Environmental Justice in Mexico

A Narrative Analysis of López Obrador's
Political Agenda, Action and Rhetoric

Diego Monsiváis García
870615-1357

Abstract

On July 2018, for the first time in modern Mexican history, a leftist candidate won the presidential elections in Mexico. With large promises on the eradication of corruption and ending social injustice, Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his party secured both the presidency and both chambers of the Mexican Congress. This paper inquires into to what extent a president belonging to the political left, who won the elections in a country with a political elite which has constantly been accused of corruption and of systematically favouring the rich at the expense of the poor, is able to channel political action towards environmental justice. In order to give an answer to this question, I carry out a narrative analysis of López Obrador's political agenda, action and rhetoric. I argue that an understanding of environmental justice based on distribution, recognition, participation and capabilities is necessary in the pursuit for social justice. Indeed, environmental and social justice might be two sides of the same coin.

Keywords: Environmental Justice, Social Justice, Environment, Mexico, López Obrador, AMLO, Narrative.

Words: 9132

1. Introduction

July 2018 was a turning point in Mexican politics. For the first time in modern Mexican history, a leftist candidate and his political party won the presidential elections: this with promises on the eradication of corruption and ensuring justice for the Mexican people (Conger 2018). With 53% of the votes, Andrés Manuel López Obrador was elected President of Mexico. Furthermore, almost half of the rural voters (49,4%) voted for him (de Ita 2019). Clearly, the rural and indigenous sectors disapproved the liberal policies driven by governments prior to López Obrador, as these laid down the legal framework for the dispossession of land and natural resources traditionally and commonly owned by rural and indigenous communities (ibid).

The question of this thesis, then, is: to what extent a president belonging to the political left, who won the elections in a country with a political elite which has constantly been accused of corruption[1] and of systematically favouring the rich at the expense of the poor, is able to channel political action towards environmental justice? Is environmental justice a mere question of distribution of goods and bads, of risks and privileges, or is there something else accounting for an individual's and a society's sense of justice and wellbeing?

Academic literature discussing social and environmental justice, often frames the subject in distributional terms. Influential thinkers like Hayek, Rawls and Walzer articulate their notion of justice stressing the role that different agents and institutions have in the *fair* distribution of goods and bads, and argue for different means to attain that distribution (Merkel & Krück 2004). Nonetheless, this notion of justice has been criticised for only considering distributive aspects and not looking into the underlying structures that cause maldistribution. In this spirit, Schlosberg (2007) argues that the definition of justice necessarily has to take into account the *distribution* of goods and bads, the *recognition* of the differences among individuals and communities, the institutional infrastructure that enables *participation* and the *capabilities* that individuals and communities have access to in order to transform resources into an enjoyable and dignified living.

This broader understanding of environmental justice is, following Eckersley, a central aspect when discussing the role of the State in modern societies, as "all differently situated others may not be capable of providing consent", yet "all

---

[1] Mexico scored 28 points on the Corruption Perceptions Index 2018 (a scale from 0 to 100), occupying the 138th place on the list (Transparency International 2018).

differently situated others (human and nonhuman) ought to be free to unfold in their own distinctive ways and therefore should not be subjected to unjustified policies and decisions that impede such unfolding" (2004: 120). So, how are we to understand the State, its functions and its actions? Or, putting it in terms of this essay, how do Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his government tell the *story* of the poor and environmentally vulnerable? Does he really mark a turn in regard to the environment and the environmentally vulnerable? In the light of these questions, this paper intends to inquire into how the Mexican government, under the presidency of Andrés Manuel López Obrador portrays and operationalizes the notion of environmental justice. Looking at how the story is told, who the characters are, what roles they play and in which setting they act, we can have a clearer picture of how environmental justice is framed, who is part of the solutions to the problems and who is excluded.

In order to tackle this task, I carry out a narrative analysis of two case studies: 1) the fight against fuel theft, popularly known in Mexico as "huachicoleo", and 2) the project of the new Santa Lucía International Airport in Mexico City. Through the analysis of these cases I intend to shed light on how environmental justice is integrated in political action that strives towards social justice. Consequently, I argue that environmental and social justice are two sides of the same coin and that one cannot exist without the other.

In the second section of this paper, I go briefly through the political background of Mexico prior to López Obrador's time as president. In this section, I expound some of the major political difficulties that previous governments have dealt with in regard to environmental justice. I do this in order to understand the context in which López Obrador got elected and the social pressures that Mexican governments have been subjected to.

In the third section, I lay the theoretical ground of this paper. Firstly, I expand on how environmental justice is understood here. I base this subsection on David Schlosberg's conception of environmental justice and contrast it to the more traditional conception of distributional justice. In other words, I will discuss the implications of understanding justice in mere distributional terms, and what a notion of justice focused on recognition, participation and capabilities adds to the equation. Secondly, I present the ontological and epistemological theoretical ground on which this essay builds on. Here, the notion of *narrative* is defined and I discuss the value of narrative analysis for the present study.

In the fourth section I will proceed to develop the methodology I applied and present the material analyzed in this paper. In the fifth section I expose my analysis of the narratives concerning the two mentioned cases. Finally, in the conclusions, I

round off my findings and I expound the conclusions I have reached as a result of my analysis.

2. Background

2.1. For clarity: a brief comment on terminology

The definition of and the distinction between *post*-colonialism and *neo*-colonialism (and even other forms such as "anti-colonialism" or "modern colonialism") have given rise to some discussion in academic literature (see for example Göttsche 2017; Hulme 1995; Manzo 2014). The prefix "post" indicates *after* or leaving behind some past colonialist era; while the prefix "neo" suggests a *new*, present, kind of colonialism. Postcolonial theory, far from being synonymous with decolonisation, is concerned with historical practices and patterns of cultural, economic and political rule that still resonate in the modern world. In this sense, postcolonial theory is interested in history as long as the present structures reflect the historical ones. On the other hand, neocolonialism lays focus on the economic hegemony of rich countries that, despite having made a formal shift away from colonialism, maintain the dependency of former colonies.

Nevertheless, both theoretical perspectives share a neo-Marxist approach to the *unjust* relationship between exploiter and exploited, between core and periphery, between colonial power and economic dependency (Manzo 2014: 329-334). In this sense, postcolonial and neocolonial definitions overlap each other. Still, the term used in this section is rather "neocolonialism" because the notions of justice discussed here are more directly related to Marxist and neo-Marxist theory, and focus more on economic distributional patterns, rather than on historico-colonial ones.

2.2. Mexico prior to López Obrador and the context of his election

After a long period of a political monopoly[2] in the hands of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI[3]), only interrupted by a relatively short holding of power by the National Action Party (PAN) between 2000 and 2012, Andrés Manuel López

---

[2] From 1929 to 2000 and, later, from 2012 to 2018.
[3] PRI: Partido Revolucionario Institucional; PAN: Partido Acción Nacional

Obrador attained victory in the presidential elections in July 2018. He and his party (Movimiento Regeneración Nacional, MORENA) secured both the presidency (with 53% of the votes) and the majority of the seats in both chambers of Congress ("Mexico under AMLO", 2018).

