



Beyond the Caribbean: The Impact of Globalization in an Indian Community in Mexico

Luis Berruecos
lberruecos@prodigy.net.mx
Department of Social Relations
Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana
(UAM) –Xochimilco Campus, México City

ABSTRACT¹

In a little Indian community north of Mexico City where I have been doing fieldwork for long years, the recent installation of maquila factories surrounding has provoked, among other things, the intensification of mobility of individuals from this Indian community to where maquilas are located or to United States. In the context of global crises, the inhabitants of this community have been compelled to abandon their families and the agricultural activities to work in maquila industries in the quest for jobs that neoliberal government has been unable to create, as a result of the lack of policies regarding native Mexicans.

The owners of these industries, (the maquilas) most of them foreign, pay very low wages and exploit the workers: consequently, people have to migrate. This paper will focus on some alienation factors developed from that situation, the alteration of lifestyles and the absence of attention to healthcare problems.

Introduction

The definition of “Globalization” has been heavily debated^{2 3} since it operates in a multi-layered fashion including different aspects related to economics, politics, culture and environment.^{4 5} and since economic globalization is often seen as the most advanced aspect,⁶ I am particularly interested in the impact globalization has on the cultural environment and traditions of Indian communities. Unfortunately, there is not enough time to analyze what the global level means in terms of the

[*]Mexican Social Anthropologist and Historian. Full-Time Researcher/Professor and Dean of the Department of Social Relations, Social Sciences and Humanities Division, Metropolitan Autonomous University, Xochimilco Campus (Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana-Xochimilco), México City, México. (berruecos.luis@gmail.com) (lberruecos@prodigy.net.mx)

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² Hirsch, 1996: 84-85

³ Berruecos, 2000

⁴ Kearney: 2001:2-9

⁵ The word globalization has been so widely used in several different contexts that defining it can be a difficult and confusing task. In an insightful and clever description, one of my students offered the following example of globalization as clarification: Princess Diana was a British princess with an Egyptian boyfriend that used a Swedish cell phone and whose German car with a Dutch engine, crashed in a French tunnel being driven by a Belgian conductor that just before became drunk with a scotch whisky. They were being followed by Italian *paparazzi* driving a Japanese motorcycle that was taking pictures with a Taiwanese camera for a Spanish journal. She was taken to a hospital where she was seen by a Russian doctor assisted by a Filipino student using American syringes.

⁶ Kaplan, 2001:15; Roitman, 2001:14



transnational enterprises and the modern state or to present the way in which Mexico is situated within the globalization process and the advantages and disadvantages of this international commerce; also, is not possible to discuss about the history of the Maquila industry in Mexico or how the maquila industry is related to productive transformation and its expansion. In the last part of the paper, I will briefly examine the case study of cultural transformations resulting from globalization in Teziutlán and the feelings of the Indian inhabitants about all this process.

In Mexico, different administrations from the center and the right wing have not been able to provide enough job positions for its inhabitants: in consequence, people look for different alternatives such as migration. This has been the case for some of the Indian people living in San Sebastian, a community close to the City of Teziutlán, Puebla, located in the north of Mexico in which vicinity, the recent installation of many maquila industries has provoked important changes in the everyday lifestyle experiences of the community; such changes include, among others, alcohol consumption. All this and more happens as a result of a crisis of the global system and the neoliberal economic policies derived from that situation in Mexico, that have been applied in the last decades. Currently, it is no longer easy to find workers for the field in agricultural activities since the majority of the people are either now working in the maquila industry producing clothing for exportation and have practically abandoned agriculture, or have migrated to the United States. In this essay, I will analyze the effects of globalization in the minds of the natives themselves and some of the solutions that they have acquired, such as migration.

The main focus of this paper is to show some of the perceptions of the inhabitants of this little community and the alternatives to survival that they have adopted. To illustrate this point throughout this paper, I will refer to a case of a city where ten percent of the industry within Mexico has recently been established, as well as how this industrial structure has affected the leisure lifestyles of an Indian community. I draw attention to this leisure transformation, as the community has, up until now, remained culturally traditional and has, as of late, been faced with accelerated changes and unpredictable consequences.

