

# VOICES<sup>TM</sup> of Mexico

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A New Challenge for  
Mexico's Political System  
*Germán Pérez Fernández del Castillo*

On Arnaldo Coen's Painting  
*Alberto Ruy Sánchez*  
*Luis Porter*

The Antidrug War in  
U.S.-Mexico Relations  
*Jorge Montaña*

A Short Story by  
*Angeles Mastretta*



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# VOICES<sup>TM</sup> of Mexico

Number 41 October • December 1997

## EDITORIAL

Our Voice

*Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla*

4

## POLITICS

A New Challenge for Mexico's Political System

*Germán Pérez Fernández del Castillo*

7

Mexico After July 6

*Diego Bugada Bernal*

12

## SCIENCE, ART AND CULTURE

The Two Sides Come Closer

Five Years of the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture

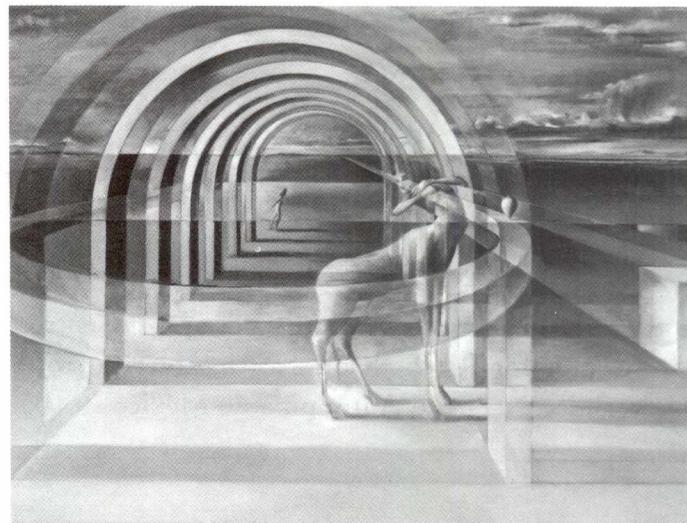
*Ilán Semo*

16

Doña Luz, Inspiration and Image  
Of a National Culture

*Jesús Villanueva*

19



The Geometry of Desire and Dreams

*Alberto Ruy Sánchez*

26

The Prophecies of Arnaldo Coen

*Luis Porter*

31

## THE SPLENDOR OF MEXICO

University City

A Captivating Encounter with Culture

*Luis Roberto Torres Escalona*

37

The Venues of the International  
Cervantes Festival

*Elsie Montiel*

42

*El Tinacal*, A Ritual Mexican Space

*Francisco Pérez de Salazar Vereá*

45

## HISTORY

The Mexican Viewpoint

On the War with the United States

*Jesús Velasco Márquez*

49

## SOCIETY

The Antidrug War in U.S.-Mexico Relations

*Jorge Montaña*

59

## UNITED STATES AFFAIRS

Regional Geopolitics

The United States and Cuba

*Santiago Pérez Benítez*

67



## CANADIAN ISSUES

Blitzkrieg, The 1997 Canadian Elections  
*Julián Castro Rea* 71

Internal Trade Barriers  
A Special Challenge for the Canadian Economy  
*Elisa Dávalos López* 81

*Cirque du Soleil*, A Canadian Product?  
*Graciela Martínez Zalce* 85

## MUSEUMS

The Quixote Iconographic Museum  
*Elsie Montiel* 92

## ECOLOGY

Mexican Ceremonial Flowers  
*Edelmira Linares*  
*Robert Bye* 97

## LITERATURE

Aunt Jose Rivadeneira  
Had a Daughter with Big Eyes  
*Angeles Mastretta* 103

## IN MEMORIAM

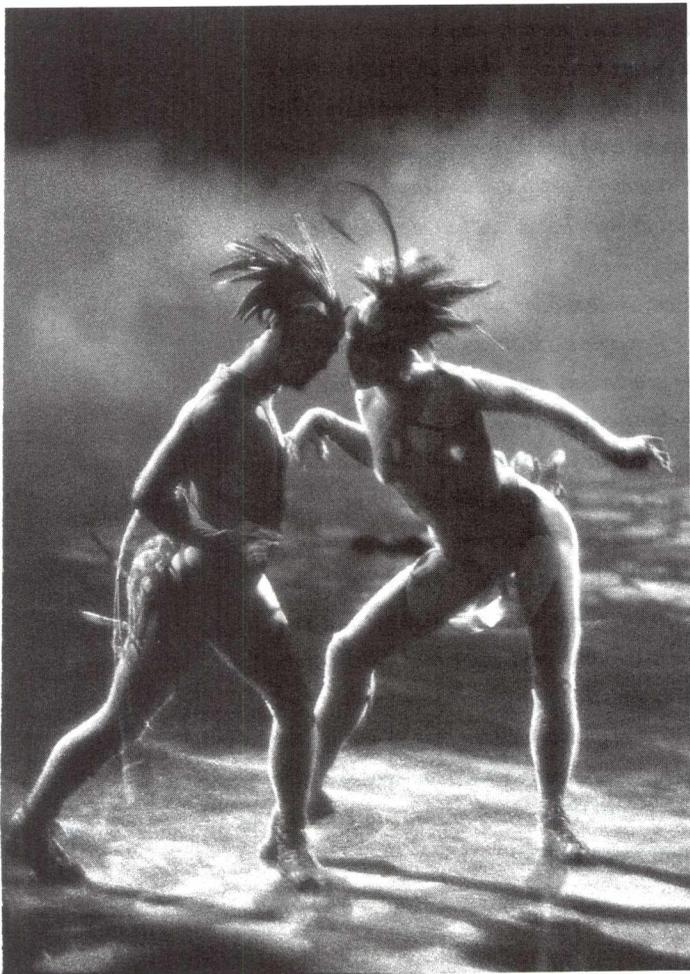
Hugo B. Margáin  
Mexican Diplomat, Academic and Statesman  
*Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla*  
*Diego Bugeda Bernal* 105

## REVIEWS

Lola Alvarez Bravo: In Her Own Light  
*Susannah Glusker* 108

La presidencia imperial  
Ascenso y caída del sistema político mexicano  
*Mauricio Grobet Vallarta* 109

Cover: Arnaldo Coen, *Thought Sees*, 100x120 cm (oil on canvas).



# OUR VOICE

***D**rug trafficking gravely distorts economies, public health and the security of all the countries it touches. And because it is a problem we share, we should also share the solutions. Therefore, bilateral and multilateral mechanisms for fighting it must be set up that also respect each country's national sovereignty and take into account the complexity of the task at hand in proposing concrete strategies. Using in-depth studies, agreements must be reached that clearly define each country's functions and responsibilities, for example, in terms of financing, technology and policy design.*

*Unfortunately, the United States government has opted for a unilateral policy in the fight against drug trafficking: certification. This does not take into account the needs or problems confronted by the countries it classifies as producers; above all, it is based on the false premise that the problem is almost exclusively these countries' responsibility. This policy has had a negative impact on U.S. relations with Latin America, especially with Mexico. But, in addition, its effectiveness is dubious. Certification's actual results are unsubstantial. Drug trafficking has not only not abated, but it has increased despite the producing countries' impressive efforts to fight it.*

*In an exclusive article for Voices of Mexico, Ambassador Jorge Montaña looks at the reasons for certification and questions its effectiveness. He shows the uselessness of a strategy based exclusively on combating drug production and distribution while not including serious, well funded programs for halting consumption. He also goes into the fallacies in the arguments used in the U.S. Congress for justifying its unilateral actions. Among others, he points to the facts that 1) production and distribution channels go beyond Latin America, and 2) the United States is also a producer and distributor, with powerful drug cartels operating inside its borders. If some states of the United States were measured with the same yardstick as Latin America, they would probably not rate certification because they are important centers for marijuana production and distribution.*

*Drug czar Brian McCaffrey's recent visit to Mexico's northern border may be an indicator of a change in the U.S. outlook. The intense work being carried out by the high-level bilateral teams of experts and officials is also encouraging. However, the only fair, productive position would be for all the countries involved to come together to develop a multilateral strategy. This would presuppose the elimination of the certification procedure and the creation of an international plan for fighting drugs, probably directed by UN or OAS officials.*

Mexico's federal elections last July 6 signaled a radical transformation in the way politics are done in this country. For the first time in more than a century, the nation must envisage and create institutions for decision-making in a context in which the president's political party will not have an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies. Germán Pérez Fernández del Castillo analyzes the consequences of this transcendental change, describing the scenarios the country may face, emphasizing particularly the threat to governability and economic stability that vengeful or exaggerated attitudes on the part of the opposition in exercising its new-found power could mean. The "Politics" section also provides our readership with an overview of the July 6 electoral results, with the aim of familiarizing the English-speaking public with the new situation and bringing to its attention the implications and possible consequences, centering on the issues on the immediate political agenda to be thrashed out in the new, really pluralistic situation.

While Mexico's relations with the United States have been contentious around issues like drug trafficking, other areas like culture have been the backdrop for exceptional institutional and private efforts to foster the two countries' coming closer together. In "Science, Art and Culture," Ilán Semo's contribution explains how, when institutions are both willing and interested—in this case, Mexico's Bancomer Cultural Foundation and National Fund for Culture and the Arts, and the Rockefeller Foundation—they can create a productive bilateral relationship. These three institutions' five years of work in the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture have resulted in an impressive number of art works and cultural events that build bridges of understanding between two countries united by history and geography.

The section continues with an original article by Jesús Villanueva which relates the life and work of an exceptional Mexican woman, Doña Luz. Model and inspiration to painters because of her indigenous beauty as well as language and cultural interpreter for outstanding U.S. anthropologists and scholars interested in Mexico, Doña Luz was recently honored by an important Texas museum with a well deserved homage.

Two important Mexican art critics, Alberto Ruy Sánchez and Luis Porter, present in this issue articles about the work of painter Arnaldo Coen. Coen's work has made him one of the most outstanding exponents of Mexican abstract expressionism. His command of the balance between abstraction and figurative painting, together with his mastery in working with geometric figures, particularly cubes, are perhaps his main contribution to universal art.

"The Splendor of Mexico" includes an article by Luis Roberto Torres Escalona about our wonderful University City campus. The profusion of its art works, which include the best of Mexican monumental sculpture, architecture and muralism make this one of the capital city's most important cultural sites.

The International Cervantes Festival held annually in Guanajuato is one of Mexico's most important artistic and cultural events, not only because of the quality of its performances, but also because it takes place in one of our most beautiful colonial cities. Voices of Mexico offers its readers a photo story about the festival's main venues, examples of some of our country's best colonial architecture.

*Architect Francisco Pérez de Salazar takes our readers into the world of tinacales, or fermenting sheds, ritual places on old Mexican haciendas used to produce pulque, a popular alcoholic beverage drunk both daily and on special occasions. Although unfortunately the tradition is on the wane, the murals on the shed walls turned them into repositories of some of Mexico's best folk art.*

*This year marks the 150 anniversary of the 1847 war between Mexico and the United States. Historian Jesús Velasco Márquez offers us an article about the viewpoint of the Mexican participants in that historical conflict, a "vision of the vanquished" noteworthy for its rigorous analysis and documentary research.*

*Relations between the United States and Cuba have never been easy. "United States Affairs" presents an article by Santiago Pérez Benítez looking at the pragmatic reasons behind recent U.S. administrations' positions toward Cuba, in the framework of a cost-benefit analysis for policy design.*

*"Canadian Issues" takes up the topic of Canada's recent elections. Julián Castro Rea shows how, despite the Liberal Party's victory, it has lost hegemony and ground vis-à-vis other political forces, particularly with regard to the degree and impact of the new distribution of regional power in the country. Elisa Dávalos writes an article about inter-provincial trade in Canada where, paradoxically, only very recently did internal trade barriers begin to come down, in total contrast to its foreign policy which led it to sign NAFTA. Lastly, we include an article by Graciela Martínez Zalce about Canada's Cirque du Soleil, more than just a circus, a cultural expression that enters the realm of corporeal plasticity and the music of movement.*

*The "Museums" section invites our readers to a unique experience, a visit to The Quixote Iconographic Museum in the colonial city of Guanajuato. This museum is the only one in the world with more than 600 versions of Cervantes' immortal character, done in painting, sculpture, engravings and crafts, from the world over.*

*Edelmira Linares and Robert Bye delight us once again with their vast knowledge of Mexico's plants in a short but interesting article about their ceremonial uses.*

*Undoubtedly, Angeles Mastretta is one of the most important writers not only in Mexico, but in the Spanish-speaking world as a whole. We are happy to be able to include here a short story from her book *Mujeres de ojos grandes* (Large-Eyed Women).*

*Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to inform Voices of Mexico readers that this will be the last issue for which I will act as editorial director. The more than two years in which I was honored to have the opportunity to edit the magazine have been one of the most important challenges and joys of my professional life. I leave the magazine satisfied that I have put the best of my abilities into getting across in English my country's most important issues and voices. Happy to know that I will be close to Voices in my new post as director of the UNAM Center for Research on North America, I am sure that the dedication and professionalism of the staff remaining at the magazine will ensure it a successful future.*

*Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla*  
 Editorial Director

# A NEW CHALLENGE FOR *Mexico's Political System*

Germán Pérez Fernández del Castillo\*

**M**exico is going through an unparalleled moment for two reasons of undoubted importance: the July 6 elections show that the country has achieved democratic normalcy,<sup>1</sup> something demanded for several decades. In addition, new scenarios are opening up nationwide which demand intelligence, tolerance and astuteness on the part of the country's main political players, the political parties.

This article will look at the main challenges Mexico faces in these new conditions. First, we will take a brief look at the political and legal conditions that have made democratization possible; then, we will examine the July 6 elections themselves; and finally, I will put forward a few considerations about some of the challenges arising out of the new balance of forces.

## THE CONDITIONS FOR DEMOCRATIC NORMALCY IN MEXICO

Between December 1946 and November 1996, Mexico held federal elections regularly every three years. In

those 50 years four totally different electoral laws were in force, and the legislation was revised and amended 15 times. This means that for 15 different federal elections, the electoral law was either substantially modified or completely replaced 19 times: more changes than elections. And, of course, each of these reforms and amendments gave rise to proposals, debates, negotiations, mutual accusations, conflicts among the political parties at the Ministry of the Interior, which served as mediator, and in the Chamber of Deputies. Democratization has been the most debated, controversial and negotiated topic in all those years, as well as the most fought for. Perhaps that is why when he took office, President Zedillo proposed that a definitive political-electoral reform be forged by the existing political forces. For 23 long months thereafter, Mexico's political parties, parliamentary caucuses in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate and government officials intensely and tirelessly negotiated this electoral reform. The result was that in July 1996, for the first time in history, all the political parties approved the constitutional norms for elections to public office; on that basis amendments to six different pieces of legislation were drafted and passed in November of the same year.

The electoral reform resulted in a substantially strengthened political party system. Public financing for parties increased almost five-fold; for the first time in the history of Mexico, all political parties—not only the PRI—were given the opportunity to become truly

\* Academic Director of the Latin American School of Social Sciences, Mexico Headquarters.

<sup>1</sup> The term "democratic normalcy" was coined by President Ernesto Zedillo in referring to Mexico's recent electoral reform having led the way to a democratic system with rules and norms commonly accepted by countries recognized as democracies. [Translator's Note.]



Tomás Bravo/Imaginatina

President Zedillo with the presidents of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate, Porfirio Muñoz Lerdo (PRD) and Eduardo Andrade (PRI).

national and to improve the quality and coverage of their electoral campaigns. New criteria for equity in media coverage strengthened the parties' public profile; a new, independent electoral justice system was set up; and the Federal Electoral Institute, the body in charge of organizing the elections, became totally independent.

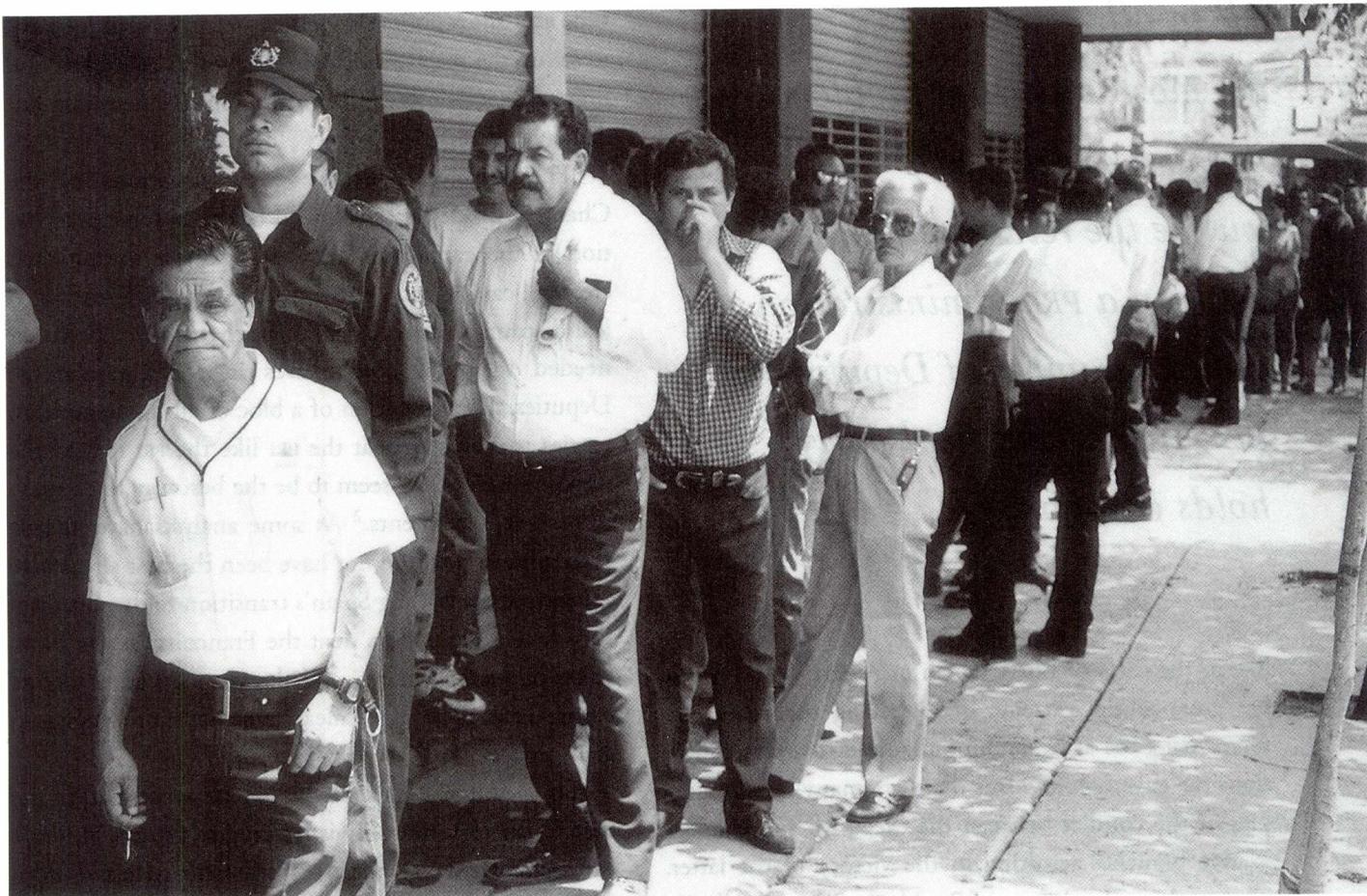
Two other aspects of the reform clearly became very important: a) the democratization of Mexico City's

Federal District, where for the first time the head of government would be elected; and b) the new way of establishing political representation, whereby no party could be over-represented by more than 8 percent. This stipulated that there could not be a difference of more than 8 percent between the number of ballots cast in favor of a particular party and its proportion of seats in the Chamber of Deputies.