As mentioned, PRI had governed Mexico uninterruptedly from 1929 to 2000 and, even though the party has its origins in leftist movements, market liberal policies and massive privatization measures were implemented during the decade of the 1980s under the presidency of Miguel de la Madrid (1982-88) and Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1988-96) (López 2018; Czarnecki 2017). These constitutional reforms towards a liberal economy continued years after, during Enrique Peña Nieto's time as president (2012-18). One of the most debated projects that Peña Nieto pushed through during his presidency was the Energy Reform, through which concessions for extracting and exploiting national oil resources were granted to private actors (Czarnecki 2017). This period of *liberalization* gave rise to a number of reforms and policies that were largely criticized for exposing vulnerable rural communities to unequally distributed environmental risks and divesting them from their land and means of production (Czarnecki 2017; de Ita 2019; Merchand 2015).

Understanding Mexico from neocolonial perspective is crucial in order to understand López Obrador's rhetoric and the resonance that it has had in the Mexican people. As we saw in the previous section and as Merchand (2015) argues, the Mexican governments from the 1980s onwards, with emphasis on Peña Nieto's administration, have greatly favoured foreign capital investors. Merchand identifies the neoliberal economic model, with the commodification of labour and natural resources, as a major cause of the "processes of recolonization" (2015: 124) to which Mexico and other periferic states have been subjected. Building upon David Harvey's arguments, he adds that the Mexican State played an essential role in this process as, through the implementation of different reforms such as the Energy Reform of 2014 and NAFTA, it paved the juridical and institutional groundwork for the foreign exploitation of land, energy and resources that originally and traditionally have belonged to Mexican farmers and indigenous communities (Merchand 2015).

It is against this background of a political tradition of exploitation and lack of recognition, together with a deeply corrupt political elite, that López Obrador's electoral victory took place. Indeed, some claim that what the Mexican people actually voted for was for a change, rather than for López Obrador himself (Weizenmann 2018). This ambitious commitment to Mexico, its people, territory and natural resources, the promise of a just distribution of goods, bads and opportunities is the core of what he calls *the fourth transformation of Mexico* (Watts 2019). This *transformation* – as all the previous ones: the Independence in 1821, the Reform in

1855-63 and the Revolution in 1910 – seems to be predominantly driven by the fight against inequality and the pursuit for social justice (Weizenmann 2018).

3. Theory

In this section I lay out the theoretical ground on which I build the argument of the present paper. The section is conformed by three subsections. The first one expounds David Schlosberg's conception of environmental justice integrally based on *distribution*, *recognition*, *participation* and *capabilities*. In the second subsection I argue why an interpretative approach suits better the purpose of this thesis. Also, in the same subsection, I provide a definition of the term *narrative* and argue how narrative analysis allows us to understand the meaning that political actors ascribe to their action. Thereafter, in the third subsection, I expound the elements of a narrative and four primary rhetorical figures used in the analysis of narratives.

3.1. Environmental justice: distribution, recognition, participation and capabilities

Referring back to the introduction of this paper, thinkers like Rawls, Hayek and Waltzer have largely influenced scholars and politics, and have been the starting point for many discussions and definitions of *justice* (Merkel & Krück; Schlosberg 2007). These discussions and studies, including the neocolonial and postmaterial arguments outlined above, define justice in distributional terms, i.e. how goods and bads are distributed in a society. Or as Brighouse phrases it, the "fundamental question is this: how and to what end, should a just society distribute the various benefits (resources, opportunities and freedoms) it produces, and the burdens (costs, risks and unfreedoms) required to maintain it?" (quoted in Shlosberg 2007: 12). Understanding *justice as fairness* is crucial in the discussion of the environment and the socioeconomic problems related to it; how access to natural resources and the exposure to environmental risks are *distributed* is essential in the endeavor towards a just society.

But what exactly is a "good" distribution of goods and bads? Why does maldistribution actually happen? Understanding justice only in distributional terms may provide us with insights into how distribution can be reached and improved, but tells us little about *why* maldistribution arises in the first place. Furthermore, ideas

like Rawls' justice as fairness fails to address real-life injustices. Distributional justice, in other words, may not have as much practical relevance as it is claimed (Schlosberg 2007: 21-22).

In this theoretical context, without intending to criticize distributional justice per se, but rather to argue that understanding justice solely as the fair distribution of goods and bads is not enough, Schlosberg (2007) identifies four indispensable elements of justice: distribution, recognition, participation and capabilities. He argues that each one of these aspects is crucial for a comprehensive definition, understanding and political implementation of the notion of environmental justice. Put in his own words, "focusing on one notion at the expense of others, or while ignoring others, simply cannot satisfy the multiple and complex nature of justice sought by the [environmental] movement" (2007: 97). In the following paragraphs I will shortly expose Schlosberg's three other elements of justice, namely recognition, participation and capabilities.

Recognition

The main issue concerning this aspect of justice is the acknowledgement that maldistribution begins with the mis- or malrecognition of the social, cultural and economic differences among groups in the pluralistic net of society. In order to get to the root of maldistribution, it is necessary to look at the social, cultural and economic structures that shape social interaction. In other words, distributional injustice is the consequence of a complex chain of social, cultural and economic processes. Thus, if we are to understand why maldistribution arises, we have to understand the *context* in which maldistribution exists. Addressing distributional injustice implies, then, to "examine the range of social and cultural values and practices that impede the full recognition of a group as an accepted member of the moral and political community" (Shlosberg 2007: 16).

Here, Schlosberg points out that both individuals and communities may be subject of malrecognition. Building on Fraser's arguments (1998; 2000), he argues that it is through institutional practice that individuals or communities are being misrecognized, and adds, through Honneth, that self-esteem is closely related to recognition by others, including individuals, culture and the state (Schlosberg 2007: 18-20). The lack of recognition of a certain community or group in society means also that the organizational features and traditions, either economic, social, cultural or political, of the community or group in question, are being neglected by the hegemonic ruling class. In this sense, a fair distribution of environmental risks and privileges is impossible to achieve if the ways of life of all groups and individuals are not being recognized as valuable and legitimate (ibid: 89).

Participation

This aspect of justice has special importance in what concerns the State. Participation and procedural justice refer to the institutional infrastructure that allows individuals and communities to participate in political processes. Furthermore, recognition and participation go hand-in-hand. If someone is to participate in the matters of his or her society, then he or she has to be recognized as a member of the society. Conversely, if someone does not participate, he or she is lacking recognition in the society (Schlosberg 2007: 26-27).

When it comes to environmental justice and the politics of the environment, participation is also a key factor. There is widespread criticism of the fact that poor and indigenous communities are systematically being excluded from decision-making processes that concern their ways of life, food production, land, access to clean water, etc (Schlosberg 2007: 89-91).