I conclude that in the case of Mexico, definite consequences of globalization are still far from realization since the administrations of the last 27 years have been following a neo liberal economic model maintaining its policy of compressed salaries, which subsequently contributed enormously to the country's severe unemployment problem. With this economic model in place, the maquila provides a very limited alternative for employment that offers low wages, and in turn affects the rest of the economy. I suggest that under these circumstances, it is necessary to develop internal production and access to cultural and communications resources in order to protect regional institutions.⁷ Globalization has brought with it such an internationalization of economic transactions that activities that in the past were essentially explained in terms of national economy, have sought other financing

⁷ Moreover, I maintain that that the exports that come from the maquila have neither affected the reconstruction of the internal market nor generated jobs; furthermore, the maquilas have failed to improve the quality of life for the majority of workers, as the maquiladora industry has had effects on the rest of the economy. In spite of the fact that the maquila export industry is one of Mexico's most dynamic sectors, it is private investment and exports and not excessive public spending or indebtedness that must drive economic growth. Inflation must be reduced without artificial controls or price distortion. Consequently, with a free-floating exchange rate, there is a need for a regulatory framework in order to generate certainty and favor competitiveness, but inflation must be reduced through a free-floating exchange rate and without resorting to artificial controls or price distortion.



channels such as the *maquila*.⁸ Globalization has also impacted the cultural sphere.⁹ Economic globalization implies alliances, which force societies to reorganize the political sphere, and in turn serve to favour and strengthen the economic position of transnational enterprises that have established an internationally commercial regime.¹⁰ Some authors agree that the economy is not changing but rather transforming itself in its structural basis.¹¹ Between the two world wars, a profound crisis with a survival instinct motivated the restructuring of the international economy through new lines of production, new markets and the exportation of capital to areas of easy control of labour.¹² The flexible accumulation of the production system, commercial interchange based in an ample division of labour and new industrial production centers appeared in newly industrialised nations: industrial decay¹³ practically converted former intense manufacturing areas in *ghettos* of social exclusion in the cities especially in countries with emergent economies.¹⁴

The migration problem

Walls are taller, efforts to contain migration are bigger, technology is better but the law of supply and demand makes that flows of migrants look for jobs in United States. The migratory system between Mexico and United States is undoubtedly one of major history and dynamism.¹⁵ The 3,000 kilometer border between the two countries makes it the one with more traffic all over the world: 98% of Mexican flow goes to the United States and constitutes the biggest Diaspora in the world since according to UN, for the years 2000-2005 México is the country with the highest number of people that annually establish their residence abroad (400,000, against 390,000 from China and 280,000 from India).

As far as the phenomenon of migration to the United States, this country is recipient mostly of Mexicans and Latin Americans. Mexican immigration to the United States began when the recipient country engaged in the Second World War. In 1942, both countries, Mexico and the United States, signed an agreement and that program, known as the Bracero Program provided that five million Mexicans got a job there. The program lasted until 1964 and by 1986, the Simpson-Rodino Act, pretended

⁸Dicken, 1992

⁹Different studies have been done to explore the relation that exists between the new globalized system of production and what culturally speaking is known as post-modernism. (Cohen, 1988), (Harvey, 1990).

¹⁰Ohae, 1995, Harvey, op.,cit.

¹¹Giddens, 1998, 1999, 2000; Cohen, op. cit.

¹²Jiménez, 2000.

¹³ The movie *The Full Monty* is an exceptional depiction of unemployment in London—the heart of Great Britain's industrial movement.

¹⁴ This concept is used by OCDE and is based in a group of economic indicators (foreign investment, exports, imports, flows of capital, etc.).

¹⁵ Raúl Delgado Wise y Humberto Márquez Covarrubias: "La migración mexicana hacia Estados Unidos a la luz de la integración económica regional: nuevo dinamismo y paradojas". IN: *Revista Theomai*, No.14, 2006



more control over immigrants but the tragedy of September 11th changed the entire situation.

From 1960 until 1996, immigration went from 576,000 to 6,679,000 and by the year 2000, United States had a total immigrant population of 34,988,000 from all over the world (12.4 percent of total population). According to information provided by the Current Population Survey of 2005, California, Texas, Arizona and New México, have the highest concentration of Mexican immigration, 69.1%, which in real figures implies a total of de 7.6 million. The rates of movement of migration are associated to economic and socio political circumstances: the National Council on Population of Mexico ¹⁶ says that by 2000, Mexican residents in United States are 3.8% of total population, the main immigration group and the 29.5% of total migrant population.

Due to restrictive policies towards migration, illicit traffic of people is common nowadays: from 1993-1997, around 48% of migrants had no legal papers; by 2001-2004 the figure went to 77% due to not only restrictive policies but also to weak economic policies in the countries of origin that do not create jobs.

