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# Some Mexican Cultural Scripts

*Emilio Said, Gloria Noriega*

## Abstract

**Scripts of men and women of the Mexican culture are described, including work roles, relationship to parents, common rackets, attitudes toward the future, religion, Miniscript Drivers, and approach to change. A discussion of present attempts to change these script patterns is also presented.**

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“Voz de la guitarra mia  
al desperatar la manana  
quiero cantar mi alegria  
a mi Tierra Mexicana ...”

(Voice of my guitar  
awaking the morning  
I want to sing my joy  
to my Mexican Earth ...)

Mexico is a country full of traditions, rich in flavor and color and with many contrasts. Our history is exciting and scripts are made up of the mixture of the Mexican and Spanish blood and also of other cultures.

We are interested in summarizing the cultural scripts of men and women in our culture, as well as certain other general characteristics of the people. Of course, these vary and become stronger or diminish depending on the Parent messages (family styles), the place of birth (province or Mexico City), religion (generally Catholic), and the social and economic status of the person.

In the woman it is considered a virtue to be abnegated and masochistic; in the man to be strong, to know how to impose and dominate. The woman is educated to serve everyone, especially her man and her children; the man to provide the money. For example, in a common family the woman stays at home, taking care of the children and doing housekeeping. The man goes out to work, stays out of the house all day and comes back at night, sometimes late if he decides after work to spend

some time with friends. When he arrives home at night, his expectations are for his wife to be ready to serve him in what he needs, which can mean that if she is sleeping she is expected to wake up and cook dinner for him. It is still very common to see couples with very few economic and cultural resources in very traditional families where the woman is at home and the man comes and goes as he pleases. In some places it is not acceptable for the woman to work if she is married or for her to go to a restaurant with a woman friend. The woman that would do this may be seen by others in town as not respectable, looking for an adventure, or crazy.

As pastimes in social gatherings the men and women separate — the men to drink and tell dirty jokes, and the women to complain about their husbands, children, servants or housework.

Mexican people respect very much their parents, especially their mothers. For example, on Mother's Day it is a tradition to buy a very special and sometimes expensive present for her, or many times to awaken her in the early morning with singers below her balcony for a “serenata” and to stay all day with her as a way to be grateful for all the suffering that she had when the children were small.

We have many sayings in our culture which are typical of our heritage and folklore. They are all contaminations and prejudices of the Adult by the Parent. Two very common ones are: For the man, “Give a woman neither all your money nor all your love;” For the woman, “All men are alike — rotters.” As we can see, these contaminations or beliefs lead to games that reinforce the script described above.

The most frequent racket in the woman is sadness, in the man anger. When things go bad, women usually feel sad (covering their anger), and men feel angry (covering fear or sadness). Suffering is often considered as a penitence that

one must pay or as a cross that one must bear, borne out in our typical songs sung by the mariachis. As an example among many that we have is a song called "Camino de Guanajuato" (Guanajuato Road) that says "... life is worthless, begins always crying and also ends crying." We have also other songs full of joy, for we find that Mexican people easily go from one extreme to the other — very sad or very happy. Postponing things is also very common for both sexes, as well as complaining a great deal about the consequences.

Also Mexicans tend to spend more money than they have without thinking of the future. Currently Mexico is passing through a difficult economic moment, caused by a dishonest government that we had previously. This has led to the devaluation of the Mexican peso. Nevertheless, Mexicans continue spending money, especially out of our country. This is why the new government does not now permit the free interchange of foreign money inside Mexico as a way to ensure that money stays in our country so that we will get out of the crisis we are now living in.

Our government is basically parental. The President of the Republic has maximum authority to dictate laws and to govern, and our people accept this with their Adapted Child, obeying and complaining. We have as an example the recent nationalization of the banks. Previously banks were private businesses, the owners were the bankers. Now by Presidential mandate they have become the property of the government which, of course, provokes anger in the bankers. They are going to be paid, but not what is fair, and some of them are encouraged to stay in their jobs but now as employers. The government is the boss and they should accept it.

The Mexican in his script is accustomed to being guided, dominated and conquered. We have lived many years under the influence of the Spanish conquest and for this reason have inherited many of the Spanish customs. One of the strongest of these customs is religion — at times managed as fanaticism because of the mixture of the indigenous people with the Spaniards, each group with their magical ideas

and superstitions. The religion of the Indians was to believe in several gods. They used to adore stone idols, the sun, the moon, the rain, the earth. The Catholic religion is monotheistic, believing in only one God and Jesus Christ as God in a human form, the virgin and the saints. Many people only pray to solve their problems and let things happen as a will of God. This makes people think more about destiny instead of being responsible for their own lives.

We identify as basic drivers in our people: Try Hard (for all), Please Me (for women), and Be Strong (for men). Nevertheless, the Mexican lives easily. He does not complicate his existence. He tells jokes and laughs at his problems, discounting the possibility of resolving them and allowing time to pass him by. Some others are serious, trying to change what they don't like, and still others have a tendency to be sarcastic at the attempts at problem solving.

We do not intend to criticize our country; we are proud of being Mexican, and we love our culture and people. Our intention is to be objective, analyzing and sharing with the world through TA language some aspects of life which are found here and which also happen in other countries as well, only in a different way.

We are in a state of evolution — the figures of the "macho" man and the suffering women are beginning to disappear. There is now more liberty for the women and a desire on the part of the man to collaborate, although, as in other countries, it is difficult for the woman to reach certain positions in the work force, and there is fear on the part of men to get close to and live with or marry women who are ready to grow and become autonomous.

We propose change through becoming aware of these scripts, recognizing them and inviting change through thinking and weighing the consequences in order to create stability in families, in society and in the political situation.

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