Presentation

Sabed que la más principal y derecha intención con que Nos movemos a enviar, y enviamos, nuestras gentes a descubrir y pacificar y poblar esas tierras es para que los indios y gentes de ellas sean convertidos en nuestra santa fe católica. Y para ello conviene que se hagan entre ellos pueblos de cristianos para que con la conversación y comunicación, especialmente en la administración de los divinos oficios en las iglesias y monasterios, ellos vengan en conocimientos de nuestra santa fe católica […]. Convenía que los pueblos de los cristianos se hicieren y asentasen entre los indios en los lugares y partes más convenientes, y tuviesen con ellos más conversación y trato, y se pudiesen hacer granjerías y criar ganados y otras cosas necesarias a la conservación de los dichos pueblos.

—*Real Cedula* to the governor of *Tierra Firme* (Toledo, 19 May 1525)[1]

Durante años el 'Camino a Delhi' ha parecido una opción bastante atractiva para jovencitas que buscan escapar de la pobreza, el hambre y los sueños destrozados de tener un dulce hogar.

Inicialmente las monjas católicas organizaron alojamiento para las jóvenes, hostales donde podían residir hasta que fueran ubicadas y centros de capacitación y formación.

La abrumadora mayoría de las empleadas domésticas de Delhi son mujeres tribales (indígenas) que pertenecen a las comunidades oraon, caria y munda.

–Samar Bosu Mullick[2]

[1] In Francisco de Solano, *Normas y leyes de la ciudad hispanoamericana,* Madrid, CSIC, 1996, 86.

[2] "Mujeres tribales en servicio doméstico en Delhi-Indias", *Asuntos indígenas*, Copenhagen, nos. 3-4, 2002, 17-18.

Indians trapped, dazzled by the bright lights of the city. A most ancient and diverse reality, but one imbued as well with constants and interweavings that are repeated through time, as the two passages in the proem above reflect, in both their differences and their central motivation. Quite intentionally, the quotations are five centuries apart in time, separated by oceans and continents. In the end, they demonstrate, perhaps cynically, perhaps not, that the road to Hell is indeed paved with good intentions; though here it may be better to speak of "Hells", for the articles in this issue of *Relaciones* speak of the efforts –competition?– of several churches and civil authorities to support indigenous peoples in cities in northern Mexico today.

Of course, the attraction and exploitation that the city exercises on the indigenous world did not appear in 1492. We could, if we broadened our perspective and imbued terms with their literal meanings, go back as far as 7,000 or 8,000 years, when the Neolithic Revolution, aside from deteriorating mankind's diet, enabled the accumulation of production surpluses and propitiated "the desire for the city", as Ítalo Calvino would say. Thus began the exploitation of peasants or Indians (tribes, as people in India now say) by urbanites, and thus were born two cultures, one enlightened, the other bleak –according to the dominant ideologies, urban ones– over the course of two millennia, with varying degrees of contrast. Differences were accentuated in imperial times, for imperialistic rule must irradiate from bedazzling cities and requires native peoples whence it extracts the blood to irrigate the entire system. So it was in Rome, and again in the epoch of the Catholic Monarchy and beyond: a model that did not become obsolete in 1821.

But 1492 and the waves of imperialism that followed, Hispanic, Portuguese, French or English, brought something new, something underlined in a *Real Cédula* of Charles V: the Indian is no longer just a peasant –that is, rustic, perhaps beaten– but also the Other. This increased distance (suspicion) and intensified exploitation, while endowing the dominant system with greater legitimacy, tinged definitively with a civilizing dye (note the root *civis*). A text sent to the governor of the realm by the Spanish Council of Santiago de Chile in 1552 conveys this through its naïveté and clarity:

> El cual dicho tianguez estuvo y se puso en la plaza mayor, y en ello se servía a Dios, y a S.M. y a usía, e era en gran pro de los naturales por las razones que diré. Lo primero que estando como está la santa iglesia en la plaza, los naturales que están en el tianguez, ven administrar los divinos oficios, y es parte para que ellos y todos los demás indios vengan mas presto, vengan con el conocimiento de nuestra santa fee. […]. Lo otro sírvase Dios y S.M. que los naturales tengan libertad para que contraten unos con otros, y excusase que los dichos naturales no vayan a las tiendas de los mercaderes, adonde les llevan doblado de lo que vale. Y lo otro, es público y notario que la cuarta parte del oro que se saca de las minas, hurtan los indios, y como está en poder de ellos, es mejor que torne a volver a poder de los españoles; y S. M. en ello recibe provecho, porque se le acrecientan cada un año cantidad de veinte mil pesos de quintos. […]. Lo otro, cualquier secreto que en la tierra hai, ansi de alzamiento de naturales como de minas de plata y oro, se descubre, a causa de la comunicación que los españoles tienen con los naturales.[3]

