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Hemisphere Volume 13, Spring 2004

# *Hemisphere*

A MAGAZINE OF THE AMERICAS

VOLUME 13 • SPRING 2004 • [HTTP://LACC.FIU.EDU](http://LACC.FIU.EDU)

## **Popular Movements in the Americas**

*Evo Morales and Bolivia's Movement Toward Socialism*

*Ecuador's Indian-Mestizo Political Alliances*

*Post-Menem Social Organizing in Argentina*

*The Civil Society Resurgence in Latin America*

*Photo Essay: Chiapas, January 1994*



# THE JOURNAL OF LATIN AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGY

Florida International University

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*Ritual Meal at Chan Kom, circa 1930. Photo by Robert Redfield. Courtesy Redfield Collection, University of Chicago*

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JLAA is a peer-reviewed journal published in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. JLAA reflects the broad scholarly field of Latin American Studies including an emphasis on the Caribbean. We understand "Latin America" to include those geographic areas which are usually referred to with the expressions "Central America," "South America," and "the Caribbean"—including the areas and islands with populations who are not native speakers of Spanish.

We have a special interest in publishing articles about the contemporary realities as well as about the histories of the diverse populations who live and interact in Latin America and the Caribbean. The pages of JLAA are exclusively reserved for articles which focus on broad or specific, cross-cutting problems, themes, and theories and which are based on original fieldwork (ethnographic, archeological, etc.) and/or original archival research. The Spring 2004 issue, a photo from which is produced above, presents an in-depth look at the *Maya Identity of the Yucatan, 1500-1935: Re-thinking Ethnicity, History, and Anthropology*.

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THE MAYA IDENTITY OF THE YUCATAN, 1500-1935

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**LACC****LATIN AMERICAN AND  
CARIBBEAN CENTER**

Florida International University, a public institution of higher education in South Florida, created the Latin American and Caribbean Center (LACC) in 1979. As a federally supported National Resource Center for Language and Area Studies, LACC has a mandate to promote graduate and undergraduate education, faculty research and public education on Latin American and Caribbean affairs. LACC faculty span a broad range of academic disciplines, including the social and natural sciences, humanities and business.

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# FROM THE EDITOR

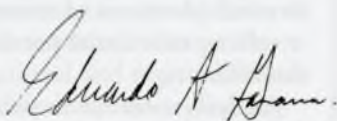
In the 1990s, most Latin American countries seemed to be more or less firmly on board the Washington Consensus, implementing free market policies and espousing support for democratic governance. In just the first few years of the twenty-first century, however, the picture has changed dramatically. In South America especially, popular movements have expressed their frustration with continued poor economic performance in protests that in some cases—Ecuador, Argentina, Bolivia—have led to the ouster of democratically elected governments. In Brazil, after eight years of the Cardoso administration, voters turned their back on his party to elect Luis Ignacio “Lula” da Silva, a long time labor leader and head of the Partido dos Trabalhadores, a Socialist party with a long list of social grievances. And in Venezuela, Hugo Chávez’s populist appeals continue to polarize the country.

This issue of *Hemisphere* examines the development of new political forces in several countries in the region. Robert Albro examines Evo Morales and his Movement Toward Socialism, which led the protests that toppled President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada in Bolivia last year. Amalia Pallares writes about politics and race in Ecuador, another country that has seen the emergence of strong indigenous-based political movements. Marian Goslinga’s publications update provides a useful bibliography for further reading on this topic.

Turning to Argentina, where economic collapse triggered mass public demonstrations that drove President Fernando de la Rúa from office in 2001, Carolyn Sattin discusses the formation of neighborhood assemblies and the phenomenon of factory “recuperations.” Eduardo Moncada and Tanya Dawkins also look at the growing prominence of civil society and social movements in their report on opposition around the hemisphere to the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Our photo essay spotlights one of the first, and certainly most dramatic, examples in Latin America of a movement to reject the neoliberal agenda, the Zapatista uprising in Chiapas. Photojournalist Alyx Kellington uses text and images to recount her experiences reporting on the violence in 1994. The book review in this issue also focuses on Mexico, in this case Oaxaca, where indigenous artisans have succeeded in adapting their crafts to meet the demands of globalization.

Finally, we take the opportunity to present the preliminary results of our own research here at Florida International University on the large, but largely unnoticed, population of Mexican immigrants in South Florida. Jordan McDuff explores some of the reasons for this group’s low profile compared to other Latin Americans in this region, with important conclusions for the study of transnational immigrant groups. The full results of the study will be released later this year.





# Beyond the FTAA

by Tanya Dawkins and Eduardo Moncada

**T**he 2003 Latin American Studies Association conference featured numerous sessions directly and indirectly related to the re-emergence of social movements in our hemisphere. The academic interest in this topic is paralleled by the growing recognition on the part of governments and international institutions that social movements are a force with which to be reckoned. Social actors can no longer be dismissed as anti-growth or anti-globalization fringe elements. Their role as generators of ideas, framers of public opinion and articulators of a range of policy options is real and attracting attention.

Social movements are influencing political processes in tangible ways, as well as altering the manner in which impoverished and marginalized citizens throughout the Americas view themselves in relation to political systems and processes that have largely failed to promote the public interest or reverse growing inequality and poverty.

Today's social movements are re-emerging at a time when we are witnessing the results of the seismic shifts in relations between markets, politics and society ushered in and accelerated by the neoliberal economic reforms adopted in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s. Much has been written about the spread of democracy throughout the hemisphere, and yet governments in the Americas are increasingly accountable to the austerity

**Social actors can no longer be dismissed as anti-growth or anti-globalization fringe elements. Their role as generators of ideas, framers of public opinion and articulators of a range of policy options is real and attracting attention.**

requirements of international institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. This policy environment has narrowed the ideological "wiggle room" between political parties once sharply differentiated by their approaches to macro- and micro-economic policy and the role of the state. The capacity of any political party to respond to growing popular demands for access to education, health care, environmental justice and other elements of the withering social safety net has decreased dramatically.

In turn, political parties find their ability to negotiate for the demands of their constituents severely truncated, fostering widespread disillusionment among their constituencies. According to Philip Oxhorn, in 1996 an average of only 14% of Latin Americans considered the policies being pursued by their politicians as viable and acceptable solutions to their personal dilemmas. This disenchantment has created a gap between politics and people. New social and political movements are attempting to articulate both the causes of and solutions to that gap.

## Social Movement Mechanics

Social movements are groups of individuals, associations and organizations, including community-based groups, policy-oriented think tanks or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), which coordinate formally and informally with each other to enact some form of political or social change. Individually, their structure includes elements normally associated with "civil society" groups. Linkages between organizations in this framework tend to be more political and quite fluid in nature, with diverse participants contributing at varying levels at different times in the movement's lifecycle. Movements are increasingly "cross-border" in nature, as well, although it is almost impossible to determine the precise moment when in its development cycle a movement shifts from a group of concerned individuals, associations and organizations to a full-blown social movement involving substantial portions of the citizenry.

Analysts continue to debate the relative long-term implications of structural fluidity and the capacities that flow from it. For now,



## *The social movement renaissance in the Americas*

this fluidity is paying significant dividends by creating a framework that is structured enough to allow for a high degree of diversity, growth and the ability to heighten public consciousness about issues that might not otherwise have been near the center of political discourse.

Consider the World Social Forum (WSF) phenomenon. The WSF began in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001 as a gathering of about 10,000 individuals seeking an alternative to the narrowly focused priorities of the World Economic Forum (WEF) held annually in Davos, Switzerland. By 2003, the WSF had grown to 100,000 international participants and was headlined by leading progressive activists and opinion makers, including newly elected Brazilian President Luiz Inácio "Lula" da Silva, whose victory was in no small part due to his political solidarity with Brazil's diverse social movements.

The WSF describes itself as "an open meeting place where groups and movements of civil society opposed to neo-liberalism and a world dominated by capital or by any form of imperialism, but engaged in building a planetary society centered on the human person, come together to pursue their thinking, to debate ideas democratically, formulate proposals, share their experiences freely and network for effective action." Across the world, national and regional forums on every continent are replicating the WSF model. Talks have begun for a North American Social Forum in 2005.

### **The Multiplier Effect**

The growth of social movements has a powerful multiplier effect in all areas of civic, economic and political life. This effect is particularly acute in Latin America, where many countries have a history of suppression of public dissent, sometimes through officially sanctioned violence or other extreme measures.

Social movement organizations in Latin America and throughout the world are working to reconstitute the very meaning of citizenship and to hold democracy accountable to its highest ideals. Social movements are more likely than other elements of civil society to put issues of gender, race, class and culture at the center of the political discourse, thereby adding to the political vocabulary. Sonia E. Alvarez has labeled this type of engagement "cultural politics," a strategy designed to redefine the very meaning of what can be considered "political."

This kind of politicization has the potential to expand democratic space and thereby pressure public and, to some extent, private institutions to act on equity and justice concerns. The nature of this particular kind of activism is designed to create significant shifts in public interest, attitude and debate.

Argentine analysts Catalina Smulovitz and Enrique Peruzzotti have documented a process they term "societal accountability." They argue that by spotlighting and successfully framing their messages around an issue, social movements provide political space in an

otherwise apathetic climate for branches of the government—such as the judiciary—to investigate and hold accountable actors in other parts of the bureaucracy. Smulovitz and Peruzzotti cite the processes that led to the 1992 impeachment of Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello on corruption charges and the recent development and implementation of election monitoring mechanisms in Mexico as examples of societal accountability at work. Social movements have become integral actors in the efforts to consolidate nascent and vulnerable Latin American democracies that continue to exhibit elements of the social and economic policies of their authoritarian predecessors.

Increasingly, social movements consider tracking and critiquing the emergence of neoliberal economic policies throughout the hemisphere to be an integral part of their role in consolidating democracy. The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), in particular, has become a magnet for social movements with diverse interests.

