Mexico and the global problematic: power relations, knowledge and communication in neoliberal Mexico
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INTRODUCTION

Organised crime was responsible for more than 30,000 executions in Mexico between 2007 and 2010. To put this number into context, during this three year period in Mexico there were more executions perpetrated by organised crime than the total number of approximately 15,000 US soldiers killed in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2001 (1). Aside from the intensification of violence in Mexico, there has also been a considerable increase in the number of persons and specific populations entering the nightmare of poverty, misery, and extreme material constraint. Between 2007 and 2010, approximately 8 to 10 million persons fell into poverty, joining the 40 to 60 million Mexicans already labelled as poor (2). Under this grim introductory scenario of increased violence and material constraint, it may be pertinent to ask the question: Is Mexico in a state of war? Unfortunately, the answer is yes. Although Mexico is not involved in any international conflict, there is war going on inside the boundaries of the country. The war against drugs declared by the Mexican government in 2006 is the most visible manifestation of this conflict; however, it is not the only one. The war between drug cartels, the war declared by the Zapatistas and other rebel groups against the government, the low intensity warfare engaged in by the government against hostile or ‘dangerous’ groups are all different examples of the general state of the war experience in Mexico.

The uneven distribution of wealth and well-being is distressingly visible; it is not uncommon to see five year old children begging at the traffic lights everywhere in Mexico. Social disparity is evident and a proper explanation for the situation is difficult to find and articulate. A generalised attitude that thinks “reality is harsh, there’s nothing one can do to change that” paralyses any collective aim and destroys any hope and possibility to solve the most poignant social problems at the root. A large part of the problem lies precisely within the collective attitude, which in tandem reflects the individualised nature of Mexican society, regardless of social class. This modern individualism is coupled with a traditional social framework and a corrupt and rather inefficient state system.

Status, hierarchy, and power shape important aspects of Mexican society and therefore its collective attitudes. Status can lead to exacerbated individualism, hierarchy transforms into intransigent tradition and immobility, while power usually adopts the form of corruption and impunity. Unfortunately, these aspects systematically determine the nature of social and political relations in Mexico, thus preventing the possibility of reaching new social alternatives, and eventually achieving a more balanced social ‘equality’ and sense of justice in Mexico. Following this line, personal or collective merit, achievement, solidarity, and integrity are attitudes that are not very visible in what we can consider to be determinant factors in the Mexican ‘public sphere,’ to
frame this in Habermasian terms. Under this assumption of a lack of socially constructive attributes (solidarity, integrity, legitimation) in the contemporary Mexican public sphere, a general feeling of unrest and lack of trust is deeply rooted in society at large (3).

To approach this unrest and lack of trust, in this study the theoretical perspective that frames the social problem in Mexico forcefully deals with the notion of globalisation. In general, globalisation is understood as an encompassing planetary idea based on capitalist principles. Closely related to the idea that opening up national markets to international influence generates economic growth, globalisation thus affects Mexican territories and populations. Economic, political, technological, and cultural globalisation processes play a role in shaping the particular identity and possible subjectivities developed by individuals and groups everywhere in the world and within the Mexican nation state. However, one of the main problems brought about by the broad concept of globalisation is precisely the lack of suitable units of analysis to comprehend the correlation between contemporary global processes and the social problem, or what I define in this research as the global problematic, namely the experience of poverty and violence.

In a conference held at the University of Amsterdam in 2005, Ulrich Beck (4) stressed that the main problem hindering a proper analysis of globalisation, at least in the social sciences, is the lack of a proper unit of analysis. This concern is not minimal and rests at the core of the possibility of properly defining the idea of globalisation and notions associated with it (e.g. global poverty, global economy). On that particular occasion, Beck proposed cosmopolitanism and self-reflexive thinking as a possible way out of a lack of consensus on what we may understand as globalisation, and in tandem, to establish certain units of analysis, which may be used from within the social sciences to address the social problem.

This thesis ignites the discussion on the importance of developing a proper unit of analysis for contemporary globalisation, arguing that together with the conceptualisation of the social problem there is a need to address the so-called global problematic. The theoretical conceptualisation performed in this research is not meant to substitute conventional approaches towards the social problem in general, but to complement these views and frameworks in the hope to enable a better understanding of globalisation processes and the human problematic derived from them.