Here we find every motivation, political, economic, social and, above all, cultural and religious; a complete multidisciplinary project. Note the early date: the chaining of the Indians to the urban beacon… a punishment handed down from distant times, taken up almost spontaneously by the city of Santiago in that moment of gestation; like an inverted myth of Prometheus. But there is no suggestion of absolute promiscuity here: Indians may co-exist with Spaniards in the market and in domestic service, but not at night: early *apartheid*. Winners ensconced in the center, Indians in the outlying slums.[4] And when it is discovered that the scheme has been perverted, that the Indian has infiltrated the center, it is too late; witness the riots in Mexico City on June 8 1692.

One must always distrust revolutions, and the Industrial turned out no better than the Neolithic for the diet and for the Indigenous, be they Irish, English or European farmers in general, separated from their fields, attracted as a lumpenproletariat to the large cities.[5] This

[3] *Primer libro de Actas del cabildo de Santiago, de 1541-1557,* Santiago, 1861, 307-308.

[4] See Felipe Castro, coord., *Los indios y las ciudades de Nueva España*, Mexico, UNAM, 2010.

[5] For a parallel, that transpired in Spanish America, see the article by Juan Carlos

combined with an intermediate (parallel) moment, that of proto-industrialization; *i.e.*, the establishment of industry –primarily– in the countryside: we refer the reader to the article by Carlos Riojas in the *General Section*. The city of lights was a well for these laborers, literally, since so many lived in veritable caves bereft of hygiene. This for the 19th century and the Old Continent; in the New Worlds there was a waiting period: "the century of the hacienda" that interposed its gargantuan figure between peasant and city. The Indigenous maintained a relationship with the city, but only an organic one, bustling in with all that which was vital for the latter's existence: indispensable, surely, but less coercively than in colonial times. [6]

Curiously, the attraction of the exotic and the narratives of numerous travelers bring about an odd phenomenon: Old World cities need to put greater distance between themselves and their natives, who are now settling in central neighborhoods where they construct an intruder modeled on the American Other. In *Le Père Goriot* (1835), Vautrin depicts the young Rastignac: "Paris, voyez-vous, est comme une forêt du Nouveau-Monde, où s'agitent vingt espèces de peuplades sauvages, les Illinois, les Hurons, qui vivent du produit que donnent les différentes chasses sociales".[7] Alejandro Dumas' longest book (14 tomes!) is entitled *Les Mohicans de Paris* (1854).[8] This put an end to the multi-secular, European indigenist episode, for the cataclysmic dimensions of World War I washed everything away.

But the urban-Indigenous relationship took other paths in the New Worlds –including Africa and Asia– first with the sanitary revolution and the accompanying industrialization of the 1920s; later with decolonization (Africa, Asia); and, finally, with the broadening of rural-urban migratory movements. Megalopolises are born, a

Cortés Máximo.

[6] Andrés Lira, *Comunidades indígenas frente a la ciudad de México: Tenochtitlán y Tlatelolco, sus pueblos y barrios, 1812-1919,* Mexico, El Colegio de México, 1983. The best testimony is that of Manuel Payno and his *Bandidos de Río Frío*; see, especially, chapter XI, Part Two, "Los almacenes de fruta".

[7] *Scènes de la vie parisienne. Le Père Goriot*, Paris, 1856, p. 27.

[8] On this topic see: Dominique Kalifa, *Crimen y cultura de masas en Francia, siglos XIX-XX*, Mexico, Instituto Mora, 2008, especially, "Arqueología del 'apachismo': barbaros y pieles rojas en el siglo XIX", p. 37-52.

middle class emerges, one desirous of emulating the elites; that is, having its own servants taken from the grand reservoir of humanity that is the rural world. This tends to feminize these migrations and accentuate the imbalance between city and countryside: who will the 50,000 "tribal women" living in Delhi today marry, and how to resolve the shortage of women in Jharkand? What is the Aymara woman thinking as she gazes with interest on the fresco of indigenous miners (see the cover)? They pertain to another indigenous world, mining and urban, harsh, rooted in colonialism, but consolidated in the 20th century: is there communication between these two universes, or is it but fleeting, through the woman's gaze?