### **FTAA**

If completed, the FTAA—scheduled to take effect in January 2005—will encompass 34 nations and more than 800 million people. Throughout the hemisphere, networks of social movements composed of small and mid-level farmers, indigenous peoples, environmentalists, community-based groups, academics, labor unions, think tanks and policy-oriented organizations are constructing a

comprehensive critique of the agreement, whose current form, they predict, will bring negative social and environmental impacts. Beverly Bell of the Center for Economic Justice surveyed nine of the hemisphere's most influential grass-roots social movements and found that the model of economic integration that the FTAA represents is the central target for their advocacy and mobilization activities.

While some government officials would dismiss these groups as "protectionists" who are against free trade, this description is too often nothing more than a generalization. In studying the social movements engaged in the Summit of the Americas process, University of Miami political scientist William C. Smith has found an insider-outsider dynamic at work in social movements. Smith identifies two types of elements involved: one located on the fringes of the political process, waging a campaign of opposition and protest, and another situated not directly at the negotiating table but close enough to exert some degree of influence on the process. In other words, social movements are rarely homogeneous forces that share a common objective, but instead display great degrees of political heterogeneity.

To date, policy makers have been slow to entertain seriously the demands of social movements and other civil society actors regarding the social, environmental, economic justice and equity issues involved in the FTAA. In 1998, in response to growing social movement action, the negotiators established the Committee of Government Representatives on the Participation of Civil Society (CGR). The "committee," however, is little more than an on-line mailbox on the official FTAA web-

site inviting civil society actors to submit their suggestions and analyses to the trade ministers. The "side" forum organized for civil society organizations and held concurrent to the trade negotiations at the VIII Trade Ministerial in Miami in November 2003 also proved contentious. Initially, many civil society organizations rejected participation in the forum based on their repeated claims that it was developed in a manner neither transparent nor accessible to the diverse range of civil society groups throughout the hemisphere. What actual impact the proceedings of the alternative forum and any future similar forums will have on the FTAA negotiations remains as yet unclear.

The continued closed-door nature of the FTAA negotiations, combined with the absence of a formal effective structure for citizen engagement at the domestic and hemispheric levels, has led in turn to only greater calls for transparency and accountability. Social movement groups have devoted significant resources and time to politicizing and localizing trade issues in an effort to leverage the power of their members as voters and consumers. Ironically, in the United States, these messages are resonating with a growing chorus of business and political interests whose current concerns include the loss of US manufacturing jobs, the growth of the low-wage service sector, agricultural deregulation and other worrisome trends.

This in no way means that business and social movement interests have merged. Rather, the convergence signifies the diversity of calls for a fundamental reassessment of international trade policy.

Social movements have succeeded in spreading awareness and criticism of the FTAA. Many take as

evidence of their impact the inability of trade ministers to come to a consensus around the original "single undertaking" FTAA vision in Miami; instead, the ministers opted to mask their differences by agreeing to an "à la carte" version: a thin skeleton of an agreement with only a promise to resume negotiation of divisive issues such as agricultural subsidies and the so-called Singapore issues at a later date.

Can social movements and those who represent their political gains, such as Brazil's Lula, shift the trajectory of the FTAA and other economic integration debates by raising issues of market access for developing nations and the need to prioritize the elimination of poverty and inequality? The FTAA debate is taking place within the context of a broad-scale critique of its predecessor, NAFTA, on its tenth anniversary. This discussion of the nature, vision and timing of economic integration is one of the healthiest and most timely debates in which citizens can engage. Policy makers would do well to take the demands of such groups seriously.

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# Invisible Immigration

by Jordan Alexandra McDuff

Florida is in the midst of a dramatic demographic transformation. Over the past several decades, the state has become home to millions of Latin American immigrants. The 1950s to 1980s were characterized by the massive influx of Cuban exiles to South Florida, but recent years have brought waves of immigration from other Latin American countries: Venezuelans fleeing political upheaval, Argentines fleeing financial ruin, Haitians fleeing poverty and oppression, and Colombians fleeing a continuous cycle of violence. Like the Cubans who arrived before them, each diaspora is unique, and each group could potentially wield an enormous political, cultural and economic impact in the state. With the exception of the Haitian and Colombian diasporas, however, Florida's new immigrants have not been the subject of extensive research. The Miami Cuban community continues to receive the most attention, thanks in no small part to its political clout. In contrast, the approximately 350,000 Mexicans living in Florida have gone largely unnoticed.

In the last decade alone, Florida has witnessed a staggering 125.3% increase in its Mexican population, according to the 2000 Census. Mexicans are now the second largest Hispanic immigrant group in the state. As of 2000, 363,925 Mexicans were living in Florida, most of them concentrated in the southern part of the state—not counting undocumented immigrants, who may number upwards

*Mexicans are the second largest group of Latin Americans in Florida, but their presence is often overlooked*

of 200,000. Such a large yet largely overlooked population raises several critical questions: Why are so many Mexican immigrants choosing Florida as a destination? What are the major characteristics of this understudied population? How are Mexicans adapting to Florida society, and do they retain ties to Mexico? And, most important, why is this enormous population all but invisible?

The information presented in this article is based on a research project conducted by the Florida-Mexico Linkage Institute and the Latin American and Caribbean Center at Florida International University. The study was primarily qualitative in nature, although it also consulted secondary quantitative data sources such as the 2000 Census and Florida Agricultural Statistical Abstracts. Other recent studies of the Mexican immigrant population in Florida were also useful, most notably the work on Clearwater by Maria Crummett and Ella Schmidt at the University of South Florida. The primary data method selected was focus groups, supplemented by individual interviews and entrance surveys in cities and towns throughout the state.

## Characteristics of Florida's Mexican Population

Traditionally, most Mexican migration to Florida has been temporary or transient, linked to the winter vegetable industry. As the recent census discovered, however, a sizable number of migrants have chosen to make Florida a permanent destination. What the official figures do not make clear is that there are two broad types of Mexican populations in Florida: rural, primarily agricultural laborers confined to small towns in the interior of the state; and an urban professional class concentrated in the major coastal cities. In metropolitan areas such as Miami, Tampa, Aventura and Clearwater, "transnational" Mexican professionals are strengthening the economic and financial ties between Florida and their home country.

Both rural and urban Mexican populations choose Florida for one reason: economic opportunity. Despite improved economic performance under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), Mexico's rural sector continues to struggle with poverty. Extreme poverty—the kind that makes a family incapable of sustain-



ing itself—affects 42% of rural Mexican families, compared with only 12% of urban families. Wage comparisons between the United States and Mexico illustrate the mechanisms of “push-pull” economics: More than 50% of Mexicans earn an average annual wage of \$2,500, while the median income for Mexican households in the United States is \$22,400. Substantial research examining the economic motivations for migration has concluded that many families in Mexico see migration as a way to diversify economic opportunity. Family members sent to work in the United States sustain their relatives in Mexico through remittances, which bring almost \$10 billion into the country annually. The “pull” of Florida is apparent: Florida’s economy ranks fifth in the United States, with an annual growth rate of 5.6%, attracting thousands of immigrants from the primarily rural states of Guerrero, Zacatecas, Hidalgo and Querétaro.

Each year, an estimated 400,000 Mexicans work in Florida’s strawberry, tomato and citrus fields. The majority of rural Mexicans interviewed for the FIU study work in agricultural sectors, picking fruit or vegetables or at other jobs in nurseries or produce packaging plants. Most rural migrants hear about these opportunities through family connections and informal immigrant networks, which serve as an important source of information for recent arrivals. When asked why they chose Florida, the most common refrain among the rural Mexicans interviewed was a simple, straightforward answer: “I was told there was work” by family or friends who were already established in the state.

In contrast, Mexican urban professionals choose Florida for its connections with the rest of Latin

America. Miami is increasingly the main portal for US trade and financial transactions with the region. The majority of the Mexican business class in Miami is employed in banking, private enterprise or multinational corporations. Increased flights and transportation links between the United States and Latin America have helped facilitate commerce and connections between Florida and Mexico. Many urban professionals return to Mexico several times per month to conduct business, and they report that the ease of travel has helped nurture growing business ties. Unlike rural workers, these professionals were not “pushed out” of the Mexican economy; almost all of those interviewed held similar jobs in Mexico and came to Florida for professional development. Thus, while both rural and urban Mexicans choose Florida for employment reasons, there is one substantial difference: Rural workers migrate because they lack economic opportunities, while urban professionals look to enhance opportunities they already enjoy in Mexico.

Crummett and Schmidt’s study of Mexicans in Clearwater focuses on a special subset of the urban population. Pinellas County is home to some 11,000 Mexicans, almost all of them from the small town of Ixmiquilpan, Hidalgo, a primarily indigenous area. In the past 10 years, more than one-tenth of the town’s residents have immigrated to Clearwater. Located on Florida’s tourist-reliant “Treasure Coast,” Clearwater offers employment opportunities in an urban, service-oriented economy with room for upward mobility. Most of the Hidalgo immigrants take jobs in the area’s numerous hotels and restaurants, but many have moved on to run their own restaurants, small stores and markets. Contributing

to this success is a strong migrant network made possible by the common background of the area’s Mexican residents; while Mexicans in the rest of the state are a diverse group, the majority of the Clearwater community is from the same hometown, culture and economic class.

### **Adaptation and Immigrant Identity**

The notion of adaptation is crucial in future immigration policy considerations for the state and federal governments. How the Mexican population in all its diverse demographics is incorporated into Florida society depends on several factors, among them social cohesion and political strength. Mexicans are the second-largest immigrant group in Florida, yet they are the most socially and politically invisible. In almost every focus group, respondents unanimously acknowledged the absence of a united Mexican community in Florida, either at the rural or urban level. Most of those interviewed cited specific cultural reasons preventing cohesion, among them a tendency toward individualism, isolation and the varied backgrounds of Mexicans in Florida. Rural immigrants, for example, include individuals from different Mexican states and cultural traditions. Many of them are more comfortable communicating in indigenous languages instead of Spanish, let alone English. Urban Mexicans in Florida, although enjoying better networking opportunities and access to organizations such as the Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce, also report a general lack of unity or cohesion that contrasts with the highly visible political and social presence of Mexicans in the Southwest.