Capabilities

In addition to the above mentioned aspects of justice, Schlosberg observes that the environmental justice movement is articulated in terms of the capabilities that individuals and communities have access to in order to make use of the available resources and be able to have a functioning life. The constant privatization of the land and means of production is an example of how rural and indigenous communities are denied their capabilities to use the land for food production or other purposes, forcing them to move to poor and marginalized suburbs in search for a precarious wage-based living (2007: 91-92).

In summary, Schlosberg articulates a conception of environmental justice based on the distribution of environmental goods and bads, the recognition of different ways of living and knowing as valid and legitimate, the institutional infrastructure that enables the participation of "differently situated others" (Eckersley 2004: 120) in political processes, and the capabilities that the environmentally vulnerable are given to make use of their resources. As I expand on in section 4.1, these four elements of environmental justice are what I look after in my empirical research. In other words, distribution, recognition, participation and capabilities are the benchmarks or indicators that I use in my analysis in order to answer the question of this paper.

3.3. A reflexion on the ontology of narratives

3.3.1. An interpretative approach

The first obvious choice to make and to justify is whether to tackle the challenge with a positivist or interpretive approach. As you might already have guessed, an interpretive approach is my weapon of choice for these matters. The reason lies in the nature of the analysis. It is not only an epistemological matter, but also an ontological one. What there is to know poses questions on how to know about it.

The reason why an interpretative approach to the problem posed in this essay is more suitable is because I intend to throw light on the symbolic (or rather narrative) value of Andrés Manuel López Obrador's rhetoric and action in regard to environmental governance. In the search for an *understanding* of the meaning that López Obrador ascribes to Mexico's political reality through actions, speeches and statements, I need an analytical and theoretical toolkit that allows me to *interpret* that meaning. Furthermore, that interpretation is only possible from *within* the social reality observed by the analyzer. Understanding, in this sense, is engaging in the activity of interpreting political action. To understand, thus, implies an interpretation of the action from *within* the context in which the action was performed. Consequently, action is explained, not in causal, but intentional terms (Wagenaar 2011: 14-16, 197).

3.3.2. What is the a "narrative"?

The intention with this essay is to understand the meaning that López Obrador and his government ascribe to their political action. The meaning underlying political action can then be understood, interpreted, through narratives, as these are "powerful tools that can shape people's realities and emotions" (McBeth et al 2014: 225).

But what exactly is meant by *narrative*, in general and in a politico-scientific sense? What are we actually after when we analyse narratives? Moreover, what is there to understand when we look at narratives? Probably the most essential idea of a narrative (or rather, story) is the presentation of an event or chain of events in a more or less coherent way, starting with a beginning, moving through a middle and finally coming to an end (Wagenaar 2011: 210). The beginning of the story illustrates the protagonist's initial situation and how this is put out of balance by some challenge that the protagonist has to face. In the middle of the story we see how the events develop. And finally, in the ending, the resolution of the problem or challenge is

presented. This linear course of action, coherently put together as a whole, is the plot of the story. It is important to note that the plot of the story is not something that exists just by itself, "but something that is deliberately, willfully imposed by the author" (ibid). A row of isolated events does not become a story, a narrative, until the author (the political actor) ties them together with meaning and intention. This, in turn, implies that those events may follow up on each other in time, but they are not necessarily causally or logically linked together (ibid: 211). It is the author who, narratively, suggests a sequential chain of events in order to grasp a piece of reality that may not appear directly logical.

Wagenaar then argues that narratives are open-ended, subjective, value laden and action oriented. The open-endedness of narratives, he argues, is a consequence of the dialogical nature of social reality. Reality, in this sense, is the product of social interaction. Narratives then deal with "possibilities, not certainties" (Wagenaar 2011: 210). The author, the one who proposes the narrative, the particular linkage of events, tells a story that is to be received, judged and recomposed by the audience. The author and the audience engage then in a dialogue with each other, interpreting and composing their common reality.

Narratives are subjective in the sense that they are filled with details that, put in the context of objectivity and rational causal explanations, are irrelevant or make no sense, but that talk directly to people's subjectivity. It is not the logical, causal relation between elements that matters, but the emotional, subjective meaning ascribed to them.

This leads to the statement that narratives are value laden. The characters and their actions, the details that the storyteller deliberately chooses to highlight makes us perceive them in a specific manner. As Wagenaar expresses it, "[c]haracters in stories are moral constructions that indicate our beliefs about how people fit into society" and they "are positioned in an institutionalized system of relations and obligations" (2011: 213). Through narratives, actors (politicians, organizations, institutions, etc.) articulate reality in moral terms. They portray a transgressed world order and offer ways of how it is to be repaired accordingly to a determined set of values.

Finally, narratives are action oriented because they are a call to action, something has to be *done* in order to "repair" the transgression or adjust the "wrong behavior". Here, Wagenaar highlights the plausibility of the action. The effectiveness of narratives depends on the eloquence with which the author portrays the plausibility of the action that eventually will lead to the expected result. Expressed differently, narratives are "symbolic representations of human action in practical, concrete situations" (Wagenaar 2011: 216), thus making sense of an otherwise chaotic and unfeasible reality.

3.4. The elements of a narrative

For the purpose of this essay, I lineup here the elements in the analyzed text that will let me identify the narratives. Derived from the discussion above and using McBeth's et al (2014) definition of narrative, the elements constituting a narrative are:

- *The setting*: the setting is the context in which the story is told. Stories have the power they have and resonate with their audience because they are told in a specific *setting*. The setting consists of all the relevant features that add narrative value to the story, such as geography, culture, economic conditions, legal frame, etc (McBeth et al 2014: 228).
- *The characters*: who is participates in the narrative? The characters are all the involved actors; they can either be individuals or groups of them. Here it is important to identify what *roles* the characters play (ibid). Who is the hero, the victim, the villain? It is also important to be aware of who is *excluded* from the story.
- *The plot*: the plot, as we said, is the overarching structure of the story: beginning, middle, end. With the plot, the author of the narrative (the storyteller) links together the different elements of the narrative, ascribing meaning to reality (ibid; Wagenaar 2011).
- *The moral*: as we saw, narratives are value laden and they are a call to action. The moral of the narrative tells us what the storyteller claims has to be done accordingly to a specific set of values (ibid).

Now, as a complement to McBeth et al's components of a narrative, I use what Czarniawska (2004) calls *ways of emplottment*. Stories, she says, are emplotted through four rhetorical figures: metaphor, metonymy, synecdoche and irony. I will use these rhetorical figures as analytical tools to clearly identify how López Obrador and his government make use of the language to portray reality. These rhetoric figures, more than being simple linguistic ornaments, work and resonate in a specific manner with a specific audience because they are subjectively and emotionally recognized by that audience and "they permeate all linguistic utterances (Czarniewska 2004: 30). Stories, in this sense, are dialogical, because they are constructed " in a continuous interaction among the storyteller, the elements of the story, his audience and the environment they share" (Wagenaar 2011: 210). Czarniawska defines these rhetorical figures as follows:

Metaphor, perhaps the most well-known trope, explains a less known term by connecting it to one better known:'the moon is a silver plate.' *Metonymy* substitutes something in the vicinity for the original object or its attribute for the object itself: the crown for the kingdom, the banner for the country. *Synecdoche* builds on the part–whole relationship where the part symbolizes the whole or the whole symbolizes the part: hands for workers, brains for intellectuals. *Irony* builds on inverted meaning – the opposite of what is ostensibly expressed (2004: 29-30).