The Indigenous (and, in a sense, the peasants) may have disappeared from Europe in the course of the 19th and 20th centuries, but what is occurring in other worlds? Attempts, some political others folkloric (sometimes both…) to reinforce or support them: neo-Indigenous movements intent on finding solutions, or at least answers, often seriously, at times mired in fantasy.[9] One thing to avoid at all costs is "philanthropy, local or national", as Marco Vinicio Morales Muñoz writes in this issue. With regards to "intermediations", they are the Trojan Horse of other actors (mestizos…).

But there is one ineluctable reality: the shadow of the city extends ever further over them. According to a report to the United Nations, today most of the Indigenous in Australia, Canada, Chile, the U.S., Norway, Kenya and New Zealand live in urban areas.[10] And this phenomenon continues to spread, of course. In 1993, the urban Indigenous population of Colombia was 11.3%; in 2005 it reached 21.4%. This evolution is not due solely to the song of the urban sirens (I was about to write: citizens), for in the same period the total indigenous population multiplied 2.6-fold, not all of whom could remain on their lands; especially when we consider that the agitated

[9] On the complexity of these phenomena, their diversity between the Andes and Mexico, in direct relation to urbanism, see Jacques Galinier and Antoinette Molinié, *Les néo-indiens. Une religion du III millénaire*, Paris, Odile Jacob, 2006. Of course, these should not be confused with the pro-indigenous groups present in these articles.

[10] Rodolfo Stavenhagen, *Los pueblos indígenas y sus derechos*, Mexico, UNESCO, 2002-2007, 146.

political context led to their despoiling.[11] This became generalized through the 20th century in the many countries with indigenous populations. Colombian censuses show as well that the vast majority of the indigenous urban population lives in the nation's main cities; a finding seemingly not refuted by the Mexican case, and one underscored in the studies published here on the capital cities of individual states (Chihuahua, Monterrey, San Luis Potosí). But a word of caution: these shifts may be only temporary, performed in stages, until the city that offers the best options is reached (see the essay by Diana Patricia García Tello). For instance, the residential installations available in the city of Monterrey are essential and foment a certain type of "territorialization" through the introduction of vegetation characteristic of the region, or necessary for their practices.

But the question then becomes if, etymologically speaking, the Indigenous are the original inhabitants of the country but move to reside in the cosmopolitan city, that temple of individualism, for how long do they continue to be Indians? True, communitarianism when displaced from its habitual horizons (fields, sierras) may last for a time; but in Chihuahua the "Oasis of the Indians" soon became simply "the "Oasis". But perhaps this is a question more philosophical than realistic. Day-to-day reality is right here, in this collection of articles coordinated by Séverine Durin. There is no better approach, within a circumscribed temporality and space –contemporaneity, northern Mexico– based on fieldwork and direct sources that integrates iconographic documents into the demonstration. After a broad historical review, it becomes possible to posit today's problems, though perhaps not tomorrow's solutions, despite the fact that this is to what every social scientist aspires. The "grassroots" approach with its "microdata", or individual cases, allows us to mitigate the desperation born of the macroscopic perspective.

If one thinks that it is through institutions, as communitarian expression, resting upon the weight of tradition –though manipulated to a greater or lesser degree by external authorities– that it be-

[11] See http://www.observatorioetnicocecoin.org.co/index.php. It is true that the growth in such a short time is problematic. These are the figures that appear….

comes possible to form a new, urban indigenous community, the example of the Oasis in Chihuahua is rather ambiguous. Without doubt it demonstrates a certain permanence and stability, but underneath it manifests nepotism, disorder, impotence. Perhaps it was the same in the sierra, but there all things may have other meanings and weights, in a totally different context. These articles suggest that it would be convenient to cross-index the incompatibilities, adjustments and continuities between life in the sierra (or towns) and urban everydayness; and this in relation to the living conditions: for an isolated young woman employed in domestic service in the house of a member of the elite (Séverine Durin) does not have the same capacity for cultural survival as the construction worker or family that toils on a cruise ship but continues to live in community, despite the fact that the latter's material conditions may be more limited. Specifically, preservation of the family context may be a key element (Mónica Lizbeth Chávez González): of course this is universal, but even more essential for groups that are vulnerable and segregated –displaced– like urban Indians.