*For the first time since  
the 1930s, the PRI  
will not completely control  
the congress.*

#### THE JULY 6 ELECTIONS

Last July's elections were characterized by political players and electoral observers paying greater attention than ever to the ballot results and not to real or imagined irregularities on election day. Both the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and the National Action Party



Waiting to vote, Mexico City, July 6.

(PAN) had representatives in all the country's 104,000 polling stations and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) had representatives in 99.6 percent of them. Twenty-eight thousand Mexican electoral observers and nearly one thousand foreign ones participated, and almost no cases of irregularities grave enough to endanger the elections were observed or reported. The only case of any importance was in District III in Ocosingo, Chiapas, where groups of alleged Zapatistas disrupted the voting by burning polling booths and stealing ballot boxes.

Both federal and local returns began pouring in the very night of election day, after the last polling stations closed. The PRI lost the gubernatorial races in the states of Nuevo León and Querétaro, and, significantly, the PRD won an undeniable victory in Mexico City's Federal District.

#### NEW REALITIES, NEW CHALLENGES

The balloting in the congressional elections, however, give rise to an unprecedented and delicate political scenario. For the first time since the 1930s, the PRI will not completely control the congress. Of the 500 Chamber of Deputies seats, the PRI won 239, thus losing its absolute majority.

This new political situation has given rise to two different interpretations of Mexico's immediate future. The first, pessimistic and negative, emphasizes that in political systems with hierarchical, disciplined political parties, in which the administration is held by one party and the legislature by another or by no one at all, the tension between the two branches of government can increase to a practically catastrophic degree. Where the executive branch is strong and enjoys great legitimacy,

*All in all,  
the most important problem  
in the next few years  
will be the relationship  
between a PRI administration  
and a Chamber of Deputies  
in which no political party  
holds a majority.*

like in the cases of Boris Yeltsin or Alberto Fujimori, it has gone to the extreme of dissolving parliament by force, using the army, arguing the need to create conditions for governability. But there are many more examples of the conflict between the executive and the legislative branches resulting in the victory of the latter. This explains the defeats of Presidents Salvador Allende in Chile, Carlos Andrés Pérez in Venezuela or Fernando Collor de Mello in Brazil.

At the other end of the spectrum, some analysts are betting on prudence, the historical intelligence and responsibility of the players, first in forging an agreement among the political parties in the Chamber of Deputies and then in establishing a rational equilibrium with the federal executive branch.

The negotiations between the PRI and the different opposition caucuses in the Chamber of Deputies have been particularly difficult for two reasons. The first is the PRD's tradition of being in the opposition. In the last three years, 141 bills were presented to the Chamber of Deputies, 135 of which were sent by the executive branch. In 139 cases, the PRD voted against the bills, and only twice voted in favor: in the vote on the peace process in Chiapas and in the case of the constitutional amendments agreed on for elections. It will not be a simple matter for the PRD leadership to change its atti-

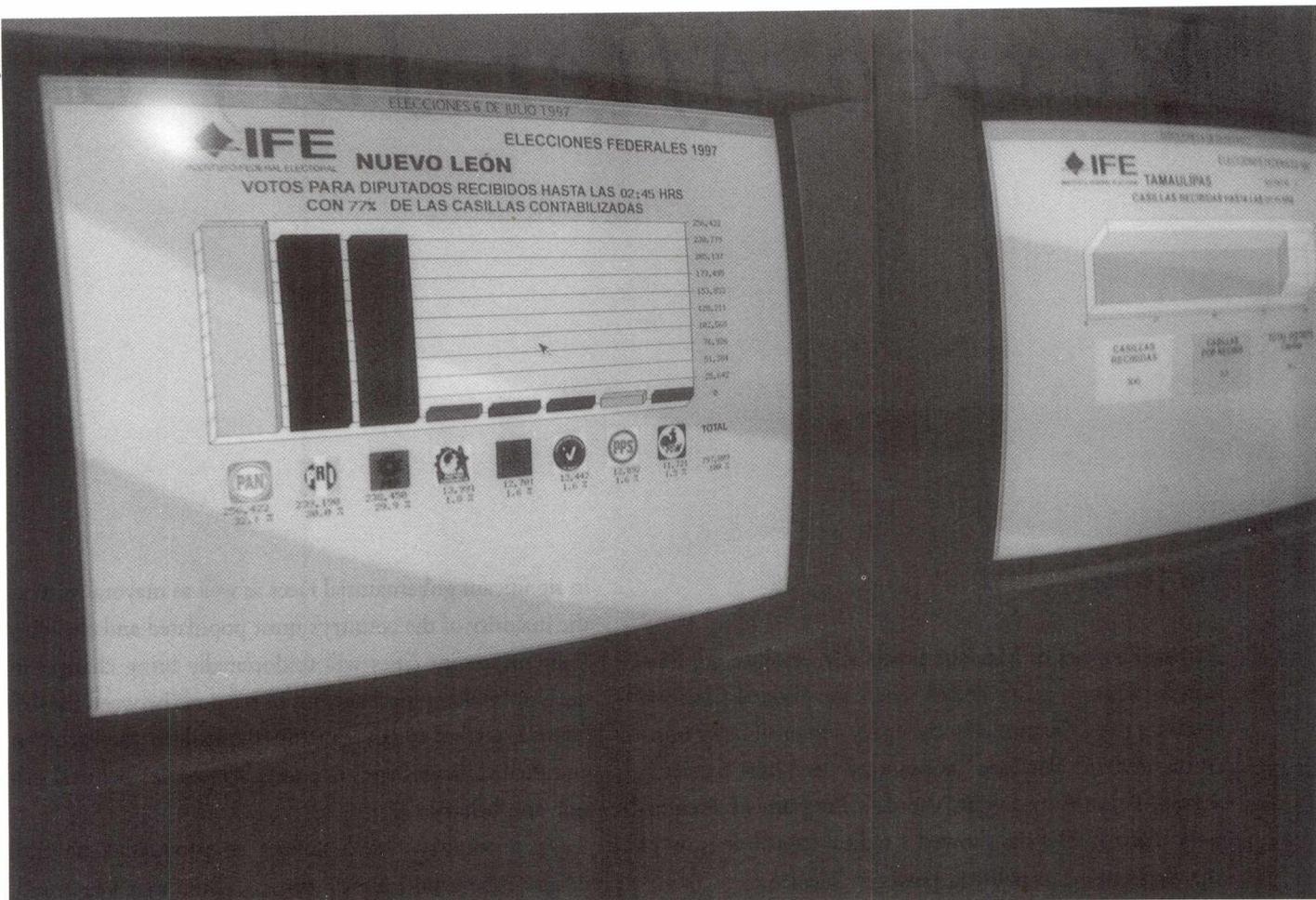
tude and allow politics to actually operate, that is to say, to set up the mechanisms whereby real negotiations and mutual concessions can be made. This is a necessary but difficult process.

The second hindrance to negotiations in the Chamber of Deputies is linked to the extreme polarization of the candidates and other players during their electoral campaigns. At first glance, their different political discourses seem to be the exact opposite of what is needed to build consensus in the Chamber of Deputies. The formation of a bloc of all the opposition parties that would treat the PRI like the PRI treated the opposition does not seem to be the best way to come to reasonable agreements.<sup>2</sup> As some analysts have already pointed out, it would not have been the best alternative for the parties leading Spain's transition to democracy if they had attempted to treat the Francoists as the Francoists had treated them, and the same could be said of extreme cases like the Chilean, Argentine or Uruguayan transitions.

Of course, these problems can be overcome. In the case of the PRD, not only is it going to govern Mexico's most important city, but it will also have a decisive influence in forging federal public policy because it has the second largest caucus in the Chamber of Deputies. With regard to the extreme opposition discourses and the opposition front made up of the PAN, PRD, the Labor Party (PT) and the Green Ecologist Party of Mexico (PVEM), a reasonable time has to go by for the different players to shift gears and change from what is demanded of them in electoral campaigns to the discourse of a day-to-day exercise of government. In other words, with time, the overwhelming passions that frequently characterize electoral campaigns give way to a more serene, reasonable negotiating discourse needed in times of administrative and political normalcy.

All in all, the most important problem in the next few years will be the relationship between a PRI admin-

<sup>2</sup> The author is referring to a bloc formed by the PAN, PRD, Green Ecologist Party of Mexico (PVEM) and the Labor Party (PT) to influence the functioning of the Chamber of Deputies; the bloc also presented an eight-point plan for negotiating with the PRI. [Editor's Note.]



The IFE used the latest technology to ensure accurate and rapid preliminary returns.

istration and a Chamber of Deputies in which no political party holds a majority. We Mexicans are going to have to learn to deal with the sharp and inevitable tensions between both branches of government. We should point out here that it is a prerogative of the Chamber of Deputies to approve government spending and that it is within its power to block legislation on government revenues.<sup>3</sup> In these and other items, we face situations that could put the country's economic recovery in check. Unfortunately, presidentialist systems like Mexico's lack a tradition of inter-party coalitions that could ensure that bills presented by the administration prosper in the legislature. We are now facing the enormous challenge

of overcoming that uncertainty through political agreements, even if we have no historically proven bases or experiences of this kind.

Finally, our politicians are well acquainted with the difficulties our country has faced in attempting to overcome one of the most severe economic crises of this century. They are also perfectly cognizant that they have received a popular mandate for pluralism and democracy, that is to say, tolerance and negotiation, understanding and responsibility. It would be unthinkable for the expectations of economic improvement and the consolidation of democracy to be thwarted because our party elites were unable to act politically. I am inclined to believe that all parties will have the political determination and the good sense to meet the new challenge and consolidate democratic normalcy. **W**

<sup>3</sup> In other words, the opposition could seek to influence economic policy for the next three years. [Editor's Note.]

# Mexico After July 6

## THE CONTEXT

Almost 70 years of Mexico's practically absolute domination by a single party ended when the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE), the public body legally responsible for organizing federal elections, announced the July 6 voting results. Around midnight, the IFE's Program of Preliminary Electoral Results showed a radical transformation of the distribution of political power in Mexico.

For the first time, the Revolutionary Institutional Party (PRI) will not have an absolute majority in the Chamber of Deputies. With its 239 deputies, the PRI now becomes the largest minority in the lower house of Congress, where two other minorities —the National Action Party (PAN), with 122 deputies, and the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD), with 125— emerge as political players with broad national support. Two relatively young parties —the Green Ecologist Party of Mexico (PVEM), with eight seats, and the Labor Party (PT), with six— are the other forces that won congressional representation.

Another significant development is that the capital, Mexico City's Federal District, whose chief executive had never been elected before, gave the opposition PRD a landslide victory the first time voters had a say in the decision.

The new balance of forces in the Congress and the opposition's victories

in significant gubernatorial races as well as mayoral wins in the majority of the country's most populated and economically important cities will undoubtedly bring changes in decision-making mechanisms, in relations between the different branches of government (particularly the executive and the legislature) and, of course, in people's political culture and behavior.

In a country unaccustomed to productive political debate, where no political forces existed that were really capable of questioning —much less forcing a change in— presidential decisions, the consequences of election results like July 6's will inevitably have an impact on how politics are carried out. For many analysts, the date marks the beginning of a transition to democracy from a *sui generis* form of authoritarianism. For others, it is the end of a process of gradually deepening, steady and irreversible democratization. No matter what classification is used, the important thing is to reflect about the concrete mechanisms for national decision-making which as of now are subject to new rules. The abrupt emergence of real pluralism took many by surprise and caught almost all the polit-

*For many analysts, the date marks the beginning of a transition to democracy from a sui generis form of authoritarianism.*

ical players with little experience of how to behave amidst genuine negotiation and debate. This new situation will require careful consideration and prudence on the part both of the new winners and the new losers. Extreme oppositionist stances vis-à-vis the executive by the former or incomprehension of the changes underway by the latter will affect not only governability but also the possibility of establishing a new "democratic pact" which would have a positive impact on building a country where the opinion its citizens expressed at the polls would have to be taken into account.

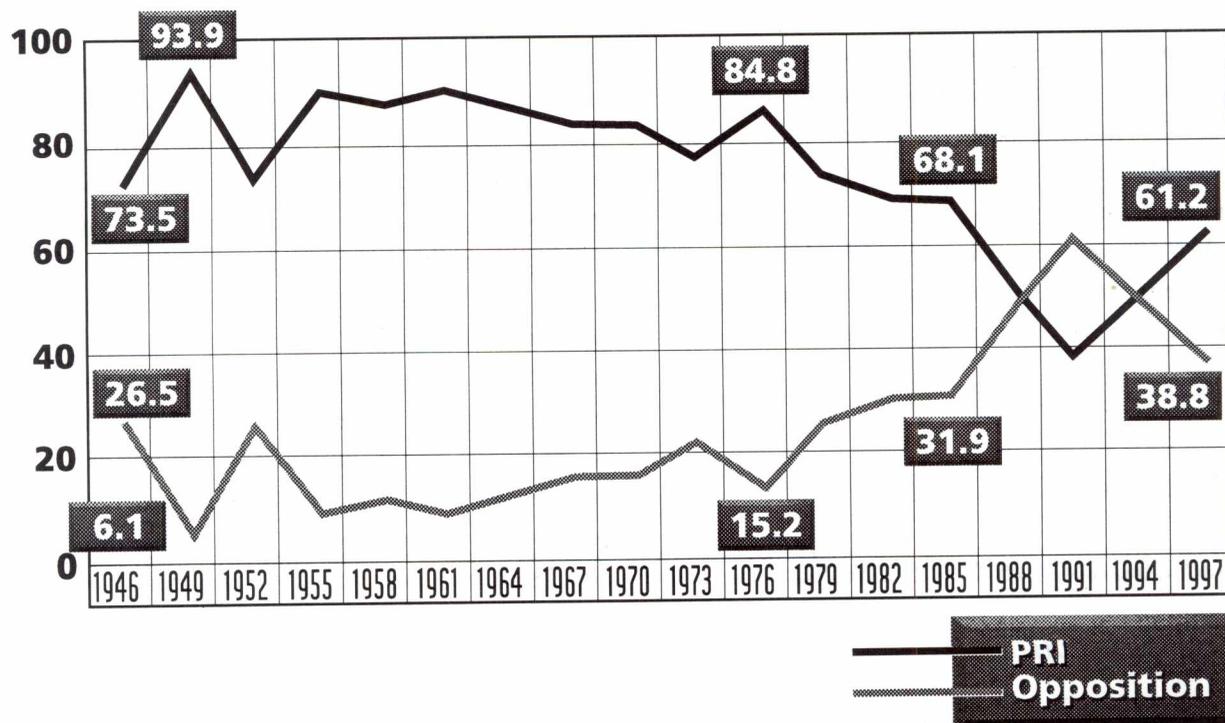
Before the new Chamber of Deputies was formally seated, on the weekend of August 30-31, Mexico was threatened with a constitutional crisis and the possibility of ungovernability loomed. What happened was that both the four opposition congressional caucuses, on the one hand, and the PRI caucus, on the other, attempted to open the congressional session according to their respective interpretations of existing legislation and the way that each side

understood the different congressional bodies and functions should be established in the Chamber of Deputies. Underneath, each side was actually playing for time and posing a test of strength. As a result, Mexico's Fifty-seventh Congress inaugurated its session in accordance with the format proposed by the majority of deputies grouped in the self-styled "opposition block" ("opposition" with regard to the executive). Both the PRI and the president had to concede the point, not without high political costs and once again losing face in public opinion.

#### THE AGENDA

That incident was only an example of the difficult political and congressional relationships on the horizon. The topics slated for discussion by the legislature are myriad, and some of them are just a bit more transcendental and will have more impact on developing public policy than

### PRI and Opposition Parties' Vote for the Chamber Of Deputies (1946-1997)



Source: *Reforma* (Mexico City), 15 July 1997.

**Current Political Division  
Of the Chamber of Deputies**

Party	Seats
PAN	122
PRI	239
PRD	125
PVEM	8
PT	6

Source: Federal Electoral Institute.

**Current Political Division  
Of the Senate**

Party	Seats
PAN	33
PRI	77
PRD	16
PVEM	1
PT	1

Source: Federal Electoral Institute.

decisions about the internal functioning of the Chamber of Deputies. Among the national issues to be debated that will very probably presuppose significant negotiations and consensus-building efforts are: 1) economic policy; 2) the bill on federal public spending, presented yearly; 3) fiscal policy; and 4) the detailed monitoring of public spending.

All these issues have immediate, decisive effects in people's daily lives. For example, one issue up for discussion is the possible reduction of Mexico's value-added tax (VAT), or sales tax, a political plank of all the opposition parties in their campaign platforms in the recent elections. Government expenditure policies could also change, with more or less emphasis on social spending or, by contrast, the continuation of a policy to strengthen the market and create a healthy financial environment. In other words, the continuity of the administration's economic program is at stake.

*The democratic change  
in the country is irreversible  
and brings with it  
a new public awareness.*

A change in the current distribution of public monies is also probable given the new balance of forces. Greater apportionments to state and municipal government budgets and a reduction of federal spending has historically been part of the opposition's agenda, particularly the PAN's.

Among the most important topics on the agenda are peace in Chiapas, public safety, the elimination from the budget of a secret discretionary presidential account, transparent use of monies allotted to the fight against extreme poverty, renewed discussion about additional amendments to the electoral legislation not resolved in last year's debate (such as, among others, the establishment of the referendum, the plebiscite and the citizen's initiative as procedures for consulting the populace; or making it possible for alliances and coalitions as such to be put on the ballot at election time), the fight against corruption and the conclusion of the reform of the state (a whole series of agreements and definitions are pending regarding how government should mete out information to the public and its relationship with the media, the administration of justice, police investigations, the autonomy of indigenous peoples, etc.). How the political actors deal with these points will put their political mettle to the test, particularly the ability of the different parties and the legislative and the executive branches to relate to each other in the way mandated by the July 6 election results.

## THE SCENARIOS

An effort to move toward policy-making that includes negotiations, forging consensus and lobbying by special interest groups of congressional commissions and administration agencies will be fundamental, first of all, to avoid conflicts that could threaten government functioning itself and therefore create a scenario of ungovernability. That kind of policy-making presupposes a whole new political culture, a new way of doing things. It would have to, as a matter of course, both accept and put into practice new forms of behavior; these would flow from a form of government in which different majorities may be forged by issue, and alliances made not only around strategic questions, but above all to deal with concrete topics on the public agenda. However, this will probably not be possible if the institutions are not redesigned to fit with the new requirements in political practices, government institutions and laws dictated by the new political situation.

