

Oral Histories from Guatemala

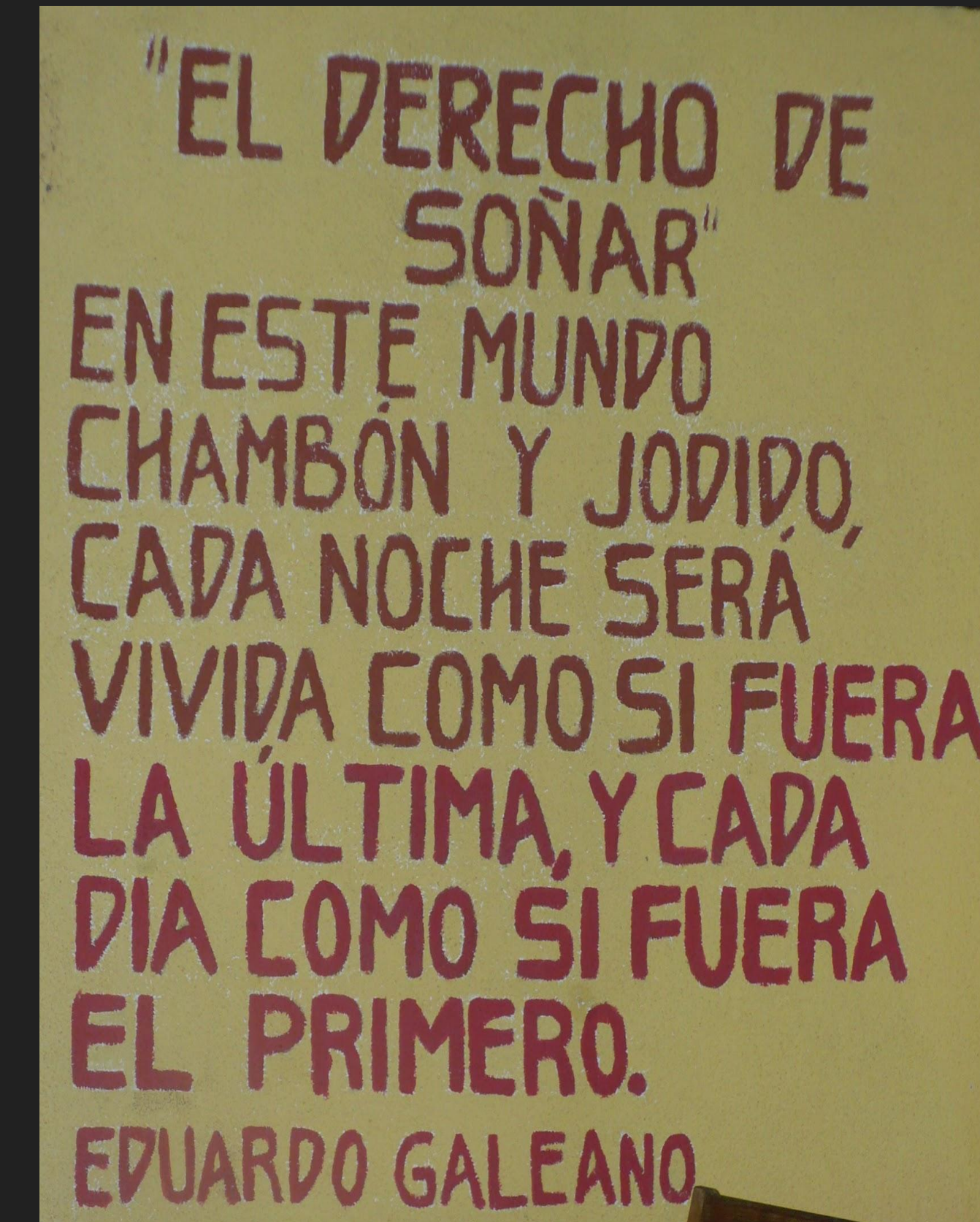
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Project

- Developing a children's story for the community to remember and share with their children
 - The Struggle . . . The Fight
 - Organizing on the Plantation
 - Standing up for rights to live, earn a fair wage and survive
 - Standing together and unionizing
 - Working with local pastors, bearing witness to struggle.
 - Becoming displaced as result of crisis.
 - The Other Struggle . . . The Other Fight
 - Together but without a Home
 - Obtaining land
 - Getting water, housing, electricity
 - Surviving new struggles . . . together
 - Collaboration
 - Working with the Catholic Church, La Escuela de la Montana and other organizations to gain stability
 - Educational opportunities for children - scholarships, education and a community library
 - The Struggle Continues
 - Lack of work
 - Having a home but without sources of income
 - Young adults with education but no available work near home
 - Prevalence of gang activity
 - Looking for work elsewhere . . . Xela, Guatemala City, U.S.A.
- Collaborating with a local artist



Oral Histories

- Sharing voices, keeping stories alive
- Finding commonalities among differences
- Learning together a route to remember struggles of the past to create success in the future

Outcomes

- Children's book for community that reflects the history, collaboratively written and illustrated
 - Written based on recorded oral histories
 - Providing a relic of a memory for community, by the community, of the community.
- Potential to provide more scholarships for kids to study
- Creating work for local artist

Acknowledgements

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- Community of Fatima and Rueben
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- Teresa Serrano
- University of Michigan School of Social Work and Office of Global Studies: Dr. Mike Spencer, Dr. Larry Root, and Katie Lopez

Guatemala:

- Comprised of 23 Mayan tribes
- Strong history of collective culture and action
- De-colonized in 1829 from Spain but the rich elite still maintain control
- History of political and economic corruption that has contributed to massive poverty

Nuevo San Jose, Fatima and La Escuela de la Montana

- Communities of farm workers who stayed together as collectives after displacement
- Different stories, but similar histories of collective struggle to survive, live together and gain a better life for their families and children
- Spanish Language School that works with these communities to provide scholarships for area children and sources of income with Collective of Women.



Meet Ceiba and her community

