

## Portico

We are very happy to present this issue of our journal. As is customary, it offers a wide variety of topics and theoretical perspectives for dealing with the political, social, economic, and cultural issues that make up the North American reality: the migration of Mexicans to the United States, the desire for greater political integration of our region's three countries, the weakness of the third sector in Mexico, and the difficulty of finding a balance between national interests and the dynamics of the world economy, among others.

Daniel Drache's article deals with regional heterogeneity. He warns of the risks involved in the economic growth of a country –specifically that of Canada– depending almost exclusively on the exploitation of natural resources. Drache analyzes the tension between what he calls “market Canada” and “social Canada” in a country that integrates into globalization processes by adopting the U.S. model of hyper-commercial capitalism. The economic and political changes of the 1990s increased private wealth as social investment decreased. To avoid economic instability, Drache proposes the Canadian government invest in bailing out manufacturing and industry and in social welfare, which implies maintaining a long-term perspective.

Tackling the issue of regional integration and NAFTA's unfortunately uncertain future, James McHugh offers a clear-cut historical description and analysis of how federalism took shape in Canada, the United States and Mexico. His article reflects on the as yet unexplored possibilities that this kind of political organization can offer for achieving more effective regional integration. The three countries have differing degrees of institutional strength and centralization, and this distinction can either hinder or boost the much-desired integration. Until now, little has been said about the importance of taking federalism into account in the three countries' negotiations and legal agreements. That is why the author suggests that a centralized federal system with weak institutions like Mexico's would contribute to facilitating negotiating and agreeing on political and economic reforms, while a more decen-

tralized system, like the Canadian system undoubtedly is, could be more useful for establishing agreements among the different countries' regional and local actors

Michael Layton's contribution deals with the gap between Mexico's development and that of its two northern neighbors, analyzing the reasons our country's third sector is so weak. Layton discards out of hand any simplistic or single-cause explanation. He puts forward the need to create an environment that would favor strengthening Mexico's very heterogeneous third sector, underdeveloped compared to that of other nations. The factors that should be taken into account to facilitate the work of civil society organizations are a legal and fiscal framework that would not impede its functioning; an effective system for accountability to create trust among the organizations, government, the media and donors; and, lastly, the professionalization of staff, greater operational efficiency, and availability of more resources.

Using the information from the Northern Border Survey on Migration 2004, Germán Vega Briones and Virginia Ilescas Vela study the demographics and social conditions of migrants deported by the U.S. Border Patrol. Their aim is to clearly show that migratory patterns are changeable because they depend equally on immigration policies and economic factors. After carefully analyzing the survey's data, the authors conclude, among other things, that attempts to cross the border are becoming increasingly dangerous and costly. Most of those polled confess they will attempt to cross again only a few days after being caught and returned despite the risks and the high monetary and physical cost. The authors maintain that, without bilateral policy on undocumented labor immigration, it will not be possible to resolve the problem of migration from Mexico to the United States.

Further on, the "Special Contribution" section offers a Spanish-language version of the article "America" from Diderot and D'Alembert's *Encyclopédie*, which began publication in 1751. The article traces the main traits that defined the Eurocentrist view prevailing in the West throughout the eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which to a great extent modeled some of the fundamental notions about our modern culture, like the state, progress, civil society, or otherness. Faced with the savage from the Americas, European Man understood himself, his activities, his knowledge, and his way of life as the culmination of history. This first part of "America" is accompanied by an essay critiquing some of the ideological precepts contained in the text. Because of the article's length, we will include the second part in our next issue.

In this issue's interview, we establish a dialogue with well-known Mexican thinker Bolívar Echeverría, recently declared professor emeritus by our university, about modernity and its civilizing project; the construction of identity in our hemisphere, which he calls the "baroque ethos"; and whiteness, understood as a cultural order and not just a racial issue, among other undeniably timely issues.

In the last sections, we publish texts about the moment when U.S. letters took the road that would lead to their own identity through the public's reception of Ralph W. Emerson's *The American Scholar*, and about the reciprocity and interdependence between public security and economic security in the framework of North America since the September 11 terrorist attacks.

As always, we finalize the issue with a chronology of the main national, bi-national and tri-national events in the region to provide a useful tool for reflection and research.

*Nattie Golubov*  
*Ignacio Díaz de la Serna*