Mexico's political and governmental institutions were not prepared for a presidential democracy. Accepting it implies a national effort with the aim of establishing a new national pact to define the ground rules for political activity in which all players with influence are able to intervene. It could also imply a much deeper and far-reaching reform of the state than has been proposed so far. In other words, government, political parties, bankers, the business community, peasant and workers organizations, political groups, non-governmental organizations, the most important civic groups—like renters, debtors and pensioners groups—, academics, intellectuals and the media will have to create a mechanism for analysis and deliberation, a great national forum, for example, to look at the important national issues and, above all, putting aside vested interests, to deal without prejudice with the need to recreate the nation's democratic practices. That would be the most useful meaning of the transition.

This is perhaps why President Ernesto Zedillo and September's President of the Chamber of Deputies Steering Committee, PRD Deputy Porfirio Muñoz Ledo, both touched on this point in, respectively, the State of the Nation

## Official 1997 Results for Mayor Of Mexico City's Federal District

Party	Votes	%
PAN	602,466	15.58
PRI	990,306	25.60
PRD	1,859,866	48.09
PVEM	266,223	6.88

Source: Federal Electoral Institute.

speech and the response traditionally given by the head of the chamber, last September 1. President Zedillo called for creating an economic policy "of the state," which presupposes joint work by the two branches involved in its design. Muñoz Ledo explicitly invited representatives of the different sectors of the economy to participate in the discussion. Making this new national pact different from the many pacts signed during previous administrations, without succumbing to revengeful or authoritarian temptations, is the great challenge to everyone's political imagination in today's emerging pluralism.

The other scenario, the scenario of confrontation, intolerance and a pragmatic zeal by all players for capitalizing on their own political strength—whether it be newly or previously acquired— would probably only result in polarizing positions and therefore plunging Mexico into the institutional crisis over which it has been hovering for a long period. On July 6, the voters clearly demanded great efforts in the opposite direction. The democratic change in the country is irreversible and brings with it a new public awareness, the product of a democratic political culture which in some senses was ahead of the government's and the main political players' ability to react. That is why the public will not permit any other road to be traveled but the road of transition. 

Diego Bugeda Bernal  
Coordinator of Publications, CISAN

# The Two Sides Come Closer

## FIVE YEARS OF THE U.S.-MEXICO FUND FOR CULTURE

*Ilán Semo\**

**I**n the wake of Mexican euphoria at the beginning of the 1990s, which imagined that the country would become part of the first world economy, a review of the results would today show a complex combination of gray areas that equally conjure up frustration as well as innovation.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has radically transformed relations between Mexico and the United States, but has also sharpened their oldest conflicts. The unfortunate harvest of the first half decade of the trade opening will be—aside from verbal, impassioned excesses imposed by secularly misunderstood relations between neighbors—the memory of Mexico's second 1929 of the century: the

crisis that began December 20, 1994, and not only brought down the Mexican economy, but also ruined the spirit that sought to reverse a history of mutual rejections and conflicting nationalisms.

Using the metaphor of the river used in the collective Mexican imagination to conjure up that horizon of opportunities and misfortunes represented by the United States—"the other side"—the infant stage of NAFTA resulted, in the terms each side is accustomed to using about each other, in a distancing of the two sides. However, a cooler-headed analysis of this brief but intense attempt to modify a culture of separateness should be based on still unexplored terrain, littered with insular experiences in which the desire to imagine and build an effective relationship has survived the renewed (and always irrational) recourse of blaming the other side to justify your own flaws.

The U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture has been, in its own way, one such experience, a small labora-

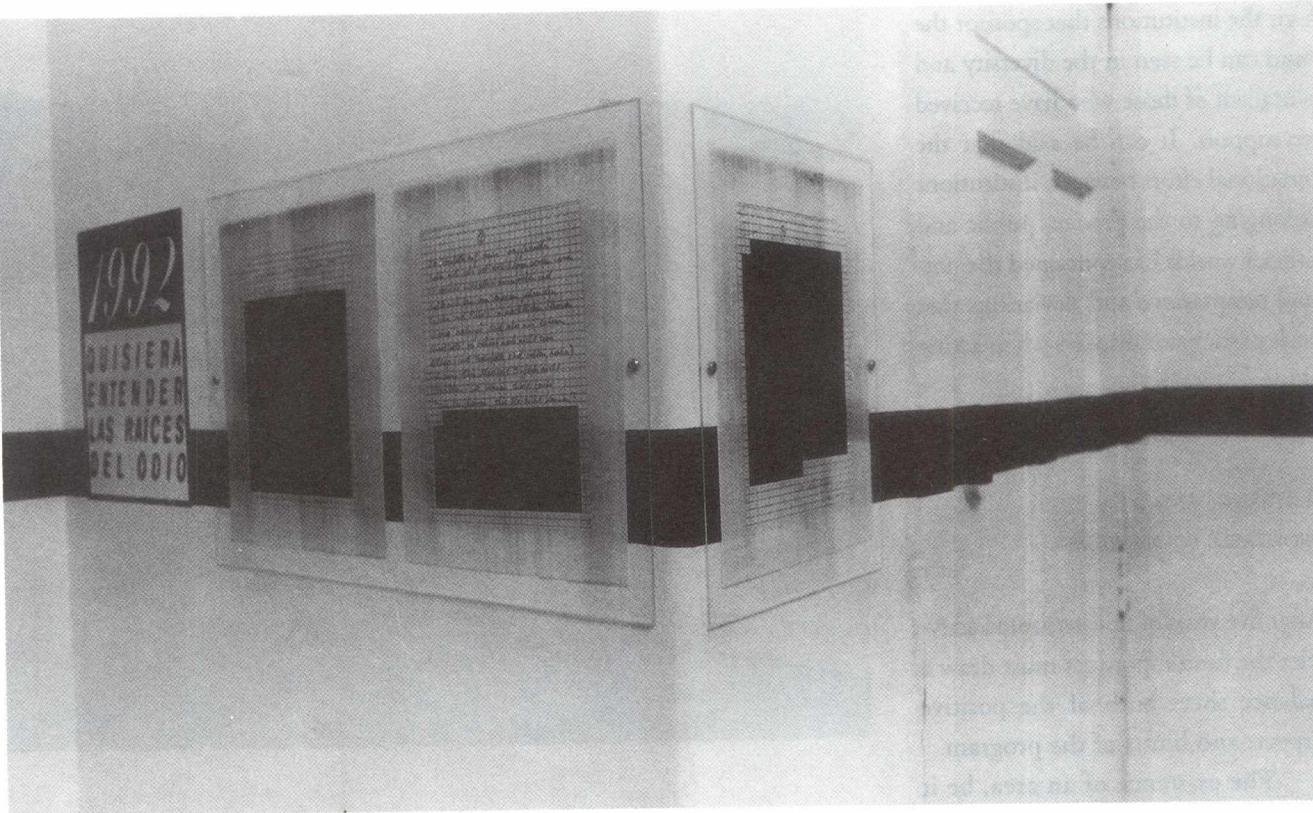
tory that has brought onto the scene and fostered shared perceptions, institutional practices and budgetary decisions in which cultural production has turned into an effective binational enterprise. It should be noted that relations between Mexico and the United States as a whole are distinguished by the incredible absence of real binational institutions that though legal action and understanding can put a halt to the unbreachable state of conflict that both joins and separates both economies and societies. In this sense, the fund represents a singularly rare effort and a unique contribution for any vision seeking to institutionalize—and therefore, to civilize—what currently takes place in the arbitrary and unfair terrain of the market and the seats of power.

The fund was born in 1991, when the National Fund for Culture and the Arts (FONCA), the Bancomer Cultural Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation decided to establish a fund of one million dollars

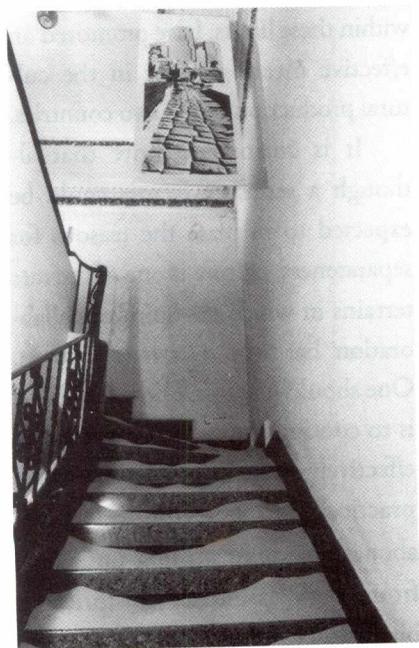
\* Mexican historian, Member of the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture.

Photos show different views of the exhibition "Chronologies", with work by Mexico City and Los Angeles artists at the Temístocles 44 Gallery in Mexico City.

Translated by Peter Gellert.



a year to support, promote and bring together the two countries' cultural production (cinema, dance, theater, art, literature, music, library resour-



ces, etc.). Since that time, the fund has provided close to 350 scholarships, ranging from U.S.\$5,000 to U.S.\$25,000, to Mexican and U.S. artists and intellectuals who, to one degree or another, share topics, aims, venues, resources for exhibitions, publicity and publishing and, above all, a desire to find a meeting point and experience the other side's culture.

The character of the sponsoring institutions that comprise the fund is significant in and of itself: the cultur-

al division of a private Mexican company (Bancomer), a Mexican government agency (FONCA) and a U.S. civic organization (the Rockefeller Foundation). In short, the coming together of the private and public sectors with civil society. The committees that select the projects are strictly binational, with a Mexican and an American interacting in each decision made. They are replaced every two years to prevent turf and clique interests from emerging. The autonomy of the selection committees vis-

*Culture is one of the rare areas in which the spirit of collaboration wins out over distrust.*

à-vis the institutions that sponsor the fund can be seen in the diversity and pluralism of those who have received its support. It can be said that the binational effort between institutions belonging to the private, public and official worlds has contained the natural temptations and deviations that each participant displays when acting alone.

A STRANGE AND PROFITABLE EQUILIBRIUM

After five years of uninterrupted activities the fund's sponsors must draw a balance sheet both of the positive aspects and limits of the program.

The existence of an area, be it modest and limited, in which Mexicans and Americans can come together to collaborate in an effort to create a "third institutional reality" —neither Mexican nor American, but binational— is a positive development in and of itself. The multitude of artistic creations sponsored by the fund and without whose help would have been inconceivable, speaks volumes of its value; in addition, the quality of such creations underscores the necessity of the fund.

However, both of the cultures represented in the fund have imposed their own criteria and their own range of options to be promoted. The centralism of Mexican life has wound up meaning the centralism of the funding, with Mexico City taking the lion's share. The U.S. obsession with making Mexico culturally a part of its geopolitics and a capsulized



version of Mexican-U.S. relations has frequently limited such cultural promotion by the United States to those in the Mexican-Chicano com-

munities or those visiting Mexico. The idea of a fund that promotes what is universal in both cultures has been somewhat impoverished by one side's centralism and the other's ethnocentrism. This, however, does not diminish the merits of those who, even within these limits, have promoted an effective meeting point in the cultural production of the two countries.

It is curious to note that although a series of factors could be expected to increase the reasons for separateness, culture is one of the rare terrains in which the spirit of collaboration has won out over distrust. One should just think how sensible it is to continue with the program and effectively make it into a place where practices and perceptions emerge about something missing until now from both countries' histories: a binational calling. ❧

# DOÑA LUZ

## *Inspiration and Image of a National Culture*

Jesús Villanueva\*

**H**eir to the great Nahuatl tradition, Doña Luz departed from all the stereotypes of her time about indigenous people. From childhood, she wanted to be a teacher, but the whirlwinds of the Mexican Revolution brought that dream up short. Her life was completely transformed when she became a model and took part in three post-revolutionary artistic movements: Mexican muralism, grassroots art education and the renewal of graphic art. In the 1940s she was a resource person for historians and anthropologists; in addition, she worked as an assistant teacher of Nahuatl at a prestigious Mexico City university. Always both noble and humble, with her clearly indigenous demeanor, Doña Luz is an extraordinary case of rebellion against destiny.

Julia Jiménez González, Doña Luz, was born in southern Mexico City, in the Nahuatl community of Milpa Alta, January 28, 1897. At that time

the Porfirio Díaz government was taking formal education into Mexico's rural communities and from a very young age, Doña Luz longed to be a teacher.

At the beginnings of the 1910 Revolution, Milpa Alta had 5,588 inhabitants, the great majority of whom were of Nahuatl ancestry and spoke their traditional language. The children who went to primary school soon became bilingual and learned the trades taught there.

Doña Luz started elementary school in 1904 and entered the Concepción Arenal Upper Primary School in 1908. But, with the outbreak of revolution she was forced to leave school in 1912.

The streets of Milpa Alta became a battleground for Zapatistas and Federal troops. The civilian population weathered violence, thieving and the rape of both the town's women and its churches. Finally, the federal troops drowned the revolt in Milpa Alta in blood by executing most of the men of the town on March 16, 1916. The women and children crept

away under cover of night, fleeing from death.

Doña Luz lost her father to the revolution and journeyed with her mother, three sisters and many other women to eastern Mexico City, where they settled in a lake district similar to Xochimilco. Near her home were the Tlalpan, La Viga and Santa Anita canals, as well as the retail and wholesale market areas of La Merced and downtown Mexico City. Soon they were surrounded by *ahuehuetes* (giant conifers), cypresses, ash and black poplars, watching the canoes go up and down the canals loaded with vegetables and flowers. Doña Luz and her family may well have survived by buying and selling vegetables, fruit, flowers, food like tamales, tortillas, bread and *atole* (a thick traditional beverage, served hot), and hand-made products like girdles, tablecloths, napkins and articles of apparel.

When the Revolution was over, the residents of Milpa Alta began to return, but nothing would ever be the same again. The town was in ruins;

\* Independent Mexican researcher.



Doña Luz, 1932.

Reprinted courtesy of the Villanueva Hernández Family



Jean and Ann Charlot with Luz and her family, 1946.

Reprinted courtesy of the Villanueva Hernández Family

the fields had been reclaimed by the forest and Concepción Arenal Upper Primary School had been torched in 1914.

Two things came together to change Doña Luz's life yet again, however. The first was in 1920, when Alfredo Ramos Martínez, the director of the San Carlos Academy set up the Chimalistac open air school in southern Mexico City. After the Revolution, artists and intellectuals had turned their gaze to the people. The indigenous people were the heroes, the image and emblem of the nation in their work.

The second event occurred in Santa Anita in 1919 or 1920: during the annual celebration of the arrival of spring, Doña Luz won the *Izcalichpochtziñtli* (Spring Maiden) contest. Covered with flowers, Doña Luz must have radiated beautiful indigenous youth. Later, she was asked to pose at different painting academies.

In 1920, Fernando Leal, a student of the open air schools, used young Luz as a model for one of his canvases. From then on, Doña Luz would be closely tied to Mexico's artistic and cultural milieu of the first half of the twentieth century through her relationship with several generations of the San Carlos and the La Esmeralda Academies up until 1965.

In 1921, the young French artist Jean Charlot arrived in Mexico. The descendent of a Mexican grandmother, Charlot grew up in France in constant contact with pre-Hispanic figurines, codices, books and traditional Mexican toys from the nineteenth century. When he arrived, he easily fit in with the artistic circles of the time: he went to the open air painting schools and shared his studio with Fernando Leal. It was there that he met Luz, the young indigenous model posing for Leal. She impressed him profoundly and he nicknamed her Luciana. Luz-Luciana

became his muse and the link between the Mexican indigenous culture of the past and the present. Charlot would paint her many times, and she repaid him by introducing him to the traditions of Milpa Alta and the Nahuatl language.

Diego Rivera, having recently arrived from Europe, was commissioned in 1921 to paint several walls of the National San Ildefonso High School. In his mural *The Creation* in the Simón Bolívar Amphitheater, Rivera used Luz as a model for his allegory on Faith. Fernando Leal and Jean Charlot worked as assistants on the project.

Her face appears in *The Festival of Our Lord of Chalma*, an encaustic done by Leal in 1922, and in *Marketplace*, a fresco Rivera did in 1923 at the Public Education Ministry. It is also said that she was Diego Rivera's model for some of the indigenous faces in the murals at Mexico City's National Palace.

Doña Luz modeled for innumerable canvases and etchings; her face and figure were also used by sculptors and photographers. In 1925, she already enjoyed certain prestige in the artistic and intellectual circles of the time. She and her family were excellent hosts for visitors to Milpa Alta. Her profound knowledge of local traditions and the fact that she was bilingual as well as extremely pleasant facilitated her introducing people to Milpa Alta and the customs of her indigenous brethren, people like journalists Anita Brenner and Frances Toor, photographers Tina Modotti and Edward Weston, painters Jean Charlot, Diego Rivera, Alva de la Canal, Fernando Leal and Díaz de León and the sculptor Ignacio Asúnsulo. She worked at many different trades: model, story-teller, tour guide in Milpa Alta and Chalma, cook and even maid.

When work became scarce, she made girdles and other traditional indigenous wear to sell in Mexico City. Since she knew both the city and potential buyers, Doña Luz distributed both her own products and those made by her relatives in Milpa Alta. Her help to others made her even more popular among her people.

While she worked, she lived sometimes in Mexico City and sometimes in Milpa Alta. In Iztacalco she met an inspector named Manuel Hernández and fell in love with him. When she became pregnant by him out of wedlock and he accepted no responsibility for the child, Doña Luz broke off all relations with him and had what was to be her only child,



Jean Charlot, *Luz*, 1922 (pencil on paper).

Conchita, in July 1925. Anita Brenner and Jean Charlot became the child's godparents, giving Luz both moral and economic support. This relationship brought Doña Luz even

closer to them, cementing a friendship that would last for decades.

Now Doña Luz no longer modeled alone; she had Conchita with her, which is how she is seen in pho-

tographs by Tina Modotti and paintings by Rivera, Leal and Charlot. Conchita effectively inherited her mother's part-time work. She received her primary education in Milpa Alta, but forgot the Nahuatl language because she lived in downtown Mexico City.

In 1928, as Charlot sought new horizons in the United States, Diego Rivera became the cornerstone of Mexican art. Currents in painting were changing little by little and many new artistic avenues opened up. Doña Luz continued to pose for well known artists and students of the different art academies for several more years.

On the recommendation of Anita Brenner, Doña Luz worked with the U.S. linguist Benjamin Lee Whorf, who began his studies of Nahuatl in Milpa Alta in 1930. This was the beginning of a second career: Luciana became Doña Luz, a resource person for anthropologists, linguists and folklorists from Mexico and the United States. Whorf was seeking details about Nahuatl pronunciation. In her work with him, Doña Luz had to make use of the very same

patience she had learned as a model at the art academies.

The First Aztec Congress was held in Milpa Alta in 1940. The meeting decided, among other things, how Nahuatl was to be written: it was decided not to use Spanish-based spelling, and employ "k" and "w" instead to give the language a non-Spanish appearance.

In those same years, Robert Barlow came from the United States to learn Nahuatl at the National University. He later founded *Tlalocan*, a magazine for sources about Mexico's native cultures; *Mexihcayotl*, a Nahuatl-language newspaper; and, in 1950, *Mexihcatl Itonalama*, a publication for Nahuatl-speakers to send song lyrics, poems and essays.

Doña Luz began to work for Barlow in the early 1940s. In 1950, she published several essays in *Mexihcatl Itonalama*, written according to the spelling rules set down by the Aztec congress.

At the same time that she worked for Barlow, she gave private classes to his students and, beginning in 1948, worked for Stanley S. Newman from

the United States collaborating on his Nahuatl grammar book.

