaboration of the U.S. and Mexico about borders that need to interact 24-7. In mid-March, the tightening of U.S. border crossings, first with Canada and later with Mexico demonstrated the coordinated efforts that the governments are able to construct. The partial border closing was orderly, negotiated between the presidents of each country (and Canada's prime minister), seeking minimal disruption of daily activities and allowing the transit of goods and products while reducing nonessential crossings. Surely, *Voices* will publish a series of articles about the challenges and responses to this unprecedented health event; and again, the academic relationships will be handy.

When elections take place in the U.S., the CISAN has organized panels, inviting scholars who belong to its institutional network. Regardless of what political party is in the White House, expert panels examine the political perspectives that the U.S. president will have in relation to Mexico since the relationship between the two countries is crucial for both. It was no surprise that during the 2016 presidential election Donald Trump used the border and Mexico as his bullet points for his presidential platform. Despite some volatility and economic impacts in trade, large U.S.-based corporations demonstrated to Mr. Trump that North American manufacturing models were completely interdependent and that attacking Mexico would be, ultimately, a negative proposition for the economic prosperity of the United States. The CISAN hosted one of the first panels of analysis within a week of Mr. Trump's victory to examine how his presidency would impact Mexico and the entire migratory process. And the passing of a new trade agreement precisely proposed by the Trump administration is recognition that the structural relationships in North America are difficult to change. Ultimately, Mr. Trump acknowledged that the realities of the U.S. interdependence with Mexico cannot be ignored and that borders and geography cannot be changed or disregarded.

Voices has been the best forum for the institutional collaboration and academic interaction of the CISAN and all the academic institutions in United States and Canada. Plus, no topic has escaped the analysis and examination of scholars actively engaged in fundamental research that always has policy and public opinion implications. This anniversary will be the departure point for many more successful years of publishing about the issues that matter the most for the North American countries, especially Mexico. VM

Luis E. Coronado Guel*

Advancing Mutual Knowledge Of the Complex U.S.-Mexico Agenda

Introduction

Colloquially, the University of Arizona (UA) has been known as "the most northern Mexican University" because of Mexico's enormous importance to it. Located in Tucson, the epicenter of the borderland regions of Sonora and Arizona, the UA was established in 1885 as a public research university, even before Arizona was admitted as a sovereign state to the Union in 1912. Along the U.S.-

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Binational Symposium at the University of Arizona, 2019.

The University of Arizona has one of the longest traditions of collaboration with Mexico in existence, covering the natural and social sciences, the arts, and the humanities.

Mexico border, many shared challenges, interests, geography, and populations have brought together the UA and Mexico's most important university, the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM). In this context, the Center for Research on North America (CISAN) has become an ideal partner for the UA to strengthen mutual knowledge on the complex binational agenda. This article briefly recounts and celebrates the strong collaboration, as well as the many initiatives in the social sciences, that the UA and the UNAM have shared in recent years.

Mexican Initiatives in the Social Sciences: Mexico in Tucson

The University of Arizona has one of the longest traditions of collaboration with Mexico in existence, covering the natural and social sciences, the arts, and the humanities. For decades, the UA has exchanged students and professors in many fields of knowledge. This is demonstrated by its profound relationship with the UNAM, which is so strong that in 2015 the UNAM established an international center in Tucson, reciprocating the existence of the UA office at the UNAM main University City campus in Mexico's capital.

Among the many scientific fields of mutual interest, the social sciences represent a critical area of opportunity between the UNAM and the UA simply because the United States and Mexico are linked through many social dimensions. On top of these efforts, the UA College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (SBS) is deeply committed to becoming a platform for increased, sustained academic collaboration with the UNAM. The college provides a deep, broad perspective for understanding firsthand the multiple dimensions and complexities of the United States-Mexico border and connecting with the local Tucson community, rich in expressions of cultural diversity and whose historic relationship with Mexico is profound and robust.

For that reason, in fall 2016, the dean of social sciences, Dr. John Paul Jones III, created the Office of SBS Mexico Initiatives, originally designed by Professor Scott Whiteford, a prominent anthropologist with academic interests in international migration, violence, power, human rights, research methods, and the political ecology of water. SBS Mexico Initiatives was established to consolidate collaborative efforts with Mexico, its academic institutions, organizations, scholars, students, and communities in the social and behavioral sciences. Its purpose was to generate the basis for binational collaboration and provide resources for SBS units, faculty, and students to facilitate joint research and scholarly activity. Its main mission up to now has been providing spaces to think and discuss broadly on the impact of the social sciences in Mexico and the United States, celebrate shared cultural heritages and populations, and promote awareness on issues of mutual importance.