In this research, I propose the re-conceptualisation of the social problem as it is presented in the social sciences and humanities, in order to enable this concept to better fit global complexity. In very brief terms, the idea that I propose as a unit of analysis suitable for a research agenda on globalisation, capable of moving beyond a purely economic perspective, is what will be referred to as the global problematic. In this regard, the global problematic needs to be a unit of analysis that is
flexible, variable, and dynamic: a unit of analysis that can systematically approach the complexities of the processes of contemporary globalisation, in particular those related to the experience of poverty and violence in post-traditional societies (5).

The re-conceptualisation of the social problem into the global problematic may be explained by the idea that the aim of the global problematic is to collapse all social problems into one single problematic or set of interrelated problems. The global problematic approaches the social problem not as a myriad of problems to be independently analysed – poverty, violence, abuse, exploitation, malnutrition – but as the intensification of one complex problematic. Therefore, the global problematic approaches the social problem as a whole. This re-conceptualisation unifies undesired social outcomes into one unit of analysis, instead of having them as dispersed fields of sociological inquiry where poverty, violence, and other social problems are approached independently and not as a human condition that is manifested regardless of cultural, geographic, and national specificities.

To elaborate on the forms taken by the global problematic in the specific case of Mexico, there is a need to think the notion of globalisation within the social sciences and humanities. The main concern in global analysis is the asymmetries in distribution processes among nation states; for example, of ideas, medicines, education, technology, security, risk, disasters, goods, wealth, and natural resources. Following on from this, I argue that contemporary globalisation can be characterised as a process that organises and distributes change upon society. Beyond an economics approach driven by international politics based on nation-states, I propose that the study of contemporary globalisation could also refer to the analysis of the main social assemblages and power diagrams that organise societies, rule mobility, and distribute the sensible in the world (6). This study analyses contemporary modes of distribution and change and the social assemblages and power diagrams attached to these modes. This theoretical statement uses the global problematic as its unit of analysis. Furthermore, an analysis of the global problematic needs to consider the personal scale, attending to attitudes, feelings, and desire.

In order to approach the social problem as a whole, and to deploy the concept of the global problematic theoretically, a particular viewpoint or subject position is required. Positioning a subject capable of registering the intensification and variation of the global problematic from an ethical perspective is essential to this work. It is a question of building or devising research instruments for the social sciences and humanities that respond to the ethical debates posed by contemporary globalisation, recovering the meaning of responsibility – not only agency – in social actors. It is my belief that to apply theoretical and analytical tools that consider the ethical dimension as an important component of understanding a social problem is of relevance. This is why I attempt to put assemblage theory and power relations theory together, and bring the ethical
dimension to the realm of social scientific enquiry. This has been proposed before by dependency
theories and emancipation theories in the Latin American context. Work from authors such as
Enrique Dussel and Franz Hinkelammert, among others, are good examples.

Systems Theory’s Contribution to the Theoretical Framework
The present research comes close to some versions of systems theory (e.g. feedback, non-linearity,
complexity, irreversibility, autopoiesis). In the first stages of my research and before adapting
assemblage theory as a referential frame, the work of Luhmann (e.g. 1986, 1995, 1997) and
Maturana (e.g. Maturana & Varela 1998) played a significant role, stimulating me to conduct
research in a more complex fashion. Later on, borrowing from Latour’s ANT (Actor-Network-
Theory) (2007) and Habermas’ Excur sus on Luhmann’s Appropriation of the Philosophy of the
Subject through Systems Theory (1987), I developed a critique on the use of systems theory and
networks. The latter is a rather new addition to academic discourse, which has often been associated
with the Internet and new communication theories (e.g. Castells). I encountered several relevant
contributions from these theories that need closer inspection, as the theoretical framework is
overshadowed by an epistemological narrowness that prevents systems theory and ANT from fully
unfolding the potentials latent in their use of complexity. For example, one problem with ANT and
Latour’s “parliament of things” (Latour: 1993: 142) is that from such a position it is possible to
assume that action is the product of network communication-interaction among the elements within
the network. Objects gain a certain type of agency that, following Latour, has not been properly
identified by classical social science (Latour: 2007). Without disputing the fact that objects can
affect other objects without human interference, the problem here is how to understand this
supposed agency performed by objects. Below, an exaggerated example illustrates my point.