Consequently, identifying the elements of the story (setting, characters, plot and moral), the rhetorical usage of the language and the narrative contribution of storytelling is the main challenge of this paper.

4. Method and material

4.1. Method

The method applied in this paper is, as I mentioned above, narrative analysis. In this subsection I aim to clarify how I put the above discussed theory into practice and how I apply it to the analyzed material.

The material, as I expand on further down, is a number of speeches, statements, press conferences and official documents. My task is then to analyze the narratives embedded in the material, through identifying the four elements of a narrative presented in the previous section: setting, characters, plot and moral. Important is to mention that each piece of the material does not "contain" a singular narrative. Rather, the narratives are embedded and constructed through all the pieces of the material as a whole. This does not mean that "the setting", for instance, is only found in the chronologically first pieces. Different speeches, documents or statements *can* provide hints of the same setting, adding each time new details or reaffirming previously mentioned ones. Hence, the narratives I expound in the fifth section of this paper, are the synthesis of a series of detached narrative elements spread throughout the whole material.

I am aware that studying the actual outcome of López Obrador's political agenda, action and utterances would provide relevant insights into the repercussions of his narrative. However, due to the short period of time that López Obrador has been president so far (barely a half year), few substantial results can be observed. In addition, with the time and space I was given to write this paper, such a task would be impossible to accomplish. Thus, the repercussions and outcomes of López Obrador and his government's political agenda, action and utterances are beyond the scope of this essay and will not be taken into consideration.

4.2. Material

I will focus my analysis on two case studies: 1) the fight against the fuel theft, popularly known in Mexico as "huachicoleo" and 2) the construction of the new Santa Lucía International Airport in Mexico City. Therefore, the material that is object of my analysis consists of 25 speeches and statements by López Obrador

concerning the first case (from December 1, 2018, to January 25, 2019), and 21 in regard to the second one (one from November 2015, another from September 2016 and the rest from August 8, 2018 to April 29, 2019). Note that the time period of the second case includes material prior to López Obrador's presidential office. This is because the Santa Lucía project was presented as an alternative to Peña Nieto's Texcoco International Airport when he still was Mexico's president, and during Obrador's presidential campaign.

As the intention of this paper is to analyze López Obrador's political agenda, action and rhetoric, the analyzed material is consists of speeches, statements and a few official documents where policy and social plans are described.

The reason why I chose these two particular cases is that they are two political actions that clearly show narrative differences before and in times of López Obrador. The first case, the fight against the fuel theft, was, as we will see in the next section, framed as a problem mostly related to the organized crime. Whereas López Obrador portrays it as another case of corruption. The second case, the construction of the Santa Lucía International Airport, is interesting because it is comparable to the controversial project of the Texcoco International Airport approved by former President Enrique Peña Nieto and that López Obrador decided to stop in order to begin with the Santa Lucía project.

Furthermore, both cases have clear environmental repercussions. The first case is directly related to the production and distribution of fuels, which, in turn, has exposed several rural communities and their means of production to high environmental risks. The second case is directly related to the expropriation of land that belongs and has traditionally been used by rural communities for food production and other purposes.

I am aware that listening to other voices, specially those of the people and communities affected by the policies, are necessary in order to make a more accurate analysis of the effects and consequences that these policies have have. But due to limitations in time and space, I will not include them in my analysis.

5. Analysis

With the ambition of expounding my analysis of the two cases as clearly as possible, I divide each case of my analysis in two subsections. First, I systematically go through the different components of the story: setting, characters, plot and moral. The purpose with this subsection is mainly to present the story, the narratives that I found embedded in the material. Then, in the second subsection, I expand on my analysis with a comment. In this subsection, I put the story and its different elements vis-à-vis with the notion of environmental justice discussed above.

It is worth stressing once more that the stories (or narratives) expounded in this section are the result of the thorough qualitative analysis of my empirical research. Therefore, it is not my intention to provide a causal explanation of a series of events, but rather to understand López Obrador and his government's intention by looking at how fuel theft and the project of Santa Lucía International Airport are portrayed through narratives.

5.1. Fuel Theft

5.1.1. The story

Setting
In his first speech as President of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (December 1, 2018) portrays Mexico as a country rich in natural resources and with a former glory that has gradually vanished away due to the maladministration of previous governments. The Mexico that he portrays is a Mexico that has gone through three political transformation processes: 1) Mexico's war of independence in 1810, 2) the re-establishment of the Mexican Republic in 1867 and 3) the Mexican Revolution in 1910. In the light of this, he claims that he and his government are initiating the "fourth transformation of Mexico" (ibid).

This rich and sovereign Mexico has, though, been exploited and plundered by political and economical elites, both from within the nation and for the benefit of foreign actors (ibid). The setting in which López Obrador's political action takes place is, then, a worn out Mexico whose wealth has been deficiently administered by previous governments. In fact, as we will see in *the plot*, López Obrador stresses the

role of a *neoliberal period* that began in the 1980s as the main cause of Mexico's political and economic crisis (ibid).

In this first speech of his, López Obrador does not talk about fuel theft specifically. Still, this setting of a Mexico rich in natural resources that has constantly been exploited and plundered by the elites, permeates his narrative throughout the analyzed material. On several occasions, López Obrador refers to the fuel theft as a consequence of the negligence of previous governments. For example, in the press conference of December 7, 2018, López Obrador exposed the fuel theft as a consequence of the lack of opportunities that marginal communities have to live an honest life and away from crime (Presidencia de la República, December 7, 2018).

This is an important aspect of the *setting* because those communities living close to the fuel pipelines are those who carry the biggest risks, as they are exposed to the latent risk of an explosion or leakage, but also because they are "tempted" to steal fuel directly from the pipes. These are rural communities that have been impoverished during the neoliberal period. In a press conference on January 21, after a large-scale accident due to fuel theft, López Obrador said: "Of course, the tragedy could have been avoided, if there wasn't corruption in Mexico, if fuel theft wasn't practiced, if the authorities wouldn't allow it, if necessity wouldn't force people to do it [own translation]" (López Obrador in Presidencia de la República, January 21, 2019).

We can see another instance of this *setting* in the press conference of December 27, 2018, where López Obrador announced the so called Joint Plan against fuel theft. Here, López Obrador talks about the highly corrupt and decadent state in which Pemex, the state-owned oil company, had been operating: "I don't have evidence of managers of Pemex stealing fuel. Why I do can tell you is that the were aware of it, no doubt" (López Obrador in Presidencia de la República, December 27, 2018).