It is important to mention that the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has strong academic capabilities in all the key topics of the binational agenda with Mexico. It houses 31 academic, research, and outreach units in

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the social sciences and the humanities. Promoting collaboration with Mexico is a priority, as its research capacities in numbers indicate: around 90 of over 500 faculty engage in scholarship on Mexico, Mexico-U.S. relations, border studies, and Mexican-American populations, often in collaboration with colleagues in Mexico from top universities and research centers. The SBS student body is 30 percent Hispanic and Mexico's Science and Technology National Council scholars are welcomed to graduate programs every year. The SBS hosts academic units and research centers focused specifically on the border and the binational agenda with Mexico, such as the Binational Migration Institute, the Center for Border and Global Journalism, the Center for Regional Food Studies, the Southwest Center, the Southwest Institute for Research on Women, and the Border Lab in Nogales, Arizona, to be located at the historic Castro House, a property donated by former Arizona Governor Raul Castro.

The UA-UNAM Binational Research Consortium: Migration, Human Rights, and Human Security

In April 2018, UNAM Rector Dr. Enrique Graue visited Tucson and signed several collaboration agreements, among which was the establishment of a Binational Research Consortium on Migration, Human Security, and Human Rights. Why are these topics key to the binational agenda? Among the central challenges of the twenty-first century is the need to strengthen human rights and security globally. The critical threats to human rights and human security inherent in the migration process between Mexico and the United States make it necessary to conduct social science research and propose joint solutions, including new or amended policies to ensure their protection. Thus, UA-UNAM joint research capacities on the social sciences are crucial in these times.

It is important to say that research carried out thus far by scholars in both countries has greatly increased scientific knowledge around issues of migration, human rights, and human security; however, collaboration in research between the two participating institutions could exponentially strengthen dialogue between their respective countries and enhance the search for common solutions from a shared, interdisciplinary, multidimensional perspective.

In a few words, the consortium is both a financial instrument for promoting joint academic collaboration and a research network of specialists. It seeks to provide an infrastructure for binational cooperation and collaboration between the UNAM Humanities Coordinating Department and the UA College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to strengthen research in these key topics. Both institutions recognize the importance of the bilateral exchange of academic staff, researchers, technical specialists, and students associated with them.

Since 2018, the consortium has sought to establish mechanisms and financing models to strengthen joint research between the UNAM and the UA on these topics between the United States and Mexico, including, but not limited to, their shared border region. It promotes the mobility of academic staff and students between the two universities and the establishment of collaborative projects between academic degree programs to create undergraduate and graduate study opportunities for students at both institutions in related areas. Lastly, it seeks to create a permanent exchange of bibliographical resources and other teaching and research materials, as well as joint publication of research products carried out by scholars from both countries.

The CISAN in the UA-UNAM Consortium, A Key Partner for SBS Mexico Initiatives

The inaugural meeting of binational scholars to pave the way for the consortium took place in Tucson, Arizona, April 5-7, 2018, on the UA campus. It brought together 27 faculty from the UA College of SBS and 10 delegates from the UNAM Humanities Coordinating Department. They identified numerous research areas that they wanted to collaborate on, including border deaths, immigration enforcement, policies that impact refugees, environmental challenges, economic integration of returned families, media representations of migrants, public health issues re-

lated to Mexican and Central American populations, violations of indigenous rights in both the U.S. and Mexico, human rights violations against women, elite migration networks, and the cultural impacts of immigration policies.

Since the beginning, the CISAN has participated enthusiastically in the research cluster focused on human security. Firmly supported by CISAN Director Dr. Graciela Martínez Zalce and Academic Secretary Dr. Juan Carlos Barrón, Dr. Roberto Zepeda has led many projects and conducted research stays in Tucson, positioning the CISAN as the pillar of the human security team. By summer 2018, they had established the Binational Emerging Actors in Human Security Permanent Seminar jointly with SBS Mexico Initiatives.[1] Through this permanent think tank, the CISAN has hosted visiting UA scholars covering topics connected with the field.

