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The End of the Recurring Guerrilla in Mexico?



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Abstract

This research focuses on the historical emergence of guerrilla movements intended to overthrow the post-revolutionary Mexican State. The revolutionary process of 1910 consolidated a corporatist nation-state led by the ruling party (Institutional Revolutionary Party, PRI), which had been in power for 70 years.

In 1999, Mexican writer Carlos Montemayor showed that Mexico has been characterized as a region with a marked and permanent presence of guerrilla movements. Twenty-five years later (2024), a dissipation of these expressions can be observed. The objective of this work is to analyze the internal and external processes that have generated this possible rest. Methodology: the research is qualitative, the phenomenological-hermeneutical method was used and a documentary investigation was carried out, returning to four elements: state violence, the reestablishment of institutions (AMLO's triumph in 2018), consolidation of revolutionary power and the strengthening of drug trafficking. Results: It is maintained that there is a rest in the guerrilla recurrence, the result of four processes: 1. The dissolution of guerrilla groups by the Mexican State. 2. The triumph of a center-left government in 2018. 3. A change in the Latin American paradigm involving guerrilla militants obtaining positions of popular representation and 4. Strengthening drug trafficking groups in the country.

Keywords

Guerrilla movements • Post-revolutionary Mexican state • Latin America



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The End of the Recurring Guerrilla in Mexico?

Mexico has been characterized by the permanent presence of guerrilla movements seeking to overthrow the post-revolutionary Mexican State. This continuity is the reason Montemayor (1999) discussed the recurring guerrilla. When conducting a genealogy of the guerrilla movements that have emerged against the nation-state, it was found that these began to germinate in the 1940s with the outbreak of the Jaramillista movement in Morelos. The State put down this movement.

Subsequently, in the sixties and seventies, a cycle of guerrilla mobilization was generated at both the rural and urban levels. In the rural area, the Popular Guerrilla Group (GPG) emerged in Chihuahua, the National Revolutionary Civic Association (ACNR) led by Genaro Vázquez and the Execution Brigade of the Party of the Poor (BA-PDLP) of Lucio Cabañas, both of which were present in Guerrero. Note that these movements were the result of the erosion of legal and institutional means of demand and popular participation (Martínez-Zavala, 2011).

As for the urban guerrilla groups, the Revolutionary Action Movement (MAR), the National Liberation Forces (FLN), the September 23 Communist League (LC23S), among others, emerged; which were the result of the ideological radicalization of the student sector of higher secondary and higher education (Martínez-Zavala, 2011). The Latin American context claimed the seizure of political power through revolutionary struggle through processes such as the Cuban Revolution in 1959, the triumph of the Sandinista Revolution in 1979, the socialist government of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1970, and the guerrilla uprisings in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Colombia (Nolff, 1982; López and Rivas, 1999; Figueroa, 2003).

Unlike Latin American cases, Mexican State deactivated guerrilla movements. However, survivors of the GPG regrouped and formed the Peasant Workers' Revolutionary Party, the People's Union-Poor People's Party (PROCUP-PDLP), which became operational in the 1980s (Martínez-Torres, 2006; Montemayor, 2010). In these years, said guerrilla movement carried out actions of military harassment, clandestine work to consolidate support bases among the population, and provided support to Latin American guerrilla expressions such as the case of Nicaragua and El Salvador (EPR, 2005-09-09). The PROCUP-PDLP, based on a Marxist-Leninist ideology, formed the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), which was present and operational in the 1990s.

In this period, a paradigm shift was experienced at both the national and Latin American levels: the consolidation of neoliberal projects and the erosion of socialism and communism. In Mexico, it seemed that the dominant power had managed to deactivate the guerrilla movements; However, two protest expressions emerged that opened a new cycle of mobilization and struggle: the emergence of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) and the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR). Both movements were present and operational in the first decade of the 21st century. They shared the consolidation of a more just world, but their strategies and conceptions of struggle were different (Martínez-Zavala, 2015).

The EZLN, adapting to the ideas of a globalized world and questioning the classic canon of popular struggle, was announced in 2005 in the Sixth Declaration of the Lacandona Jungle, a change in its fighting strategy. They left aside the classic vision of the Marxist guerrilla and proposed the consolidation of Good Government Boards and Autonomous Municipalities, whose dissolution was announced on October 5, 2023.