The Census Office of U.S. says that currently there are 31.7 million people of Latin origin in the country, 11.7% of total population: almost 20 million are from Mexican origin. According to Mexican officials, Mexicans represent the 65% of the 18 million Latinos in that country, The Statistics Office in Mexico (INEGI) and the Ministry of the Interior in Mexico provided the following figures for the State of Puebla, where the community studied is located: In 1995, the total population of the State was of 4,264,365 inhabitants. The real rate of migration was of 2.11% for the years 1992-1997 and the total migrant population for 1992-1996 was of 97,574 people. The National Council on Population of Mexico (CONAPO) says that the real flow of migrants to United States per year is of 390 mil Mexicans: in 2003, 26.7 million Spanish speakers were there, 16.8 born there but from Mexican descent and 9.9 born in Mexico, 9% of Mexican total population and 3.6 percent of American total population.

Many of Mexican migrants are Indian originally that seek for better economic opportunities than in their own country. More than 4 million Mexicans live in Los Angeles, the second largest city of Mexicans after Mexico City. Temporary migrants are the most important group of these workers and they even celebrate the [Guelaguetza](#), an old feast from Oaxaca, also popular in several cities of California. Indians in US send money to their relatives back home, organize fiestas in US, and come back their towns for important celebrations and return to US to work

Recently, it has been said that United States has deported more than 77,000 Mexicans only during the first two months of this year. ¹⁷ In 2009, the same situation happened to 590,091 Mexicans, especially on March and April and particularly in Baja California and Sonora States. By 2010, last facts provided by the National Immigration institute of Mexico, there were more than 77,000 repatriations especially in Tijuana and Nogales, Sonora.

¹⁶ Consejo Nacional de Población

¹⁷ Martínez, Fabiola: "Estados Unidos deporta más de 77 mil mexicanos durante los dos primeros meses de 2010. [La Jornada](#), Lunes 12 de abril, 2010, p.13.



San Sebastian: Effects of Globalization in and Indian Village

The village I have been working at in different periods of time is known as San Sebastián ¹⁸, close to the city of Teziutlán, located in the northern section of the State of Puebla. ¹⁹ The last census reported a population of around 100,000 inhabitants for this city but around Teziutlán, there are 17 Indian villages where many people live in very poor conditions. They speak *Náhuatl*, which is the modern version of the so-called Aztec language, the most important spoken language in the country other than the official language, Spanish; the second one is the *Maya*. There are another 63 Indian languages spoken by 16 million people.

It used to be one of the more traditional and underdeveloped of all the 17 other villages. It is comprised of no more than 2,000 people that in the past were dedicated mostly to agricultural activities. They used to keep their traditions intact, the language was not infiltrated by Spanish as it is now and the culture was adamantly defended. Today, however, all of this is almost gone—due in a large part to globalization.

In the recent years, a boom of maquiladoras suddenly appeared in the neighbour city of Teziutlán, affecting people's everyday life and traditions. Currently in Teziutlán there are 320 maquiladoras, though only 120 are officially registered. Six of them have agreements with industries of the USA and the direct benefit is for 42 enterprises and indirectly for other 28: the rest of them, are maquila industries of the maquila companies. ²⁰

Today there are around 14 thousand workers in the maquila and most of them come from Indian villages such as San Sebastián. People not happy with wages at the maquila, migrate to United States, as we will show later in a case study. The law in Mexico requires that if a worker is on the job for more than 30 days, he must be registered at social security to obtain medical and other services, but only 8,000 have those benefits and the rest work for less than a month to avoid registration and then are rehired for another 29 days According to some sources, there must be a floating population of around 6,000 workers in illegal maquila industries. Most of them work in assembly line factories that produce jeans and shirts and one of the main problems of the clothing industry is that workers do not have the proper qualifications for the job; there is also lack of security on the employment which pushes the maquiladoras to rehire workers for different types of jobs every month. In addition, the highways do not facilitate transportation of goods since their maintenance is very poor. Moreover, the Unions do not provide adequate protection for their workers, and independent syndicates or unions always are in disadvantage: there is a well known independent syndicate known as "*5 de Febrero*", that in 40 years have only arranged for 400 definite jobs but have another 800 workers in temporary basis. The minimum wage for a worker is between 45 and 50 dls. Per week but some of them can make as much as 125. The local social security hospital for those workers have only 14 beds and 10 dispensaries, and the government has only built 300 little houses for the workers when the demand is bigger. Each family of a worker usually has an average of four children, there are no sports or outdoor

¹⁸Half an hour drive from Teziutlán.

¹⁹Four hours drive north from Mexico City.

²⁰ Martinez, 2000.



recreation facilities and they work from Monday to Friday and according to the law, eight –and sometimes more unpaid- hours per day.