In February 2019, the consortium launched the first set of funding opportunities to support mobility. The Faculty Research Travel Grants supported academic visits from Mexico City to Tucson and from Tucson to Mexico City. Since then, three faculty research exchanges have taken place, two led by CISAN professors.

In March and June 2019, representatives of three Mexican institutions (the CISAN-UNAM, the College of San Luis, and the Autonomous University of Sinaloa) and two U.S. universities (Bradley University and Fort Hays University) participated in the first and second Shared Cultural Heritage Binational Research Symposiums, which included research dimensions connected to human security. The first took place in Tucson and the second in the city of San Luis Potosí. Among other activities in Tucson, they met with Professor Noam Chomsky and Professor Marvin Waterstone to discuss further collaboration.

Slowly the CISAN's permanent seminar has turned into a platform to connect researchers in all three areas of the consortium, not only human security. For example, in April 2019, UA-SBS Professor Kathleen Schwartzman from the Sociology Department shared her research on binational commerce at the "Integration or Disintegration in North America?" International Colloquium. In June 2019, UA-SBS Professor Javier Osorio from the UA School of Government and Public Policy and Coordinator of the Consortium Cluster on Human Security visited the UNAM Institute for Legal Research and the CISAN and delivered the lecture "Organized Crime Violence and Big Data" at the Humanities Tower at the UNAM's main campus. In sum, up to 15 faculty from both universities have completed academic visits between fall 2018 and fall 2019.

The second plenary meeting of consortium members took place in Mexico City September 12-13, 2019. The Binational Research Workshop UA-UNAM: Migration, Human Rights, and Human Security was very successful because six faculty from UA-SBS met 18 UNAM faculty directors from the Humanities Coordinating Department to develop joint proposals. In two days, they formed seven binational teams, developed eight proposals, and submitted three proposals for grants to institutions like the Haury Foundation, CAZMEX, and UNAM-PAPITT. Up to now, it is impossible to think about the UA-UNAM consortium and not think of the CISAN as a key partner.

The Arizona-Sonora Border: A Fascinating Invitation to Continue Binational Research

On January 25, 2017, the new Trump administration announced the construction of a border wall between Mexico and the U.S. Just a few days later, Tohono Odham Chairman Edward D. Manuel declared that his community will not tolerate the construction of a wall dividing their ancestral land, since they consider the international border an artificial line that divides their indigenous homelands.[2] This is only one dimension of the border's complex panorama that can be explored through binational research. One can ask how borders –of any kind, at any time— create tensions that reflect cultural, ideological, linguistic, artistic expressions of division or cooperation among human beings. Social, cultural, historical, and economic dimensions of the border are extremely elusive, unattainable, even ungraspable when examined through rigid or boxed-in methods. In just a few years, the partnership between CISAN and the UA College of Social and Behavioral Sciences has demonstrated the importance of developing an international/interdisciplinary working

> Resulting from complex, ongoing historical processes, boundaries manifest in many aspects of human life, fueling tensions but also facilitating cross-cultural engagement.

group of scholars from different fields to address common problems, actors, or processes in different cases, spaces, and timeframes.

Resulting from complex, ongoing historical processes, boundaries manifest in many aspects of human life, fueling tensions but also facilitating cross-cultural engagement. Approaching such a ubiquitous phenomenon as boundaries implies examining how social interactions along borders promote the formation of specific identities and foster permanent struggle over space, knowledge, and the very practice of "community." Undoubtedly, the collaboration between the UA and UNAM in the social sciences —to which the CISAN has been instrumental— is an open invitation to continue doing binational research as a way to shed light on the complex relationship between the United States and Mexico, and on the permanent negotiation and construction of what we call North America.

Congratulations to the CISAN on its thirtieth anniversary and thank you for advancing our mutual knowledge about our complex binational agenda. VM

Notes

1 See http://www.cisan.unam.mx/seminarioBinacional/index.htm.
2 Stephanie Innes, "Tohono O'odham Leaders Confident Trump's Wall Won't Rise on Their Border," *Arizona Daily Star*, accessed March 1, 2017, http://tucson.com/news/local/border/tohono-o-odham-leaders-confident-trump-s-wall-won-t/article_6403a694-d3f4-5bcf-9120-fba3a0f53bdc.html.