For its part, the EPR continued with the political-military strategy of a classic Marxist-Leninist guerrilla, conducting political-military actions governed by the Popular Revolutionary Democratic Party (PDPR). The EPR conducted a series of political-military actions from 1994 to 2007, years in which it activated committees



in states such as Guerrero (June 1996); Michoacán (August, 1996); Tabasco (September, 1996); Oaxaca (September, 1996); Chiapas (September, 1996); Hidalgo (October, 1996); Valley of Mexico (October, 1996); Veracruz (December 1996); Puebla (July 2003); Chihuahua (April 2005); and Guanajuato (July 2007). This activity was very irregular due to the internal crisis they suffered during the years 1997-1998, which was due to the detachment of militants who formed other guerrilla movements (Martínez-Zavala, 2015).

Subsequently, they were present in 2006 during the movement of the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO), in which two main leaders disappeared. This generated a decantation of military action and presence, taking its actions to the political sphere with the formation of a mediating Commission that intervened in the search for its two militants and in the issuance of political statements (Martínez-Zavala, 2015).

Currently (2024), it seems that there is passivity in the actions of guerrilla movements in Mexico. Since 2018, their public appearances have been very limited and have consisted of the issuance of propaganda statements. This suggests the probability of *the end of the recurring guerrilla movement*. It is argued that this response responds to four causes. First, the dissolution of the guerrilla groups by the Mexican State. Second, it is the result of the triumph of a center-left government in 2018 that brought together social discontent and strengthened legal avenues for citizen participation. Third, a change in the Latin American paradigm: the consolidation of political power by leaders of Latin American guerrilla groups who have managed to obtain high-level popular representation positions such as the presidency of the republic. Fourth, the strengthening and expansion of drug trafficking groups in the regions of the country.

This research contributes to the current study of guerrilla movements in Mexico. A review of literature published during the years 2023 and 2024 was conducted using the keyword “guerrillas in Mexico”, and the publication of historical articles was found. Research related to the history of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) was conducted (Estrada, 2024, Harvey, 2024; Solís, 2024; Villafuerte, 2024); analysis of the convergences in the ideologies of the EZLN and Lopez Obradorism (Ackerman, 2024); articles on the history of the September 23 Communist League in the 1980s (García, 2024; Lechuga, 2024; Reyes, 2024); with respect to the movement of Lucio Cabañas Barrientos that took place in the 1970s (Fregoso, 2023; Guadarrama, 2024); a critique and a look from a gender perspective on the historical construction of the guerrilla in the country (Padilla and Fernández, 2024); research on the Revolutionary Action Movement (MAR) (Confino, 2024) and about the sick people of Sinaloa during the 1970s (Soto, 2024). This review highlighted the existing theoretical gap in relation to the current guerrilla movements in the country. This research has the interest of placing the possible end of the classic canon of the Marxist-Leninist revolutionary struggle in Mexico as a popular alternative to generate social transformations.

Methodology

This research was based on a qualitative methodology, the phenomenological-hermeneutic method was used; since this method “emphasizes the science of phenomena. This lies in allowing and perceiving what is shown, as it is shown to itself and as it is shown for itself” (Fuster, 2019, p. 204). This method allows us to understand the phenomenon of the Mexican guerrilla in its complexity by analyzing the causes that have given rise to the apparent rest in the emergence of guerrilla movements in current times. It is assumed that there was a cessation in the emergence of guerrilla groups in Mexico from 2018 to date (2024) due to four social events: 1. State violence generated in previous years; 2. The political alternation that occurred in the 2018 elections and that caused the establishment of the hegemonic power of the institutions; 3. The



vindication of state power through the triumph of former guerrillas over the presidency of the republic and 4. Strengthening drug trafficking groups in the country. The documentary research technique was used to conduct this research. As a first step, from the perspective of grounded theory, four codes were established: 1. State violence; 2. Institutional reestablishment; 3. Ex-guerrillas in power; 4. Drug trafficking. Once the initial categories were selected, the information was collected, analyzed, and the document was written.