Prostitution and delinquency are recently common problems surrounding the industries and the city, especially on pay day; there is a 35% of unmarried mothers according to different sources and new sicknesses have appeared such as AIDS and others. Most of the workers have no more than nine years of education in total. In the city of Teziutlán and its surroundings ²¹ close to the Indian village where we have been working in the last years, maquila industries represent around 10% of all the industry in the country: most of them produce clothing of different kinds for exportation. In the city of Teziutlán, in one of its boroughs named Francia, it is very common to see trucks that come directly from USA: Teziutlán and Tehuacán in the State of Puebla have become with Tijuana, important maquila centers.

Most of the people that work in the maquila industry are from Teziutlán and surrounding cities. ²² Wages are paid according to the number of parts assembled and usually are a little upper than the official minimum wage (around 3 to 4 dollars a day). It is common to see that people move from one position to another according to the wages paid. Some maquilas have their own transportation system for its workers and even some go as far as the Indian village to bring the workers to the factory. Ecological effects of the installation of these maquila factories in the area are very clear: for instance, chemicals (bleach) are used for washing jeans. Local rich citizens own most of the maquilas from well known families and some even have small maquila industries for bigger maquila companies; some others provide food for the workers or parts for the maintenance of the machines; we even found a Spaniard making products for exportation to Spain.

It is very common to see a new industry born almost every week either in this city or the neighbouring populations. ²³ Last calculations indicate that the employed population receive wages that go from 45 to 125 dls. Per week, depending on the qualifications of the worker and the amount of products he makes. Recently, the problem is that there is more demand for jobs than the offer the industries have. The owners maintain close relations to industries in the US through special contracts in exchange for machinery.

All the exportation goods are handled by registered brands but curiously, it is common to see goods in the local market with international brands at very cheap prices, for instance, jeans at \$8 dls. Most of the imports that are used by the industries established in Teziutlán come from USA through the states of Puebla, Tlaxcala and Aguascalientes; there are many foreign supervisors with much better income and even is common to see people in care of quality control of international brands specially from China, France and United States who receive around one thousand dollars a week. ²⁴

As far as people's perceptions, according to some informants, the only advantage of the maquilas in the city is the wages paid to the workers (at an average of 80 dls. a

²¹ Jalacingo, San Juan Xiutetelco, Atempán and Atoluca.

²² such as Tlapacoyán and Altotonga in the State of Veracruz and Chignautla and Atempán in Puebla.

²³ Chignautla, Teteles, Tlatlauqui, San Juan Xiutetelco, Tlapacoyán, Jalacingo, Altotonga and Xalapa.

²⁴ Since cost of living in Teziutlán is very low, it is common to see some of them paying a \$.50USD. for a soda and leave a dollar for tip!



week) since the profits of the owners are invested in other growing nearby cities or even other countries for the establishment of new maquiladoras: as a matter of fact, Teziutlán is exporting only cheap labour. There is internal control systems supervised by local authorities but only for those officially registered. Since most of the industries are engaged in the production of jeans for exportation, a new business in the city is the laundry (there are, so far, five of them most of which do not recycle the water and pollute the environment).

For the population, the establishment of maquiladoras in the region has provoked mixed reactions that summarize the malaise of modernity: on the one hand, those who have a job are very satisfied even if the wages are not that spectacular, but many are complaining about the pollution, the changes in lifestyles and the growing of the city. In the past, delinquency and associated manifestations were very rare and today are very common, for instance. Also, people complain that vegetables, coffee, corn, beans, fruits and cattle growing that were produced in the past are not anymore since peasants are abandoning their villages and their lands to work in the maquila and consequently the prices are higher. Now Teziutlán imports most of these goods when not too long ago they exported to all the area. Most of the people in the city against the maquila industry comment if the recent governmental strategies to industrialize the Tehuantepec Channel, especially since the Panama Channel is fortunately no longer property of the USA, have something to do with this apparent boom of the maquila.

Among others, the principal effects of the installation of these new industries in the vicinity of the Indian community are at stake. First of all, the most striking fact is that Indians do not want to speak their own language anymore but only in home: we obtained this information through interviews, questionnaire data, etc. Sometimes they even deny being Indians and consequently, they have abandoned their traditional garments and clothes and now use jeans, shirts and jackets. Since they have to go every day to the maquila, sometimes they decide to live in the city during the week and only spent sometimes the week end at home: there is no more familial contact like in the past. The spare time is utilized mostly in the cantinas (Mexican pubs), where they spend most of their salary, affecting the family income. Alcoholism and drug abuse –formerly not only unknown but out completely of their traditions- is very severe since the introduction of the maquila and some other problems already mentioned such as prostitution and delinquency, are growing rapidly. As far as the alcohol problem in the area, we must say first that almost 30 years ago, it was estimated that in Mexico, annual per capita consumption of alcohol was in the population above 15 years old, of 61.1 liters of alcoholic beverages and that 9 of each 100 adults were alcoholics. In the Indian community we studied, 150 litres of “aguardiente” are produced weakly but there are other beverages that people like such as beer or tequila and pulque. The figures for this village are 2.91 litres weakly, that is, 151.32 yearly for men and 2.94 for women (152.88 yearly), which means that 6.62% was spent only on aguardiente but if we add beer and tequila, the people spent almost 71.91% weakly. Annual per capita consumption is therefore of 34.01 liters of aguardiente and 93.01 liters of beer, respectively.²⁵ In Mexico, currently,