During the 1940s, Anita Brenner edited several books that included stories told by Doña Luz and illustrated by Jean Charlot. These indigenous children's stories were translated to English for children in the United States, but a great deal of the Nahuatl substance was lost in translation.

Around 1948, American anthropologist Fernando Horcasitas met Doña Luz at the Barlow home. Horcasitas rapidly began to participate in the interviews with Luz and in publishing *Tlalocan*.

Horcasitas kept up his friendship with Doña Luz for a long time and in 1957, they taught Nahuatl together at Mexico City College.

In 1961, Guadalupe Solórzano, the director of Galerías Chapultepec, suggested to journalist Maruxa Villalta that she interview Doña Luz on her television program *Working Women*. That was a big year for Doña Luz: on May 10 (Mother's Day in Mexico), the national daily newspaper *Excelsior* published an article about her life, her modeling and experiences as a resource person for Nahuatl; and on December 27, she was interviewed on television.

In 1963, Horcasitas, who worked at the National University, asked Doña Luz to dictate more texts. This time, she told her own life story, her childhood and experiences during the Revolution; it was actually a chronicle of Milpa Alta from the last years of the *Porfiriato* (the thirty-year regime of Porfirio Díaz) until 1920.

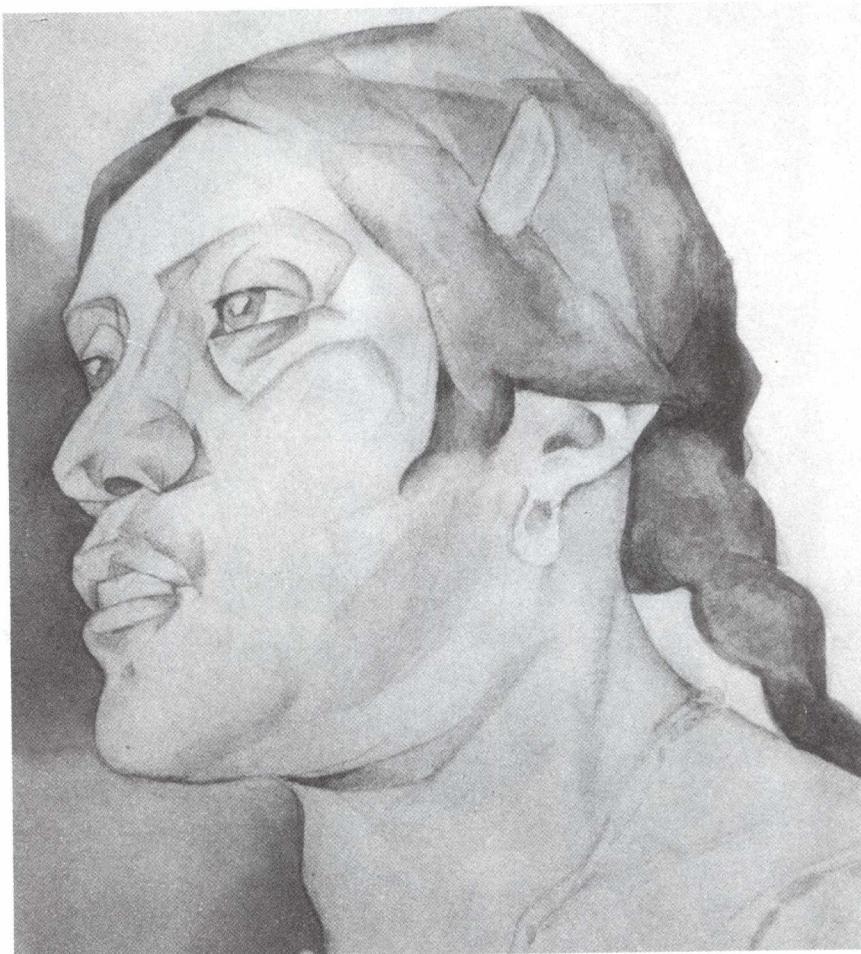
*Doña Luz was closely tied to Mexico's artistic and cultural milieu of the first half of the twentieth century through her relationship with several generations of the San Carlos and the Esmeralda academies.*

Doña Luz's family was grown up. Conchita had married. Despite the pleasure Luz took in her grandchildren, innumerable events undermined her strength: in 1958 she lost her mother; in 1964, she lost her friend, her daughter's godfather, Fernando Leal; also, her age took its toll on her physical abilities, weakening her eyesight.

The good times were gone. Sometimes she worked as a resource person, sometimes as a cook or a servant. Her custom of making clothes helped her survive, and her daughter Conchita says that she used to walk the streets of downtown Mexico City crying in English, "Lady, Lady, Mexican curiosities!"

In January 1965, Doña Luz went to work and never returned. She was killed in a traffic accident on her birthday, January 28. Many friends went to say their last goodbyes at the Iztapalapa cemetery in Mexico City. *Mexico This Month* published an anonymous column written in her memory—most probably by Anita Brenner, the magazine's publisher—"Luz, Her Legend", accompanied by a drawing by Charlot and the poem "The Broken Jar" by Octavio Paz.

Fernando Horcasitas also made his contribution: he gathered the stories that Doña Luz had told and published them in the first Nahuatl-Spanish bilingual edition of *De Porfirio Díaz a Zapata, memoria náhuatl de Milpa Alta* (From Porfirio Díaz to Zapata, Nahuatl memoir of Milpa Alta), which renders this indigenous woman's childhood and understanding of the Revolution; in 1979, 44 of



Jean Charlot, *Luz*, 1922 (watercolor).

her stories were published in both Nahuatl and Spanish in *Los cuentos en náhuatl de doña Luz Jiménez* (Stories in Nahuatl by Doña Luz Jiménez); and in 1972, a bilingual Nahuatl-English version of *Memoria náhuatl de Milpa Alta* (A Nahuatl memoir of Milpa Alta) was published.

These posthumous tributes were rounded out by research done by Frances Karttunen, from the United States, who wrote Doña Luz's biography, *Between Worlds*, published in 1994 in the United States, completing the biography that Horcasitas had already begun. Karttunen also

wrote several works on the Nahuatl language and different pieces on Doña Luz.

In 1994 the then-Diego Rivera Studio Museum and some U.S. institutions organized an exhibit-tribute to Charlot, "Mexico in the Work of Jean Charlot." Among the 500 pieces in the show were innumerable sketches, paintings and etchings that Charlot did of Doña Luz as well as photos of her and her family.

Frances Karttunen also expressed her admiration for Doña Luz by doing all the paperwork needed both in the United States and Mexico in



Tina Modotti, *Doña Luz and Conchita*, 1926.

order to put on a pictorial and photographic exhibit in which Doña Luz came through in all her beauty and grandeur.

On the centennial of her birth, the Mexican Museum of Texas inaugurated the trilingual exhibit (in English, Nahuatl and Spanish) “Luz and the Good Teachers,” presenting Doña Luz as a Mexican heroine, model and storyteller.

Luciana, as Charlot called her, or Doña Lucha, as the students at La Esmeralda Academy called her in the 1960s, was really named Julia. No one knows to this day why she

changed her name, or why she did not follow the stereotypical road of the majority of the indigenous people of her time. Doña Luz broke with an almost preordained destiny: she would not be an unlettered indigenous woman.

Artists for much of this century caught Doña Luz in many different images and forms. The past that she represented and that became the present at the moment it was put on a canvas, paper or wood, has also moved toward the future as part of the Mexican people’s iconography. Her gentle face and her corpulent

figure are on exhibit in museums in Mexico and the United States, in private collections, in several art books and in the home she always wanted for herself: the Ministry of Public Education and the Old National Preparatory School. Her words have nourished scholars and specialists in the Nahuatl language from the world over and her stories can be read by young and old alike in Nahuatl, English or Spanish. Doña Luz could never have imagined the rich legacy she would leave behind when for the very first time she lent her indigenous beauty to a canvas. **W**

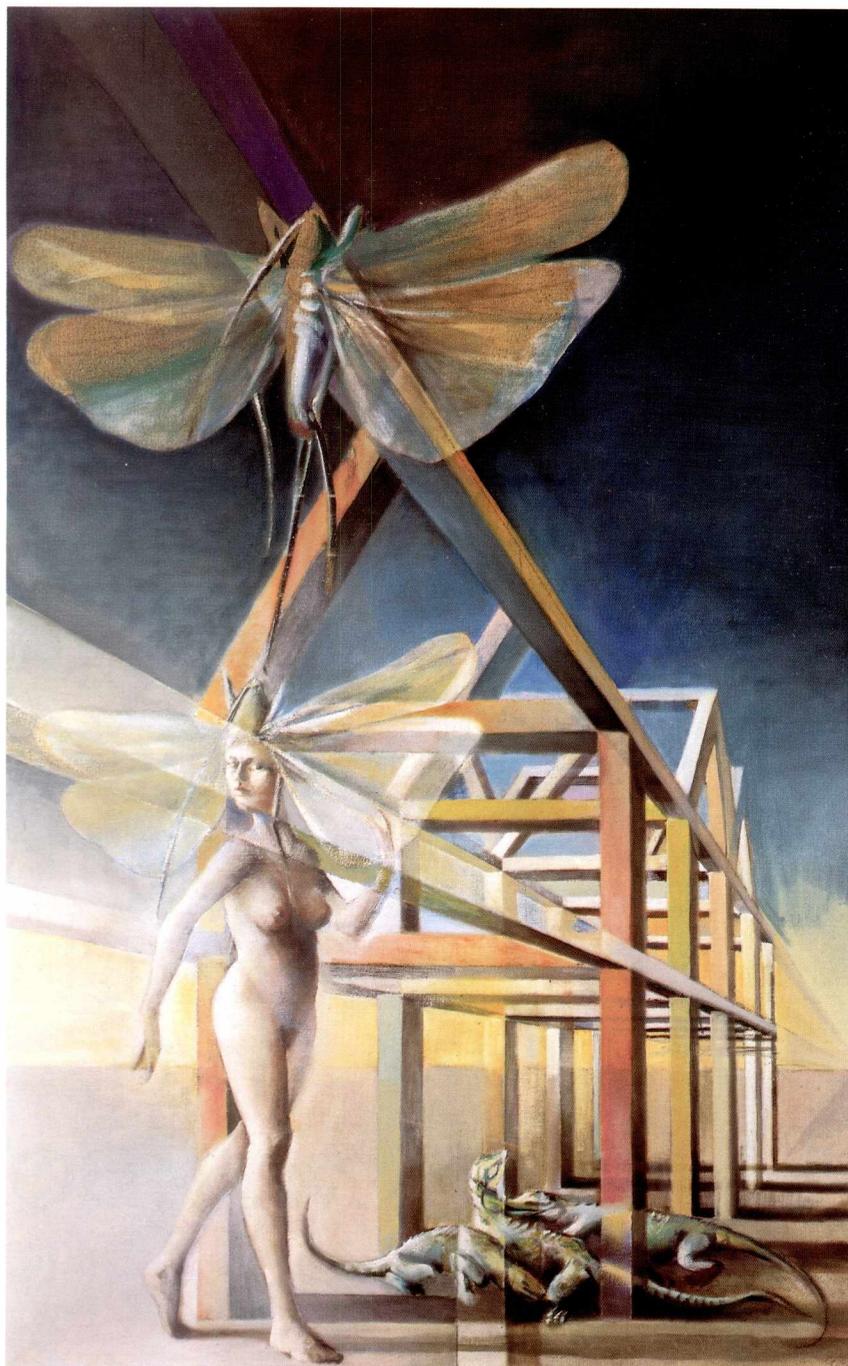


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LA  
ESENCIA  
DE LA  
CULTURA  
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DE  
MÉXICO  
Y EL  
MUNDO

# THE GEOMETRY *Of Desire and Dreams*

Alberto Ruy Sánchez\*



Photos reprinted courtesy of Arnaldo Coen

*Bed of Transparency*, 160 x 100 cm (oil on canvas).

More than a fiesta for the eye, Arnaldo Coen's painting is a carnival of forms pierced by a rainbow, a carnival of fleeting, disguised forms celebrating the immensity of the moment at the same time that the four sides of the cube that imprisons them give them new freedom. We are before impossible cubes, both limited and infinite. They hold us, but we can also observe them from without. One of their walls may be the picture itself, or the wall of the Museum of Modern Art where it hangs, or the large window to the rear, or the landscape we would see from that window. But the cubes are also objects inside the paintings, and their walls are windows through which clouds and balls enter, or they are swimming pools or secret doors that lead to the cellar of dreams, or reflecting pools or traps through which other cubes fall into the dark blue vacuum of the universe.

\* Editor in chief of *Artes de México* magazine.

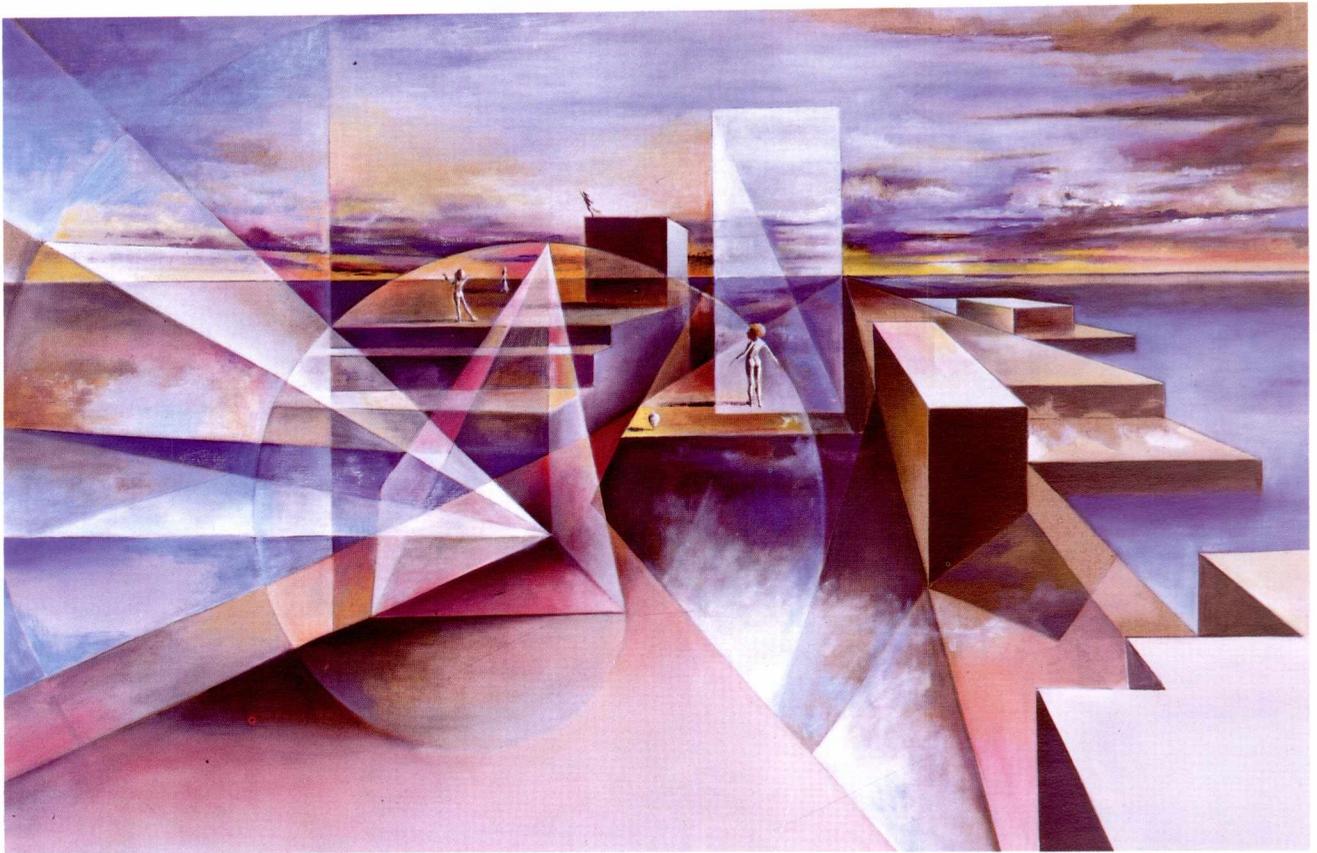


*A Beat of Time*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).



*Throw to the Sun and the Moon*, 100 x 160 cm (oil on canvas).





*I See You in What I look At*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).

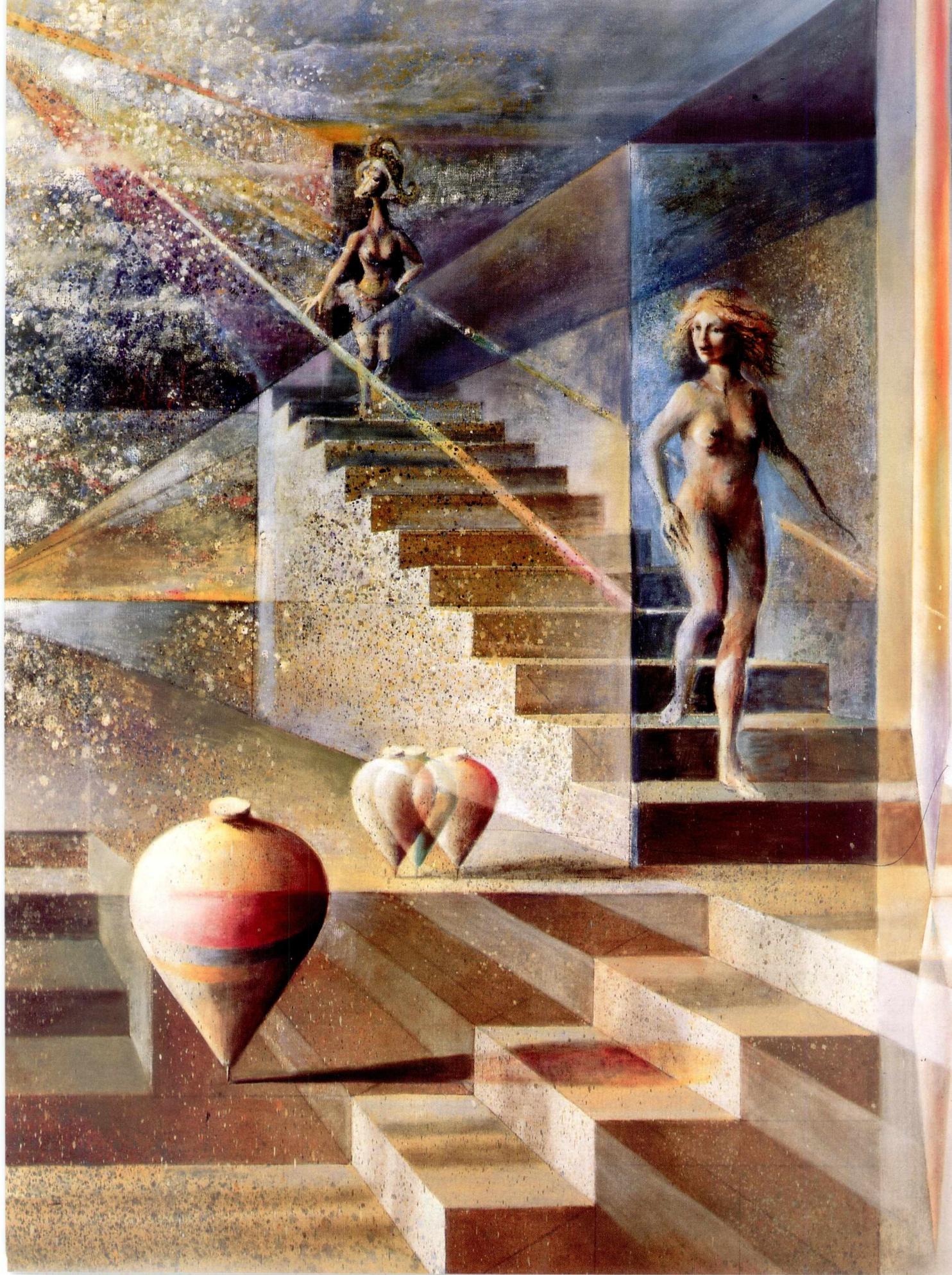
**Opposite page:** *In an Unending Present*, 200 x 150 (oil on canvas).

