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Review of "Cuando Los Mundos Convergen, terrorismo, narcotráfico y migración post 9/11 [When the Worlds Converge: Terrorism, Narco-traffic and Migration post 9/11]"

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Cuando los Mundos Convergen [When the Worlds Converge] is a masterful book authored by Nashira Chávez who deals with the problem of narco-traffic, terrorism and illegal migration. In this valuable research, a strong connection between 9/11 as a founding event and the international affairs of the U.S. is made evident. To some extent, perpetrators of this attack not only had a legal residency in the U.S., but also changed the ways this country considered migration. Simply because they were migrants, the problem of migration was on the agenda of officials. By the same token, the construction of what Chavez calls "the doctrine of national safety" appealed to a just state, which has the right to intervene in case of future attacks, or potential hazards. Though drug-abuse and narco-traffic was a big problem to diverse American administrations, 9/11 accelerated the conditions to weave a national discourse about homeland safety.
It is clear how the U.S. has historically built its bilateral international policies based on the doctrine of manifest destiny, which conferred to Americans the ethical authority not only to determine what is or not wrong, but also to expand its exemplary civilization to other non-democratic nations. The external world is given by some sectors of national politics as something unstable, uncertain and hostile. Neo-conservatism, a wave originated by the ideal of preemptive war during Reagan’s administration, migrated soon to Bush’s presidency to occupy privileged appointments. Per the ideology of this movement, the U.S. as the strongest power in the world should intervene if necessary any nation with the end of regulating democracy and peace, even in case of an imminent threat. Of course, this tough policy faced serious problems to overcome for Clinton’s and Bush’s father’s presidencies, who were both convinced that market and mutual cooperation aid programs would make the world a safer place for everyone. Rather, Neo-conservatism found in the character of George Walker Bush not only a fertile ground to arrive, but also it envisaged the opportunity of 9/11 as the platform for the U.S. to conduct a preventing war against “terrorism.”

Chavez proposes an understanding of how the discourse of neo-conservatism weakened the democratic institutions of the country to the extent to suffer a profound re-structuration of law and jurisprudence. The construction of homeland safety, Chavez adds, starts from the premise of a potential threat against the vulnerable American citizenry or to the financial powers, in the hands of asymmetrical forces which do not respect the classical codes of war. As a consequence, the administration monopolized and controlled any internal or external situation which would be hostile to the government. This changed the ways narco-traffic and migration have been monitored up to today. Bush’s government alludes to the sense of emergency, given by the tragedy of 9/11, to impose policies otherwise would be rejected. The archetype of an instable world helps to legitimate a “preventive war” that allows the U.S. direct intervention in autonomous but suspected nations.

The second stage of this book explores the discourse of Ecuador; a small Latin American country that in some cases adheres to American’s view while in others takes considerable distance. Though for Ecuadorians, Colombia represents a serious problem to solve, they believe the narco-traffic should be internally controlled. Undoubtedly, post 9/11, Colombia was the excuse of the U.S. to show how dangerous the migration and narco-traffic was for western modern states. Also supporting Colombia in its struggle against narco-traffic is necessary to prevent terrorism. The discourse of neo-conservatism, that way, signals to traffic as a sign of terrorism. The elements of securitization made from worker unions, mass migration and narco traffic became new threats to defeat. Conducive to the status-quo view, the Patriotic Act reinforced the needs to impose the reasoning of the state on legal jurisprudence. Individual rights, in the cradle of democracy, set the pace to the urgency of efficiency.
Though we found the present book of high quality, it is still important not to lose the sight that Chavez trivializes the connection of terrorism and democracy. As Korstanje and Skoll put it (2013), terrorism is a result of the production and work-organization in capitalist systems. Resulting from the European migration in 19th century, many anarchists landed in the U.S. looking for an opportunity for improvement. Their ideology was not only very dangerous for capital-owners, but also for the nation; they represented an obstacle to progress. The workforce, beyond the richness of owners, suffered many privations and worked under bad conditions. This condition paved the ways for American workers to embrace this radical anarchist’s ideology. Though some activists opted for attacking top-ranked officials (terrorists), others reserved their rights to organize the worker-union demands against the state. The American State kept part of anarchist discourse inside by giving the legal right to strike and other improvement to workers, while rejecting (by coaction) the most radical wing of anarchists to the external boundaries of the country. At a closer look, we must confess terrorism and work organizations were inextricably intertwined. In fact, the worker organization, as a disciplined version of violent activism, is terrorism by other means. Therefore, not only were the perpetrators of 9/11 professional and well-educated citizens who had legal residency in rich countries of Europe and even the U.S., but also their tactics were copied from a manual of management. This suggests that we share commonalities between strikes and terrorist attacks. Some of them are the surprise factor and extortion as a form of negotiation (Korstanje & Skoll, 2013; Skoll & Korstanje, 2013).

REFERENCES