The Clearwater Mexican community, in contrast, enjoys both social

solidarity and ethnic cohesion. These characteristics go a long way toward explaining the relative success of the community. According to Crummett and Schmidt, indigenous migrants from Hidalgo transplanted the strong ethnic networks that characterized their communities in Mexico to Florida. Their experience highlights the importance of ethnic ties in promoting a common identity and establishing an ethnic enclave, factors that facilitate cohesive adaptation to US society and upward social mobility.

### Transnational Activity

The conditions characterizing Mexican immigration to Florida do not, as a rule, facilitate transnational activity. Although the urban professional class has greater access to transnational avenues of commerce and capital, it is generally apathetic with regards to participation in transnational activity. While all interviewees agreed on the importance of maintaining ties with Mexico, few possess the resources or the will to do so. Rural migrants are transnational only inasmuch as they send remittances back to Mexico; otherwise, they have neither the time nor the resources to establish a viable transnational connection. But perhaps the most important predictor of a transnational migration pattern goes back to one of the basic problems affecting the Mexican population in Florida: the lack of a cohesive social identity either in Florida or in Mexico. Transnationalism explicitly encompasses the importance of retaining cultural, political and economic links to the home country to strengthen and sustain both native and immigrant communities abroad. In a sense, transnationalism represents a symbiotic relationship between home and immigrant communities; hundreds of small

town in Mexico enjoy the financial benefits of remittances, and immigrant communities abroad use such ties to nourish and preserve their ethnic and communal identities. While most transnational activity, such as remittances, is explicitly individualized, large-scale transnationalism that transforms entire communities on either side of the border rests almost exclusively upon the ephemeral notion of a strong "community" identity.

The explicit transnational ties exhibited by the only Mexican community in Florida with a firm ethnic identity—the one in Clearwater—support this assertion. The Clearwater residents have a strong and resonant transnational relationship with Ixmiquilpan. Millions of dollars in remittances connect the two cities, and the governor of Hidalgo has become a frequent visitor to Clearwater. Focus group participants described the connection to their hometown as a source of pride and self-worth; immigrants to Clearwater are expected to become "patrons," paying for holiday celebrations back home and building large houses in preparation for their eventual return. They also represent virtually the only source of community revitalization in Ixmiquilpan, including construction and maintenance of the town's infrastructure. In turn, conservation of language and culture in the migrant community is of extreme importance. This strong ethnic identity virtually ensures continued links to the hometown and culture.

### The Future of the Mexican Population in Florida

Clearly, the various components of Florida's Mexican population will adapt and integrate into US society in different ways. Migrant farm workers, who represent the majority

of the state's Mexican population, face two of the most difficult challenges for any immigrant group: undocumented status and stalled socioeconomic advancement. Legal status has a profound effect on the level and pattern of integration. Undocumented immigrants lead a clandestine, insecure existence, with integration hampered by the fear of deportation. Although wages are higher in Florida than in Mexico, poverty among farm workers in the United States is endemic and unlikely to improve in the near future. The piece rate for tomato picking in Florida is 45-50 cents per bucket, meaning that workers must fill 13 buckets per hour just to make the minimum wage. The lack of a united community also impedes group activism or the formation of statewide grass-roots organizations to demand higher wages and better living and working conditions. Conversely, although lacking strong communal ties, the urban population is already well integrated socially and economically into the international commercial spheres of Miami and Tampa and primed for upward social mobility.

Across the state, the impact of Mexican immigrants is obvious: Their work is at the heart of Florida's economy. The ultimate socioeconomic adaptation and upward mobility of Mexicans in Florida, however, may lie in the community strength—or lack thereof—of the Mexican population itself.

*Jordan Alexandra McDuff is a recent graduate of Florida International University's Master of Arts in Latin American and Caribbean Studies program. She is currently the project manager for the Television Association of Programmers in Latin America.*



# A New Evo-lution?

by Robert Albro

**I**t is too early to tell if Bolivian opposition leader Evo Morales represents the nation's political past or future. Morales's Movement Toward Socialism (MAS)—which he and supporters assiduously avoid calling a “party”—finished a stunning second in the June 2002 presidential election, with almost 21% of the vote. This brought it just short of the 22.5% obtained by the National Revolutionary Movement (MNR), the closest thing to a dominant party in Bolivia since the 1952 revolution. The MAS won four of nine departments, 27 congressional seats and eight of 27 senatorial seats. Together with other indigenous representatives, the MAS makes Bolivia's the most indigenous congress in Latin America. After the election, the movement and its allies stood to control almost 50% of the legislature, a startling turnabout that consolidated Morales's emergence as a national figure.

But by January and February of 2003, yet another round of nationwide protests, blockades and violent confrontations in La Paz (including a clash between the army and police) sparked by a new IMF-imposed 12.5% income tax hike left a reported 50 dead and hundreds injured. Triggered by MAS-led protests, the unrest was one more skirmish in the growing resistance to neoliberal policy in Bolivia after 18 years with no discernible trickle down. Amid the fallout of Bolivia's “Black February,” then President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada accused Morales

of a failed coup attempt. After the violence and despite sporadic “dialogues” ostensibly to resolve the intractable problem of Bolivia's coca growers, relations between Morales and Sánchez de Lozada became severely strained. More clashes followed in October, culminating in Sánchez de Lozada's resignation.

## From Union Organizer to Opposition Leader

Morales's career as a legislator has been checkered by the entrenched resistance of Bolivia's mostly non-indigenous, elite and technocratic parliamentarians to his presence among them. The 2003 coup accusations continued a public relations battle begun when Morales was thrown out of congress in January 2002, despite having been duly elected in 1997. A US tendency to demonize Morales as a drug-trafficking terrorist or, as a recent *New York Times* article put it, an “upstart coca-chewing Aymara Indian,” along with the US Embassy's refusal to work with him or to recognize him as a legitimate representative, have aggravated the situation.

Originally called the Political Instrument for Peoples' Sovereignty, the MAS formally appeared in 1995. But only since the 2002 elections has it leapt from the marginal left to the center of Bolivian politics, in the process again calling attention to the highly contentious question of the Chapare coca growers and Bolivia's US-backed and funded coca eradication program. The MAS was born out of the now two decades old, low-intensity war

pitting Bolivia's militant coca growers against US-trained Bolivian police and military personnel. The coca growers have waged this war through militant agrarian unions, using direct action protests such as roadblocks, hunger strikes, mass marches, public rallies, sit-ins and the occupation of local government or NGO offices.

First formed in 1953, the Chapare unions were galvanized by an influx of ex-miners—casualties of the 1985 MNR neoliberal austerity measures recommended by Harvard guru Jeffrey Sachs—and their storied history of radical unionism. By 1985 the unions had supplanted the highland Aymara *kataristas* as the vanguard of the national agrarian union movement and wielded influence in the national hierarchy of the Bolivian Worker's Union (COB). Morales grew up in the impoverished obscurity of rural highland Bolivia. After his year of compulsory military service, he migrated in 1979 from his highland village to the Chapare, where he was elected to his first local union post two years later. In June 2003, he was elected to a fifth term as maximum leader of the Six Federations of the Tropics in the Chapare (approximately 35,000 strong), a post he has held since 1988. His political base remains, without doubt, the coca growers. But whether Morales can successfully walk the tightrope between national legislator and grass-roots leader remains a crucial question.

Given the deep suspicion with which Bolivia's disillusioned public regards its political establishment,



## *Prospects for Bolivia's popular movement*

Morales presents the MAS as an alternative to the vertical politics, pervasive corruption and broken promises of national politicians. This is evident in the MAS's structure, half "political party" and half "social movement." At the national level, the MAS is often indistinguishable from many other ephemeral political coalitions in which it participates and takes a guiding hand. What organic structure the MAS has is expressed through a changing number of "cabinets," formed on an ad hoc basis to develop positions on key issues. At the most local level, the MAS becomes inseparable from the local union structure itself. Where it has won elections, it is the provincial municipal bureaucracy, exercising authority through effective use of the government's own 1994 Popular Participation Law.

Morales emphasizes that the MAS "does not have its own separate structures" but is run more or less directly from the grass-roots level and the coca growers' praetorian guard in the Chapare. MAS legislators do not claim to be politicians or even representatives; they are, rather, "messengers" to congress, "spokespersons" for a base-driven consensus that emerges from the local rank-and-file union meetings at which they are expected to report. As opposed to the procedural democracy of the congress, the MAS functions as an assembly-style democracy rooted in local unions. Morales claims that for the MAS to become the "primary political force in Bolivia" it need not win the presidency in 2007.

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Instead, his goal is to take up to 70% of local municipalities in the 2004 local elections.

### **The Question of Sovereignty**

Perceptions of the coca growers as intransigent, isolated and issue-specific are misleading. The projection of the MAS's influence beyond Chapare local politics continues the coca growers' long-term strategy of courting other union movements and political parties on the left, including participation in other social movements and alliances with human rights groups, foreign NGOs, the clergy and sympathetic social scientists. In the early 1990s, for example, Morales was a vocal critic of NAFTA, was active in the 1992 anti-quincentenary campaign and appeared on the ballot for the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize. Recently, the MAS proved an effective participant in the Water War of April 2000, helping raise Morales's profile.

If the coca growers remain the power base and vanguard of the MAS, the movement has attracted other social sectors, including labor unionists and intellectuals of the former left. With the momentum of a post-neoliberal backlash, the MAS is evolving into a plural coalition

that cuts across and potentially unifies the popular sectors hit hardest by structural adjustment since 1985. Displacement is a key unifying feature of the MAS's growing constituency. This trend began with the original settling of the Chapare and continued with the influx of relocated miners. It is now reflected in the MAS's popularity among both peri-urban dwellers—mostly rural migrants to peripheral communities lacking in basic services who work in the "informal" economy—as well as highland peasants resettling in lowland Santa Cruz and mobilizing to obtain land grants.

As international awareness of the coca growers has increased, their leaders have begun to travel regularly to Europe, Japan and the United States to attend meetings with foreign NGOs, participate in activist congresses, hold speaking and informational tours, raise money, and publicize the international impacts of the US War on Drugs. One dimension of Morales's success has been his activism in transnational social networks dedicated to such interconnected issues as pan-indigenous rights, environmental conservationism and resistance to economic globalization. Since his

first trip abroad in 1989, Morales has become Bolivia's most well-traveled politician, making close to 100 trips abroad as a representative and symbol of Latin America's "original nations" to the world.