²⁵See from this autor: “Algunas consideraciones acerca de las repercusiones del alcoholismo en las familias de una comunidad indígena de la Sierra Norte de Puebla, México”. Ponencia, II Congreso Nacional de Medicina General - Medicina Familiar, Ciudad de México, febrero 23, 1978. Publicada como “La Ingesta de alcohol en San Sebastián, Puebla”. En: *Addictus*, Año 3, No.10, abril- mayo, 1996: Ciudad de México: Ediciones Alternativas, 27-31.



16.9% of the total population drinks moderately highly, (five or more drinks for occasion monthly) and 5 or more weakly 12.4%. Transcultural studies report that the dependency rate in Mexico is 8%, lower than the 128% of EUA²⁶ which suggests that in Mexico, a high proportion of problems derived from alcohol consumption, are the result of inadequate practices in non dependent persons.²⁷ Mexico has a high rate of mortality for cirrhosis of the liver, (48.6) higher than in France or USA.²⁸ In this village, if we assume that the percentages for the country are correct, currently 72% of men and 13% of women have problems with alcohol as far as mortality associated with alcohol consumption;²⁹ however, we know little about use and abuse of alcohol in Indian communities.³⁰

Traditions in the community are changing at a very fast rate: for instance, the very common Feast of the Patron Saint of the town, San Sebastian, on January 20th. is now celebrated not with services, praying and processions that still exist but few people attend, but mostly with the establishment of fairs where people go to bet money and drink. Food habits have also changed: tortillas are rarely made at home and people prefer to buy them by the pack, electricity has come to the village and unfortunately people spend time watching soap operas and listening to American rock hits: local music is gone, musicians are out of work, agriculture has been abandoned practically and the women that in the past kept domestic animals and took care of the household, want to work in the maquila.

People dress, eat and live together in a very different way; all this has occurred in no more than ten years. Utensils are plastic, clay containers have all but disappeared from the dining ritual. Bricks now substitute the former huts made of wood, and furniture is bought into the city and is no longer handmade. Goals are also different: people dream of having a job in the maquila, marrying city style, celebrating life cycle happenings in a different way; they want to be like urban people, they do not like being rural or Indian. There are now compact discs instead of local bands, foreign music, junk food, consumption of liquors and other goods announced on TV and things not needed in the past are now essential and usual. San Sebastián has changed radically by all means and in all terms. There is no cultural resistance, re-invention, indigenization or creolization. The socio-cultural consequences of globalization via maquila industry are quite visible.

As a result of the installation of maquilas around the village I described, the feelings of the people are ambiguous: they are happy in terms of the fact that they have now a regular weekly payment, even though it is not sufficient, to satisfy the basic needs as opposed to the former situation where they had to wait months for the crops to be harvested and in the meantime they had nothing to do or money to use. That is why, in socio psychological terms, we can say that people are concern only about living the present and even though future worries them, the past, particularly traditions and

²⁶ (Vega y cols., 1998), but rates are higher of lesser frequent consumption but in great quantities (24% y 6%) and rates of less frequent consumption in low quantities (3% y 12%) (Caetano, Medina-Mora, 1988; also, there are higher rates of urgency treatment in hospitals with positive levels of alcohol in blood (21% y 11%) (Cherpitel y cols., 1993)

²⁷ (Borges y cols., 1999).

²⁸ (SSA, 1998). (Edwards y cols., 1994).

²⁹ (SSA, 1970 y 1998).

³⁰ See: Berruecos Luis: "La investigación sobre el consumo de alcohol entre la población indígena de México." and "Las Etnias mexicanas y su consumo de alcohol" (in press), from María Elena Medina Mora and Antrop. Luis Berruecos Villalobos.



religion are a support. That means a search for the immediate satisfaction of needs but in a process of losing individual personality; there is admiration for technology but desperation for the impossibility of having it. People do not believe any more in politics, justice and political institutions.