Suppose there has been a shooting outside a school whereby one boy is killed. Network
theory can imply that one person shot the gun, and the gun killed the boy. In fact, and to be more
precise, it was the bullet that killed the boy. Although it is ‘true’ and exact (with a high degree of
certainty) to say that the bullet killed the boy, it is not correct, at least not from the point of view of
assemblage theory and its proposed ethical subjectivity position. For assemblage theory there are
not only connections between the nodes in the network, there is also interaction and co-evolution of
elements and assemblages. The bullet killed the boy, the gun killed the boy, the man who shot the
gun killed the boy, the weapons factories killed the boy, etc. All of these statements are also true
and more complex than the reductionist (inductive or deductive) network theory statement that can
nevertheless be scientifically proven: it is true that bullets can kill, therefore it was the bullet and
the bullet’s agency alone that killed the boy.
As a hypothesis that can be scientifically proven, the bullet example also exposes something else. It projects a distorted understanding of agency and it conceals individual and collective responsibility. To avoid this type of scientific distortion, but without sacrificing the tenets of complex theories regarding society, I employ assemblage theory rather than systems theory or ANT to approach the manifestations of the global problematic in Mexican territories. This is because the subjective position of the observer achieved by the use of assemblage theory allows for a multitude of answers: the bullet killed the boy, the gun killed the boy, the man who pulled the trigger killed the boy, the weapons factories killed the boy. The scenario is more complex in nature, and it is in this complexity of information where I aim to find human responsibilities, not only material causes and effects – as in the epistemology approach used to address social problems (7).

To satisfy the theoretical necessities of this research, I have chosen to apply assemblage theory and the notions of power relations and knowledge as posed by Gilles Deleuze, Felix Guattari, and Michel Foucault, along with the more recent reformulation of this theoretical framework made by Manuel de Landa in his book *A New Philosophy of Society. Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (de Landa: 2006). In spite of the uncommonness of this theory within social science and humanities research today, I believe that this approach towards society can advance new understandings and trigger essential learning of global processes and the effects they exert upon the human realm of experience. Ideally, this contribution will enable a different approach that will lead to new paradigms, refreshing the research questions common in social sciences in order to contribute more critically to the development of socio-politics.

The presence of assemblage theory in social sciences is not an oddity. It has its antecedents in philosophy and other fields, though it is still quite new in social science and sociological research. Saskia Sassen has already introduced one form when implementing this type of theoretical approach in her book about territory, authority, and rights (TAR) (8). Although there are some similarities to Sassen’s work in this research, the approach taken here towards the implementation of assemblage theory in regard to globalisation holds fundamental differences. While Sassen focuses on territory, authority, and rights as the axis of investigation, in the present research the global problematic or the actual experience of poverty and violence is the centre of analysis.

**Main Concepts**

The main concepts I elaborate upon in this research are the global problematic, power relations, a specific understanding of knowledge, and the so-called technolinguistic social assemblage. While the notion of globalisation remains quite ambiguous in global studies, even a certain consensus about its economic drive exists. I want to point out that the proposed notion of the global
problematic refers to globalisation in a broader sense than one which predominantly refers to economics – in particular liberal economics – as the central engine of global processes. The global problematic also moves beyond nation states’ borders and stresses the idea that knowledge about globalisation processes does not necessarily require the nation state in order to explain the causes and events associated with the experience of the global problematic.

As becomes evident in the text, the problematic I expose with regard to Mexico searches for responsibilities within what can be considered Mexican social assemblages. The role of other nation states or international organisations and institutions are of secondary importance for this analysis, as it is the opinion of the author that the main processes triggering the experience of the global problematic among the Mexican population should be addressed by the people living with or close to the associated problems. It is true that the role of powerful international forces, such as the United States or transnational companies, have a significant impact both within Mexican territories and in terms of linking Mexico to the global arena. However, the erosion of sovereignty suffered in Mexico and the mismanagement of wealth and territories would not simply improve if and when the US were to cease to exist. The global problematic can only be explained from the individual or personal scale, as the scale of the nation state is simply the aggregate expression of smaller assemblages and groups within territories, organisations, and institutions. This is a crucial point since the ethical dimension of the research could not be addressed at the nation state scale. As nation states lack ethics as a possible attribute to be researched, my focus is on groups and individuals, and from an assemblage theory perspective I address ethical concerns that help to explain and understand the global problematic and its consequences.