Critics have routinely sought to portray Morales as one more in a familiar line of populist demagogues without a coherent plan for the country's future, misleading a gullible electorate with an ideological hodgepodge of anarchists, Guevarists, indigenists, Trotskyites, leftists and Maoists. But if Morales's public discourse is peppered with references to Ché, Castro, the Zapatistas and Lula, and if the MAS has in fact courted Bolivia's traditional left, Morales cannot be defined simply as a left-leaning populist. Matters are more complex, at once reflecting the fact that indigenous political issues are now much more a part of the national mainstream, bound up with other issues of concern to a broader electorate, and the fact that the new wave of leftists in Latin America is decidedly more pragmatic than its 1960s forebears.

The main platform of MAS and Morales, the "struggle for dignity and sovereignty," is not simply an echo of the hemisphere's pan-indigenous struggle—represented in Bolivia by the writings of Fausto Reinaga—but a calculated challenge to a failing neoliberal regime. In December 2002, at its first national meeting, the MAS developed a referendum that included a rejection of US policy in Bolivia, the hot button topics of Bolivia's gas reserves and moribund mining industry, and the contentious questions of land and coca. But it also took positions on a social security fund for retirees, judicial and health care reform, inadequate pay for teachers, and the need for greater regional economic integration in

**He may incline to the left, and he is a manifestly popular politician, but Morales practices a more pragmatic and pluralistic brand of politics.**

Latin America. The MAS is not a one-issue, one-sector rural phenomenon.

Perhaps most important in Morales's post-neoliberal agenda is the notion of "sovereignty," which has multiple connotations. First is the need to respect the "uses and customs" of Bolivia's indigenous peoples, for which the traditional consumption of coca leaf (not of cocaine) has become a symbol. Morales and the coca growers emphasize an "Andean" heritage as intrinsic to Bolivian national identity. For them, the effort to eradicate Bolivia's "sacred leaf" is a direct assault on Bolivian cultural heritage and a violation of Bolivian national sovereignty by the US.

Morales is also a radical Bolivian nationalist, defending his nation's sovereignty against US interference and to prevent the loss of "national patrimony." He opposes construction of a pipeline that would send Bolivia's natural gas deposits through Chile, arguing that the gas would be better used at home to help domestic industries and create needed jobs. Sovereignty is also at the root of his opposition to the proposed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). Morales has insisted that the FTAA would amount to the "annexation" of the region for US economic interests and extend a standing invitation to loot its natural resources and economic potential. Like Brazil's Lula, Morales has stressed the need to optimize existing regional economic blocs such as MERCOSUR and in

international forums has urged the realization of Bolívar's vision "for the freedom and construction of one great nation in Latin America."

Gone are the days when Bolivia's government could play popular movements off each other, as it routinely did with mining and peasant unions in the past. Morales and the MAS are not just about coca. Their message of sovereignty, patrimony and collective cultural and citizenship rights resonates with members of Bolivia's popular sectors, both rural *and* urban, whose lives have gotten more difficult in recent years. Meanwhile, international and civil society networks make it harder for the nation's politicians to dismiss the MAS. It is their long-term appeal among the urban, indigenous-descended and disillusioned popular majority that should determine the political future of the MAS and Evo Morales, and eventually, Bolivia itself.

### **The Future of Bolivia's Democracy**

The tensions clustered around Morales's polarizing figure reflect the systemic paradox he poses to Bolivian national politics. The MAS is Morales's current instrument to work from within Bolivia's legislative process. It potentially validates the flexibility of Bolivia's political system to accommodate—some might insist "co-opt"—dis-senting political outsiders. In this light, the MAS phenomenon can be viewed optimistically as part of a



gradual process of democratic enfranchisement of Bolivia's popular and indigenous majority. Yet, blocked by a shaky government pact, internal dissension, and rivalries with other indigenous and popular leaders, the MAS's legislative efforts to "refound the country" have instead foundered. As Morales himself often claims, the MAS is much more effective when it "governs from the streets," using direct protest strategies. But the parade of blockades, demonstrations and other collective opposition strategies is both frustrating and paralyzing to many Bolivians, who simply want an end to their nation's seemingly perpetual economic and political crisis.

Lamentations in Washington about Latin America's "turn to the left" give the impression that impatience with free-market policies has brought Latin American politics full circle. But the left of today is not the left of the past, as illustrated by Evo Morales and the MAS. He may incline to the left, and he is a manifestly popular politician, but Morales practices a more pragmatic and pluralistic brand of politics, as the Bolivian and US governments would do well to recognize. MAS tactics effectively dramatize the polarities of incomplete democracy in Bolivia, caught on the horns of dialogue or violence, ineffective legislation or effective street protest, discredited political parties or grassroots unionism.

The fall 2003 protests that drove Sánchez de Lozada from office, leaving almost 80 people dead and another 500 wounded, were sparked by the plan to export Bolivian gas to the US via Chile. An expression of profound popular disenchantment like the Water War before it, the "Gas War" focused demands relating to citizen sovereignty, including clarity in coca

eradication laws, rejection of the FTAA and opposition to a new Citizen Security Law. A vocal leader in the Gas War, Morales reiterated the coca growers' previous demands but insisted the MAS would not be part of the new government. Instead, he positioned the movement as a "constructive opposition" that lost no time exerting its influence on a new government formed without traditional

political parties, pledging to battle corruption and to hold a popular referendum on the nation's gas reserves. Morales and his allies gave it 90 days.

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**MAS ALLA DEL MAR (BEYOND THE SEA)**, a full-length documentary on the Mariel boatlift, premiered on the opening night of the Made in Miami Film Festival, January 10, 2002, at Miami's historic Tower Theater. Produced, filmed, and edited by Lisandro Pérez-Rey, with support from FIU's Cuban Research Institute and the Ford Foundation, the 80-minute documentary was awarded the Festival's prize for Best Documentary Feature. *Más Allá del Mar* presents the story of one of the most dramatic episodes in the history of human migrations. In a few short weeks in 1980, nearly 130,000 Cubans left their homeland in an unrelenting stream of vessels bound for Key West. More than two decades later, the personal stories surrounding the boatlift, filmed for this documentary, continue to resonate with an energy that can only be described as surreal, powerful. Weaving together these riveting stories along with rare historical images and footage from present-day Cuba, this film recreates the "explosion of 1980," a crisis that shook Cuban as well as American society.

**MAS ALLA DEL MAR (BEYOND THE SEA)**

A film by Lisandro Pérez-Rey

80 min., English/Spanish (with English subtitles)

Executive Producer: Lisandro Pérez

Sponsored by the CRI, with support from the Ford Foundation

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# Indigenous Mobilization

by Amalia Pallares

**O**n August 14, Salvador Quishpe, an indigenous member of the Ecuadorian Congress representing the Pachakutik indigenous political movement, was publicly punished with a cold bath and beaten with the sharp-edged *ortiga* plant for not voting with the Pachakutik bloc in Congress. The nightly news showed images of Quishpe in his underwear silently looking down while dozens of activists carried out the punishment for all the country to see. His offense was voting with President Lucio Gutiérrez's Sociedad Patriótica Party (PSP) for a bureaucratic labor reform that Pachakutik opposed. In addition to the bath and the beating, Quishpe was forced to sign a document accepting that he would be removed from Pachakutik if he goes against the movement again. Manuel Cholang, an activist with the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities of Ecuador (CONAIE), stated, "we will not permit acts of indiscipline."

While the mainstream media viewed this incident as an example of the indigenous law of customs, a display that simultaneously horrified and fascinated *mestizos*, clearly much more was at stake. Quishpe's punishment occurred during the same week that Gutiérrez broke off his pact with Pachakutik and asked all of the movement's ministers and other public officials to step down. Quishpe's support of the PSP's position was, at the very least, a public embarrassment to a party that had just been shunned by the president.

More important, Quishpe's action and the punishment itself should be read as events that played out, or "staged," two important and inter-related tensions that have plagued the national indigenous movement since its inception: the difficulty of maintaining alliances with mestizos that do not ultimately disempower Indians, and the representativeness of indigenous leaders who acquire national power.

## A History of Tense Alliances

The first institutionalized efforts to mobilize indigenous political participation in the twentieth century were the result of the relationship established between urban mestizo socialists and indigenous hacienda workers in the northern Ecuadorian highlands. In the 1930s, the Ecuadorian Federation of Indians (FEI) was created under the umbrella of the Communist Party. The FEI focused its efforts on hacienda land conflicts, but while these obtained important gains, they were characterized by limited indigenous leadership and mestizo control over most planning and decision-making.

In the 1960s and 1970s, leftist unionism and the Catholic Church played an important role in helping create local and national organizations. The first highland organization, ECUARUNARI, emerged under the tutelage of Catholic activists and the Christian left. From the start, however, indigenous leaders were troubled by conflicts between the Catholics and the leftists and by the perceived paternalism of mestizo leaders from both groups, who were pressuring Indians

to take their side in the dispute. Young indigenous activists grew tired of what they called ideological paternalism and decided to exclude mestizos from organization meetings and high-level leadership positions. This marked the creation of the first national-level organization with exclusively indigenous leadership.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Indians experienced similar difficulties with mestizos in their relationships with labor unions and leftist political parties. Controversies erupted over political platforms that privileged class over ethnic demands and urban concerns over rural issues, and usually relegated Indians, individually and collectively, to subordinate positions in popular fronts and electoral campaigns. Even in local elections, Indians were often expected to deliver mass votes to the left but were not themselves placed on the ballot. The irony was not lost on the activists: Indians were struggling for equality but confronted deeply embedded structural and cultural inequalities in that struggle.