But nothing —no wall, horizon or vacuum— seems to stop Coen's carnival. Perhaps this is because as it runs its course, which both subverts and diverts, it creates a universe: as the viewer's gaze wanders over the paintings, it realizes that each is a planet unto itself, just as each mind is a universe unto itself. And his universe moves in festive procession, propelled more by the luminous force of play (and of smiles) than by the force of gravity. However, in the universe of Arnaldo Coen, the tides rise and fall like the heavy breathing of the color that so often twinkles speckled with white. The purples separate

like an evening sky yielding little by little to the night. The force of the moon —which naturally is a cube— ends up imposing itself. It is the time when lizards become unicorns and fossils, stars. Minotaurs shake their sex in a cube as they whisper into their beloved's ear, "I am a prisoner of your enormous freedom."

At this final hour which is also eternal —detained, or rather, delayed— in these paintings, the lines are no longer a succession of points but of intensities. Bodies are no longer what they seem: *from the geometry of the flesh arises the dream*. These paintings exhibited "on the edge of time" show us that we are all

geometry, relationships among bodies, mystery and mechanics of forms, human landscapes pierced in turn by the curved illusion of color and the straight illusion of perspective. As the magnetized center of the exhibit, a nude woman lies on a dune that is also a pyramid of straight ridges. The rainbow tangentially touches her breast like a sting of life that infects her with dreams and impregnates her sand-colored body without yet untangling the dark forest of her womb. In essence, the music of the spheres and the cubes tries hesitantly to reveal a secret to us. But, "How can what is not said at all be said?" ❧



# The Prophecies of ARNALDO COEN

Luis Porter\*

**T**he common meaning of the word “prophet” comes from the Greek and refers to the supernatural gift of knowing the future. In the Hebrew usage of the word, found in the Bible, a prophet is one who is able to bring to light something unseen, hidden truths or higher orders of things in the name of God. In this sense, in Mexican culture, the prophet is a holy man rather than a soothsayer, a being whose contact with God allows us to elucidate things which are unclear.

We cannot deal lucidly with Coen’s work without the understanding that his visual concerns, the problems he resolves on canvas or paper, are in all cases an attempt at revelation, an exercise in the ability to see what others cannot see. If the reader tries to feel or understand the images shown in this issue, it will help to

know that Coen is not trying to tell us stories, nor is he expressing his inner world, nor is he trying to recreate a contemporary language of painting in the light—or the shadow—of new artistic trends in his painting. His images could be understood as hermeneutic or cryptographic procedures that lead to a visual result whose importance centers on describing and revealing a hidden order. What order? The one that is part of the laws and invisible structures that we are all subject to without knowing it: cosmogonies, unexplainable relationships, coincidences or harmonies that penetrate our sensibilities through unknown angles and portals.

In this sense, Coen is one of our few painters who—perhaps without knowing it, perhaps deliberately—tries to comply in the last analysis with God’s plastic aims because it is in the revelation of a higher order where his inspiration and enthusiasm lie. (We should not forget that the correct meaning of enthusiasm is “deification” or “ecstasy.”) If we

try to imagine how cosmic intelligence manifests itself—not in the movement of the planets and the order of the constellations but in the images painted on canvas—and, if we think that this minimum expression executed with pencils or brushes is also ordered by a higher force, then in figures, axes, directions and volumes that in turn contain other images, figures, axes and directions, line by line, point by point, we will recognize the premises that make Arnaldo’s painting fragments of something absolute, in which there is no more chance than that contained in possible mistakes, his mistakes as a painter and ours as viewers. It is painting always aware of threatening revelations.

Arnaldo Coen is not an artist of a single passion. Another passion, very much his own and glimpsed through his painting, is language and the play of language. His vision is not at all similar to the daily, distracted tramp that takes us from events to ordinary things that we

\* Architect, Ph.D. in education, professor at Mexico’s Autonomous Metropolitan University.

Opposite page: *It Says What I Don’t and Doesn’t Say What I Do*, 200 x 140 cm (oil on canvas).



Photos reprinted courtesy of Arnaldo Coen

*The First Encounter*, 85 x 40 cm (oil on canvas).

explain as products of chance. This does not happen in the case of a painter concerned with the designs that an infinite intelligence may have deliberately dictated to an image, where there is no tolerance whatsoever for chance. Just as Neruda asks himself who ordained the map of the butterfly's itinerary drawn on its wings, Coen tries to be both mirror and interpreter of that "stellar intelligence" manifested in images that can be painted.

To imagine this way of approaching art, Borges' explanation of the Cabala is useful. In contrast with a normal reading, says Borges, one that seeks a hidden meaning is equivalent to reading *Don Quixote* as a [Spanish-language] text that begins with two monosyllabic words ending in the letter "n" ("en" and "un"), followed by a five-letter word ("lugar"), two two-letter words ("de la") and a six-letter word ("Mancha"), and from there, using these indicators, we try to come to a special conclusion. Only someone who had lost his senses could read like this, but, for example, that is the way that the seekers of the possible underlying design in the word of God have read the Bible: nothing can be accidental in the Scriptures because it is a book dictated by God; everything has been pre-determined including the number of letters in every verse. In just this way the world of images in which the cosmos takes form challenges Coen to decipher it.

The idea, then, is to paint like someone who draws a cryptogram, and while doing it, seek out the



*In the Memory of Her Abodes*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).

code that explains it using the rules of geometry that order it. But to be fair, we should clarify that Coen is not only concerned with “reality,” because if he were, there would be no difference between him and an astronomer or any scientist. As an artist and poet, we should realize he is also interested in other hidden revelations, the revelations of dreams, for example. This is not, then, a vision that emphasizes an obsessive rationality, but rather one that also allows for mystery and the unexplainable as part of prophesy.

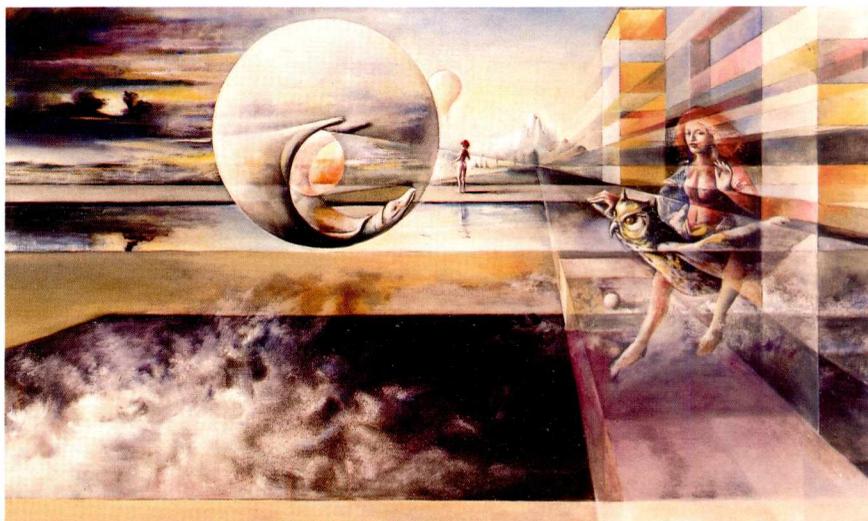
Again, it is Borges who says on more than one occasion that when



*In the Clouds of Your Mind*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).

dreaming that he was reading, he exclaimed, "Goodness gracious! I can see again!" But then immediately, still in his dream, he would say, "No, I'm inventing the words I'm seeing." Borges imagined the words because his blindness prevented him from seeing a written text. Arnaldo's painting is also a result of the ability to see what cannot be seen, another way of explaining what some understand as invention.

So, tops and eggs, spheres and cubes, structures, lines and meridians, all Coen's geometric paraphernalia is not scaffolding; it is not the kind of order proven through axioms, arguments or the conviction that geometry is infallible because that would only produce artificial systems. Quite the contrary, Coen's geometry is the plot through which the characters and symbols in his painting are revealed as they wander through plainly illuminated byways. That is why, despite the fact that Coen's paintings are figurative and "plain to the eye," they are also filled with secret, mysterious images that no one could really ever know, together with figures, people or evocations of people who none of us doubt at all having met. That is why it is painting that changes and continues to change with time because the latest revelation is the revelation of each viewer, the revelation that you, as a reader, have right now, at this moment, upon seeing something which is not in view, that is, you bring into the light, in the name of Coen, other truths and hidden orders, which are none other than your very own. ❧



*Still, Under the Sun*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).



*Under the Arches of Your Light I Enter*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).



*Diaphanous Like Silence*, 120 x 180 cm (oil on canvas).



*The Hoped-For Satiation of Her Desire*, 155 x 300 cm (oil on canvas).

## ARNALDO COEN

Born June 10, 1940 in Mexico City, Arnaldo Coen began as a self-taught painter. Diego Rivera, who met him in 1956, recommended that he continue painting without any formal training. From 1957 to 1960, however, he did study graphic arts at the Fresnos Institute of Advertising Arts in Mexico City and graphic design with Gordon Jones, who enriched his knowledge of painting.

In 1959, Coen began experimenting in abstract expressionism. However, in his first solo exhibition in 1963, he presented figurative expressionist works, and after 1964, he began working in fantastic expressionism. As he developed as an artist, Coen began to work with object paintings and sculpture, making different treatments of the female body his main theme.

In addition to painting, between 1964 and 1983, using panels, mobile objects and body painting, he created environments, scenery and costumes for plays and dance pieces which were performed in Mexico City venues like the Palace of Fine Arts, the Benjamin Franklin Library and the Tamayo Museum as well as at the Alhóndiga in Guanajuato.

He made several trips to the United States and Europe, and in 1967 the French government awarded him a fellowship. In 1972, Arnaldo Coen participated in "Stealing Art," a film shot and shown in "Documenta 5" in Kassel, Germany. From 1977 to 1978, he worked in collaboration with a group of architects in Dodoma, Tanzania, designing the new capital. He also painted several murals in different countries and illustrated books and magazines.

Coen has had innumerable exhibits in Mexico, the United States, Canada, Latin America, Europe and Japan. His individual exhibits at the Palace of Fine Arts' National Hall and the Modern Art Museum in Mexico, the Claude Leman Gallery in France and the La Vorpall Gallery in New York are some of the most outstanding.

His work has received worldwide recognition and earned him many awards and prizes. Art critics, intellectuals and writers such as Octavio Paz, Claude Bouyeure, Singrun Paas and Guillermo Sheridan have dedicated hundreds of pages to his role in the art world. ❧



# University City

## A Captivating Encounter with Culture

Luis Roberto Torres Escalona\*

**I**nsurgentes Avenue, one of Mexico City's main thoroughfares, takes you to University City, a monumental work south of the Pedregal in the San Angel district. On either side of Insurgentes Avenue, the first things the visitor sees are the Mexico '68 Olympic Stadium, the Rector's Tower and the Central Library, all outstanding buildings of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, covered with murals by Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Juan O'Gorman.

As a whole, the campus is a landmark in the history of contemporary Mexican art, with its mix of European architectural avant-gardes and the renewed artistic quest of Mexican muralism which had its second great moment when University City was built.

The murals were painted on outside walls so that they were visible from different perspectives. The aesthetic intention behind the construction of the University City campus was not just to put a painting on a wall, but to achieve an aesthetic integration of architecture and painting. This renovating aim was called plastic integration and the most notable example is the Central Library. The mural that covers its four walls, *Historical Representation of Culture*, is a huge mosaic measuring 4,000 square meters by architect and painter Juan O'Gorman. It narrates the

great epic of Mexican culture from pre-Hispanic times until this century.

Mexico is a nation said to live by its myths. Its past is very much part of its present and without a doubt permanently forges its future. Mexican art's creative source is to be found in that magical past that survives in our traditions and day-to-day attitudes. That is why the University murals refer to it as a source of renewed life. This is the case of Francisco Eppens' murals in the Schools of Medicine and Dentistry, *Life, Death and the Four Elements* and *Man Elevating Himself Morally, Culturally and Intellectually*, respectively. In his works, the artist recreated, according to the aesthetic demands of his time, the sense of the ancient, pre-Hispanic world view: death as a condition for the continuity of the life cycle; blood and the land as the sacred foundations for the Mexican mentality; the civilizing protection of Quetzalcóatl, the great god who originated with the Toltecs; and the recognition of the mixture of the races, *mestizaje*, as something which enriched our culture. This last theme did not escape the artistic intuition of Diego Rivera either: his mural in the Olympic Stadium, a relief on the embankment, depicts sports as a cultural identification where racial mixes converge.

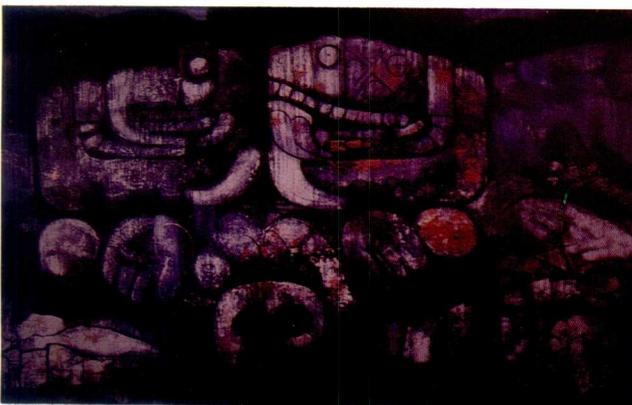
Specifically university topics also abound. In the Rector's Tower, David Alfaro Siqueiros presents us with a *New University Emblem*, stylizing the UNAM's traditional coat of arms. On the south wall of the same building,

\* Researcher at the UNAM Department of Artistic and Cultural Assets.

Opposite page: Rufino Tamayo, *The University, Embryo of Humanism and Wisdom*.



The Central Library's *Historical Representation of Culture*, by Juan O'Gorman.



Guillermo Ceniceros, *Huitzilopochtli*, University Museum of Contemporary Art.

*Sebastián has graced the sculpture area with several pieces evoking nature's eternal game of creation.*

Siqueiros represented the social vocation of the university in his work *The People to the University, The University to the People*, a mosaic done in relief.

The great artist born in the state of Guanajuato, José Chávez Morado, uses universal themes in his mosaics *The Conquest of Energy* and *The Return of Quetzalcóatl*. The former, located on the facade of the Alfonso Caso Auditorium, shows the great human quest to master energy, from the conquest of fire to the atomic age. The second mosaic shows Quetzalcóatl as a serpent in the form of a raft carrying the most representative figures of the world's religions.

The vestibule of the Alfonso Caso Auditorium boasts a mural by Chávez Morado which pays tribute to the building of University City itself, *Science and Labor*. Here, the artist shows the transformation of rural laborers into urban workers, paying tribute to the builders of this national center of learning.



José Chávez Morado, *The Conquest of Energy*, Alfonso Caso Auditorium.



Benito Messeguer, *Human Creation and The Economy*, School of Economics.

Further south, near the University Cultural Center, is Carlos Mérida's tile work *Integrated Abstraction*, an example of abstractionism, heavily influenced by pre-Hispanic art, achieving a singular synthesis between the original and the contemporary forms.

Many interiors are also graced with very important murals. One example is Benito Messeguer's *Human Creation and the Economy* in the School of Economics' Narciso Bassols Auditorium, an expressionist work in which a majestic use of color goes hand in hand with the violent vitality of its forms.

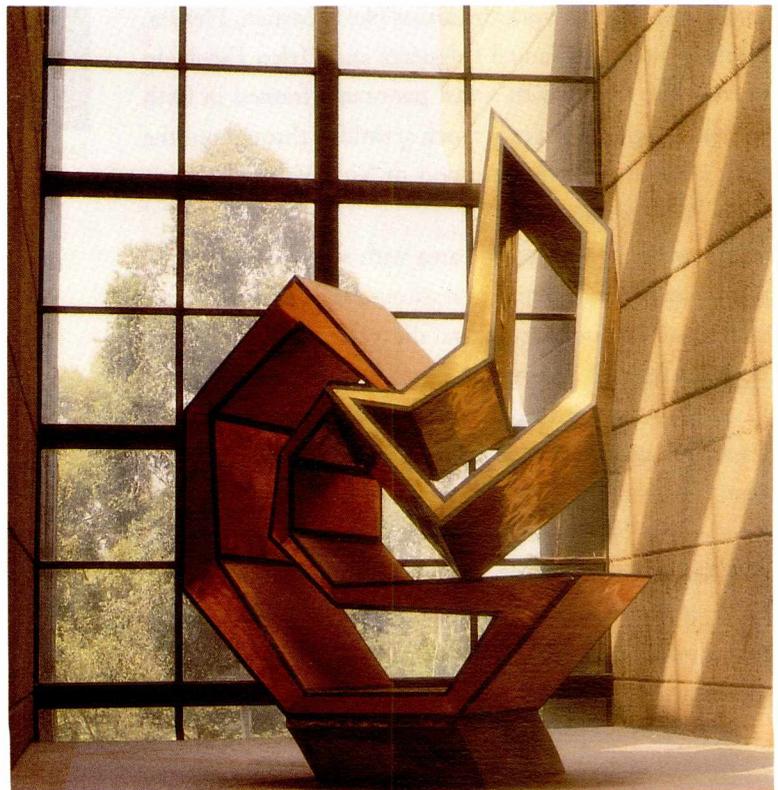
In the vestibule and the interior of the auditorium of the School of Engineering, Federico Silva painted *History of a Mathematical Space*, a creative experience in which geometry answers to a logic wherein science and art seem to converge.

In the University Museum of Contemporary Art, Guillermo Cenicerros contributed several works characterized by a kind of pre-Hispanic expressionism: the conciliation of ancestral forms with the expressive possibilities of contemporary art.

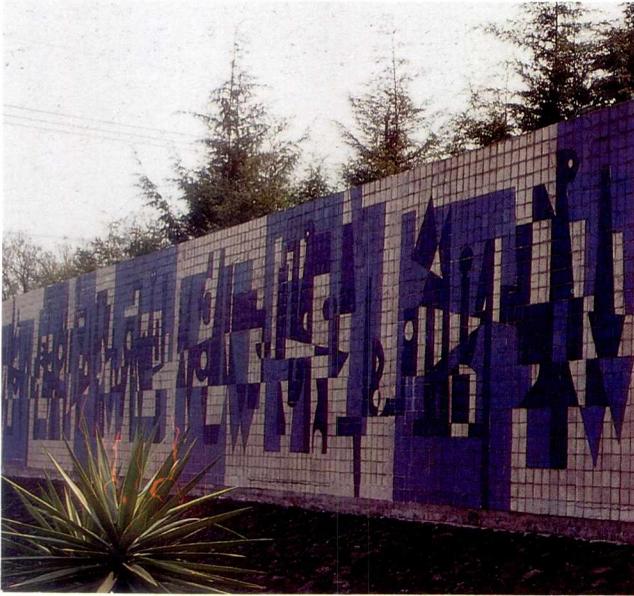
*A Gallop in Silence* by Lucile Wong, in the vestibule of the auditorium of the post-graduate division of the School of Veterinary Medicine, evokes prehistoric cave art with its dynamic brush strokes suggesting horses that seem to float.