Summarizing, the *setting* in which López Obrador formulates his narrative is a Mexico rich in natural resources, but whose political, economic and institutional structures have, during the neoliberal period, facilitated and normalized the constant "plundering of the goods of the people and the wealth of the Nation" (López Obrador December 1, 2018: min 18, sec 25).

The characters

The first obvious character in López Obrador's narrative is himself and his government. He is the hero of the story and the teller of the truth. He portrays himself as the (revolutionary) leader of *the fourth transformation of Mexico*.

Alongside López Obrador, we can distinguish other heroes in the story. During the press conference of December 27 (which is an important one because, as I mentioned above, it is then that the Joint Plan against fuel theft is introduced), López Obrador communicates that fifteen federal government offices are involved in the fight against fuel theft. Particularly, an institution that plays a significant role is the military. Both the Ministry of Defense (Secretaría de la Defensa Nacional) and the Navy (Secretaría de Marina) are central in López Obrador's narrative. On different occasions, López Obrador portrays the Ministry of Defense and the Navy as necessary, as the theft of fuel "is an issue of national security" (López Obrador in Presidencia de la República, December 27, 2018).

As for who the villains of the story are we have two important ones. The first one is the poor individual criminal who, risking his or her life, steals fuel directly from the pipes. This character plays an interesting role. The individual fuel thief (commonly referred to as *huachicolero*) is both a villain and a victim. He or she is a villain as he or she is criminalized. During the press conference of December 7, 2018, López Obrador announced his proposition to change the law to categorize the theft of fuel as a *serious felony*, which implies that the prosecuted will not the have right to bail: "the one who steals 10 liters [of gasoline] will be consigned without right to bail [own translation]" (López Obrador in Presidencia de la República, December 7, 2018).

On the other hand, fuel thieves are also portrayed as victims of the abandonment of the governments from the neoliberal period. In an official statement published on January 15, 2019, López Obrador refers to the communities that live along the fuel duct Tuxpan-Azcapotzalco (the duct that provides Mexico City with gasoline) as "communities in poverty that have been forced to partake in illegal activities [own translation]" (López Obrador in Presidencia de la República, January 15, 2019).

Here, it is interesting to see how López Obrador refers to the "individual thief", the *huachicolero*, as a criminal, but to "the people" or "the community" as a victim and, sometimes, as a *cooperator*. In fact, in different occasions, he asks the "the community" to hinder "the young" from committing criminal acts. In other words, the (young) individual who lacks the support of the family and the community will eventually end up being a criminal, ergo a villain and a victim simultaneously.

The second villain of the story is not a particular individual, but a phenomenon: corruption. Corruption is the *big boss* (my term) to be defeated. In 15 of the 25 statements and documents included in the analysis, *corruption* is pointed out as the main cause for poverty and underdevelopment. López Obrador uses the term "corruption" as a rhetoric figure. By treating "corruption" not only as a problem

but as a character or some sort of disease, he metaphorizes the governments of the neoliberal period, including former presidents and other public officials. To illustrate this with an example, let me quote him: "The main feature of liberalism is corruption. It sounds strong, but privatization in Mexico has been synonym of corruption. Unfortunately, almost always, this evil has existed in our country. But what has happened during the neoliberal period has no precedent. During this time, the system as a whole has been operating for corruption [own translation]" (López Obrador, December 1, 2018: min 48, sec 50).

The plot

The plot of the story is quite straightforward: a Nation rich in natural resources, history and culture, with steady economic growth, has been plundered and given away by its own leaders to foreign hegemonies. During the neoliberal period, political leaders, through the privatization of the resources of the Nation, have been giving away the wealth that belongs to *the people*, enriching themselves in a grotesque epidemic of corruption. It is now time to stop it. It is time to put an end to corruption and impunity. It is time for *the fourth transformation of Mexico* to begin.

This *emplottment* can be seen in several occasions. As I mentioned above, during the press conference of December 27, 2018, López Obrador argues that the real enemy to be defeated is corruption and not the individual fuel thieves. He explains that 1145 tank trucks of fuel are being stolen everyday and, therefore, it cannot be a simple matter of common thievery: "That is huachicol, but from above" (López Obrador, December 27, 2018). Furthermore, on another occasion, he claimed that the previous government used the fuel theft as "a smoke screen" (López Obrador, December 28, 2018) to hide what was really going on inside of Pemex.

The moral

Clearly, the moral reflects socialist values. Together with his constant portraying of neoliberalism and corruption as *the villains* of the story, López Obrador works a policy of austerity. On his second day in office, December 2, 2018, for example, he initiated the process for the sale of the presidential airplane, which was acquired by his predecessor Enrique Peña Nieto (Presidencia de la República, December 2, 2018).

López Obrador's call to action is then to jointly fight corruption and to reactivate the local economy and sense of community. As an example of this we can see programs such as *Tandas del Bienestar*, which grants credits with zero interest rate to small merchants (Presidencia de la República, January 24, 2019).

5.1.2. Comment

Looking at the different elements of the story, we can see how López Obrador portrays himself as the leader of some sort of revolutionary movement, namely what he calls "the fourth transformation of Mexico". Nevertheless, in his narrative, he places himself not above the people, but on the same level. He constantly stresses that fuel theft and corruption have to be defeated *jointly*. This joint action is not only expressed in terms of which governmental offices are to be participant, but it is also an attempt to engage the people. The people in this sense become an active character in the story and not only a passive victim waiting to be rescued.

In the frame for the *Integral Programs for Wellbeing* (Programas Integrales para el Bienestar), presented on January 15, 2019, López Obrador's government articulates a narrative of inclusion and recognition. The communities that live alongside fuel ducts were given special attention. They were visited and consulted in order to, through dialogue, shape a policy to counteract fuel theft and give them the *capabilities* to exploit their natural resources and local knowledge for a sustainable development and production independency. In this series of programs we can see, for example, the *Production for Wellbeing Program* (Programa Producción para el Bienestar), the *Young for the Future Program* (Programa Jóvenes para el Futuro) and the above mentioned *Microcredits for Wellbeing Program* (Programa Tandas para el Bienestar). These three programs focus on the reactivation of the local economy through local knowledge and the creation of a sense of community as measures to counteract underdevelopment.

As we can see, and in relation to the four elements of justice discussed above, through his narrative, Lopez Obrador articulates – to a certain extent – a notion of justice in terms of *distribution*, *recognition*, *participation* and *capabilities*. By understanding the particular needs and circumstances of marginalized rural communities, these communities are being recognized as legitimate sources of knowledge and productivity. They are also given the possibility to participate in the policy-making processes that concerns them, designing with it a policy whose scope stretches beyond mere distributional approaches.

However, López Obrador seldom communicates his narrative in environmental terms. His statements and speeches are clearly articulated in terms of *social justice*, targeting the neoliberal economic system and the political and social abuse that the elites have exerted upon the socially vulnerable. López Obrador's rhetoric might not lean much on the environment, but his political action on fuel theft (the different social programs mentioned above) reflects some aspects of environmental justice. In other words, some of the programs he has implemented as

part of the solutions to fuel theft, do take into consideration distribution, recognition, participation and capabilities.