Modernity, new technology, maquilas, all come together as a supposed to be economic, cultural and social interchange but in reality is threatening the integrity of the culture and the local identity. There is a conflict between modern culture and popular culture and homogenization of ideas through mass media provokes a reinforcement of the need of superfluous goods in detriment of basic items in a process of enhancing the value of the material over the social or moral versus the satisfaction of minimal material needs.

Final Remarks

The final results of globalization are still far away to be known. Some scholars caution about the negative effects of this phase of capitalism in terms of the polarization of income, unemployment and social exclusion especially for vulnerable sectors.³¹ Moreover, in the case of Mexico, the government has obediently followed the orders of The World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and other economic agencies with an impeccable neo liberal model that has kept his policy of compressed salaries and unemployment causing one of the most severe problems in the country. The maquila provides some jobs, but with low wages and this affects the rest of the economy; that is why impulse to internal production and access to cultural and communicational resources must be developed to protect regional institutions.³²

The exports that come from the maquila have no effect in the reconstruction of the internal market or in the generation of jobs or the elevation of the level and quality of life of the majority since the maquiladora industry has disarticulated the rest of the economy.³³

Mexico is currently facing a precarious forecast: the fall in the international dues of oil, the contraction in the amount of foreign investment and of the money remittances that Mexican immigrants working abroad send to their families, and the recent outbreak of the Influenza virus, all in an environment of governmental incapacity to deal with those problems, will unavoidably derive in a deficitary balance between income and outcome in public treasury.³⁴ The pains, aches, loss of opportunities

³¹ When capitalism arose, many warned against the need for control of to prevent inequality and exploitation and that logic is the same in global capitalism whose obscure face is again exploitation, inequality and exclusion which can also act globally.

³² García Canclini: 2000: 4-5.

³³ Since the maquila (assembly plant) export industry is one of Mexico's most dynamic sectors, private investment and exports, as opposed to excessive public spending or indebtedness must drive economic growth. Inflation must be reduced without artificial controls or price distortion, especially with a free-floating exchange rate. The maquila industry now operates in an atmosphere of uncertainty and competitiveness that will only be defeated by the establishment of a regulatory framework; inflation must be reduced through a free-floating exchange rate and without resorting to artificial controls or price distortion. Economic growth can be achieved on the basis of private investment and exports, as opposed to excessive public spending or indebtedness. The conditions required allowing the Mexican economy to maintain its dynamism and stability for years to come have to improve. If the economy is administered with a sense of congruence and discipline, these two spheres will complement and strengthen each other.

³⁴ Public spending has not been applied in a responsible manner: there are extravagance and onerous prerogatives for public officials and administrators. Spending is not oriented towards the needs of the more punished sectors of the population since there is no sensibility before this new economic crisis due, in a mayor scale, to the connection of our economy to that of the United States, which is in bankruptcy. The current and inept administration strictly follows the measurements that neoliberal



and hopelessness of an accessible future, have become dense reality. We need better conditions for political conduction, for governance and for repairing the deformed economy. The unjust, concentrator and depredator economic model that our governments have been following in almost three decades, has captured the consciousness of many administrators and has subdued leaders and elites; consequently, we need new roads to confront this emergency and to guide the productive, economic and social structures to better courses.³⁵ The expressions of social discontent break out all over the country as if they were bubbles in a water pot about to boil: there are right now all kinds of problems between police and citizens for the construction of new airports or oil refineries. Corruption and impunity of civil servants is all over as well as the existence of higher authorities with unexplained enrichment in their fortunes, injustice in trials to protesters, lack of punishment for fugitives of the law, inexpertness and lack of capacity on the administration to deal with these problems due to improvisation of official servants, drug and arm trafficking, war against drug cartels, a new enormous rampart between our frontiers, unemployment (that supposedly was the goal to attack of the President who himself called in his campaign for the Presidency, "The President of Jobs"), migration to the United States in the search of new opportunities that our own government has not been capable of offering, revenges of workers against management, social movements against burial of toxic residues from transnational companies in agricultural lands of poor villages.³⁶

All this situations remind us the thoughts of that American political sociologist, Barrington Moore, who wrote "*Injustice: the Social Basis of Obedience and Revolt*" (1978). Moore's concern was the transformation of pre-industrial agrarian social relations into "modern" ones, examining the constants and variables of the sense of injustice displayed by ordinary people in various societies. He pointed out that there are certain conditions in which people with an enormous capacity to undergo suffering, suddenly revolt. Some of this conditions are explained as a response to

ideology has proclaimed for decades and that have proven unsuccessful. We need corrective actions that guarantee the best development of our economy with major growth and better distribution of opportunities. Our obedient administration, stubborn with the idea of following the rules awarded by the power hegemonic centers, is now submitted again to international recycled organisms. In this fashion, the new economic crisis scarcely covers a more profound crisis: that of social kind which is growing day by day.

