

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the assimilation process of Mexican immigrants in New York City, taking as a case study the work of Tepeyac Association of New York. This case was chosen because Tepeyac Association has been able to mobilize the largest number of Mexican immigrants in that city, serving as a liaison between them and the City's social, economic and political life. The hypothesis is that Mexican immigrants' ideal relation to American life, as compared to that of earlier immigrants, has shifted from assimilation to integration.

The thesis includes four chapters. Chapter One provides a historical background and a theoretical framework. Chapter Two analyzes the debate currently taking place in the United States regarding the assimilation of Mexican immigrants, and it describes the assimilation process of these immigrants throughout the country. Chapter Three describes the same process, but focuses only on Mexican immigrants in New York City. Chapter Four presents Tepeyac Association case study. Finally, the conclusion applies some assimilation models to the particular case of Mexican immigrants in New York City. It also provides some suggestions and a view of the future of the assimilation process of Mexican immigrants in New York City and throughout the United States.

This thesis demonstrates that in fact Mexican immigrants' relation to American society has shifted. The implications are that even if they are not willing to assimilate, Mexican immigrants need to experience some degree of acculturation if they want to be successful in American society. Learning English and obtaining a college degree seem to be the most important contributing elements to upward social mobility.