5.2. Santa Lucía International Airport

5.2.1. The story

Setting

In November 3, 2015, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, together with engineers José María Rioboó and Sergio Samaniego Huerta, laid down the technical and geographical features of the area surrounding Mexico City, on which they build up their arguments for the development of the Santa Lucía project (Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador 2015). They explain that, due to geographical conditions and the current needs that the airport system in Mexico City has to cover, the currently existing Mexico City International Airport (MCIA) is insufficient. But, they continue, the construction of a completely new airport in Texcoco – a project proposed and initiated by former president Enrique Peña Nieto and that implies the closure of the current MCIA – is absurdly expensive. Therefore, the development of the already existing military base of Santa Lucía, which already has a functioning military airport, into a commercial international airport is a more sensible option (ibid).

Apart from the geographical conditions, the political and institutional framework in Mexico is an important piece in López Obrador's narrative. On September 3, 2016, López Obrador claimed that "behind the construction of the new international airport of Mexico City [i.e. the TIA] there is: contractism[4], desire to steal and corruption" (Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador 2016). In other words, he portrays Mexico as a plundered, maladministered and abused Nation.

The setting, then, is, on one hand, the geographical conditions in the area surrounding Mexico City that are adequate for the Santa Lucía International Airport (SLIA) and, on the other hand, a political and institutional landscape of corruption and dishonesty that has exploited Mexico's resources.

Characters

In this narrative, in contrast to the fuel theft narrative, the characters are less stereotypical. Still, there are some clearly identifiable ones in López Obrador's statements and speeches on the SLIA. In this case, the characters that are given a

---

[4] From Spanish: contratismo, a term closely related to nepotism.

good amount of attention are the engineers who work on the project. Personalities such as José María Rioboó and Sergio Samaniego Huerta, both renowned Mexican engineers, or Javier Jiméz Espriú, Secretary of Communication and Transport, are often present beside López Obrador during press conferences and speak, in contrast to Obrador himself, in technical terms. This gives the impression of seriousness and objectivity, endowing López Obrador's arguments with legitimacy (see for example Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador November 3, 2015; October 11, 2018; October 29, 2018).

Like in the case of fuel theft, López Obrador portrays himself as the leader of *the fourth transformation of Mexico* and places himself on *the people's* side against the corrupt and dishonest elites that reigned Mexico under the neoliberal period. As we can see in, for example, the bulletin published in his official site on September 3, 2016, he blames corruption and nepotism as the main driving forces behind Peña Nieto's project, the TIA. The previous government and former president Enrique Peña Nieto are, once again, *the villains* of the story.

Other interesting characters are the investors that had already invested in bonds for the financing of the TIA. These are portrayed in López Obrador's narrative as some sort of *unwanted guests* (my term). The problem posed by this group is that their investments would simply get lost, as López Obrador's plan considers to fully cancel the TIA project and initiate another one, namely the SLIA project.

This group of investors play the role of a political obstacle for López Obrador. On one hand, Obrador affirms that there is a "dividing line between the economic power and the political power" and adds that his government "will not be at the service of a minority [i.e. the group of investors financing the TIA]" (Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, October 29, 2018). With this, he means that his political action is for the sake of the Nation as a whole, "whether they like it or not" (ibid). On the other hand, however, he seems to acknowledge that he cannot just ignore this group of investors and their needs, as he assures that the "rights of the contractors and investors will be respected and attended" (Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, October 31, 2018). In fact, in an official statement on December 20, 2018, López Obrador communicated that the negotiations between investors and the Ministry of Finance and Public Credit were a success, as the Mexican State will rebuy the bonds, including the unpaid interests (Presidencia de la República, December 20, 2018; Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, December 11, 2018). As I implied above, this dual role that the investors have (as *obstacles* and, simultaneously, part of *the citizenship* or *the people*) suggest the idea of a guest who you have to open your doors for, even though you do not really want to.

The communities that live close to the military base of Santa Lucía and, more specifically, the indigenous community of Xaltocan who owns part of the land

contemplated for the development of the new Santa Lucía International Airport (SLIA), also have an active role in the narrative. The role of this community is articulated as *giver of legitimacy* (my term). On March 10, 2019, the federal government organized a meeting with the community of Xaltocan in order to discuss and negotiate the plausibility of the SLIA project. The community gave consent by unanimity (Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas, April 29, 2019), a detail that López Obrador readily embraced and used in his rhetoric: "I can now tell you that the communities surrounding Santa Lucía have already been consulted. And what do you think? The people approved the project. This very good news. We will continue with this project in accordance with all legal procedures" (López Obrador in Presidencia de la República, April 29, 2019).

Plot

The plot of the story goes as follows: the Mexico City International Airport (MCIA) has long been the only international airport in the Mexican capital. But now, the airport system in Mexico City is insufficient and something must be done. The previous government had a solution, i.e. the project of the Texcoco International Airport (TIA). Nonetheless, this solution is way too costly, profoundly inefficient and will deeply harm the Texcoco Lake and its diverse wildlife. This is another case of nepotism and corruption in disguise and a theft to the Nation.

That is why, Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his team have developed an alternative solution: the Santa Lucía International Airport (SLIA), with which 100 thousand million pesos will be spared, more landing tracks will be built and the Texcoco Lake and its diverse wildlife will be saved. In other words, the SLIA project is a better, more efficient, greener and honest solution to the oversaturated airport system of Mexico City.

However, two particular issues must be addressed. First, the group of investors financing the TIA are critical to the alternative SLIA, as their capital investments are at stake. Second, the indigenous communities neighboring the military base of Santa Lucía must be taken into consideration. That is why, in order to tackle the first issue, the state will rebuy and reinvest the bonds owned by TIA investors in the financing of the SLIA. And, tackling the second issue, the indigenous communities neighboring the military base os Santa Lucía will be consulted and, in dialogue, come to a mutual understanding.

Moral

Similarly to the case on fuel theft, this story has a moral based on social justice principles. Large collective characters portrayed through metonymies such as *the*

people or *the Nation* play the victim role. They are the ones to be defended against the gluttony of the rich minorities.

5.2.2. Comment

What does this narrative tell us and to what extent is environmental justice embodied in López Obrador and his government's rhetoric and political action? Here, López Obrador articulates an argument around the SLIA project based on social injustice and a long period of governmental maladministration. The villains are the economic and political elites that, through nepotism and corruption, have amassed fortunes at the expense of the poor. Consequently, the victims are the people or, more specifically, *the poor people*, as *the rich people*, i.e. the investors financing the TIA project, far from being portrayed as victims, are portrayed as *unwanted guests*.