Any visitor who goes through University City will find both in its architecture and its art a thumbnail sketch of Mexican history as well as of our artists' explorations in public, monumental art.

No visitor should miss a stroll through a place where he or she will find works by some of the most prestigious contemporary Mexican sculptors: Sculpture Walk, located



Hersua, *The Unity of the Human Sciences*, National Library.



Carlos Mérida, *Integrated Abstraction*, University Cultural Center.

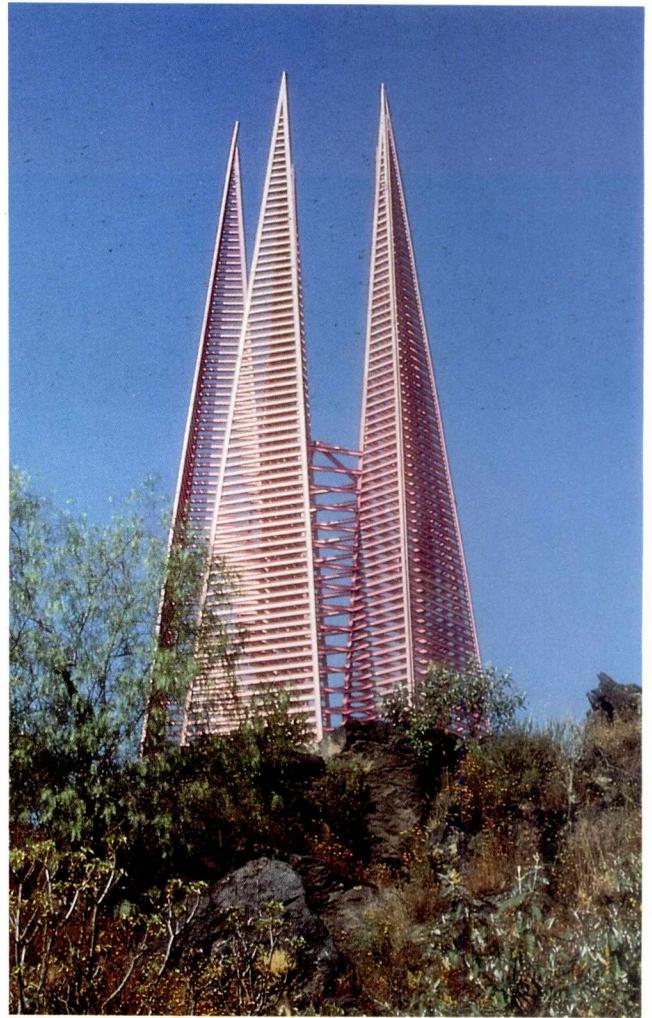
in the Cultural Area, where theater, cinema, art exhibits, music performances and literary events are held.

Here, the harmonious relationship between the sculptures and their natural and urban setting may be appreciated. Monumental works by artists like Sebastián, Hersua, Mathias Goeritz, Manuel Felguérez and Helen Escobedo provide the viewer with a vast panorama framed in both vegetation and the volcanic rock sprinkled throughout the area, a remnant of the eruption of Xitle Volcano in pre-Columbian times.

Sebastián has graced the area with several pieces evoking nature's eternal game of creation: *Tlaloc*, *Calotl*, *Serpent* and *Jaguar's Claw*, a sculptural diptych visible all the way from Insurgentes Avenue.

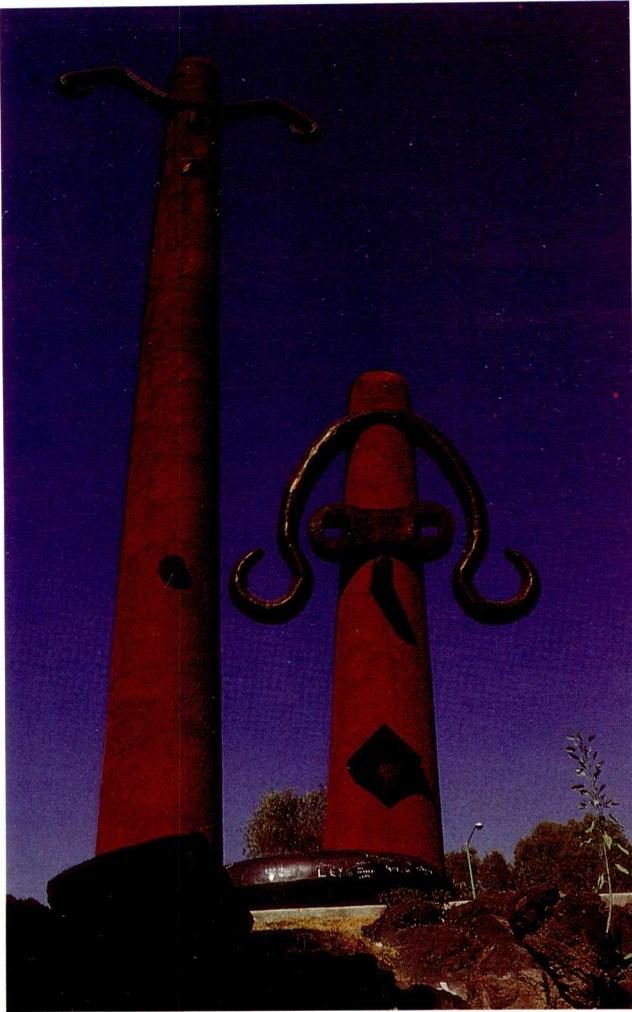
*Bird Two*, by Hersua, emerges from Sculpture Walk's wild vegetation and consists of several triangles pointing heavenward. Federico Silva's work appears in the same way; one piece, in the Two Serpents Plaza, points to the north; another, alluding to the fiftieth anniversary of UNAM autonomy, stands in the path that joins the national library to the Cultural Area. A third work by Silva should not be ignored: *Eight Rabbit*, with aerial forms pointing south.

The Two Serpents Plaza is so named because that is where two snake heads meet, sculpted in volcanic rock by Federico Silva. This work winds through most of Sculpture



Mathias Goeritz, *The Crown of Pedregal*, University Cultural Center.

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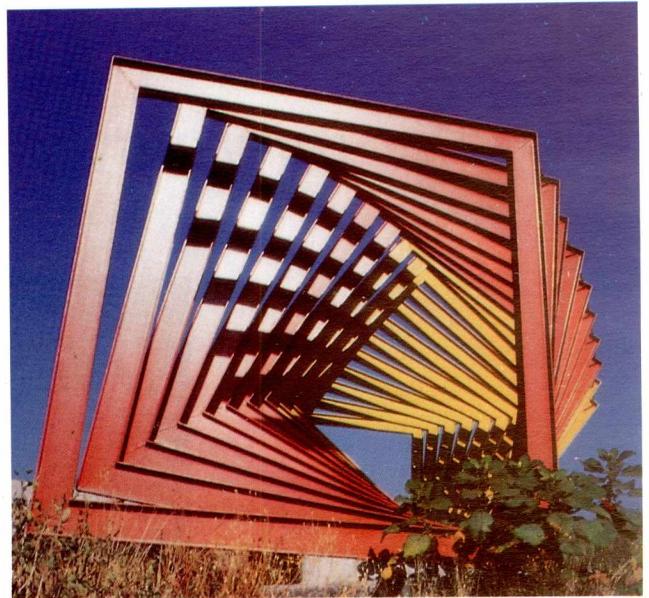
Mathias Goeritz, *The Family*, on the university grounds.

Walk as though it were a legendary piece erected centuries ago. The meeting of the serpents represents the closing of cycles, the point at which different ages meet to give rise to the change represented by a new era.

*The Crown of Pedregal*, by Mathias Goeritz, is an interesting metal piece comprised of five triangles arranged to form a crown with their corners pointing skyward.

Helen Escobedo left her mark in *Cóatl*, also a work in metal, whose square shapes form a kind of cosmic tunnel. Manuel Felguérez's work *Variation on Kepler's Key* suggests something similar in its allusion to the famous astronomer's discoveries.

On this ramble through Sculpture Walk, we cannot leave out *The University, Embryo of Humanism and Wisdom*, by Rufino Tamayo, a metal structure placed on a square



Helen Escobedo, *Cóatl*, University Cultural Center.

concrete base. The piece is a symbol of the University Cultural Center and is visible from afar.

The Sculptural Center, with its 64 monumental concrete modules, surprises the viewer with its integration of the modern and the historical, the profane and the ritual. It is a reference to Mexico's pre-Columbian past and its different archeological monuments: Palenque, Bonampak, Teotihuacan, El Tajín, etc.

Inaugurated in 1979, it is a large plaza built around a center of volcanic rock. This monumental work's modules form a circle the outside of which measures 120 meters in diameter and the inside, 93 meters. The red clay surrounding the modules enhances its rocky appearance.

This collective sculpture was the work of six of Mexico's most important artists: Mathias Goeritz, Hersua, Sebastián, Helen Escobedo, Manuel Felguérez and Federico Silva.

Anyone who ventures into this area will find a cement path etched with illustrations of the pieces in Sculpture Walk. The volcanic rock at the center of the concrete modules tempts the visitor to play. The middle is clearly marked and, looking around from there, the viewer has the sensation of being at the very hub of the universe. ❧

# The Venues Of the International Cervantes Festival



Just like every year since 1972, the Mexican city of Guanajuato is preparing to offer up three autumn weeks of music, dance, theater, opera, visual arts and academic fora to art and culture devotees during the Twenty-Fifth International Cervantes Festival.

With more than 30 participating countries, the festival continues its tradition of bringing together the best Mexican and international performers and art in both modern and historical venues in a city that differs from other Mexican colonial cities in its history, its lay-out and the grandeur of its architecture.

Originally founded in a glen, the town's buildings

and roads are nestled on inclines and hillsides with no traditional urban lay-out. After the first ore deposits were discovered in 1548, Guana-



juato became Mexico's foremost mining district and an unending source of wealth for the Spanish Crown. With the riches extracted for centuries, churches, monuments, plazas and buildings were erected sparing no expense. The most important old buildings, from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, are representative of the Mexican churriguesque and baroque styles. Their splendor fully deserves the UNESCO's classification as "the most beautiful examples of baroque architecture in the New World," when it declared Guanajuato a World Heritage Treasure in 1988.

Every year some of these buildings and plazas boast their splendor by becoming part of the Cervantes festival celebration. Such is the case of the Juárez Theater, in the heart of the city, where the most important performances

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*Voices of Mexico* wishes to thank the organizers of the International Cervantes Festival in Mexico City and Guanajuato for the support they gave us in writing this article.

and world premiers take place. Built at the end of the nineteenth century, it is one of Mexico's architectural masterpieces. The interior surprises the eye with its carved wooden screens, its iron latticework, its floor of colored tiles cut octagonally and the different wood in its ceiling, the Italian works of art, its exquisite Renaissance upstairs hall and, above all, the main auditorium's splendid Moorish reliefs.

Two important open spaces are the San Roque Plaza and the Alhóndiga.

The former, flanked by a seventeenth century Jesuit church, is important to the festival because it is there that, since 1955, Guanajuato University drama students have performed Cervantes' *Entremeses* (Interludes), a tradition that would contribute to the city's being selected to host the festival. The Alhóndiga, though not particularly attractive, is probably one of the most important historically and the one that makes the festival truly a community event,

since all performances there are free. Its esplanade can hold the largest audience of all the venues, and thanks to this arrangement, thousands of ordinary people have had the opportunity to watch artists of the stature of B.B. King, the Bolshoi Ballet and the Beijing Circus.

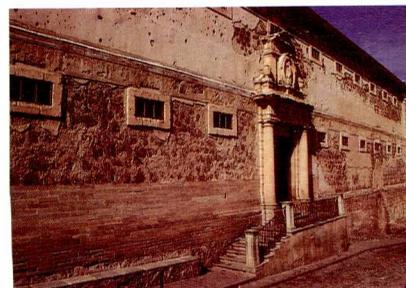
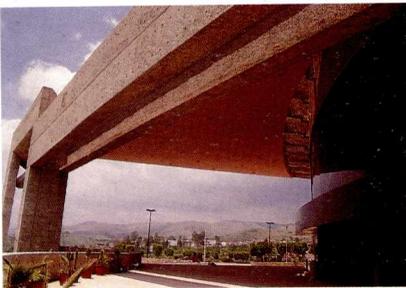
Two majestic examples of churrigueresque art built in the eighteenth century are the La Valenciana Church and the Church of the Company of Jesus. The two facades

**Captions, read clockwise.**

1. Overlooking the city, the State Auditorium.  
6. The Main Theater, one of Mexico's first theaters and Guanajuato's very first.

2. The exquisite Renaissance upstairs hall of the Juárez Theater.  
5. The Alhóndiga, famous for being the site of the first victory of Mexico's independence forces over the Spanish army in 1810.

3. The Cervantes Theater, named after Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes.  
4. The San Roque Plaza, flanked by a seventeenth century Jesuit Church.



of La Valenciana have outstanding pink stone reliefs and carved wooden porticos. In the interior, the visitor can admire the mortar decorations, the exquisite altars ornately carved in wood and gold-leafed and the magnificent pulpit decorated with wood and bone inlay. The Church of the Company's interior boasts an altar the lateral doors of which give onto a splendid single-nave vestry with

two interior facades, today a picture gallery. Both places host concerts to delight music and art lovers. The San Gabriel de la Barrera Ex-Hacienda, sober, simple and of excellent architectural design, is today a museum and is used as a magnificent open-air theater. Its large, well cared for gardens can be visited after performances. The Main Theater, the Cervantes Theater, the Auditorium and the

Mines Theater, several museums and university facilities complete the picture and contribute with their own history and charm to giving festival goers a splendid backdrop for performances, exhibitions and lectures that make this one of the most important international events in Mexico. **VM**

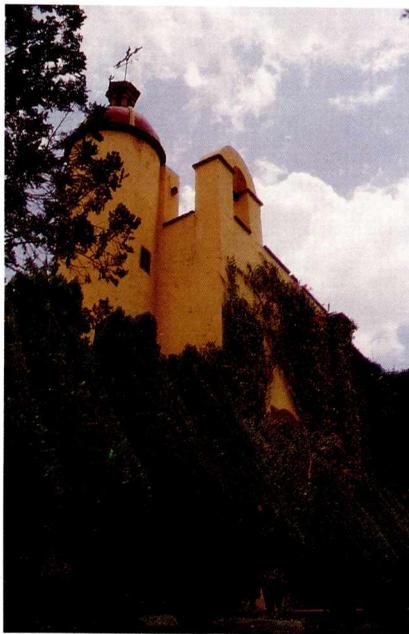
*Text: Elsie Montiel.*

*Photography: Dante Barrera.*

**Below:** The Church of the Company of Jesus, built in the eighteenth century, a splendid backdrop for musical performances.



**Below:** Two views of the San Gabriel de la Barrera Ex-Hacienda, where open-air concerts are held.



# EL TINACAL

## *A Ritual Mexican Space*

Francisco Pérez de Salazar Vereá\*

**F**rom the time I was a very small boy, through friends of my father, I went to a few haciendas in the states of Puebla and Tlaxcala. Curiosity and the sheer number of my visits initiated me into the culture of *pulque*.

There, I encountered the maguery. Not only is its sap used to make *pul-*

*que*: the *ichtli* fibers from its leaves are used for weaving; its stalks are used as roofing (a few examples of this can be found today in the Mezquital Valley); and its stiff needle-like thorns were traditionally used for self-sacrifice by the Aztecs.

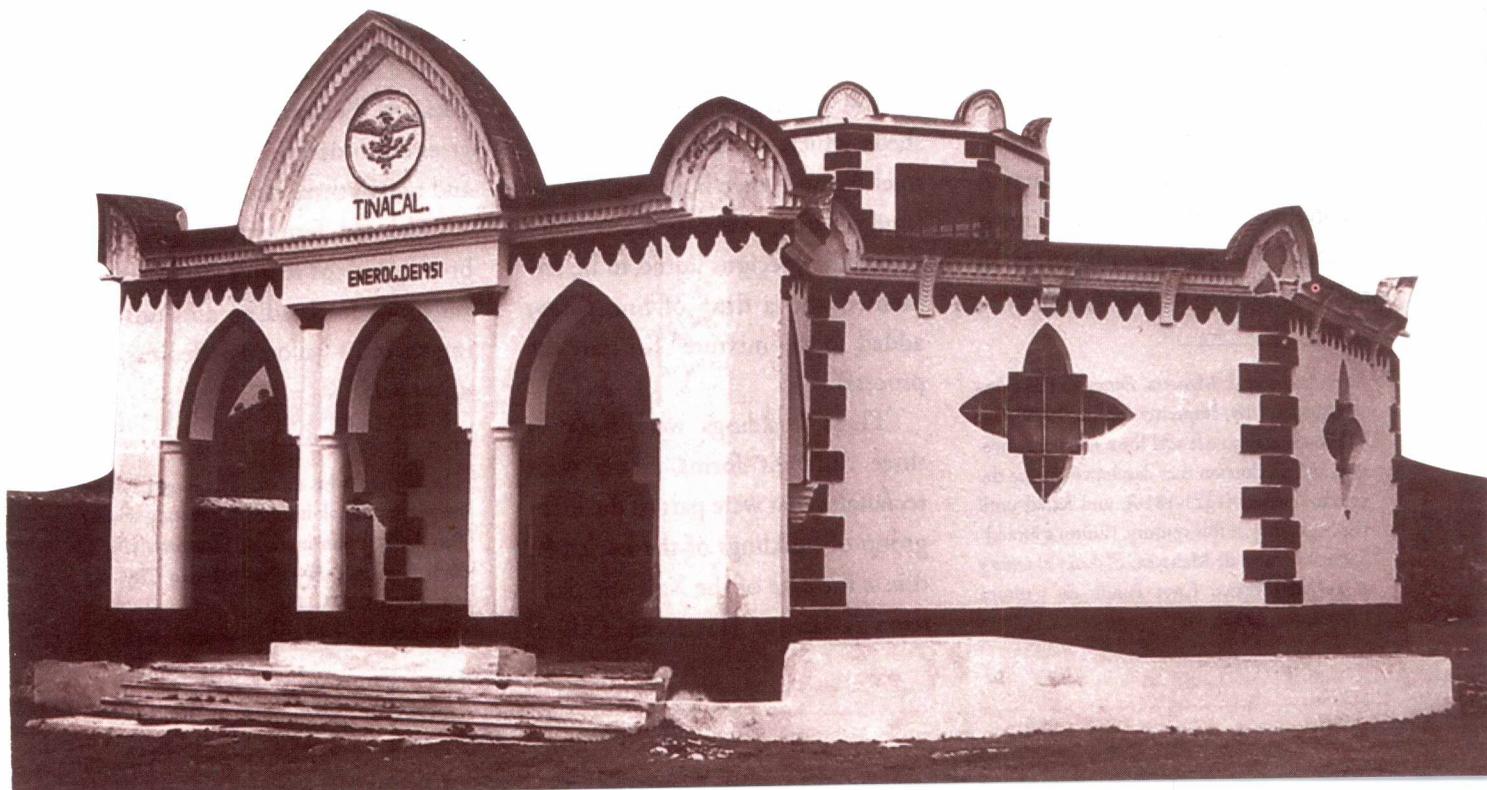
The maguery is also used to fence in fields, mark off boundaries and hold up walls. It makes good firewood; its trunk, or *quiote*, doubles as girders and beams in building; its leaves were

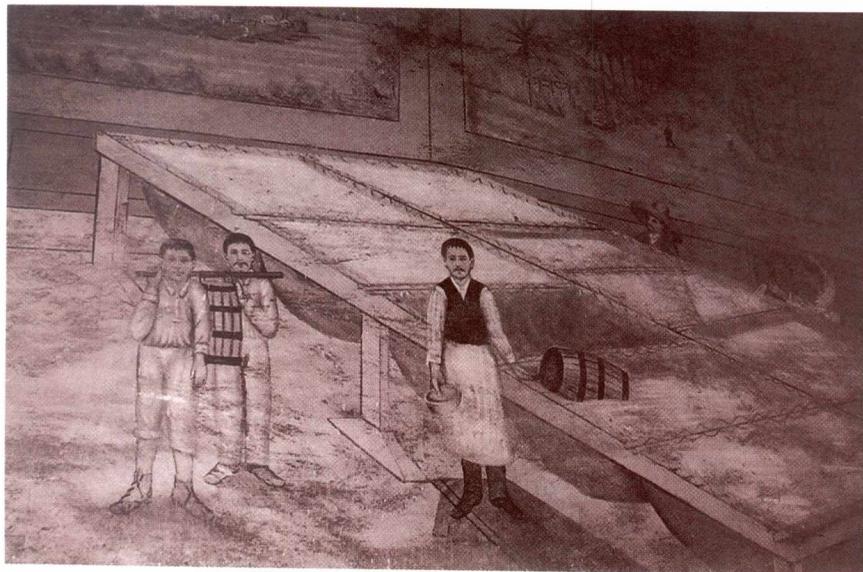
pressed to make paper, footwear, cord and coarse cloth; its sap provided honey, sugar and vinegar, just as Motolinía wrote in his *Florentine Codex*.<sup>1</sup>

One of the many varieties of this agave—also called *metl* by the ancient Mexicans—still yields the raw ingredient for mescal and the world

<sup>1</sup> Friar Toribio de Benavente, a Franciscan monk who the American indigenous peoples called Motolinía ("the poor one"). [Editor's Note.]