State Violence: The Dissolution of Guerrillas

Guerrilla movements are expressions that attempt to overthrow the State and establish themselves as ruling elites. When talking about the State, a sphere is conceived in which the relations of force between the dominant elite and subordinates are expressed. In this arena of dispute, the dominant elite strives to retain legitimacy by using domination and consensus. According to Villavicencio (2003), "the punitive function of the Social and Democratic State originates in its sovereignty to identify certain behaviors as punishable and establish the corresponding sanction" (p. 93). In this exercise of domination, they use violence to eliminate dissent and consensus to allow the rest of the population to accept the need for such acts.

Violence is a two-way process. According to Marx and Engels (cited by Domenach, 1981), violence is exercised from both social poles: by the dominant and the oppressed. Violence is understood as the "use of force, open or hidden, in order to obtain from an individual, or a group, something that they do not want to freely consent to" (Domenach, 1981, p.36). Violence is an act of power that is exercised to achieve certain objectives. It has an impact on the behavior of the other, not only as a result of its execution; but, with the warning of being carried out (Figuerola, 2001).

The history of contemporary Mexico has been plagued by violent actions that seek the permanence of the dominant power and dissolve expressions of dissidence. In response to this, popular sectors became radicalized to the point of establishing counterpower through revolutionary violence. The first expression generated against the post-revolutionary Mexican State was the Jaramillista movement; which emerged in Morelos and was the result of a gradual erosion of the legal channels used by the population to open democratic spaces. The leader of the movement, Rubén Jaramillo, was a member of the Zapatista movement. His ideas were based on agrarian reform that would provide peasants with the rights of equality and freedom.

During the administration of Lázaro Cárdenas, the Jaramillistas contributed to the consolidation of the nation-state. Later, they joined the project directed by Manuel Ávila Camacho; however, the latter abandoned the agrarian plan, sparking peaceful mobilizations, petitions, and strikes in sugar mills. The local elite responded by repressing these actions, triggering the first guerrilla uprising. In 1943 and 1944, Jaramillo visited various towns in Morelos and Puebla to establish support bases. However, in 1945, the Jaramillista movement rejoined the legal sphere, thanks to an amnesty led by Lázaro Cárdenas.

The Jaramillista movement sought to participate in local elections; it founded the Morelense Agrarian Workers Party (PAOM) and nominated Rubén Jaramillo as a candidate for governor of Morelos. The Jaramillistas, accused electoral fraud, took up arms for five years, returned to the legal path through another amnesty, and participated again in the 1957 electoral process. Again, they accused fraud, which is why they carried out a mobilization that was repressed by the government. Finally, in 1962, Rubén Jaramillo was murdered along with his family (Martínez-Zavala, 2011).

Consistent with the Jaramillista movement, guerrilla groups emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of the erosion of institutional means of popular struggle. In the states of Chihuahua and Guerrero, the Popular

Guerrilla Group (GPG), the National Revolutionary Civic Association (ACNR), and the Execution Brigade of the Party of the Poor (PDLP) were created, which were made up of peasants and teachers who suffered acts of repression by the State.

Similarly, in the 1970s, urban guerrilla groups emerged as a result of the ideological radicalization of the student sector, which faced violence in 1968, 1971, and 1973. Among some guerrilla movements, the Revolutionary Action Movement (MAR), the National Liberation Forces (FLN), and the Communist League September 23 (LC23S), were annihilated by the dominant elite. Each of these groups experienced the persecution, torture, and murder of their leaders and militants. Ramírez-Cuevas (2004) documented that a strategy used by state forces was to generate paranoia among guerrillas by executing those suspected of being traitors.

In the 1980s, former guerrilla fighters who survived state persecution formed the People's Union Peasant Workers Party (PROCUP). This movement carried out harassment actions against state, financial, and commercial institutions. The previous learning enabled them to overcome the attacks of the state to such a degree that they formed the Popular Revolutionary Army (EPR), an armed wing with which they consolidated committees in various regions of the country and managed to be operational in the 1990s and during the first years of the 21st century (Martínez-Zavala, 2011).

The Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) was publically launched in 1994, claiming itself as a Marxist guerrilla movement that sought to overthrow power through revolutionary violence. The impact and dissemination of this approach had internationally generated civil society organizations to monitor state actions; a phenomenon that gave rise to a more covert and cautious combat strategy on the part of the State. In 2005, the EZLN announced a change in the paradigm of struggle, abandoning the classic revolutionary revolt and establishing an alternative form of government that proposed the formation of government Juntas and ideological propaganda work.

For its part, the EPR conducted military harassment actions, placing it in the focus of national security institutions. Through various intelligence actions, the State confronted the guerrilla movement, causing casualties at all levels of its organizational structure, including the leaders of the General Command. Undoubtedly, the forced disappearance of two key guerrilla leaders generated a weakening of the movement's strength and capacity for action. An aspect that, together with the internal disagreements evidenced in the separation of militants to form new guerrilla organizations, generated a decline in the EPR and a weakening to establish itself as a counterweight. Currently, the presence of the movement has been reduced to the issuance of statements that establish an opinion on the situation in the country and limited ideological and dissemination work.

The violence exercised by the State has generated two reactions throughout the history of the guerrillas in the country. On the one hand, the violence exerted against social movements that sought to establish demands through institutional channels gave rise to the radicalization of popular sectors that saw armed struggle as the only possible way to generate necessary social changes. On the other hand, the systematic and specific violence, both material and symbolic, against the guerrilla groups contributed, along with other elements, to the interruption of the emergence of guerrilla movements in contemporary times, achieving social control by the State with respect to these types of expressions of dissent.

Recomposition in Popular Vote Credibility: The Triumph of a Center-Left Government in 2018

As noted above, the guerrilla movements in Mexico were the result of two processes. The first process refers to the response to the gradual erosion of institutional avenues for citizen participation. The second process refers to the radicalization of a popular sector that—due to its ideology—considers revolutionary violence as the most feasible way to establish another type of social organization.

It can be observed in the history of rebel Mexico that the popular perception of fraud in the electoral elections has been decisive in the ideological radicalization of a sector of the population. This, in addition to the violence exercised by the State against non-conformists, generates a breeding ground for radical dissidents.

It is true that the State has managed to deactivate the various guerrilla expressions; However, these struggles have had an impact on the power of the dominant elite, whose hegemony was established unevenly in the different regions of the country (Martínez-Zavala, 2015). This characteristic has generated various levels of mobilization and different means of popular expression, but correspondingly, the erosion of the ruling party allowed an alternation in political and leadership positions at both the local, state, and federal levels.

Since 2000, Mexico has experienced political change in the presidency of the republic. In both 2000 and 2006, the candidate of the National Action Party (PAN) won; in 2012, the candidate of the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) won; and in 2018, the candidate of the National Regeneration Movement party (MORENA) won. During the six-year term of Vicente Fox (2000-2006) there was activity by guerrilla movements such as the EPR and its offshoots the ERPI, the FARP, the EVRP, the CCRP-CJ28J and TDR-EP; which considered this triumph as a continuation of the policies and previous governments. The FARP stated the following:

It is a lie that the transition to democracy is taking place; what is clearly seen is that financial capital moved its ideological, economic, propaganda, and political machinery to achieve a “change”; but a simple change of post. (FARP, 2000- 07- 24)

Felipe Calderón's six-year term was a period in which the EPR had high political-military activity. The objective of this action was to demand the appearance alive of two key leaders of the guerrilla group who disappeared during the maelstrom generated by the Popular Assembly of the People of Oaxaca (APPO). One of the operations with the greatest resonance were the explosions in the PEMEX pipelines in Celaya, Salamanca, Coroneo, and Valle de Santiago, Guanajuato, on July 5, 2007 and in Querétaro on July 10, 2007.

Subsequently, in 2008, the EPR requested the formation of a Mediation Commission composed of public figures recognized for their career in defense of human rights in the country. The Said Commission undertook dialogue actions and legal procedures to determine the whereabouts of the two EPERRA militants; However, over time and as a result of the wear and tear generated by the slow actions of government agencies, the Mediation Commission ceased to be a central figure in the guerrilla group's search for negotiation (Martínez-Zavala, 2015).