The poor people and indigenous communities, playing the role of the victim, are being *recognized* as legal and legitimate parts with an active voice in the decision-making process. The consultation on March 10, 2019, in the community of Xaltocan, was an attempt to put into practice the legal and institutional frame that enables their *participation*. In fact, during the meeting, which was attended by 626 citizens, a monitoring committee, integrated both by citizens and governmental representatives, was appointed in order to protect the community's interests during the construction of the SLIA (Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas, April 29, 2019). Furthermore, at the same meeting it was agreed that important infrastructural improvements will be done in order to provide the community with more and better drinking water (ibid).

The narrative also takes into consideration the fragile ecosystem of the Texcoco Lake and the "great unrepeatable opportunity" to develop an ecological project where the TIA would have been built (Echeverría in Presidencia de la República, April 26, 2019). Once again, López Obrador and his government stress the importance of the local communities' knowledge concerning the management and caretaking of the area. Or, as Iñaki Echeverría, the responsible for the Texcoco Lake Integral Recovery Plan, put it: "this [...] is the beginning of a conversation that will have to incorporate the ideas, the sensibilities, the knowledge of all the communities living in the zone and that have a history and knowledge of what can be done there [own translation]" (ibid).

In contrast with the fuel theft case, this narrative incorporates the *environment* in a more explicit way. Nevertheless, it is seldom López Obrador himself, once again, who actually names it when justifying his action. One of the few occasions where Obrador himself mentions the environment is during a press

conference on October 29, 2018: "It is also very important to highlight that the 'Nabor Carrillo' lake [i.e. Texcoco Lake] will be saved and the ducks, the birds, will not be chased away, that is a triumph for the environmental movement [own translation]" (Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, October 29, 2018).

6. Conclusions

So, how do Andrés Manuel López Obrador and his government tell the story of the poor and environmentally vulnerable, and to what extent have they managed to channel political action towards environmental justice? There is no doubt that López Obrador's rhetoric and political agenda reflect ideals and values based on the postmaterial arguments outlined in the second section of this paper. He constantly attacks *the neoliberal period* and the governments that implemented market liberal policies, and argues that neoliberalism in Mexico has only fostered corruption.

In both cases, the fight against fuel theft and the Santa Lucía International Airport, López Obrador's political action does reflect a conception of environmental justice based on distribution, recognition, participation and capabilities. The (mal)distribution of environmental risks and privileges are indeed taken into consideration, as, for example, the communities living close to the pipelines were given special medical care after the explosion on January 18, 2019 (Presidencia de la República, January 19, 2019). The indigenous communities living close to the pipelines and Santa Lucía were consulted and taken into consideration during policy-making processes. Moreover, in the Santa Lucía case, the communities neighboring the Texcoco Lake and their ways of knowing were considered legitimate for the conservation and caretaking of the lake. This accounts for recognition and participation. Finally, capabilities to take advantage of the resources at hand were also fostered in both cases: in the first case with the implementation of programs such as *Tandas para el Bienestar*, and in the second case with investments in infrastructure that enables the access to drinking water for consumption and food production.

López Obrador's rhetoric, however, seems to portray the environment as a secondary problem. *The environment* as a character is often excluded from the story. It is important in some occasions for the emplottment of the setting: Mexico is a country rich in natural resources, or the corrupt political elite has stolen the natural riches that belongs the people. But the environment is seldom talked about as something that has to be kept from harm. Interestingly, despite the environment being a peripheral matter in López Obrador's political agenda and rhetoric, important aspects of his political action reflect indeed the conception of environmental justice discussed above. We might not be able to draw generalizing conclusions from these two cases and claim that, in every imaginable case, a comprehensive conception of social justice inevitably leads to environmental justice. But it seems that Andrés

Manuel López Obrador happened here to, intentionally or not, take the environment into account. In the end, social and environmental justice might be two sides of the same coin after all.

References

Conger, Lucy, 2018. "Barrer con la corrupción. El gran desafío de AMLO", *Latin Trade (Spanish)*, vol. 26, n. 3, pp. 58-59. [Electronic]. http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=b1af1008-2da7-4215-ab00-abd4e077be59%40sdc-v-sessmgr06. Access: 2019-05-14.

Czarnecki, Lukasz, 2017. "Problemáticas en la transición económica y sociodemográfica de México y Vietnam", *Problemas del Desarrollo*, vol. 48, n. 188, pp. 55-88. [Electronic]. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpd.2017.01.004. Access: 2019-05-14.

Czarniawska, Barbara, 2004. *Narratives in social science research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Eckersley, Robyn, 2004. *The Green State. Rethinking Democracy and Sovereignty*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Göttsche, Dirk, 2017. "Post-imperialism, postcolonialism and beyond: Towards a periodization of cultural discourse about colonial legacies", *Journal of European Studies*, vol. 47(2), pp. 111-128. [Electronic]. https://journals-sagepub-com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/doi/10.1177/0047244117700070. Access: 2019-05-14.

Hulme, Peter, 1995. "Including America", *Ariel*, vol. 26(1), pp. 117–23. [Electronic].http://resolver.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/openurl?sid=EBSCO:hlh&genre=article&issn=00041327&isbn=&volume=26&issue=1&date=19950101&spage=117&pages=117-123&title=Ariel&atitle=Including%20America.&btitle=Ariel&jtitle=Ariel&series=&aulast=Hulme%2C%20Peter&id=DOI:. Access: 2019-05-14.

Instituto Nacional de los Pueblos Indígenas, April 29, 2019. *En consulta libre, previa e informada a la comunidad indígena de Xaltocan, se aprobó el proyecto del aeropuerto en Santa Lucía*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/inpi/prensa/en-consulta-libre-previa-e-informada-a-la-comunidad-indigena-de-xaltocan-se-aprobo-el-proyecto-del-aeropuerto-en-santa-lucia-198270. Access: 2019-05-16.

Ita, Ana de, 2019. "AMLO: claroscuros de propuestas para el campo", *Cotidiano - Revista de la Realidad Mexicana*, ene/feb 2019, n. 213, pp. 56-66. [Electronic]. http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&sid=b2ee65dc-d780-45d6-9500-ce2bf4ceae1b%40sessionmgr4010. Access: 2019-05-14.

López, Airée Coronado, 2018. "*Historia mínima del Partido Revolucionario Institucional* by Rodríguez Rogelio Hernández", *Foro Internacional*, vol. 58, n. 2 (232) (Abril-Junio 2018), pp. 381-389. [Electronic]. https://www-jstor-org.ludwig.lub.lu.se/stable/26387844. Access: 2019-05-14.

López Obrador Andrés Manuel, December 1, 2018. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITXHhmEHDA8. Access: 2019-05-16.

Manzo, Kate, 2013. "Do colonialism and slavery belong to the past?" in Jenny Edkins & Maja Zehfuss (ed.) *Global Politics*, 2nd edition. New York, NY: Routledge, pp. 314-337.

McBeth, Mark K. – Jones, Michael D. – Shanahan, Elizabeth A., 2014. "The Narrative Policy Framework" in Paul A. Sabatier & Christopher M. Weible (ed.) *Theories of the Policy Process*, 3rd edition. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.

