

Sept. 2, 2012

- Primer contacto con representantes de asociaciones del triángulo.

My first journal note was wrong. I had to decide whether to write in English or Spanish this diary. I think I'll write in both eventually but I decided to start with English with the first thought that it will be my secret code. Not that I want to hide myself from the traders or the information I gather, but I believe it gives me a sort of freedom to write whatever positive, negative or neutral observations without being worried somebody's watching over my shoulder. People are very curious. Then imagine yourself sitting down from 8am until 6pm in the same spot watching people coming and going. You know your spot, a 1x1m square, so well that the minimal unusual thing ~~might~~ catch your attention. I'm the unusual thing.

A person sitting down with her nose on a book, writing instead of watching ~~around~~ and walking around as everyone else. Now, you are more curious about me. ~~People~~ But people in D.F. are very careful with others too. They don't believe what you say straight away, ~~but~~ rather they are cautious and they ~~don't~~ show that in their faces.

Thus, writing in English right now gives me the comfortable fact of having my notebook wide open and be sure that people will have

to talk to me if they want to know what I am doing, instead of just glance two or three words in Spanish and draw their own conclusions. Let's see if I'm right...

Now I'm just hearing the lady in charge of the stall next to me call several times 'vecina' to the person in the next stall. This might be my writing spot: a square with a tree covering me from the sunshine and just in the cross of three halls full of stalls of perfumes, bags, lady wear, bracelets and pendants and men shirts and T-shirts. I can hear people's steps, bargaining, saying opinions about colours, styles, prices, ... the art of looking around, as Beto said.

→ And that's how my day started today: looking around, trying to find a job I haven't even seen yet, the leader or representative of the market association. I had a contact already, but as always happens in the field, the productive work comes from improvisation. I couldn't reach ~~the~~ my contacts and started to follow a chain. Ask some people for the name, a person tells you he's not the leader anymore and gives you another name. You track the name from person to person, get a mobile number, even meet his wife, but no trace of him. I have to wait 'til 6pm because he must be very busy now.

The wife told me an interesting thing, the next station of the chain: the stall of our association reach ~~west~~ from calle Pennsylvania til a smaller street, just when the red roofs end.

Right, then it's time to look for the representative of the next section. The magic words are "excuse me, do you know where can I find the representative (el representante, el delegado, el lider)?" Don Angel, a vendor installed in the edge of NY that sells pet food and topperware, give me the precious information: "the leader leader has been sick for 5 or 6 months, but the encargado is there in the vegetables stall next to the t-shirts". Then asked me why I'm interested in talking to him. I have to confess that is difficult for me to explain my own investigation. Now I decided to highlight that ~~the~~ I find attractive to research the contact with diverse people they have to manage due to their travelling job. I think this could move away the attention to the political ~~the~~ issues of the market that a vendor of the thursday's market warned me three days ago.

* "Neighbour, you're sleeping. Stand up and take a walk" I just heard and made me think about what I wrote at the beginning. *

It seems to be working but I know further questions will come.

So, I walked towards the vegetables stall, looking for an unknown face again but with a name and a surname in my hands. This was easier, two people knew well where to find him.

After introduced myself he told me if I could come behind the stall with a gesture. Then I explained myself. He explains that unlike the other market associations, they are a mercado sobre ruedas, and governed by a governmental project, so there's no leader but a mesa directiva. He's the tesorero. Manuel Sánchez Juárez is the president, but for now he's ~~the president~~ in charge. He explains me that the stalls of the association gather together in one spot, respecting an established limit of space. He indicates from the stall next to his until N4. There are a few stalls in the edge that don't belong to the association.

I have an appointment with him and the rest of the members of the junta directiva on Tuesday to explain them my research. Right, now the next leader: stalls from N4 onwards I walk outside the traqueis, the colour of the roofs changed again to red and white. I try to find another group of stalls that belongs to another association. No colour difference, I have to apply the magic words. They work again! A man in a clothes stall tells me "his son would probably be at the edge of the market, in a tacos stall. I obtained names, Don Guano Limón.

It seems that all these stalls belong to one association. This is the largest part of the tianguis and with the most clothes stalls.

A young man is cooking. He's the right person. Again we talk behind the stall. He's very nice and gives me valuable information. His father is the delegado of the biggest federation of vendors in D.F. The leader is Fernando Sanchez.

So, the federation has divided the markets in 23 circuits, this is the 15 circuit. He tells me that that kind of 'formal' info about the federation I can find it in the offices and with the ~~brother~~ son-in-law of Don Fernando. Then tells me where his father is. He is in a van parked around the corner with Doña Lola, the lady that takes the payments in every stall. After a meaningless conversation through the close window, I walk around the van and an old man opens the door. Don Guaron, very old but with his eyes filled with experience.