When they congregate, urban Indians can recreate places with identity, a tapestry of material, political or cultural co-existence (García Tello). But this does not obviate the question: does greater visibility entail greater discrimination? Perhaps, though this has yet to be demonstrated conclusively. The case of "live-in domestic servants", spread among the residences of the affluent in Monterrey, invisible behind theirs facades, but strongly discriminated against, presents the reverse situation (Durin). Segregation nurtures difference, among the employers there emerges a kind of siege mentality that leads to attempts at social "blindage": Rome besieged once again by barbarians?

Some such bitter vetch must have been tasted time and time again in the port of Huatulco, a place besieged, sacked and burned, its cross profaned, by barbarian heretics after 1579 when, thanks to Francis Drake and, later, Thomas Cavendish, the Pacific ceased to be a Spanish lake. The history recounted in the documents presented by Nahui Ollin Vázquez Mendoza also has a strong medieval flavor: how many communities fled from the fearsome Normans in the 10th century, carrying their relics into the interior? Each passing year

found the folk of Huatulco further inland, but still the barbarians pursued them, to the very heart of the continent. Once the port was devastated, Huatulco became a nomad town, martyrized like its church. This case leads us back to the question that constitutes one of the black threads of this issue of *Relaciones*: amidst such vicissitudes, "did a resignification of being *huatulqueño* occur"? Returning to the present, the answer is a resounding 'yes'. Vázquez, himself a *huatulqueño*, writes the history of his community, but from Mexico City… Though scanty, the data he provides on the practice of dyeing thread using the secretions of a marine snail on the coast of Oaxaca are of great interest; for this activity is still current: nothing less than the famous *murex*, producer of royal purple, an item coveted as well by the *Commision scientifique du Mexique* (see below).

Though Manuel Miño Grijalva examines textile workers (*obrajeros*) in Mexico City and Puebla in 1597, they existed as well in other latitudes with the hundreds of thousands of yards of common textiles they produced each year. This text has a double focus: economic history is more obvious, but one can also discern in this section of notes and debates a second interest: that of the difficulty –and hence fragility– of using concrete statistical data from an old, clearly prestatistical epoch; for the sums in the tables elaborated in 1597 are, generally speaking, erroneous. I remit the reader to the *Appendix*: for Puebla, adding up all the errors gives us a margin of error of 7.9% due to the scribe. To this first estimate, we must add all the deficiencies in the information and dissimulations of the time. This latter point emerges from the list of the production (in *reales*) of *18nos* cloths in Mexico. There, all the figures are rounded off to even thousands (no odd thousands appear); moreover, the 32 cases are represented by only 11 different values. The one most often repeated is 18,000 (8 occasions), followed by 24,000 and 30,000 (5 occasions each): apparently (?) a little below the *media real* –26,156– or right around it. This does not mean that data of this nature are of little value, but does raise a warning to those who would torture us with excessive sophistication.

As mentioned above, proto-industrialization reinforced the peasant/indigenous-countryside-city triangle. Here, I confess that one of

the articles that has most greatly impressed me during my academic career is Franklin Mendels' "Des industries rurales à la proto-industrialisation: historique d'un changement de perspective",[12] where the author responds to a series of heated criticisms that followed more than 10 years of discussions on the basis of a plethora of quotations and impressive names: among which Henri Pirenne, Fernand Braudel and Ernest Labrousse were by no means the lesser lights. For this reason, Mendels limited his analysis to the European theater –more precisely, the English-French milieu– to construct his convincing argument. The essay by Carlos Riojas arrives almost 30 years later, with all the propositions that might be expected concerning this still-burning question in the workshops of history. Here, referring to the decade of 1980, I would mark two points: first, the need for greater caution (modesty?), since the model must be used "with restraint"; and, second, associated with the first, the audacity (broadening of knowledge) of stretching the phenomenon from the Japan of the Tokuwaga era to Minas Gerais, passing through the 18th-century *Bajío*, of course. This is undoubtedly an enriching perspective and an important article that lends itself to discussion. Specifically, I see two points for debate, among others: we know that by at least the 17th century true manufacturing was taking place on haciendas in the Andes, though this was an exception: how does family production in the countryside destined for the local market or self-consumption come to be transformed into a form that opens to the exterior? Europe had the figure of the dealer (*tratante*), but did such a personage exist in Spanish America in such early times? The inrush of cheap English textiles into the Spanish Monarchy's possessions in the late 18th century brought the ruin of the urban and rural textile industry there and, hence, of proto-industrialization as well. In addition, it long compromised the emergence of the Industrial Revolution in those countries: or is this vision oversimplifying?