During the six-year term of Enrique Peña Nieto (2012-2018), EPER's actions were reduced to the issuance of statements in which they expressed their political position regarding a specific issue. It should be noted that both the PRI candidate's campaign and his government were marred by protests against student, teacher,

and popular mobilizations, among others, who were dissatisfied with the return of the PRI to power. One of the movements with the greatest popular presence was the one led by Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who was accused of having won the presidential elections in 2006-2012 and 2012-2018.

López Obrador participated again in the presidential election for the period 2018-2024, the year in which he won after his third attempt (2006, 2012, 2018). Navarrete (2023) warns that this victory was achieved—in part—due to the concerted discourse he maintained with the social movements opposed to the government. Said author pointed out that the MORENA candidate placed conflict issues on his political agenda “such as canceling the new airport in Texcoco, repealing the educational reform, removing pensions from former presidents, among others” (p. 347).

Concordantly, Anguiano (2019) asserted that the victory achieved in 2018 was based on the ability of the Morenista candidate to incorporate leaders of antagonistic ideologies. López Obrador added the following points to his campaign:

Friends and enemies of mining extractivism, defenders of the environment and long-standing promoters of transgenic seeds, neoliberals and developmentalists, supporters of the San Andrés Accords on indigenous rights and culture inspired by the EZLN, along with farmers, paramilitaries and defenders of executors of the Acteal massacre, in Chiapas; sinister characters suspected of links to organized crime and enthusiastic newcomers to state politics. PRI members, PAN members, PRD members, former members of all parties and prominent figures of the power mafia. (Anguiano, 2019, p.144)

Anguiano (2019) stated that the 2018 presidential succession occurred in a worn-out political and social context, with a “long crisis of the State [...], the degradation of national life and the loss of legitimacy of state institutions” (p. 125). Undoubtedly, this context allowed the López Obrador leadership to integrate the discontent of large and diverse sectors of the population. Moreover, this victory represented the restoration of electoral bodies and the credibility that voters can exercise vertical accountability through casting their votes.

It is argued that López Obrador’s victory filled the political vacuum that Roderos (2014) notes as one of the characteristics of representative democracies that experience a distancing between leaders and the population, due to “the real inability of public officials to respond.” to the needs and demands of citizens” (p.164). This process generated the restoration of the hegemony of the Mexican State, which to date (2024) is primarily sustained by the generation of consensus among the population. It is stated that this phenomenon of containment and consensus has had an impact on the germination of guerrilla movements as a strategy used by certain sectors of the population to convey their demands and generate a counterweight to the dominant power.

The consensus established by the López Obrador government responds to two areas: material and ideological. The material is being built through agreements established by the federal government with groups that, in previous periods, served as counterpowers, such as the National Coordinator of Education Workers (CNTE) (Flores, 2024), some parents of the 43 Normalistas disappeared on September 26, 2014 (Guerrero, 2024), as well as among the poor and vulnerable population through the delivery of economic support to older adults, people with disabilities, young students and women heads of family. Regarding the ideological sphere, through political propaganda and the morning speeches issued by the President of the Republic on

open television and radio channels, it is widely accepted that this government fights corruption, enrichment, nepotism, injustice, and inequality. (Flores and Amador, 2022).

The Guerrilla in Power

The third element that affects the interruption of the recurrent emergence of guerrilla movements is linked to the reconfiguration of powers and leadership in Latin America. In the region, there has been a search for peace between the guerrillas and the State; as well as a trend of militants who have joined the legal route, obtaining political leadership positions at important levels such as the presidency of their countries. This generates a change in the paradigm of struggle and builds a spirit of the times (*Zeitgeist*) that strengthens the sovereignty of institutions.

Undoubtedly, the case of Nicaragua with the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was the result of the push generated by the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959. The FSLN began operations in the 1960s as a Marxist-Leninist guerrilla movement. that overthrew the Somoza government and established itself as a hegemonic power, ruling in 1979 and 1990. In 1983, the FSLN was established as a party and participated in the presidential elections, obtaining victory in 1984 and losing the elections in 1990 (Martí i Puig, 2002).