These experiences help explain the creation in 1986 of CONAIE as an exclusively indigenous organization that sought to create a separate political space to preserve some political autonomy. In its early years, CONAIE organized workshops, conferences and meetings to assess the social and political conditions that specifically affected Indians. CONAIE also sought to develop political strategies. But despite its enormous success in spearheading several national uprisings in the 1990s, the organization remained absent from electoral politics for 10

## *Race and politics in Ecuador*

years. Its leaders considered electoral politics tainted and corrupt, and they distrusted mestizo politician's ability to fulfill their commitments to Indians upon being elected.

Efforts to organize with mestizos occurred in the early 1990s, as CONAIE joined with workers' movements and other social forces in protests and marches against neoliberal policies. These alliances were different from the earlier ones. They were confined to specific events and, more important, they were based on mutual respect and equal power sharing in decision-making. This change was due in large part to the growing clout of the indigenous social movement. Finally, in 1996, Pachakutik-Nuevo País was created as a political movement to support candidates in elections. While Pachakutik relies primarily on indigenous votes, it has also placed numerous non-indigenous candidates on the ballot. In 1996, Pachakutik won 80 local elected offices and five congressional seats. The 1998 and 2000 elections resulted in additional electoral gains. As mayors, council representatives and members of Congress, indigenous leaders established political coalitions with mestizo politicians and worked on broad policy issues that affected all racial groups in Ecuador. Throughout these experiences, Pachakutik representatives have insisted on power sharing on an equal basis and underscored the importance of indigenous participation in all Ecuadorian affairs, and not only "indigenous issues."

Once Pachakutik went beyond these initial efforts and created a



coalition with junior military personnel to oust President Jamil Mahuad in January 2000, new limitations of indigenous-mestizo alliances became apparent. The temporary government created with a cadre of junior military officials (including Gutiérrez) and indigenous leadership lasted only a few hours. High-ranking members of the military undermined the temporary government and elevated the former vice president,

Gustavo Noboa, to the presidency. Indigenous leaders learned that the military, like other mestizo sectors and parties, was easily divided and did not represent a collective whole. They also saw that others, including the right, had benefited from their labor without incurring any of the cost. The Noboa administration was more right leaning and repressive than the one that Indians had helped remove.



### Dual Identities

The rise of Pachakutik has added complexity to the second important source of tensions within the indigenous movement: representation. The question of who represents Indians in Ecuador is not an easy one. The role of syndicalism and religion in the creation of indigenous organizations has led to the emergence of two other national federations: the Ecuadorian Federation of Evangelical Indians (FEINE) and the Confederation of Peasant, Indigenous and Black Organizations (FENOCIN). Both have played an important role in organizing mass mobilizations and supporting Pachakutik and its candidates. However, they conflicted with CONAIE when this organization nominated its own leaders to be the movement's representatives in the Council for the Development of the Nationalities and People of Ecuador (CODENPE), a publicly funded national committee that overviews indigenous development projects carried out by the Ecuadorian Indigenous People's Development Project (PRODEPINE) with World Bank funding. FENOC and FEINE complained that CONAIE was excluding their leadership and therefore not representing the different indigenous constituents. This bitter struggle was resolved when activists decided to drop institutional affiliations and elect leaders of each ethnic group. This has proved to be a complicated change, because many Indians of Quichua origin, especially, had not previously self-identified or organized as Quichuas but rather as members of local indigenous organizations.

The creation of Pachakutik adds another layer to the question of representation. Pachakutik is the political arm of CONAIE, FENOC and FEINE, the social movements that

have given it support. Activists have opted not to transform the social movement into a political movement, but rather to have both coexist separately. For example, once CONAIE leaders make the transition to Pachakutik, they no longer remain active in the social organization. At different moments, Pachakutik and CONAIE activists have disagreed about political strategies. However, Pachakutik leaders, in order to remain representative, must be supported by the indigenous social organizations. In exchange for this support, Pachakutik representatives are held accountable to these organizations. They are expected to keep their best interests in mind and to negotiate any differences directly with movement leaders. Rather than individual politicians elected by aggregated votes, they are viewed as the representatives of a collective. For many indigenous activists, this distinguishes indigenous forms of politics and indigenous politicians from non-indigenous ones.

The unusual coexistence of separate indigenous social and political movements reflects leaders' acknowledgement of the fact that indigenous power in Ecuador relies on the potential for mobilization and disruption. Since 1990, indigenous mobilizations have challenged neoliberal reforms, halted structural adjustment policies and ousted two presidents. Elected politicians must now consider the threat of indigenous mobilization before making policy decisions. Unlike many civil rights movements and armed insurgency groups in other countries, the Ecuadorian indigenous movement has no plans to relinquish mobilization politics for electoral politics. Instead, it has adopted a dual political path. This decision can lead to the unusual situation of being in power and in the opposition at the

same time. A local example of this is the case of Pedro de la Cruz, president of the Peasant and Indigenous Organization of Cotacachi (UNORCIC) and an elected city council member, who occupied the Cotacachi municipality building in 1991 to protest discrimination against indigenous elected officials. His experience reminds us that the need to rely on the power of disruption is evidence of the incomplete inclusion of Indians in the Ecuadorian polity. Like the events following the 2000 coup, it also indicates the reluctance of non-indigenous Ecuadorians to accept increased indigenous power.

### The Collapse of Power Sharing

Fast forward to 2002. The electoral alliance established between indigenous leaders and the PSP successfully brought Lucio Gutiérrez to power in November of that year. The election was considered an unprecedented political victory for Pachakutik and the indigenous movement as a whole. Finally, Indians were going to participate in a governing coalition. However, the Gutiérrez-Pachakutik electoral alliance never became an effective governing alliance. From the outset, it was riddled by internal conflicts that ultimately led to Pachakutik's departure in August 2003, barely seven months after Gutiérrez's inauguration.

Why did this alliance go sour so quickly? Clearly, Gutiérrez and indigenous political leaders had very different assumptions about how power would be shared. Before his election, Gutiérrez and PSP leadership held regular meetings with indigenous leaders from Pachakutik, CONAIE, FEINE and FENOCIN to discuss future public policy. After leading the first round of voting with massive indigenous support, Gutiérrez reduced these meet-



ings to a minimum and assumed that occasional communication with Pachakutik representatives was sufficient. He concentrated on establishing links with business elites and the political right in an effort to gain their support in the run-off election and win the trust of international investors and the IMF. After his final victory, Pachakutik leaders publicly reminded Gutiérrez to incorporate them in his plans. As part of their project for indigenous co-government, they insisted on several ministries for Pachakutik, and the negotiations that followed resulted in three ministries and several intermediate positions in the state bureaucracy for the movement. As far as Gutiérrez was concerned, these positions settled the score with Pachakutik. In return, he expected complete loyalty at the executive and congressional levels.

Indigenous leaders, however, saw the sharing of administrative positions as only the beginning of joint decision-making and a shared policy platform. Gutiérrez and his advisors in the PSP never fulfilled these expectations. As a consequence, Indians were placed in the position of being simultaneously in government and the opposition. Differences among indigenous activists surfaced, with more moderate leaders wanting to give the Gutiérrez presidency some time to allow Pachakutik leaders to carry out their mandate in office. Others began to react negatively to what they considered Gutiérrez's undemocratic and unconditioned negotiations with the IMF and his continued approaches to the right-wing Partido Social Cristiano (PSC), a long-time nemesis of the indigenous movement. At the executive level, Gutiérrez's agreement to allow PSC Mayor Jaime Nebot to municipalize social security in the port city of Guayaquil was the last straw for

indigenous leaders. The president himself lost patience in Congress, where Pachakutik voted against the public labor bill necessary for IMF disbursement of funds. On August 6, 2003, he declared the alliance broken.

What caused the alliance to fail? For most experts on Ecuadorian politics, the question is rather, how could it not fail? The alliance was extremely vulnerable from the beginning. Gutiérrez faced the challenge of straddling those forces that support neoliberal reforms, open markets and privatization, and those that vehemently oppose these initiatives, in what is becoming an increasingly polarized society. The conflict is compounded by the fact that the opposition is regionalized and racialized: The PSC's stronghold is in the racially mixed Ecuadorian coast, while Pachakutik's support lies in the indigenous highlands and certain lowland areas.

On a deeper level, the breakdown illustrates the problems that have plagued the politics of indigenous mestizo-alliances and indigenous representation in Ecuador. Gutiérrez gained power because of indigenous backing, and his ability to sustain it has also been conditioned, in part, on that support. However, he refused to share power equally with the indigenous movement, and was unwilling to recognize that co-governing included the social movement organizations and not solely the individuals from Pachakutik selected to join his cabinet. Moreover, he would not recognize the dual dimension of indigenous power or learn to work with it. He demanded to know how Indians could be both in the government and in the opposition, and used this apparent contradiction as the basis to ask for their departure.

The indigenous position, in contrast, is illustrated by Salvador

Quishpe's punishment. In siding with the mestizo PSP and the mestizo president who had betrayed the movement, he was voting not only against Pachakutik but also against CONAIE, FENOCIN, FEINE and multiple provincial and local activists. From the perspective of his punishers, in making an individual choice that departed from the collective Quishpe was simultaneously denying its legitimacy and opting for the mestizo political path of "each for his own." His act called up memories of an era in which Indians could not express their own voices, but were represented by non-indigenous liberal thinkers—the "ventriloquists," as Andrés Guerrero has called them. It also alluded to a more recent period of leftist paternalism and unequal power sharing, reproducing the political subordination that indigenous activists had struggled so hard to escape. Punishing Quishpe was a reminder to all that Indians as a political collective must be represented by Indians who uphold that ideal or else be prepared to face the consequences.

In Ecuador, where indigenous identity is deeply politicized, political actions have become markers of race. Quishpe's denial of the collective constituted as much a betrayal as if he had cut off his braid and worn mestizo clothing. The use of a traditional punishment was a reminder to him and to all Ecuadorians not only of his Indianess, but also of the importance of indigenous political ideals at a time when the real and the ideal could not be further apart.

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# People in the Streets

by Carolyn Sattin

**O**n December 19-20, 2001, the Argentine public unleashed a new form of civic expression and unexpectedly discovered its potential to effect political change. During this historic 48-hour period, thousands of people spontaneously took to the streets to protest their country's disastrous economic state and forced then-President Fernando de la Rúa to resign.