There is clear continuity with Juan Carlos Cortés Máximo's text on disamortization in Michoacán. In England in the second half of the 18th century, the "agricultural" revolution and the "enclosure"

[12] *Annales*, no. 5, 1984, 977-1008.

movement constituted the necessary conditions for industrial *take off*. Can we expect something similar in Michoacán –and Spanish America more generally– a century later? We agree in general that the contexts are quite different: if communal lands existed in Europe, they never held the importance they achieved in America. Outside Russia, no remotely similar peasant communities were established. Moreover, by the 17th century, originally in Holland, an agricultural revolution was looming in Europe, though it would not reach the Spanish American world –at least in its productive dimension– until well into the 19th century. In other words, the resistance of communities in Spanish American was based on tangible realities. Since the attitude of New World elites leaned more towards ideology than planned, concrete actions –improving the productivity of land, for example– it was timorous at best: in Michoacán the law was applied only to the "remnants of community" (*sobrantes de comunidad*). Those elites, moreover, held to the colonial cultural mold by distinguishing between "people of reason" (*gente de razón*) and Indians and, in this latter group (the *naturales*), between "primitive families" and others. In such conditions, one might well oppose or impugn such measures.

The history of the *Commission Scientifique du Mexique* (Rosaura Ramírez Sevilla and Ismael Ledesma-Mateos) is inseparable from that of its predecessors, the *Commission des Sciences et des Arts* founded by the other Bonaparte during the Egypt expedition (1798), and the *Exploration scientifique de l'Algérie pendant les années 1840, 1841, 1842,* following the conquest of that country in 1830. A combination of exoticism, imperialism –political, military and cultural– and, hence, dissymmetry: a "high culture" attempting to salvage that which was admirable –and exploitable– in the Indigenous other. At the macro level, this is the problematic within which the Indigenous (urban or otherwise) were enclosed up to just a few decades ago, in the best of cases. Of course, this is not to dismiss the work of the commission, which was also under the auspices of Alejandro von Humboldt.

"From the collision of civilizations" we return to co-existence with the Other, another of our concerns during this long journey–

turning for support to the article by José Carlos Vázquez, who attempts to open a firewall to detain a growing incivility. This makes it possible to establish an asymmetry contrary (and positive) to the ones we have pointed out along the way; if, that is, our "sacred egoism" so permits (words and pessimism of the historian). It is so easy to corrupt concepts (and sentiments)! In other times, the balance sought here justified the society of privilege.[13] It is true that while corruption is negative, it can also proceed in the other direction, so today "positive discrimination" is a concept widely-debated, and sometimes accepted. Perhaps this is why Jon Elster considers it urgent to inject a little rationality into the dialogue among beings. However, if we accept Vázquez' proposal for a "profound reflection" on human action we might discover, to our horror, that war is one of the behaviors that entails the greatest rationality.[14]

I believe it is time to set aside the historian's dirty dishes and return to a more open attitude: to be simply "well-versed in humanities", or in the, since we are all Indigenous, whether from countryside or city, from here or there, to a greater or lesser degree. José Carlos Vázquez ends his text with the term "fellows" (*semejantes*): without doubt one of the most beautiful in the universal language of reason and sentiment.

English translation by Paul C. Kersey Johnson

[13] Beatriz Rojas, coord., *Cuerpo político y pluralidad de derechos: los privilegios de las corporaciones novohispanas,* Mexico, CIDE, 2007.

[14] On this topic, see Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*, Basic Books, 1977. One of the most implacably logical books I know is Karl von Clausewitz *On War*.