³⁵ (cfr.: Linares Zapata, Luis: "Señales para la inmovilidad". In: *La Jornada*, miércoles 15 abril, 2009, p. 22).

³⁶ as it has been happening specially in March in La Gloria, Perote, Veracruz and other small communities of the vicinity of the State of Puebla where 15 farms of pigs known as Carroll Farms, a subsidiary of Smithfield Foods, are established. The headquarters' company is located in the town of Smithfield, in the Coastal Plain of North Carolina, approximately 30 miles east of Raleigh, 125 miles to the eastern coast and 104 miles north of the South Carolina state line. This company violated The Clean Water Act which is the primary federal law in the United States governing water pollution. Established by Joseph W. Luter, Sr. and Joseph W. Luter, Jr. Smithfield Packing plant was opened in Smithfield, Va. as Smithfield Packing in Virginia back in 1936 and facilities in North Carolina and expanded from Minnesota to Texas, bought in 1999 Carroll 's Foods, the nation's fourth largest hog producer and in 2000, Murphy – Brown, with whole sales at 12 billion for fiscal 2007 and producing 14 to 17 percent of hog production and from 26 to 31 percent of the US total). Currently they have 57,000 employees worldwide. It is a global food company that encompasses many of the popular brands including Smithfield, John Morrell®, Farmland® and Butterball® and ultimately, committed to providing good food in a responsible way, according to their web page) Smithfield Foods is a global food company that goes above and beyond to provide good food in a responsible manner. We remain 100 percent committed to environmental leadership, community involvement, employee safety, animal welfare and high-quality food. The wholly owned independent operating companies and joint ventures: Produce more than 50 brands of pork and turkey products and more than 200 gourmet foods, Employ more than 57,000 individuals globally , it is the world's largest producer and processor of pork and a leader in turkey processing , over the years, Smithfield Foods has completed a series of acquisitions that have made them a global food company with annual revenues approaching \$12 billion, producing more than 50 brands of pork and turkey products as well as more than 200 gourmet foods. And in every aspect of our business, we remain 100 percent committed to providing good food responsibly. On the other hand, Smithfield Foods Says It Found No Evidence of Swine Influenza at Its Mexican Joint Ventures. Dated in Smithfield, Va., April 26, 2009 /PRNewswire-FirstCall via COMTEX News Network/ -- Smithfield Foods, Inc. (NYSE: SFD) stated that it has found no clinical signs or symptoms of the presence of swine influenza in the company's swine herd or its employees at its joint ventures in Mexico.



moral offense and when people is convinced of fundamental rights and their patience is exhausted as it happened in 1810 with the Mexican independence movement and again, one hundred years later, in 1910 in the Mexican revolution that overthrow a dictatorship. In these two events which Mexicans are preparing to “commemorate” next year, the bonds of obedience as Moore says were broken because government violated the social contract.

Our panorama is similar to an explosive cocktail: the decomposition and discredit of our rulers is bigger and bigger and that will be seen in two months in the intermediate elections. If we add to the economic crisis the political one as well as the public security situation, all that buries the credibility in laws and institutions. Unemployment, scarcity of life, fall in money remittances and the prices of oil and other factors outlined, make daily survival struggle more difficult.

The direct affection to the economic and financial levels in which the main drug cartels move, which at the same time impacts entrepreneurs and merchants -that work on money laundry and make business at the shadow of the drug market to which by the way refer to pejoratively-, is a measure that Obama started in the United States and that in Mexico nobody has thought about.^{37 38}

This characters not only continued accumulating wealth as well as political power to the point to become an dominant elite that operates above the national institutions: this mafia does not care for the future and destiny of the country or the well being of its inhabitants and have contributed to the dismantling the policy of economic foment and the creation of jobs, and neglected deliberately the energetic sector (power and oil) to ruin it and facilitate its privatization: the outcome is that the people’s destiny is to survive or to exile.

The migratory phenomenon as well as the lack of public security has their origins in political, economic and social causes; consequently, they have not to be confronted with the use of arms since we are not talking about a conflict between police and bandits. The wall in the border, the raids of the border patrol, the militarization and the menace of hard hand are only propaganda resources that pretend to attack the effects but not the causes.³⁹

The decisions taken today by the administration will have at a long run consequences for all the population and will define the trajectory of the country. Politics implies negotiation and its costs will not be seen in the near future. The price of politics today will be paid by the next two or three generations of Mexicans that not even will be able to know the names of those who signed the mortgage.⁴⁰

³⁷ (cfr: Hernández Navarro, Luis: “El regreso de Fuenteovejuna”. In: *La Jornada*, martes 14 de abril 2009: p.17).