The movement remained as a party and returned to the electoral contest, winning elections in 2007, 2011, 2016, and 2021 with the candidacy of Daniel Ortega, who has been in power for four consecutive terms. Journalistic reports indicate that in the 2021 election process, Ortega won with 75% of the votes; but in this case, there was 80% abstentionism (Arciniegas, 2021). Since the first period, the said government has enjoyed good acceptance by countries and international organizations. Cuadra (2022) maintains that his arrival “coincided in time with a trend of political change in Latin America that was favorable to his purposes: the existence and arrival to the Presidency of a series of leftist governments through electoral means” (párr. 16).

Likewise, during this push, José “Pepe” Mujica obtained the presidency of the Republic of Uruguay from 2010 to 2015. Mujica was a member of the National Liberation Movement-Tupamaros (MLN-T), an organization that was operational in the decades of the sixties and seventies, which sought to overthrow the government of Jorge Pacheco Areco. Several leaders, including Pepe Mujica, were arrested and imprisoned for twelve years. Upon leaving, in the 1980s, the ex-militants abandoned the armed struggle and joined the electoral struggle, obtaining victory with Pepe Mujica in 2008 (Schmal, 2011).

Brazil is another Latin American country that has experienced the presence of guerrilla groups seeking to overthrow the military dictatorship that was established from 1964 to 1985. The National Liberation Command (COLINA) was a Marxist guerrilla movement that sought to overthrow power through an armed struggle and to consolidate a communist country. Dilma Rousseff was a leader of that organization. She was imprisoned for two years and later joined the institutional struggle until she obtained the presidency of Brazil during the period 2011-2016 (Pattaro and Delfini, 2017).

Similarly, El Salvador was under the leadership of Salvador Sánchez Cerén, who was a member of the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN) and served as president from 2014 to 2019. This guerrilla movement underwent a process of ideological and organizational transformation from an armed group in the 1970s to a political party in the 1990s (Martínez-Álvarez, 2011). As Pérez-Salazar (2014) very correctly points out, the triumph of Salvador Sánchez Cerén in 2011, “is linked to a new phenomenon in Latin America: that of people who took up arms against the State and who now, thanks to The peace processes carried out in the region in recent decades come to power through democratic means” (párr. 3).

Finally, in Colombia, Gustavo Petro, a former activist of the April 19 Movement (M-19), won the presidency of his country from 2022 to 2026. The M-19 was an urban guerrilla that suspended its armed activities in the 1990s. In a formal act before delegates and representatives of the Latin American governments, Commander Carlos Pizarro ordered: "For Colombia, for peace, leave weapons!" (Grabe, 2010, p.1). The triumph of Gustavo Petro represented the consolidation of the first left-wing president in that country and the continuation of the peace treaties (de los Reyes, 2022).

Strengthening Drug Trafficking Groups in the Country

Martínez-Zavala (2015) warned that hegemonic power was established unevenly in the various regions of the country, leaving pockets or power vacuums that became spaces of dispute both by guerrilla movements and by drug trafficking groups that settled with the purpose of weaving networks among the population, controlling areas and strengthening their power. In the case of the state of Michoacán, the capacity for popular cooptation was greater by drug trafficking groups than by the *eperrista* guerrillas that sought to establish support bases in the area during the 1990s. This was because the Marxist-Leninist guerrillas offered the population a better life when the revolutionary struggle triumphed. On the other hand, drug trafficking groups, in the best of cases, offered an immediate solution to the poverty and precariousness in which the population found themselves.

Currently, the ability of drug trafficking groups to incorporate residents of various regions into their ranks continues to be a tangible reality. In 2023, the civil society organization International Crisis Group (2024) interviewed one of the leaders of the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación, who, when asked about what the losses they had suffered due to the open war between different organizations for the control of various areas of the country, answered: "There is always human filling" (p. 20).

According to what is documented by the International Crisis Group (2024), the strategies undertaken by previous governments for 20 years have not managed to reduce the actions and operations of drug trafficking groups; In fact, the strategy undertaken in this six-year term, which has consisted of "allowing greater room for maneuver to criminal groups in exchange for a reduction in visible violence" (p. 20), has generated a strengthening, growth and expansion of drug trafficking groups in the country. This, without a doubt, has impacted the operational and growth capacity of guerrilla movements because of two phenomena.