The display of outrage was the climax of a tense situation that had been building for many years. By early December 2001, Argentina was struggling with severe unemployment, record-breaking levels of poverty, and a government and economic system in ruins. After more than 10 years of what had appeared to be economic stability, Argentina defaulted on more than \$140 billion in loans from the international lending community, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and private investors from all over the world. This massive default caused Argentina's economy to crash and prompted the banks to put an immediate freeze on accounts.

The crisis was especially shocking because, for a long period prior to the crash, Argentina enjoyed highly amicable relations with the same lenders. In fact, throughout the decade of the 1990s, many individuals and institutions in the international economic community viewed Argentina as a model of neoliberal economic development, a prototype frequently recom-

**Pulled out of their homes by the necessity to do something in the midst of the economic and political crisis that was destroying Argentina's cultural and social fabric, neighbors began to share and discuss common problems, debate ideas and listen to each other as they met for the first time in plazas, parks and on street corners.**

mended to underdeveloped nations by the IMF/World Bank.

The centerpiece of Argentina's "success story" was Finance Minister Domingo Cavallo's controversial convertibility program, instituted in 1991 to calm hyperinflation. International economists lauded Cavallo's response to Argentina's economic insecurity, calling convertibility, which pegged the Argentine peso to the US dollar and made these currencies interchangeable in Argentina, a "revolutionary" solution for developing countries. When the crisis exploded, the program's fundamental flaws were revealed.

The Argentine people took to the streets not only to protest De la Rúa's failure to live up to his campaign promises to eliminate corruption in government and reactivate the sluggish economy, but also to express their anger at having been led down a treacherous path for many years by their own politicians, multinational companies and

international financial institutions. A remarkable number of social, political and cultural movements were born out of the extraordinary evenings of December 19 and 20, 2001. Among the most exciting are the neighborhood assemblies and worker-led factory recuperations.

## Local Organizing

Neighborhood assemblies were formed when groups of people, many of whom had lived next door to each other for years as strangers, gathered in central locations in their neighborhoods on the first unforgettable night of protest. Pulled out of their homes by the necessity to do something in the midst of the economic and political crisis that was destroying Argentina's cultural and social fabric, neighbors began to share and discuss common problems, debate ideas and listen to each other as they met for the first time in plazas, parks and on street corners.



## Neighborhood assemblies and factory takeovers in Argentina

This randomly assembled melange of individuals—women, men and children of all ages, backgrounds and experiences—soon realized that together, as an organized whole, they formed a powerful force that could work to reclaim the centrality of the *pueblo argentino* in determining the devastated nation's fate.

The majority of the neighborhood assemblies, concentrated mostly in the capital city, were formed with a commitment to gender equality and horizontality. Without formal leadership positions or designated roles, they have been able to function with surprising efficiency and equity. Since the December 2001 explosion of activism, many people who had never been involved in social or political movements, particularly middle-class women, have been finding their political voice.

Initially, neighborhood assemblies held their meetings at the same outdoor locations where they gathered originally. After several months of braving harsh weather and contending with the noise and commotion of the city streets, many began taking over abandoned buildings and converting them into public meeting places. The Asamblea del Cid Campeador, a large, active assembly in a middle-class residential neighborhood in Buenos Aires, is one example of this trend. In July 2002, the group "recuperated" a deserted bank building. Since then, the space has become a thriving community center where neighbors come to participate in free daily workshops in

yoga, tango and poetry, an after-school tutoring program, and weekly political events, including debates, panels and street festivals. Serving as an essential outlet for both incipient and veteran activists, the neighborhood assemblies provide a welcoming space for free expression and political action.

This widespread surge in involvement is particularly striking given Argentina's history of violence against political activists. The period from 1976-1983, when Argentina was ruled by a brutal military junta that kidnapped, tortured and "disappeared" approximately 30,000 "subversive" citizens, including students, factory workers, union leaders and clergymen, inflicted permanent damage on the psyche of the Argentine people. During this time, citizens were instructed to keep quiet, toe the line and mind their own business, and they sought refuge in the supposed safety of their own homes. Even after democracy was restored in Argentina in 1983, the legacy of the military's scare tactics remained, and broad-based political activism was kept to a minimum until late 2001.

The neighborhood assemblies were immediately integrated into a larger, growing political movement made up primarily of left-wing political parties, student organizations, and powerful unemployed workers' groups known as *piqueteros* for their tactic of forming human roadblocks (*piquetes*). While each group maintains an individual focus, they often come together at marches and rallies or to celebrate

significant events related to their shared goals: establishing a central role for citizens in the overhaul of Argentina's failing political system and destructive neoliberal economic policies, promoting more direct democracy at all levels of government, and expanding the efforts of autonomous citizen groups that work toward the creation of alternative solutions outside of government. On December 19, 2002, to commemorate the first anniversary of the civil uprising, these groups organized thousands of people in an "urban picket" outside of the Central Bank and Stock Exchange in downtown Buenos Aires. Neighborhood *cacerolazos* (banging pots and pans in the streets in protest) followed in the evening. On the next day, more than 40,000 people, including members of human rights organizations, student groups, political parties and neighborhood assemblies, filled the Plaza de Mayo once again. There they held a service to mourn the loss of the 35 *compañeros* killed by police violence during the original mobilization and to celebrate the force of their unprecedented movement.

In the weeks and months leading up to Argentina's highly contested presidential elections, held on April 27, 2003 after more than 15 months under the leadership of interim President Eduardo Duhalde, neighborhood assemblies ran their own campaigns to raise awareness of the various voting options and to encourage people to get involved in shaping their country's future beyond casting an obligatory vote at the ballot box.

When severe economic recession put thousands of factory jobs in jeopardy, workers across Argentina decided they could no longer sit back and watch their livelihood slip away. Rather than stand by passively as factories closed, the machinery was auctioned off and thousands of people were let go without receiving the months of back pay they were owed, workers came together in a few unprecedented cases and decided to “recuperate” the shops where they had been employed.

Although many assemblies initially opposed all of the candidates running, the eventual winner, Néstor Kirchner, has surprised people with his willingness to listen to their demands and work collaboratively with different activist groups to transform their country. With Kirchner now settled in the Casa Rosada, Argentina's presidential mansion, the neighborhood assemblies continue their community-based organizing and are increasing pressure on the new government to enact rapid changes.

Across the country, in the months since the political turmoil abated, both the number and size of the assemblies have significantly decreased, with many participants losing interest or rejecting the co-optation of these supposedly non-partisan spaces by left-wing political parties. Some observers take the lower visibility and smaller numbers as signs of a weakened movement and predict that the assemblies will not be around much longer. Those that remain, however, have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to their fight and hold firmly to their belief that by working for change over time they will achieve their goals for a renewed Argentina.

#### **Recuperating Work Spaces**

The neighborhood assembly movement is just one of many unique forms of activism that has sprung up during this dynamic and complicated moment in Argentine history. Years before the neighborhood assemblies developed, the first seeds of a large-scale movement for change were already being planted in factories across the country. When severe economic recession put thousands of factory jobs in jeopardy, workers across Argentina decided they could no longer sit back and watch their livelihood slip away. Rather than stand by passively as factories closed, the machinery was auctioned off and thousands of people were let go without receiving the months of back pay they were owed, workers came together in a few unprecedented cases and decided to “recuperate” the shops where they had been employed. This consisted of small groups of committed workers occupying factories and restarting production using leftover machinery and materials, paying out of pocket to purchase whatever else they needed.

One of the trailblazers in this growing movement was IMPA, a metallurgical factory in Buenos

Aires that was recuperated and converted into a workers' cooperative in 1998. Zanon, a ceramics factory in the southern region of Patagonia, and Chilavert, a printing press in the province of Buenos Aires, are just a few of the more than 160 factories that have followed suit, in the process preserving more than 10,000 jobs. Each factory has a different story, a unique internal culture, and a particular management style that the workers developed together. In many cases, the employees formed cooperatives and eliminated hierarchical management structure. Everyone earns the same base salary and all major decisions are voted on in regular assembly meetings.

The first series of recuperations paved the way for a national organization of recuperated factories. This organization has been integral to the factories' successes, providing a network through which workers have been able to share their experiences and lessons learned, both positive and negative, throughout the course of this difficult adventure. With the support of the neighborhood assembly movement, left-wing political parties, the independent press and



other community organizations, the recuperated factories have been able to defend their right to genuine work and have expanded production in Argentina's slowly growing economy. In the case of IMPA, which recently celebrated its fifth anniversary under worker control, production has tripled and the payroll has expanded from 50 to 172 workers after a difficult and uncertain beginning.

### Rebuilding Social Cohesion

Under the leadership of President Kirchner, a formerly unknown Peronist governor of the sparsely populated southern province of Santa Cruz, the future is beginning to look brighter for the assemblies, the factories and the nation. In his first six months in office, Kirchner won public support for his efforts to address the widespread corruption afflicting many of Argentina's government agencies and pursue an ambitious social justice campaign against hundreds of military officers responsible for disappearances during Argentina's "Dirty War." As a result of his removal of corrupt Supreme Court justices, untrustworthy police and military chiefs, and his attempts to reopen trials against war criminals, Kirchner's credibility soared. He gave audiences to individuals and organizations from across the political and socioeconomic spectrum, hearing voices that had been ignored by past administrations and recognizing the immediacy of people's needs, particularly those of unemployed workers and the newly impoverished middle class.

Kirchner's approach to improving Argentina's dire economic situation contributed to his broad public support. Polls in fall 2003 showed his approval ratings near 80%, an unprecedented figure in a country that so recently suffered

widespread public disaffection with its historically dubious political system. As a presidential candidate, Kirchner made clear his intention to improve economic conditions by bolstering domestic industry and exports, creating jobs in both the public and private sectors, and expanding regional trade relations, particularly through enhanced MERCOSUR agreements. He shunned former President Carlos Menem's strategy of blindly following IMF recommendations for economic stability, which in this case would have called for the government to increase austerity measures, cut back on social spending, and immediately repay its substantial foreign debts. In fact, with popular Finance Minister Roberto Lavagna by his side, Kirchner successfully negotiated an agreement with the IMF that drastically reduced the fund's demands for compensation to banks and privately owned utilities for losses due to the peso's devaluation. The agreement reduced primary fiscal surplus requirements and established a debt repayment schedule that would not deplete the country's reserves. Kirchner emphasized his refusal to spend the country's limited funds on debt repayment when the money is urgently needed to feed millions of unemployed Argentines.