\* Mexican Ph.D. in architecture, expert in monument restoration.





Photos reprinted courtesy of Francisco Pérez de Salazar V.

famous tequila. But in Mexico's central plateau, the maguery was used mainly to obtain *octli* or *pulque*, the traditional beverage linked to most of daily life as well as both secular and sacred festivities.

Most of the common people drank only *aguamiel*, the sap straight from the plant which is barely fermented at all. The fermented beverage, *pulque*, was the privilege of the old, pregnant women and some officials among the warrior class.<sup>2</sup>

With the emergence of the hacienda system in the colonial period, *pulque* production flourished and consequently the limits on its consumption disappeared.<sup>3</sup> To this effect, the Crown approved the *pulque* ordinances in its Royal Decree of July 6, 1672.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Sonia Corcuera de Mancera, *Entre gula y templanza* (Mexico City: Imprenta Aldina, 1979), 81.

<sup>3</sup> The hacienda was a feudal form of land ownership and production that developed during the colonial period (1521-1810), and lasted until the beginning of this century. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>4</sup> Sonia Corcuera de Mancera, *El fraile, el indio y el pulque* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1993), 125.



The *aguamiel* was transported to tubs in the *tinacales* or fermenting sheds, which, according to Don Manuel Payno, "were large, well ventilated galleries, where the leather tubs stored the precious liquid to be fermented and a drop of fine *pulque* added to the mixture" [to start the process].

These buildings were built in three different forms. Some were rectangles that were part of the main group of buildings of the hacienda; this is the case of the Xala and Santiago Tetlapeyac Haciendas. Others

were circular or polygons situated within the walls of the hacienda but far enough away from the other structures so as to be able to allow for freedom of movement and good ventilation and to avoid sullyng the rest of the hacienda with their strong odor or bothering them with their bustle. The third kind was completely independent from the main buildings of the hacienda, in a strategic place in the countryside that would allow for the *tlachiqueros*<sup>5</sup> to make their runs and put *pulque* distribution and sale well within the reach of wayfarers, travelers and local residents on the roadside.

The vats in San Antonio Ometusco and Santiago Tetlapeyac boast striking frescos depicting the cultivation and exploitation of maguery and the distribution of *pulque* which show the sensitivity of their artists. These paintings are the forerunners of the murals that years later would be painted in urban *pulquerías*.<sup>6</sup> Painters Frida Kahlo and Juan O'Gorman both depicted them extensively.<sup>7</sup>

In a few places, like Santa María Tecajete, the traditional overseer still gives out orders in the maguery fields and two or three *tlachiqueros* survive.

The old fermenting sheds had broad porticos to give the *tlachiqueros* room for loading and unloading their 50-gallon wooden casks of *aguamiel*.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The laborers who extracted the sap from the maguery and took it to the fermenting sheds.

<sup>6</sup> Bars that specialize in *pulque*. [Translator's Note.]

<sup>7</sup> Raúl Guerrero, *El pulque* (Mexico City: SEP-INAH, 1980), 124-125.

<sup>8</sup> Goatskin bags were also used as recipients.



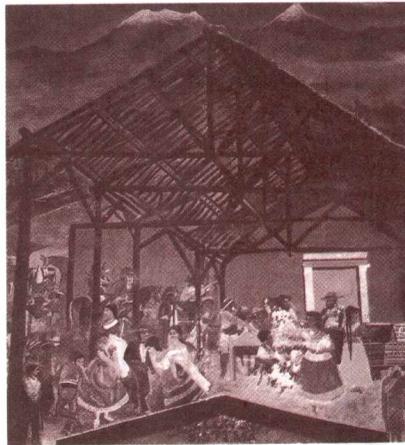
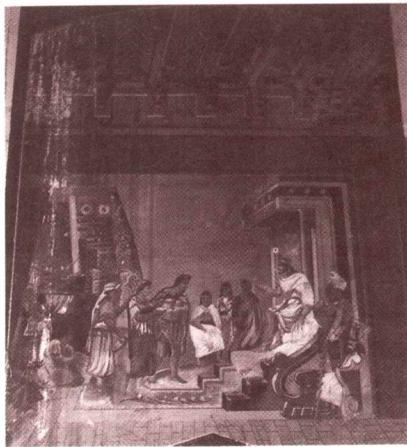
*Few pulquerías survive, but they have lost most of their authenticity, their homey, Mexican flavor.*

the measurers<sup>14</sup> and the general dogs-bodies have all disappeared.

A few *pulquerías* also survive, but they have lost most of their authenticity, their homey, Mexican flavor. Gone are the colorful floors with tinted sawdust; the barmaid elegantly attired in traditional *china poblana* dress; the little clay soldiers and toys made of pounded brass given out as prizes; the raucous games of *rayuela*, *rento* and *brisca*;<sup>15</sup> and the altar decorated and dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe on December 12.

All these things, so distinctive in our cultural and architectural identity reinforce our specificity and nationalism.

It is still possible to recover and recreate them with both institutional support and visionary investment so that, like the Marquess Calderón de la Barca, the lovers of our culture can testify to the grace and originality of Mexico's architecture and special ritual places. ❧



With the coming of the railway, loading platforms were built, like the one at San Antonio Ometusco, where the animal-drawn carts were loaded to take the *pulque* to the closest railroad station.<sup>9</sup>

Today, only rarely do *pulque* producers sing the Ave Marías or the *alabados*,<sup>10</sup> or hymns, as they used to

be sung at the beginning and the end of the day. The overseer can no longer be heard to cry, "Long live Our Lady of Guadalupe!" as he pours in the new *aguamiel* to make the *pulque* and the answering cries of "Viva!" from the workers.

Today, the only employees are the overseer and the *tlachiqueros*. The *guarda-tandas*,<sup>11</sup> captains,<sup>12</sup> *tineros*,<sup>13</sup>

<sup>9</sup> For example, a narrow path used to go from the San Antonio Ometusco hacienda to the Irolo station.

<sup>10</sup> This particular hymn was introduced into New Spain by Friar Antonio de Magrill who taught the indigenous people the song that tells the story of the passion and the death of Jesus.

<sup>11</sup> The man who coordinated and registered the arrival of the *aguamiel* at the fermenting shed. [Translator's Note.]

<sup>12</sup> The overseer's second-in-command.

<sup>13</sup> The men who monitored and cleaned the tubs during fermentation.

<sup>14</sup> These men measured out the *pulque* for distribution when it was ready.

<sup>15</sup> All games of chance; the first is a coin-tossing game and the second two are card games.

## PULQUE, A TRADITIONAL AND SACRED DRINK

*Pulque* is a fermented drink produced from the maguey (a native Mexican agave plant) that had its boom and peak consumption among the people in Mexico during the 19th century and the beginning of this century. The emergence of beer, however, together with the disadvantage that pulque cannot be bottled because it ferments too rapidly, led to its decline as Mexico's most popular drink. As a consequence, those states where the product was once the main source of income suffered an economic decline.

From pre-Hispanic times *pulque* played a part in all aspects of daily life, the fiestas of the indigenous peoples and their religious and public life. Originally *pulque* was made and consumed only by the Indians, but Spanish colonizers and mestizos saw opportunities for personal wealth in the *pulque* business and began to industrialize the drink in the haciendas where the maguey plant was grown.

The plant produces honey-water which slides down inside maguey, the heart of the maguey which has an elliptical-shaped cavity and a circular base. The honey-water is extracted, and fermented together with the roots and tip of the plant to produce *pulque*, a nutritious drink with four degrees of alcohol, though this percentage can increase with further fermentation.

The *tlachiquero* extracts the honey-water early in the morning and again at sunset. This similarity in timing with the twice-daily milking of cows led people to dub the magueys "green cows."

As *pulque* naturally has a strong bitter flavor, it is often combined with fruit to produce a drink known as "cured" *pulque*. ❧

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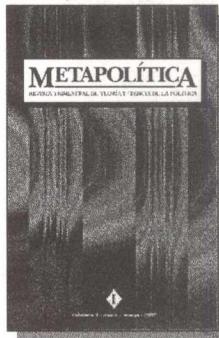
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## THE MEXICAN VIEWPOINT

*On the War**With the United States*

Jesús Velasco Márquez\*

The most dramatic event in the history of relations between Mexico and the United States took place a century and a half ago. U.S. historians refer to this event as “The Mexican War,” while in Mexico we prefer to use the term “The U.S. Invasion.” These contrasting conceptualizations are not based on mere whims, but on different perceptions of the conflict. When the U.S. Congress authorized a declaration of war against Mexico in 1846, President Polk’s viewpoint was officially accepted. It held that the posture of the Mexican government—or, better said, the Mexican governments—had left the United States with no other alternative for defending its national security and interests, and that Mexico was to blame for causing the war. That argument has been the object of debate in Mexican and U.S. historiographies, with those who have defended it and criticized it trying to explain the conduct of Mexican political leaders and opinion makers. U.S. historians have found it difficult to explain the attitude

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Jesús Corral, *Allegory of the National Coat of Arms*, 105 x 94.5 cm, nineteenth century (oil on canvas).

adopted by the Mexican governments and the national press in those years. Their interpretations have been biased, taking some official declarations and newspaper articles out of context and using them as supposed evidence of Mexico’s exaggerated belligerency. If these very documents are studied in the context of Mexico’s internal situation at that time, however, we can see the other side of the coin. Indeed, in order to understand Mexico’s viewpoint with regard to the war with the United States, it is necessary to consider three important issues: first, Mexico’s internal state

of affairs during the 1840s; second, the problem of Texas; and third, the U.S. invasion of Mexican territory.

Between 1841 and 1848, Mexico experienced one of the most critical periods in the formation of its State. First, there was the Santa Anna dictatorship between 1841 and 1843, and then, the second Centralist Republic, in power until December 1845. This was followed by the Mariano Paredes dictatorship which lasted eight months and during which the possibility of setting up a monarchy was once again discussed. The federal republican government was finally restored in 1847, after six presidents had succeeded one another from June 1844 to September 1847. With the exception of Manuel



Julio Michaud, *Battle of Churubusco*, 1847, 32 x 43 cm, nineteenth century (color lithography).

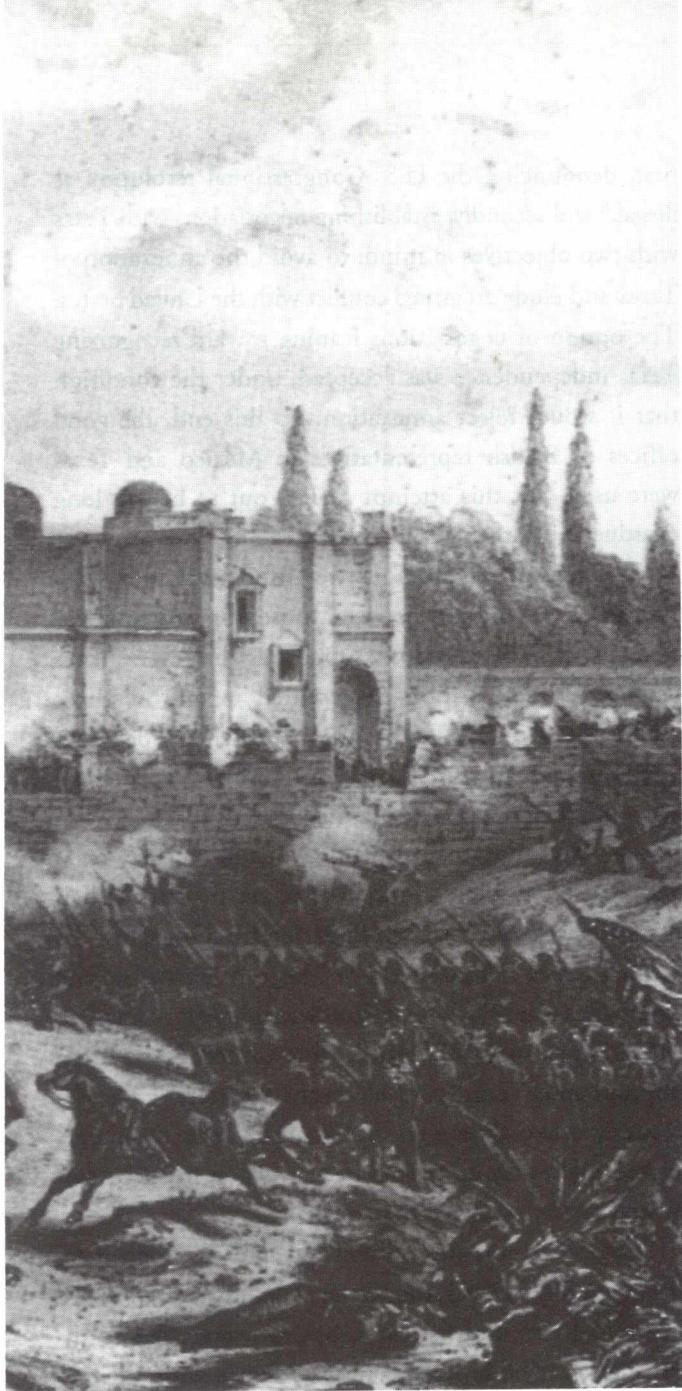
de la Peña y Peña, the rest came to power as a result of popular or military uprisings against their predecessors. Thus, all confronted opposition forces that questioned their legitimacy and were eager to overthrow them. As a result of these conditions, the problems of the separation of Texas and its annexation to the United States, as well as John Slidell's mission,<sup>1</sup> became part of the debate among

<sup>1</sup> John Slidell was a U.S. government envoy whose mission was to seek an economic agreement on compensation for the annexation of Texas to the United States. [Editor's Note.]

political parties and factions and a pretext for one faction or another to downplay the legitimacy of its opponents.

As pointed out in an article in the daily *El Siglo XIX*, the issue of Texas separation and the attempts to bring it back under Mexican sovereignty were used to justify, enhance, tear down or revive the reputations of important figures and political parties, and above all, as an excuse to justify any type of "revolutionary" movement.<sup>2</sup> In the same way,

<sup>2</sup> "Resurrecciones Políticas," *El Siglo XIX*, 20 May 1847, p. 4.



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stant suspicion of treason, which prevented him from establishing direct contact with Nicholas Trist,<sup>3</sup> after the *Cerro Gordo* defeat. The fragile state of authority was therefore an obstacle to any attempt at negotiated solutions. The political limitations characterizing the Mexican governments' negotiating capacity were even acknowledged by U.S. representatives beginning in 1844, when Secretary Wilson Shannon reported the following to his government with regard to the Texas annexation:

...many intelligent Mexicans privately entertain and express opinions favorable to the amicable arrangements of the difficulties....But there are few who have the boldness to express these opinions publicly, or who [would] be willing to stem the current popular prejudice by undertaking to carry them out.<sup>4</sup>

It is also worth emphasizing here that constitutional changes made during this period imposed restrictions on the actions of those in power. Some examples include: an article added to the constitution prohibiting the transfer of control over territory;<sup>5</sup> and amendments to the 1824 Federal Constitution which were approved in 1847 and which disqualified "the Executive from signing a peace agreement and concluding negotiations with foreign nations."<sup>6</sup>

From the Mexican perspective, there were two facets to the problem of Texas: one was related to its separation from Mexico and the other to its annexation to the United States. With regard to the first, Mexico asserted from 1836 to 1845, perhaps a bit inflexibly, that the secession of Texas was illegitimate, and it reaffirmed its right to reincorporate this part of its territory by any means necessary, including the use of force. Furthermore, it consid-

efforts during 1845 and 1846 to seek negotiated solutions for avoiding the annexation of Texas to the United States and later, for the war, were denounced by the opposition press as acts of weakness and even treason.

The José Joaquín Herrera administration, for example, had only very precarious support for negotiating with the Texas government in April and May 1845, and also for receiving envoy John Slidell at the end of that same year. Mariano Paredes confronted the same situation in 1846. And in 1847, Santa Anna would face the con-

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas Trist was the main U.S. government negotiator for avoiding the war, which finally broke out during that same year. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>4</sup> Wilson Shannon to John C. Calhoun, October 28, 1844, in Carlos Bosch García, *Documentos de la relación de México con los Estados Unidos*, vol. IV, UNAM, Mexico City, 1985, p. 351.

<sup>5</sup> "Bases Orgánicas de la República Mexicana," Article 89, IV, Mexico, June 14, 1843, in Felipe Tena Ramírez, *Leyes Fundamentales de México, 1808-1971*, fourth edition, Editorial Porrúa, Mexico City, 1971, p. 420.