³⁸ As the former candidate to Presidency Andrés Manuel López Obrador in his letter to Obama states: (Jornada, 16 abr. P.11.): current rule oligarchy was established at the protection of the deceitfulness of the neoliberal model from the very moment that Salinas (1988-1994) gave to his closes friends and allies, which turn to be speculators, influence traffickers, and corrupt politicians the public enterprises, the banks, the highways and other goods that used to be property of the people and the Nation.

³⁹ (cfr.: Loaeza, Soledad: “La Hipoteca”. In: *La Jornada*, jueves 16 de abril, 2009: p. 29).

⁴⁰ (cfr.: Guerra Cabrera, Ángel: “La cumbre esquizofrénica de las Américas”, In: *La Jornada*: jueves 16 de abril, 2009: p. 38).



We as a country do not expect any concrete solutions to the dramatic structural problems of Latin America and the Caribbean from neither the last V America' Summit or the future meetings. We have been offended for three decades of neo liberalism so what we expect, is the irreversible fall of the capitalist system which is in systemic crisis.⁴¹ Migration is one of the most dramatic effects of the crisis in the agricultural sector: more than a half a million Mexicans leave the country every year seeking new opportunities of jobs in the US. Besides, seven million youths cannot have access to higher education and 14 million live in alimentary poverty.⁴²

The world crisis generated by the United States to which we have been crooked due in part to the enormous financial-housing-banking cheating, comes to be a global crisis and represents not only the big failure of the world economic system but the incapacity of the market as a regulatory framework of an economy with equity. But is also a failure of the country, the United States, which is today cynically accused by the bankers themselves who contributed to the crisis when they state that they were not stopped at the right time by the authorities allowing them unlawful and delinquent practices.

The result of all that is economic stagnation, markets become smaller, unemployment grows wildly, credits and resources for development are no longer available, the levels of life are drastically reduced, and social inequality grows rapidly. Consequently, we are talking not only of an economic American crisis but a world crisis but also, a more profound one: a crisis on the values and beliefs and principles.

More has to be done to further the creation of real development alternatives through economic growth, the application of an increasingly tangible democracy, the modernization of the educational system and the maquila export sector: Mexico requires an infrastructure that will reflect its current industrial development and allow our country to assimilate the population growth of urban centers.

Behind globalization, we must look for the wild concentration of capital in the banks, the great consortiums and the communication media enterprises.⁴³ Globalization comes to be the process of intensification of reciprocal interdependence and a way of interconnecting between societies that has to be re-evaluated in terms of the potential of national cultures and regional institutions since it is a process that not

⁴¹ Obama has demonstrated a new attitude and tone of multilateralism and respect though in not a humble position, at least of moderation of the traditional imperial arrogance admitting part of the responsibility in the drug conflict between the two countries and recognizing the economic, social, political and strategic importance of our country as a supposed to be partner of the United States. Political shared will is not enough since it has come together with a profound transformation and depuration of the structures of both governments. There are many pendent assignments between both countries and the supposed democratic transition in Mexico in 2000 which is a deception, has only come to be a re composition of old structures of traditional and authoritarian regimes faithful to the old and the worst, antidemocratic and corrupted corporative practices. NAFTA agreement has benefited only a handful of agro exporters affecting millions of small and medium agricultural producers. In this fashion, Mexico has incremented its dependency on the United States and the agro alimentary balance shows a tremendous deficit that amounts more than a million dollars, provoking enormous disasters in the cattle and agricultural industries.

⁴² (Coordinadora Nacional Plan de Ayala: Foro El Campo y las relaciones comerciales con Estados Unidos y Canadá, abril 16, 3009. La Jornada, viernes 17 abril, p.13, and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas. "Trinidad: como el G-20, ¿vuelta a lo mismo?, In: *La Jornada*, viernes 17 abril: p. 18).

⁴³Kurnitzky: 2000: 36.



only makes countries closer and homogeneous but also produces breakdowns and segregation.

We have seen very briefly in this paper, the consequences in a particular Indian village: if wealth and access to education, health services, employment, and technology were globalized for all, we will of course welcome globalization. But unfortunately, we think that global market is making richer the rich and poorer the poor. As people say in Mexico in a joke, globalization is a Hood Robin process, that is, the reverse of Robin Hood: gives to the rich what belongs to the poor.



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