Countless obstacles remain for Kirchner and his cabinet, who inherited a social, political and economic crisis the likes of which Argentina has never seen. Menem-friendly politicians, who maintain a powerful voice in Congress and in provinces across the country, have attacked Kirchner for demonstrating "left-leaning tendencies" and resisted his efforts to institute reforms to the old system, from which they personally profited. In

addition, while the economy has shown slight signs of recovery, most people have yet to see or feel the improvement, and unemployment persists. The government still needs to negotiate billions in privately held debt, and initial offers have been strongly rebuffed. Finally, in the face of continued police oppression, some of the more radical autonomous activist groups have begun to identify Kirchner as a threat to their movements, as the middle class, more satisfied with Kirchner than with past leaders, is no longer as sympathetic to their situation.

The winds of change are blowing in South America, with Lula in power in Brazil and Chávez holding strong in Venezuela. In Argentina, where citizens are reclaiming the public's centrality in national decision-making, faith in government may slowly be restored.

*Carolyn Sattin is a recent Duke University graduate and freelance writer based in Argentina. She worked closely with the neighborhood assembly movement in Buenos Aires from September 2002-June 2003.*

# Blood in the Marketplace

by Alyx Kellington

Chiapas is what many foreigners might think of when they imagine Mexico. It's the old Mexico; in sharp contrast to the heavily populated capital, with its subway system, chic restaurants, high-rises and shopping malls, or the luxury resorts of once remote ocean villages, Chiapas is timeless. It looks and feels more like Guatemala, with its bright hand-woven textiles, barefoot peasants with shiny black braids, and campesinos riding into town on mules. The quaint colonial churches nestle into ancient cobblestone streets and vibrant purple flowers bloom against the dark silhouettes of the Sierra Madre mountains.

Chiapas is located in the southeast corner of Mexico. It is the eighth largest state in the country, and one of the poorest. The land is rich in oil, electric energy, cattle, coffee and other valuable products, but the wealth is shipped out to the rest of Mexico, the United States, Canada and other foreign destinations. PEMEX, the government-owned gas company, takes the gas and oil and leaves ecological destruction, agricultural waste, hyperinflation, alcoholism, prostitution and poverty. More than three and a half million people live in Chiapas, but most of them do not have potable water. Ninety percent of the rural population has little or no monetary income, and education, not surprisingly, ranks the worst in the country. Poor health and malnutrition go hand-in-hand with poverty and the death rate is lamentably high. The indigenous people of Mayan decent

share the land with mestizos, but the non-Indian elite does not share equally in return. The Chol, Tzotzil, Tzeltal, Zoque and Tojolabal peoples have little to offer but their culture and dignity, and even those are being stripped away—all perfectly good reasons to start a war.

It starts on New Year's Day 1994, the same day that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) goes into effect. Approximately 2000 armed guerrillas calling themselves the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) seize four towns in Chiapas, capturing international media attention. Although the taking of the towns is peaceful, the Mexican army moves in quickly, with the media close behind. I ride the wave of excitement, caught in the swirling tide of rumor versus fact.

On January 4, I join a convoy of seven vehicles and begin the treacherous drive to the town of Ocosingo, where some of the worst fighting has occurred. Along the winding mountain roads we encounter roadblocks of massive pine trees, hastily chopped and placed in our path. Everyone scrambles to lift, push, pull and chainsaw the blockades. What usually is a two-hour drive stretches into seven and some of the correspondents turn back. I stay with the dwindling group, each carload tense and quiet. A thick silence blankets the terrain. The countryside is normally alive with music, animals, conversation and traffic, but today there is nothing. Not a sound. Even the birds seem to have fled the region. The roar of

our engines vibrates against the pavement, making an unsettling noise. Fearful of sniper fire, many of us slip on bulletproof vests and huddle in our seats.

Entering the region in our visibly marked press cars bearing white flags, we encounter people cautiously emerging from their houses after two days of hiding. They venture out fearfully, curiosity and hope turning to jubilation as they cheer our progress into town. We have liberated them from the unknown and a deafening silence.

Along the way, doors fly open and tearful, frightened people point, jabbing the air, whispering, "*El mercado. Vayan al mercado.*" The open-air market, a corrugated roof covering its meager structure, appears to be the main battleground. Between the colorful stalls of lettuce, eggplant, chilies and squash, pools of blood and bits of flesh litter the concrete floor. A man dressed in a blue plaid shirt lies face down; he seems to be a civilian who was caught in the crossfire. I move quickly through the space, stepping over piles of goods pushed hurriedly into the aisles to form a blockade or shield. A clean-shaven man lies with eyes wide open, his peaceful face a stark contrast to his bullet-riddled body. Another man sprawls on sacks of cornmeal, his blood mixing into the powder, forming reddish clumps of dough. Three men together seem to have been shot in the back as they fled; they died with twisted faces and clenched hands, one reaching out to some unseen object. Another body, blown beyond recognition from the force of the ammu-



## *A photojournalist's account of the Chiapas uprising*

nition, lies in pieces near the meat counter. I cannot think about what I am seeing—not right now, anyway. I am thinking about composition, reporting the facts, shooting at 1/500 of a second, do I need a fill-flash, reducing the violent environment to a 35-millimeter viewfinder on my camera and trying not to get blood on my shoes. There is no sound in the marketplace, only fear thumping loudly in my brain.

I move to a passageway with no roof, squinting in the sunlight. The uneven pavement is wet, perhaps from workers spraying down the fruits and vegetables. A wooden crate is torn apart from bullet holes and a lone pineapple has tumbled next to a pool of blood. Propped against the crate is a handmade wooden rifle. It's a toy! These rebels did not even have real guns, and certainly no ammunition. My throat tightens. Next to the toy gun are dozens of spent shells, which came from very real weapons.

The afternoon sun glints off the bloodied water on the pavement. The light shimmers and the reflections dance into a dark corner. My eyes follow and I stand frozen for what seems like hours, staring but not seeing, knowing but not understanding. Five men lie face down on the pavement, bodies beaten, hands tied crudely behind their backs. Each has been shot with a bullet to the head. They look to be in their mid 20s, all Indians. Mud has dried to a light color on their clothes. One of the men is missing a boot; where did it go? Next to him is a man with mismatched blue socks but no shoes. I notice his

socks have holes in them. The other three victims are barefoot. Who took their shoes? I stay, looking at their feet. They seem to be the safest things to look at. I glance down at my own feet and see the blood covering the floor; I carry the thick red liquid on my boots. I pick up a bullet and instinctively put it in my pocket. I photograph the bodies from every angle and leave the area.

Eleven men were killed in the market that day. I carry their blood in my footprints.

*Alyx Kellington, currently living in Palm Beach County, has been traveling the world since 1981. As a photojournalist, she has traveled to more than 25 countries to explore and document different cultures. Her photos are published widely in newspapers, magazines and educational books. She is a frequent public speaker at high schools and universities across the country, offering visual presentations on topics covering her photo career. More of her work can be seen at [www.alyxkellington.com](http://www.alyxkellington.com).*



*The Mexican army responds to the peasant uprising with thousands of well-armed and trained soldiers.*



*For decades, a combination of government and private interests has taken land away from the campesinos, leaving them with no place to live or raise their crops.*





*Children in Chiapas rarely attend school past second grade. Here, two boys play in an abandoned car at a refugee camp.*



*Members of the EZLN, these musicians celebrate Good Friday with traditional instruments and songs. The close-knit communities in Chiapas are rich in culture and tradition.*





*Men and women of the EZLN guard their village in the Lacondon forest.*



*Mothers, daughters and sisters by day, some indigenous women in Chiapas become Zapatista guerrillas by night.*





*The Zapatistas encourage indigenous women to join the fighting. A female lieutenant leads this formation of women fighters.*

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Photo Essay: Chiapas



*Just days after it bombed the countryside and shot civilians, the Mexican army is called in to provide basic health care to the indigenous communities.*