Merchand, Marco A., 2015. "Estado y reforma energética en México", *Problemas del Desarrollo*, vol. 46, n. 183, pp. 117-139. [Electronic]. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rpd.2015.10.006. Access: 2019-05-14.

Merkel, Wolfgang & Krück, Mirko, 2004. "Social Justice and Democracy: Investigating the Link", *International Politics and Society (Springer)*, vol. 2004, n. 1, pp. 134-157. [Electronic]. https://www.fes.de/ipg/arc_04_set/set_01_04e.htm. Access: 2019-05-15.

"Mexico under AMLO", 2018, *Strategic Comments*, 24:6, pp. iii-iv. [Electronic]. https://doi.org/10.1080/13567888.2018.1506309. Access: 2019-05-14.

Presidencia de la Rpública, December 2, 2018. *Inicia proceso de venta del avión TP01 "José María Morelos y Pavón"*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/inicia-proceso-de-venta-del-avion-tp01-jose-maria-morelos-y-pavon?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, December 7, 2018. *Conferencia de Prensa de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos, Andrés Manuel López Obrador del viernes 7 de Diciembre de 2018*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/conferencia-de-prensa-del-presidente-de-los-estados-unidos-mexicanos-andres-manuel-lopez-obrador-del-viernes-7-de-diciembre-de-2018?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, December 20, 2018. *Compra de bonos Mexcat limpia el camino para iniciar aeropuerto en Santa Lucía, afirma presidente López Obrador*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/compra-de-bonos-mexcat-limpia-el-camino-para-iniciar-aeropuerto-en-santa-lucia-afirma-presidente-lopez-obrador. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la Rpública, December 27, 2018. *Conferencia de prensa del presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador 27 de diciembre 2018*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/conferencia-de-prensa-del-presidente-andres-manuel-lopez-obrador-27-de-diciembre-2018?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, December 28, 2018. *Conferencia de prensa del presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador 28 de diciembre 2018*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/conferencia-de-prensa-del-presidente-andres-manuel-lopez-obrador-28-de-diciembre-2018?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, January 21, 2019. *Conferencia de prensa del Presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador del 21 de enero de 2019*. [Elecronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/conferencia-de-prensa-del-presidente-andres-manuel-lopez-obrador-del-21-de-enero-de-2019?idiom=es. 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, January 15, 2019. *Programas de Bienestar llegarán a poblaciones aledañas a ductos de combustible, anuncia presidente López Obrador*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/programas-de-bienestar-llegaran-a-poblaciones-aledanas-a-ductos-de-combustible-anuncia-presidente-lopez-obrador. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, January 18, 2019. *Conferencia de prensa del presidente Andrés Manuel López Obrador 17 de enero de 2019*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/conferencia-de-prensa-del-presidente-andres -manuel-lopez-obrador-17-de-enero-de-2019-187387?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, January 24, 2019. *El que tenga menos recibirá más, afirma presidente López Obrador en gira por Puebla e Hidalgo*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/el-que-tenga-menos-recibira-mas-afirma-pre sidente-lopez-obrador-en-gira-por-puebla-e-hidalgo?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, April 26, 2019. *Presidente López Obrador presenta proyecto de Sistema Aeroportuario de la Ciudad de México*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/presidente-lopez-obrador-presenta-proyecto- de-nuevo-sistema-aeroportuario-de-la-ciudad-de-mexico?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Presidencia de la República, April 29, 2019. *En 2021 será inaugurado nuevo aeropuerto en Santa Lucía; presupuesto se manejará con honestidad, afirma presidente López Obrador*. [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/presidencia/prensa/en-2021-sera-inaugurado-nuevo-aeropuerto- en-santa-lucia-presupuesto-se-manejara-con-honestidad-afirma-presidente-lopez-obr ador?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Schlosberg, David, 2007. *Defining Environmental Justice. Theories, Movements and Nature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Secretaría de Hacienda y Crédito Público, December 11, 2018. *Comunicado de prensa n°5. Anuncio de modificaciones a la oferta pública de recompra y solicitud de consentimiento.* [Electronic]. https://www.gob.mx/shcp/prensa/comunicado-de-prensa-n-5-anuncio-de-modificacio nes-a-la-oferta-publica-de-recompra-y-solicitud-de-consentimiento?idiom=es. Access: 2019-05-16.

Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, November 3, 2015. *Presentan AMLO, Rioboó y Samaniego Propuesta Alterna al Nuevo Aeropuerto del DF*. [Electronic]. https://lopezobrador.org.mx/2015/11/03/presenta-amlo-rioboo-y-samaniego-presenta -propuesta-alterna-al-nuevo-aeropuerto-del-df/. Access: 2019-05-16.

Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, September 3, 2016. *Contratismo, robo y corrupción detrás de nuevo aeropuerto de la Ciudad de México: AMLO*. [Electronic]. https://lopezobrador.org.mx/2016/09/03/asambleas-informativas-en-escobedo-y-abasolo-coahuila/. Access: 2019-05-16.

Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, October 11, 2018. *No existe inconveniente técnico para la operación simultánea del AICM y Santa Lucía: Jiménez Espriú*. [Elecronic]. https://lopezobrador.org.mx/2018/10/11/viable-y-factible-la-construccion-del-nuevo-aeropuerto-en-la-base-de-santa-lucia-jimenez-espriu/. Access: 2019-05-16.

Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, October 29, 2018. *Termina vinculación entre poder económico y poder político; se respetará decisión ciudadana de construir aeropuerto de Santa Lucía: AMLO*. [Electronic]. https://lopezobrador.org.mx/2018/10/29/en-3-anos-estara-listo-sistema-aeroportuario-santa-lucia-aicm-y-ai-toluca/. Access: 2019-05-16.

Sitio Oficial de Andrés Manuel López Obrador, October 31, 2018. *Impacto fiscal de la cancelación del Nuevo Aeropuerto Internacional de México en Texcoco*. [Electronic]. https://lopezobrador.org.mx/2018/10/31/comunicado-sobre-el-impacto-fiscal-de-la-cancelacion-del-nuevo-aeropuerto-internacional-de-mexico-en-texcoco/. Access: 2019-05-16.

Transparency International, 2018. *Corruption Perception Index 2018*. [Electronic]. https://www.transparency.org/cpi2018. Access: 2019-05-16.

Wagenaar, Hendrik, 2011. *Meaning in action: interpretation and dialogue in policy analysis*. New York: Routledge.

Watts, Rebecca, 2019. "NAFTA in times of AMLO", *NACLA Report on the Americas*, vol. 51, n. 1, pp. 9-12. [Electronic]. https://doi.org/10.1080/10714839.2019.1593681. Access: 2019-05-14.

Weizenmann, Pedro, 2018. "Mexico's clamor for change. López Obrador and his people's expectations", *Harvard International Review*, vol. 39, n. 4 (Fall 2018), pp. 9-11. [Electronic].

http://eds.b.ebscohost.com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&sid=ae741525-f853-45a7-a432-dcf96a76edde%40sessionmgr4010. Access: 2019-05-14.