While Chapter One presents a full explanation of the notion of an assemblage, it suffices to say here that the two main characteristics of assemblages are their heterogeneous nature and their fundamentally finite state. They usually can be named; one easy way to identify an assemblage is to think whether one can name it. Regarding the plane of consistency (9) in which we find assemblages, there are no all-encompassing entities, no absolutes. In the plane of consistency in which this research takes place there are no pure/essential entities. All entities, things, or assemblages are made of different components and parts, but the amount of component parts in every assemblage is always limited. This limitation, however, does not prevent change and mutation from taking place. The dynamic nature in assemblages is represented by their continuous exchange of material and expressive components with other assemblages in their vicinity.

The main characteristic of assemblages – to have a limited amount of component parts – is a condition that makes them subject to unique and individuated power diagrams or forces. The finite and limited nature of assemblages is an ‘action’ that separates and differentiates assemblages from
one another, makes them singular and unique, visible and identifiable. Assemblages are not ‘actors’ enmeshed in a network, as in Actor Network Theory models (Latour: 2007), nor essential beings or monads, but assemblages interacting with an integrative outside in a meadow (10), so to speak, not a network. Therefore, a broader definition of an assemblage may be that assemblages are always heterogeneous and finite, always actual. In one way or another, all assemblages, including social assemblages, are machines or synthetic wholes, forces that necessarily endure permanent change.

As previously suggested by Manuel de Landa, assemblage theory is a theoretical framework still in an early stage. It is not yet a finished or fully consistent theoretical and analytical apparatus. However, one of the advantages of applying assemblage theory to approach contemporary society is that it assists in sorting out the theoretical grounding that entails the articulation of the micro and the macro scales as variables to sustain sociological analysis. In this case assemblage theory considers that all entities are of a multidimensional nature and that they can have simultaneous effects at different space scales, the micro and macro included. Assemblages also allow the transversal of other theoretical divides of great importance, between concrete and abstract entities, between material and abstract machines (synthetic wholes). Assemblages may be either material or more abstract in nature. For example, a more material machine is the military complex (from bullets to aircraft carriers) in contrast to a more abstract machine represented by the common notion of capitalism. Both work in a different plane, one more material than the other. Nevertheless, both assemblages exert change and mutation in the actual plane because they have the power to change and exchange components with other assemblages.

Clarity is needed to understand the existing relations between assemblages and power relations/diagrams. I briefly explain here the forms taken by power relations, and this may be illustrated in the context of social assemblages. My understanding of power relations is based on Foucault’s formulations in his essay The Subject and Power (1994), and may be summarised as being “an action upon and action on possible or actual future or present actions.” This definition works as the leading idea for approaching social change. In this regard, one of my aims is to approach power relations – actions upon actions – among constituted social assemblages in Mexico, in particular among three social assemblages of special importance in the contemporary context: government social assemblages, private sector social assemblages, and society at large social assemblages. Given the vast and abstract nature of the notion of power relations as an action upon another’s action, and following the proposed topic in this research, it is necessary to delimit the scope of this concept to the realm of socio-political power relations within modern nation states and their systems of communication.

In addition to the notion of power relations, I elaborate on the notion of knowledge as posed
by Foucault and Deleuze. What is knowledge? Following Deleuze (2000), knowledge is composed by the visible and the articulable. The visible is made of visibilities and the articulable by statements. The visible can be thought of as the world of appearance, it is the phenomenological world that stimulates the senses, the pre-logic state of environment-nature, the true realm of human contingency, an outside that overpasses our power. On the other hand, statements primarily refer to stratified language, the logic order of words and sentences that somehow institutionalise certain ideas and practices through linguistic and corporal compositions (e.g. greetings, handshakes) in the political and social realm. Hence, knowledge is made out of visibilities – what we see – and statements based on memory – what we say and express.

But knowledge is not visibilities and statements alone. In order to produce knowledge out of visibilities and statements, the subject – I/we – needs to take part in the process. The subject, which is always an assemblage, contributes to the formation of knowledge while adding the thinking process. Thus, knowledge is the product of the perceptions of visibilities on the one hand, and of statements on the other. However, without human thinking that correlates (pre-logic) visibilities and (logic) statements, knowledge cannot be stratified, or in other words, it cannot be actualised. Visibilities and statements do not determine the thinking process of human subjects but play an important role in defining human subjectivities. The importance of what we see (visibilities) and what we say (statements) takes its relevance.

