

Assessing Democracy in Puebla: The Opposition Takes Charge of Municipal Government

Debates about democratization in developing countries have generally emphasized competitive elections, broad participation, and the protection of civil and political liberties. A survey of the first two years of PAN administration in the city of Puebla, Mexico, assesses government capacities and policy responses to social and economic demands. It suggests that excitement over the election of opposition party officials should be tempered pending evidence of the accommodation of such demands.

Antonio Gramsci and the Palabra Verdadera: The Political Discourse of Mexico's Guerrilla Forces

This article examines the political strategies of the EZLN, or Zapatista army, in Chiapas and the EPR, which operates mostly in Oaxaca and Guerrero, through a content analysis of their communiqués. It argues that these two guerrilla movements demonstrate, through their cultural production, significantly different priorities and preferences; and that these differences reflect different strategic choices. Whereas the EZLN has chosen to pursue a revolutionary strategy similar in key respects to the “war of position” described by Gramsci, the EPR remains closer to the “war of movement.”

NAFTA Coalitions and the Political Viability of Neoliberalism in Mexico

The process of political coalition building surrounding trade reform in Mexico had implications for the 1994-95 peso crisis. This article traces the formation of a free trade coalition between state and business elites across several episodes of trade opening, focusing on the NAFTA negotiations. The consolidation of this powerful but narrow coalition helped to cement the Salinas government's neoliberal reform agenda, boost investor confidence, and restore moderate levels of low-inflation growth in the early 1990s, but it also gave rise to the macroeconomic imbalances and political instability that led to the 1994 crisis. Since then, the economic basis of the neoliberal coalition may have recovered, but its political viability may be questionable.

*Sino-Latin American Relations: Sources and Consequences,
1977–1997*

Diplomatic and economic relations between Latin American countries and the People's Republic of China have become increasingly relevant for both sides, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, and scientific and technological cooperation. Relations have also intensified because of changes in the international balance of power; the PRC's Third World policy is shaped by the friction between the PRC and the world's great powers, including the United States. Competition from Taiwan for Latin American opportunities is another significant influence.