# Carving Their Niche

by Lynn Stephen

***Crafting Tradition: The Making and Marketing of Oaxacan Wood Carvings***

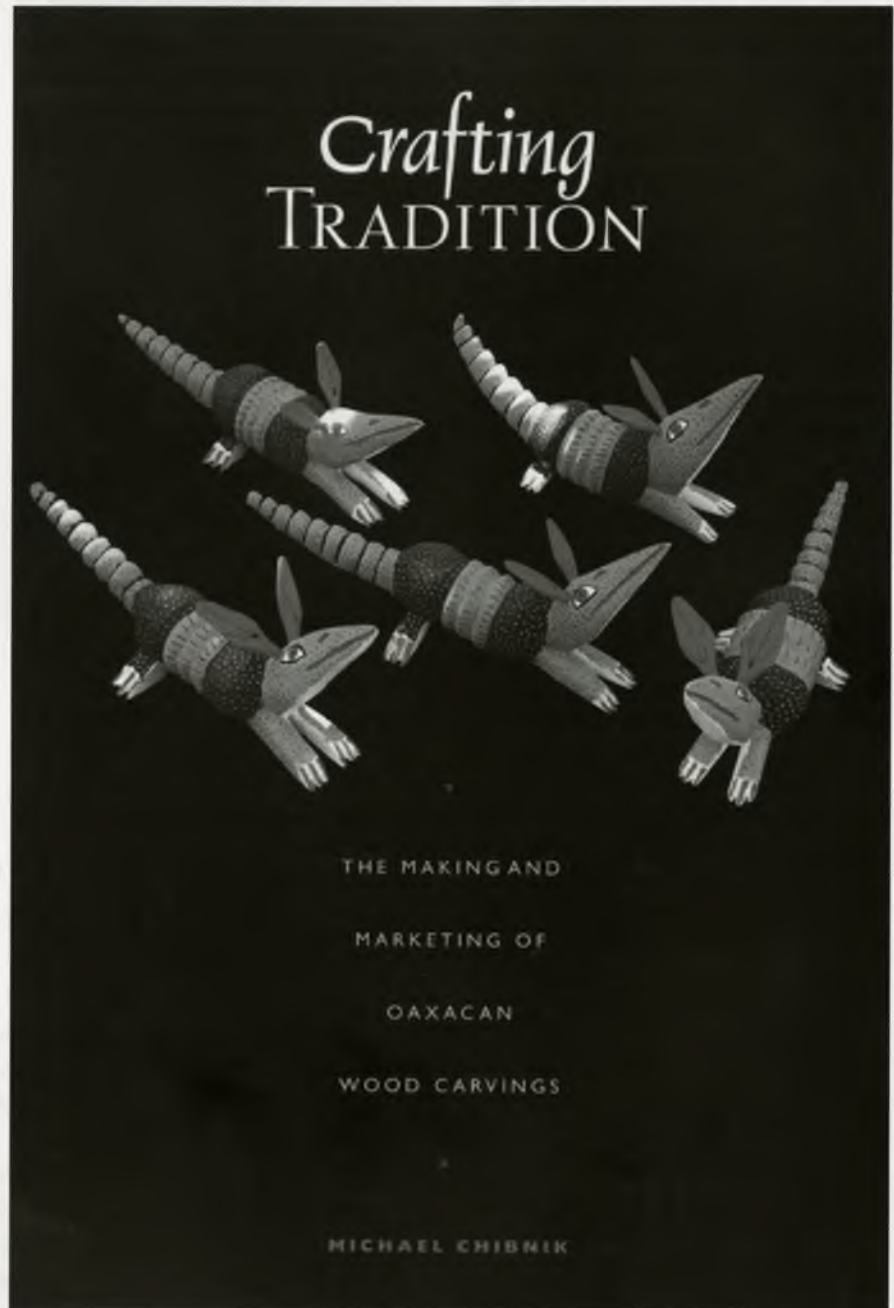
By Michael Chibnik

Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003, 266 pages.

\$50.00 hardcover; \$22.95 paperback.

The brightly painted woodcarvings called *alebrijes* have become the quintessential form of "folk art" associated with the southern Mexican state of Oaxaca. *Crafting Tradition: The Making of Oaxacan Wood Carvings* provides an intimate and detailed look at how this invented tradition emerged to be a major icon representing the authenticity of Oaxaca and how it transformed the lives of individual woodcarvers and painters in the process of becoming a globalized commodity. Michael Chibnik, an economic anthropologist, has produced an ethnography that will delight economic anthropologists with a penchant for detail as well as others who are curious about the history of the woodcarving boom, its system of production, marketing, and consumption, and readers interested in the stories of the woodcarvers and painters and their families.

Chibnik originally set out to determine whether the woodcarving trade could provide a model for successful small-scale development in rural areas via craft specialization and export. He concludes, however, that the particular set of circumstances that created a boom in woodcarving sales in Oaxaca—the low cost of materials, a demand for



high-end pieces, a marketplace that encourages experimentation and specialization, and a strategic devaluation of the peso in 1994—might not be easily duplicated elsewhere. He also points to the double-edged reality of the vertical integration of commodity chains such as the alebrijes. Woodcarvers and painters may have lost their autonomy through immersion in the global economy, but in the process many have improved their standard of living.

Chibnik finds that unlike the results of craft commercialization elsewhere in the world and in Oaxaca, the globalization of woodcarvings has not resulted in highly stratified communities with a merchant class and a piece work or laboring class. He embraces a mixture of economic ideas in predicting why some family woodcarving workshops are more successful than others: the importance of the household life cycle; location, interpersonal skills and individual artistic talent; and the ways that particular communities have been inserted at particular times into the global economy. The woodcarving economies Chibnik studied did not break into the kind of class structure proposed by Lenin, with entrepreneurs running large factory-like workshops. Instead, with the exception of a few larger workshops opened temporarily in the mid 1990s with 20-35 workers, most woodcarving production is done in family settings.

Chibnik emphasizes the importance of the entire household in the production process. While many alebrijes are now signed and understood by consumers to be the work of one particular artist, in fact, two or three people carve, sand and paint most woodcarvings. Some family workshops that specialize in lower-priced carvings buy unpaint-

ed carvings from other households or communities and finish them. Chibnik points out that while most high-end pieces are attributed to individual male artists, women are responsible for much of the painted decoration that gives the alebrijes their "whimsical, magical quality" (words often used in advertisements for the carvings). The men, women and children of producing towns such as Arrazola, La Unión Tejalapan and San Martín Tilcajete understand their work to be a collective enterprise involving a team of people.

In line with the author's consistent attempts to make visible and credit all of those involved in the production of the alebrijes, *Crafting Tradition* is distinguished by its efforts to focus on specific individuals with their own stories, talents and specializations. Chibnik devotes a whole chapter to the impact that another book on woodcarvings had on artisans and their families. *Oaxacan Wood Carving: The Magic in the Trees*, by Shephard Barbash with photos by Vicki Ragan, was influential in publicizing particular artisans and types of alebrijes. Perhaps in reaction to this earlier book, *Crafting Tradition* is replete with portraits (both textual and pictorial) of artisans and their work. The complaints Chibnik heard about individuals Barbash left out seem to have hit home, as he includes a wide range of people (most with their real names) in his book. This reader appreciated his effort, but at a certain point the show and tell by example model of writing seemed to be overused. Almost every chapter relies on the paraphrased stories of different families and artisans to illustrate such topics as how woodcarvings are made; varying economic strategies mixing woodcarving with migration, wage work and

subsistence farming; specializations in different types of carvings; and varying strategies for economic success. It would be interesting for readers to hear more directly from the artisans themselves in their own words instead of having their experiences and thoughts paraphrased. The inclusion of many different unique stories does, however, provide readers with a valuable understanding of the wide range of family workshops, communities and even individuals influencing everything from the kinds of products people make to their marketing strategies. The book also contains many black and white photographs of the artists and their work, as well as a beautiful color photo section by photographer Fidel Ugarte.

In discussing the multi-stranded economic strategies of woodcarving families, Chibnik makes it clear that for many producers, woodcarving is neither the only nor, in many cases, the most important source of income. Many of the consumer goods and housing improvements in woodcarving communities are as likely to come from migrant remittances as they are from woodcarving sales. The movement of people has been as important as the movement of capital and culture in the integration of the United States and Mexico, and a significant number of male woodcarvers have migrated north of the border or to other parts of their own country. Chibnik emphasizes the importance of migration in his analysis of household and local economies, but this dimension is not consistently integrated with his overall discussion of the ways in which woodcarving communities are and have been inserted historically into the global economy. It is possible, of course, that the woodcarving towns may have levels of migration similar to elsewhere in the Oaxaca valley



and the relationship to woodcarving may not be particularly significant.

Heeding calls for multi-sited ethnography in the age of globalization, Chibnik also explores the "social life of things" by tracing the routes that alebrijes take from their production in southern Oaxaca, to their purchase and redistribution through wholesalers in gift shows, to retail stores, and to e-Bay auctions on the Internet. In this way, he makes a solid case for how global demand for imagined exotic and traditional indigenous crafts connects producers and consumers in economic and cultural flows. Chibnik was able to get a former major importer to share his records over several years in the 1990s, allowing a detailed look at the volume, price turn-around, profits and

risks involved in importing Oaxacan wood carvings. A woodcarving that sells for \$5 in Oaxaca may be shipped to the United States, sold at a gift show to a retail store for about \$15, and purchased by a US consumer for \$35.

In line with his efforts to trace the economic and social life of the alebrijes, Chibnik devotes a chapter to their marketing in brochures, books and on the Internet, where he finds delightful examples of sites that imply that the carvings are part of ancient indigenous (often Zapotec) craft traditions in Oaxaca. The woodcarvings are a prime example of invented and re-invented traditions. Chibnik concludes that intercultural miscommunication is perhaps as responsible for the success of the alebrijes in the US market as their originality and

artistic merit. But rather than condemn globalization in and of itself, he highlights the inventiveness of the woodcarving artisans, who he is sure will come up with another "traditional" craft if the woodcarving market goes under. Oaxaca's artists and artisans have a long history of producing for global markets and will no doubt continue to do so long into the future. Chibnik's book is an engaging, detailed and delightfully illustrated document of this process.

*Lynn Stephen is distinguished professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Oregon.*

## NEW IN FALL 2004

### FIU Report on "Terrorism Preparedness in Florida"

Dr. Michael W. Collier, Lead Investigator

This two-year field research project by Florida International University's Latin American and Caribbean Center and Institute for the Study of Transnational Crime and Terrorism investigates the readiness of Florida's first responders to handle a terrorist attack. Included are an assessment of the security posture of Florida's critical infrastructure and a statewide telephone poll of Florida citizens about terrorism preparedness issues.

While Florida is often seen as a national leader in emergency readiness programs and is better prepared than before the 9/11 disasters, the state is far from ready to respond to future attacks. The citizens surveyed for this project strongly supported terrorism preparedness programs, indicating they would give up more civil liberties and pay higher taxes to ensure the safety of their families.

To order an advance copy, call the Latin American and Caribbean Center at Florida International University, (305) 348-2894, or email Michael Collier at: [collierm@fiu.edu](mailto:collierm@fiu.edu).

# Indigenous Politics

by Marian Goslinga

Providing access to social integration, political rights and economic development to minority communities is one of the most important tasks of modern states, but also one of their greatest challenges. Latin American and Caribbean countries with large indigenous populations face special difficulties in this area. The Andean nations (Peru, Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela), as well as Mexico and Central America, have struggled to reconcile the rights and needs of their indigenous peoples with the demands of unified national societies. When these needs clash, they can erupt in conflict, as in the case of the Zapatistas in Chiapas, or place political pressures on existing governments, as has occurred in Ecuador and Bolivia. The bibliography below lists some recent publications dealing with the dynamics of indigenous political and social forces in Latin American societies today. Environmental concerns, education and political representation are just a few of the topics touched upon in this sampling.

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