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Call for Papers

Cultural Transformations in/from Mexico

Hans Bouchard (ed.)

In Mexico today, the term "transformation" has become closely associated with the political discourse and project of President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), who refers to it as the "Fourth Transformation." The term is also commonly used in discussions around Industry 4.0 and digital transformation, which were accelerated during the Covid-19 pandemic on a global scale. In cultural contexts, transformations are of particular interest as they allow for negotiations and critiques of power dynamics - including postcolonial or neoliberal perspectives (Canclini, Gramsci) – and explorations of identity and otherness through concepts such as cultural appropriation.

This issue aims to highlight the importance of "cultural transformations," which are often overlooked or treated as latent elements in the face of major social, technological, ecological, and economic transformations. However, culture(s) form the substrate and foundation of these transformations. We will examine the "cultural" approach from various forms such as texts, media, practices, systems, and dynamics in and from Mexico. Through concepts such as cultural appropriation, transculturation, and transculturality (Rogers, Welsch), as well as between-places and in-between spaces (Mignolo, Borsò), we aim to highlight the forms, dynamics, and systems of the "cultural."

The concept of "transformation" can be seen as an opening in multiple ways. Firstly, it provides a synchronic perspective that enables analysis of significant changes and contacts, as well as their corresponding medial-cultural formats, from periods and concepts such as Pre-Hispanic, Colony, Independence, and Revolution (e.g., drawing on Koselleck's definition of crisis). Secondly, it is of particular interest to highlight transformations as latencies and diversifications in the face of totalizing concepts.

Medial-cultural forms are often adapted and transformed to fit different contexts and formats, as seen in the recent inclusion of Mayan culture – blended with Atlantis – in the Marvel Cinematic Universe through the character and antagonist Namor and his Talocan village in the film *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever*. This construction allows for intermediate links between Vasconcelos' *The Cosmic Race* and a certain *Clash of Civilizations* (Huntington) between Wakanda, Talocan, and the Western world. This transformation and recontextualization – transporting a pre-Hispanic cultural location into a superhero universe – highlights both the desire for authenticity, demonstrated by incorporating the Mayan language through linguistic and cultural coaching, and the importance of forms and their formulations for productive analysis of cultural dynamics in and from Mexico. This shows us that it is the forms and their formulations that make us think and analyze cultural dynamics in and from Mexico in a productive way, in terms of discussing, managing and making visible those important systems and dynamics that are left out or remain latent.

I invite all researchers in the broad field of humanities and social sciences to contribute to the approach to these cultural transformations in and from Mexico.

For a close thematic orientation, please refer to previous iMex issues, in particular [III. *pop.Mex*](#), [XI. *Nación y Nacionalismo*](#) y [XIX. *México en el mundo – el mundo en México*](#).

Topics

- Popular culture and transcultural processes: transcultural objects and practices within different cultures and their transformations; or from Mexico to the world and back.
- Forms of knowledge within popular cultures: discourses, communities, practices and spaces; What kind of knowledges lie within forms and practices?
- Theoretical discussions of cultural transformations: How can we situate those different cultural dimensions within processes of identity and Otherness? What can be identified as trigger of those transformations and how do they come into being?
- Cultural transformations from a diachronic and synchronic perspectives.
- Intersections and conflicts regarding cultural transformations: from transculturation to cultural dominance and appropriation.

Formal criteria

- Length 15-20 pages or its equivalent. Approximately 5000 to 7000 words.
- Abstract of up to 200 words, bio-bibliographic information (profession, main areas of research and recent publications) not exceeding 10 lines.
- 5 key words to identify the content of the article that are not repeated in the title of the text.

For more details on submission please consult our website:

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Articles can be sent to the e-mail address of the editor of this dossier Hans Bouchard (Universität Siegen; Hans.Bouchard@uni-siegen.de) until **November 30, 2023** in Microsoft Word format.

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