This very brief explanation of power relations – force diagrams – and knowledge – assemblages – should assist in explaining the way in which a third social element, namely communication, finds its way into the analysis of the global problematic and the technolinguistic social assemblage in Mexico. Undoubtedly, the media has had an essential role in the transformation of contemporary societies. It is so if we consider the unprecedented development of communication technologies and the impact they have had upon social relations and possibilities in recent decades. Mass media outlets play an important role in filling up the distribution of visibilities and statements in post-traditional social realms. At this point it is important to underline that the present research is concerned not with content or discourse analysis within mass media and communication, nor with analysis of the bias of mass media or the logic of production of the symbolic performed by broadcast companies. Instead, it is based on an analysis of power relations (11).

Unwanted or undesirable effects of mass media can be traced back to two different situations promoted by the type of social and political communication present in Mexico. Mass media has supported high levels of political simulation via mass media outlets; this political simulation also allows and normalises social instability and fosters perplexity. Media has played an
important role in the intensification of the global problematic by making ‘room’ for, or literally giving airspace to, what I denominate units of confusion; something that, as I will argue, supports processes of instability, polarisation, and ultimately violence. These two practices, political simulation and the distribution of units of confusion, constitute an environment where fallacious social and political discourses thrive and contribute to the state of perplexity and polarisation in Mexican territories and groups (e.g. corruption, racism).

In summary, the present research approaches three social components of society. First, power relations will be translated into the analysis of ‘actions-upon-actions’ taken by social assemblages in Mexico. Second, knowledge production is translated as the analysis of what social assemblages see, say, and think around the global problematic. Finally, I will examine the role of communication as an influential part of the technolinguistic social assemblage in Mexico. This research asks why violence and poverty have been intensifying in Mexico during the last decades, while investigating the role of social and political communication in relation to these problems. What do people see, say, and think that enable the intensification of social problems to become so prevalent? What should we know in order to challenge this state of affairs? Following this line, I focus on how the means of communication play a role and participate in the intensification of the global problematic. I analyse how social and political modes of communication prevent necessary alternatives that may provide some relief to processes of instability, polarisation, and events of violence.

Research Question

There are two main questions guiding this research. How does the global problematic actualise and intensify in Mexico? And how do communication assemblages support the process of actualisation of the global problematic in Mexican territories?

Methods

In order to answer these questions I engage in an analysis of the political and social communication setting visible in Mexico during the period 1980 to 2010; three decades that have witnessed the introduction and implementation of neoliberal policies. In order to reveal the characteristics of the Mexican technolinguistic social assemblage during this period, I have used conventional data collection techniques combined with the heuristic device based on the theoretical framework introduced above, namely assemblage theory and power relations. As part of the research, I conducted interviews with selected informants: politicians working for the government, entrepreneurs from the private sector, and managers and representatives from civil society.
organisations (12). This information was valuable in determining what the main attitudes were with regards to the communication possibilities found in each of the differentiated social assemblages. To collect data from society at large, I conducted participatory observation. In doing so, I took part in social protests organised by Mexican Zapatistas, as well as various demonstrations outside the Mexican Senate against new telecommunication legislation. Aside from interviews and observations, I conducted literary research related to the topic in academic publications, newspapers, and political magazines. I also analysed other available statistical data, such as information provided by the Mexican National Institute of Statistics, Geography, and Informatics (INEGI).

An Extra Note on Methodology
This research did not move around the analysis of relations of production nor the relations of communication, even if both approaches are implicitly present in the text. Rather, I focus on the logic of power relations in Mexico. Production and communication issues come after the notion of power relations and not the other way round. This contributes to the rather historical character of the research in contrast to a more scientific research outlook. The indicative nature of this research is visible in its being more descriptive than normative, and the aim of this analysis of Mexico is not to say what the country should be doing in the future (instead of demonstrating what it is going on now). On the contrary, the heuristic device of this research and the results it produces are indications, illustrations, descriptions, and abstractions to reflect upon; they are not instruction. I am concerned with revealing or bringing to light things that are already there but for the most part remain unnoticed (Mikunas & Pilotta: 1998).