The first event has to do with the capacity of drug trafficking organizations to co-opt the population, either as members of their cartels or as part of the population that serves as the basis of support and protection. It has been documented that "to present themselves as more benevolent and responsive than the state or rival illegal groups, these groups distribute money and food, build infrastructure [...], organize community events, and assume the role of arbitrators in citizens' everyday disputes" (International Crisis Group, 2024, p.22). Through these strategies, the population perceives that economic and social problems can be resolved immediately.

A second phenomenon that is impacting the ability of guerrilla movements to gather—a result of the economic and social impact that drug trafficking has in the various regions of the country—consists of the displacement of the population due to the violence generated between opposing drug trafficking groups that are fighting. control of various territories. A recent example is the "serious humanitarian crisis [that] has been unleashed in southern Mexico, where more than 600 people from some Chiapas towns have fled the violence of criminal cartels and have crossed into Guatemala" (Morán and Menchú, 2024, párr. 1).

Conclusions

Violence is a phenomenon that has permeated the history of Mexico and Latin American countries. Violence is exercised by the state and by the population who see in armed struggle the possibility of establishing themselves in power. This perspective was part of a cycle that opened with the triumph of the Cuban Revolution in 1959, and that sought to be replicated in Mexico and other Latin American countries.

In the Mexican case, the guerrilla groups failed to achieve the objective of overthrowing the State and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. The State managed to deactivate these groups, but this dissolution did not eliminate the idea in a sector of the population that an alternative for change was found through armed means. Thus, the history of contemporary Mexico is marked by the constant emergence of guerrilla movements, a phenomenon Montemayor (1999) called *the recurrent guerrilla* in Mexico.

This study maintains that this persistence was the result of the lack of legal and institutional means that the population had to exercise counterpower. These struggles, despite having been dissolved, opened democratic spaces, producing political alternations in high-level leadership positions, such as obtaining the presidency of the republic.


Since approximately 2010, there has been a cessation in the emergence of guerrilla groups in Mexico; which invites us to question whether the end of the recurring guerrilla movement in the country has been reached. In this work, it is argued that yes, and that this is the result of four aspects that have strengthened the hegemony of the State. First, the dominant power was able to violently deactivate dissidents. Second, it is the result of the capacity for restoration and institutional strengthening that Andrés Manuel López Obrador brought with it for the 2018-2024 presidential period. This event generated a belief in society that there is vertical accountability; That is, the population can choose the leaders of the country. A third element responds to Latin American guerrilla militants who have left the armed path and have chosen to join institutional means. It seems that we are experiencing a Latin American cycle that abandons the use of revolutionary violence as an alternative to establishing itself as a hegemonic power, turning to legal and constitutional actions that allow the construction of democratic spaces. This phenomenon strengthens at the Latin American level the ideology of establishing changes from the structures of the modern State; Added to the fact that this process has generated geopolitical changes, establishing counterpowers that support democratic movements that seek to establish themselves in power through electoral processes, such as the triumph of López Obrador in 2018. Finally, the fourth element consists of the capacity growth of drug trafficking groups, which has generated a decrease in guerrilla expression for two reasons. First, the violence caused by the drug war has caused the displacement of residents seeking refuge and who, in previous processes, were the ones who served as support bases for the guerrilla groups. Second, drug traffickers have a greater capacity to co-opt the population because of the immediate economical solution they offer. This set of events gives rise to a pause in the recurrent emergence of the guerrilla in Mexico; which, as Montemayor (1999) points out, had been an action to which certain sectors of the population had constantly resorted, considering it the only or the most viable to carry out social transformations. Undoubtedly, this research has the limitations of research that focuses on recent history. One of these limitations is that it is only possible to use public sources, articles, essays, and newspaper notes to understand and analyze a phenomenon that is built in silence and survives from invisibility. This work maintains that the interruption of recurring guerrillas continues to occur during the government of Claudia Sheinbaum Pardo (2024-2030). The state struggle during that period did not involve revolutionary violence but rather violence between various drug trafficking groups.






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