A debate can be formulated around the difference and value of knowledge production between descriptive and projective research outcomes. Here, I only state that I think both approaches are necessary and complementary and that in my personal case I decided to devote analytical thinking to the indicative, more descriptive and abstract nature of this research instead of pursuing normative aims. To indicate relations, however, it is not to come up with a better integral solution to improving the complex situation of the technolinguistic social assemblage in Mexico. So, why try to put this approach in practice instead of a compact and clear research, where its delivery can be easily recognised and valued? To answer this question, it is my opinion that the work of the social sciences is falling short in its delivery to society. Social science research and methods are not providing society with the input expected from academia and other institutions alike. This is the reason why I have dared to try out a different heuristic device, one that aids us to pose the right questions and learn more about the negative effects of economic, political, and
cultural globalisation. At the end of this work, I remain optimistic that by continuing to elaborate and develop assemblage theory, the realm of the social sciences will be enriched as opposed to impoverished.

Chapter Organisation
This dissertation is divided into eight chapters. The first part, consisting of four chapters, deals with theoretical issues and in particular with building up a position of an observer that gives the possibility to approach the case study from an ethical dimension, not only from a scientific understanding of reality. This manoeuvre aims to recover some notions of responsibility in relation to human perspectives and actions, in contrast to the notion of agency alone. The bulk of the work in Chapter One is devoted to explaining and presenting in a comprehensive manner the basic tenets of assemblage theory, power relations, and a specific theory of knowledge. These elaborations are the building blocks upon which the proposed theoretical device is deployed in the following chapters.

In Chapter Two, the main aim is to generate a theoretical framework around the notion of contemporary globalisation. Some important theories of globalisation are presented and in this way help me to formulate the proposed characterisation of globalisation for this research. This process enables the construction of the necessary conditions with which to approach the case study from the perspective of assemblage theory. In Chapter Three, I propose the idea of the global problematic as a possible unit of analysis for global studies, one that goes beyond economic and nation state explanations, but which stays within the boundaries of social science disciplines. I present the main characteristics and forms taken by what I define as the global problematic social assemblage; the experience of poverty and violence at the personal scale. Of particular importance in Chapter Four is the description of communication and the technolinguistic social assemblage. In general, the elaborations around the technolinguistic social assemblage allow me in later chapters to approach the communicational setting in Mexico to address the question of what it is. Furthermore, to understand the communicational setting from the perspective of assemblage theory allows us to observe what the technolinguistic social assemble does in neoliberal economic and political conditions.

In Chapter Five, after outlining the main notions to be used in the research, namely social assemblages and the concepts mentioned above, I describe the Mexican context using these notions. This part of the research is aimed at providing a fair understanding of what the technolinguistic social assemblage in Mexico is, identifying some of its components, before moving to the realm of what it does. In Chapter Six, I put into historical perspective some of the most significant changes
experienced by the communicational setting in Mexico, and the power relations maintained by different social assemblages and specific forms of knowledge and composing desires.

Chapter Seven is an overview of the main changes experienced by the communication practices in neoliberal Mexico. In this chapter, attention is diverted from the understanding of what the Mexican technolinguistic social assemblage is, to a more ethical realm of analysis. Finally, in Chapter Eight I explore some of the virtual scenarios tenable for Mexico, considering the nature of the prevalent economies of power and knowledge in Mexican territories and the use made of communication technologies derived from these relations. I conclude with the implication that there is a problematic corruption of language in the social realm. This finding will ideally contribute to bridging the abyss opened by a systematic corruption in the use of language within public discourse as seen in neoliberal Mexico. In this regard, the elaborations in former chapters propose the position of an observer that allows an approach to the Mexican technolinguistic social assemblage from a more ethical account, rather than from mere observations of causality. This helps to elucidate responsibilities and desires.

The final conclusions deliver an explanation of the conditions upon which power relations and knowledge in Mexico are based, and the proposal to look at the potential in government assemblages to become a different form of machine than a neoliberal one. However, the final conclusions produce quite a feeling of unrest. Is it through new names and categories in social discourses that some studies can contribute to the fundamental change contemporary societies are expecting? The theoretical and heuristic devices deployed in this concluding chapter lead to the creation of new terminology (e.g. social assemblage, technolinguistic social assemblage, the global problematic, units of confusion) that will hopefully enable debate, discussion, and thinking related to violence, poverty, and communication in Mexico, from a different perspective.