<sup>6</sup> Josefina Zoraida Vázquez, "De la difícil constitución de un Estado, 1821-1854," in Josefina Zoraida Vázquez (ed.), *La Fundación del Estado Mexicano*, Nueva Imagen, Mexico City, 1994, p. 31.

ered that despite the recognition Texans had gained in other countries, the conflict was an internal problem. Let it be said in passing that Mexico's position was very similar to that adopted by the U.S. government when it faced the problem of the secession of its southern states years later. But, in addition, the potential emancipation of Texas forewarned of the vulnerability of the New Mexico and California territories, due to both the intentions of Texas to define its border along the Rio Grande and those of the United States to expand its territory to the Pacific Ocean.

The impossibility of reincorporating Texas through military submission of the rebels was already clear in 1843 when the Santa Anna government agreed to sign an armistice. In that year, the option of negotiations leaning toward a recognition of Texan independence began to take shape. By that time, however, the United States had already revived its old project of annexing the region.

From Mexico's point of view, the annexation of Texas to the United States was inadmissible for both legal and security reasons. Thus, when the Mexican government learned of the treaty signed between Texas and the United States in April 1844, it reaffirmed the posture it had expressed a year before that Mexico would consider such an act "a declaration of war." And later, when the Congress approved the joint resolution inviting Texas to join the United States, Mexico suspended diplomatic relations with its neighbor. Mexico asserted that the annexation of Texas—whether by treaty or in a U.S. Congressional resolution—was a violation of the 1828 border treaty, which had acknowledged Mexico's sovereignty over that territory.<sup>7</sup> Consequently, such acts were a violation of the fundamental principles of international law, and furthermore, they established a dangerous precedent threatening Mexico's territorial security, since the same formula could be used to annex other areas along the border.

Faced with this situation, the José Joaquín Herrera administration attempted a double-edged diplomacy by,

<sup>7</sup> Manuel Crescencio Rejón to Shannon, October 31, 1844, Bosch, op. cit., p. 352.

first, denouncing the U.S. Congressional resolution as illegal,<sup>8</sup> and secondly, establishing negotiations with Texas with two objectives in mind: to avoid the annexation of Texas and elude an armed conflict with the United States. The option of negotiations leaning toward recognizing Texas independence was accepted, under the condition that it would reject annexation. To this end, the good offices of British representatives in Mexico and Texas were used, but this attempt turned out to be too long overdue and unfruitful.

While these negotiations were underway, the Mexican press was divided between those opposed to negotiating with Texas and those supporting the government's actions. The opposition, represented mainly by those referred to as "purists," insisted that Texas should be recovered through an armed expedition. The "moderates," who originally supported a negotiated solution with Texas, switched to the other side when in the end, Texas accepted annexation. Both sides chose to launch their campaigns against Texas and not declare war against the United States. The opinion of Mexican journalists and politicians regarding annexation was that Mexico had no other choice but "to impede the United States from appropriating Texas, using all means necessary."<sup>9</sup> The objective was to make it clear that whatever desire the United States might have to expand its territory at Mexico's cost would not be accepted passively.<sup>10</sup>

Once the Texas government had agreed to the annexation, on July 4, 1845, the Herrera administration ordered the mobilization of federal troops to protect the northern border. The order was in accordance with a decree approved by Congress exactly one month earlier, authorizing the government "within its full rights, to use all available resources to resist such an annexation to the very end."<sup>11</sup> This was later reaffirmed in the bill presented to Congress on July 21 which maintained that the military mobilization was aimed at:

<sup>8</sup> Luis G. Cuevas to representatives from France, England and Spain in Mexico, March 28, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., pp. 471-472.

<sup>9</sup> "Guerra con los Estados Unidos," *El Siglo XIX*, 20 July 1845, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> "Estado de la Cuestión de Texas," *El Siglo XIX*, 30 November 1845, p. 4.

<sup>11</sup> Congressional decree no. 2826, Mexico, June 4, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., p. 526.



Carlos Nebel, *The Bombardment of Veracruz*, 37 x 52 cm, nineteenth century (color lithography). CNCA-INAH-MEX

...preserving the integrity of Mexican territory according to the old borders recognized by the United States in treaties dating from 1828 to 1836.<sup>12</sup>

Thus, the order was given on the twenty-third day of the same month to strengthen the defensive line along the bank of the Rio Grande with the army's Fourth Division under the command of General Arista.<sup>13</sup> The posture in favor of seeking a negotiated solution was, however, maintained. One month earlier, the Mexican government's position had been communicated by U.S. agent William Parrot to Secretary of State Buchanan in the following terms:

I have satisfactorily ascertained, through the indirect channel of communication...that the present government

will not declare war against the United States, even if Texas be annexed.<sup>14</sup>

Mexico's anti-belligerent posture in favor of negotiations was confirmed October 15, 1845 when its foreign relations minister, Manuel de la Peña y Peña, notified U.S. consul John Black

...that although the Mexican nation was gravely offended by the United States due to its actions in Texas—belonging to Mexico—the government was willing to receive a commissioner who would arrive in this capital from the United States possessing full faculties to settle the current dispute in a peaceful, reasonable and respectable way.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Enrique Olavarria y Ferrari, *México a través de los siglos, México Independiente, 1821-1855*, Editorial Cumbre, Mexico City, 1958, vol. IV, p. 543.

<sup>13</sup> Pedro García Conde to Mariano Arista, Mexico, July 23, 1845, in Genaro García (ed.), "Archivo del General Paredes," *Documentos inéditos o muy raros para la Historia de México*, Editorial Porrúa, Mexico City, 1974, pp. 554-555.

<sup>14</sup> William Parrot to James Buchanan, Mexico, June 17, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., p. 540.

<sup>15</sup> Manuel de la Peña y Peña to John Black, October 15, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., p. 599.



Carlos Nebel, *The Entrance of General Scott*, 37 x 52 cm, nineteenth century (color lithography).

Any possibilities for entering into negotiations, however, faced serious obstacles. First, opposition from public opinion and certain political interests to an agreement signifying a recognition of Texas' annexation had increased.<sup>16</sup> Thus, the government lacked the internal consensus necessary for negotiations. Secondly, the U.S. proposal included in the instructions given to envoy John Slidell did not have much to offer in terms of negotiations. Those instructions not only included the demand that the Rio Grande serve as the Texas border, when in fact the Nueces River had always been defined as such, but also a demand for the cession of the territories of New Mexico and California linked to claims which had been resolved since the signing of the Convention of 1843.<sup>17</sup>

Furthermore, the Polk administration had accredited Slidell as a plenipotentiary secretary and not as an ad hoc commissioner with faculties only for initiating

negotiations, as the Mexican government had agreed to. The Slidell mission was therefore used to force the Mexican government into tacitly recognizing the annexation of Texas and the cession of the disputed territory. This last point was the initial obstacle for beginning negotiations and was a recurrent issue in the correspondence between the U.S. envoy and Ministers Manuel de la Peña y Peña and Joaquín María del Castillo y Lanzas between December 8, 1845 and March 21, 1846.<sup>18</sup>

To analyze President Polk's intentions for the Slidell mission, it is worth highlighting comments made earlier by William Parrot to Secretary Buchanan:

There are other considerations, important to the government and people of the United States, which incline me to believe that it would be far better that Mexico should declare a war now, than that it should propose to open negotiations for the settlement of pending differences;

<sup>16</sup> See Jesús Velasco Márquez, *La Guerra del 47 y la opinión pública (1845-1848)*, SEP, Mexico City, 1975, pp. 29-36.

<sup>17</sup> James Buchanan to John Slidell, Washington, November 10, 1845, Bosch, op. cit., pp. 613-621.

<sup>18</sup> J. Black to J. Slidell, Mexico, December 15, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., pp. 632-635; M. de la Peña y Peña to J. Slidell, December 20, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., pp. 639-642; J. M. del Castillo y Lanzas to J. Slidell, Mexico, March 12, 1846, in Bosch, op. cit., pp. 671-677.

among these, that of tracing certain geographical lines drawn upon the maps of the northwest coast of America, is not the least important; these lines could be satisfactorily run in a case of war; but not in a negotiation, now or at any future period.<sup>19</sup>

The demands made by John Slidell and the U.S. government's refusal to modify the terms of his accreditation, accompanied by the formalization of the admission of Texas to the United States and the order given to General Taylor to occupy the territory between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River, were the factors that confirmed to Mexicans that the objective of the mission was none other than to lay out

...a crude trap...with an outrageous Machiavellian objective. The dilemma was after all quite simple: either the Mexican government admitted a regular government secretary, which would be equivalent to reestablishing friendly relations between the two countries without the dispute being resolved, thus approving the usurpation of Texas and proving to the world that despite any matter of offense and divestment, Mexico would always be dependent on and a slave to the United States; or —the more likely possibility— the Mexican government would not agree to such an excessive humiliation, and a pretext would thus exist for resorting to war and for more cases of usurpation.<sup>20</sup>

Scarcely a week after Slidell received his credentials and began his trip back to the United States, the troops commanded by General Zachary Taylor arrived at the Rio Grande, across from the city of Matamoros, thus occupying the territory in dispute and increasing the possibilities of a confrontation. This provocation by President Polk would be acknowledged even by John C. Calhoun, who had been the main promoter of the annexation of Texas.<sup>21</sup>

In the eyes of the Mariano Paredes government, the mobilization of the U.S. army was an outright attack on Mexico's territorial integrity and clearly demonstrated that the United States had no intention of subjecting itself to the terms of the 1828 border treaty. As a consequence, the Mexican government reaffirmed the instruction to protect the border, meaning the territory located between the Rio Grande and the Nueces River —an order which led to the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma.

Even before these incidents, President Polk had already decided to ask the U.S. Congress to declare war against Mexico, but the battles provided a pretext to mobilize the opinions of both U.S. legislators and the public in favor of such a measure. He held that

Mexico had crossed over the U.S. border, had invaded our territory and had caused the shedding of U.S. blood in U.S. territory.<sup>22</sup>

This declaration not only implied a unilateral definition of the U.S. border with Mexico, but also clearly defined the reason for the war as the defense of U.S. territorial security. Nevertheless, Polk immediately ordered the occupation of the territory to the south of the Rio Grande, as well as the New Mexico and California territories and the blocking of Mexican ports.

The question was and continues to be: were these actions in defense of U.S. territorial security or the flagrant invasion of Mexican territory? From the viewpoint of Mexicans, the answer was clear: the U.S. government was not seeking to protect its territorial security, nor did it have other supposed demands, but rather it was determined to take over a territory legitimately belonging to Mexico. This posture was reiterated in an article in the daily *El Tiempo* which stated: "The American government acted like a bandit who came upon a traveller."<sup>23</sup> The daily *El Republicano* published the following opinion:

<sup>19</sup> William Parrot to James Buchanan, Mexico, July 26, 1845, in Bosch, op. cit., p. 566.

<sup>20</sup> "La Cuestión del Día," *El Tiempo*, Mexico City, 5 April 1846, p. 1.

<sup>21</sup> Speech on reply to Mr. Turner of Tennessee, February 12, 1847, in *The Works of John C. Calhoun*, New York, 1854, vol. IV, p. 336; "Speech on the Three Million Bill," February 9, 1847, *ibid.*, p. 305.

<sup>22</sup> "President James Knox Polk's war message to Congress," Washington, D.C., May 11, 1846, in Thomas G. Patterson, *Major Problems in American Foreign Policy, Documents and Essays*, second edition, D.C. Heat and Company, Lexington, Mass., 1984, vol. I, pp. 245-247.

<sup>23</sup> "Parte Política," *El Tiempo*, 11 May 1846, p. 1.

No one has any doubts about the intentions the Washington cabinet has had for some time now with respect to Mexico....One fights in the name of usurpation; the other defends justice...the war has begun and the [Mexican] nation has a great deal at stake, since even if justice is on its side, that is unfortunately not enough to triumph and hold back the excesses of a powerful enemy....The war...has now begun, to our misfortune, and it is urgent that time not be wasted.<sup>24</sup>

Most people in Mexico believed the use of arms was the only option available to defend their rights and territorial integrity. Thus, on July 6, 1846, President Mariano Paredes enacted the Congressional decree that sustained such principles in the following terms:

*Article 1.* The government, in the natural defense of the nation, will repel the aggression initiated and sustained by the United States of America against the Republic of Mexico, having invaded and committed hostilities in a number of the departments making up Mexican territory. *Article 3.* The government will communicate to friendly nations and to the entire republic the justifiable causes which obliged it to defend its rights, left with no other choice but to repel force with force, in response to the violent aggression committed by the United States.<sup>25</sup>

If we carefully analyze the text of this decree, we find that war was never declared against the United States. Rather, reference was only made to the need for defending the country's territorial integrity and repelling the U.S. invasion. This is even more important to note if we consider that by that time, General Taylor's forces had already crossed the Rio Grande and seized the city of Matamoros; Mexican ports had been blocked; Captain John Fremont was promoting a revolt in California; and Colonel Stephen Kearny had received orders to occupy New Mexico and California.

<sup>24</sup> "Neutralidad," *El Republicano*, 20 June 1846, p. 3.

<sup>25</sup> Alberto María Carreño, *México y los Estados Unidos de América. Apuntaciones para la historia de acrecentamiento territorial de los Estados Unidos a costa de México desde la época colonial hasta nuestros días*, second edition, Editorial Jus, Mexico City, 1962, p. 107.

On August 8, 1846, President Polk asked the U.S. Congress for a special two-million-dollar fund to cover the costs of the war. In a message accompanying his request, he declared that these resources would also be used to make adjustments in the border with Mexico, thus making it clear that the intention was to forcefully acquire Mexican territory. When news of this message reached Mexico, the daily *El Republicano* commented that a war started for such motives was "unjust and barbaric, and those responsible should be considered enemies of Humanity."<sup>26</sup> A month later, it reiterated that:

A government...that starts a war without a legitimate motive is responsible for all its evils and horrors. The bloodshed, the grief of families, the pillaging, the destruction, the violence, the fires, are its works and its crimes....Such is the case of the U.S. government, for having initiated the unjust war it is waging against us today.<sup>27</sup>

The U.S. army continued to advance during the second half of 1846 and the first months of the following year. On March 3, 1847, the U.S. Congress approved a three-million-dollar fund for allowing the president to reach a treaty of "peace, boundaries and borders" with Mexico. A month later Nicholas Trist was appointed to negotiate with Mexican authorities. But by this time a new offensive had been initiated under the command of General Winfield Scott who was ordered to attack the territory between the port of Veracruz and Mexico City. The opinion shared by Mexican society and government was against signing a peace agreement in disgrace.<sup>28</sup> And even after the first contacts between Trist and Mexican authorities, *El Diario del Gobierno* stated:

[The peace] that could be established right now between the Republic of Mexico and the United States would be ignominious for the former, and would lead to so much discontentment toward other nations and such negative impacts within the country that Mexico would soon

<sup>26</sup> "El último mensaje de Mr. Polk," *El Republicano*, 15 September 1846, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> "La guerra," *El Republicano*, 23 October 1846, p. 3.

<sup>28</sup> "No importa," *El Republicano*, 6 April 1847, p. 4.



Julio Michaud y Thomas, *Chapultepec Castle*, 23.8 x 36.5 cm, nineteenth century (black/white lithography).

become a stage for war once again, and would disappear from the list of free and independent nations.<sup>29</sup>

The events of the following months dramatically prevented Mexicans from pursuing the stubborn, however just, defense of their territory, and they finally had to accept a negotiation that was difficult, painful and undignified for negotiators on both sides. This is revealed by comments made by Nicholas Trist to his wife regarding the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the attitude assumed by Mexicans with regard to the U.S. invasion:

Just as they were about to sign the treaty...one of the Mexicans, Don Bernardo Couto, remarked to him, "this must be a proud moment for you; no less proud for you than it is humiliating for us." To this Mr. Trist replied "we are making peace, let that be our only thought." But, said he to us in relating it, "Could those Mexicans have seen into my heart at that moment, they would have known

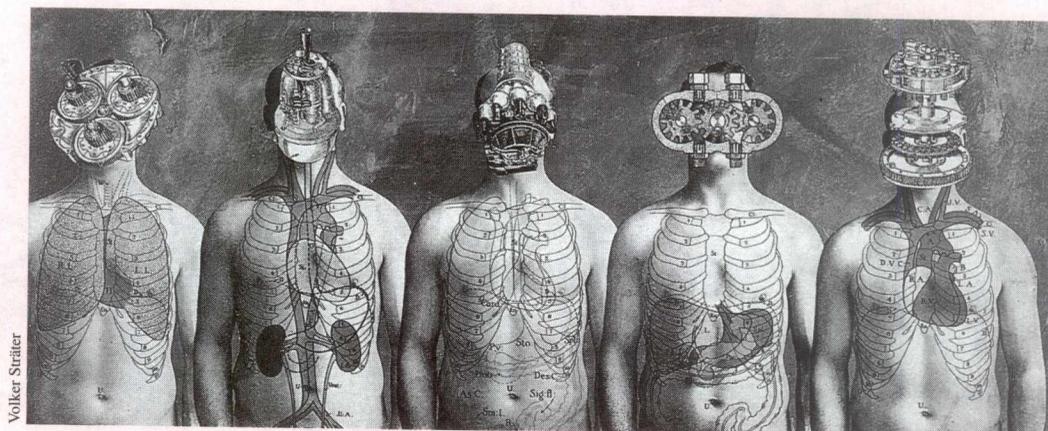
that my feeling of shame as an American was far stronger than theirs could be as Mexicans. For though it would not have done for me to say so there, that was a thing for every right-minded American to be ashamed of, and I was ashamed of it, most cordially and intensely ashamed of it."<sup>30</sup>

Indeed, during the entire conflict, from the separation of Texas to the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico defended its territory and if at any time its position was belligerent, it was belligerent in the defense of national security and for the preservation of international legal order. Therefore, it was not a result of arrogance, nor of irresponsibility, but rather the only possible response to the arguments and actions of the U.S. government. In conclusion, the armed conflict between Mexico and the United States from 1846 to 1848 was the product of deliberate aggression and should therefore be referred to as "The U.S. War Against Mexico." ❧

<sup>29</sup> Virginia Randolph Trist to Tockerman, July 8, 1864, *Nicholas P. Trist Papers*, Box 10, Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. See Robert W. Drexler, *Guilty of Making Peace: A Biography of Nicholas P. Trist*, University Press of America, Lanham, Maryland, 1991, p. 129.

<sup>29</sup> "La Guerra y la Paz," *Diario del Gobierno*, 8 July 1847, p. 3.

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# *The Anti-drug War In U.S.-Mexico Relations*

Jorge Montaña\*

**T**he end of bipolarism in international relations had an instantaneous effect in the United States of an increasing tendency to “nationalize” foreign policy issues. With the elimination of the threat of a nuclear confrontation, U.S. diplomacy has expended its best efforts in attending to its international concerns based on criteria of domestic interest.

This can be illustrated by President Clinton’s recent visit to Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. Throughout the visit, laced with cordiality and good manners, the interests of the guest took precedence over those of the hosts. Nonetheless, at several points things became uncomfortable due to the fact that it was Clinton’s first trip to the region since taking office in January 1993. For many, it was a symptom of a lack of congruency between words and deeds. For others, it expressed a lack of interest in a part of the world considered sufficiently loyal.

The basic agenda during the three legs of the trip consisted of trade, migration and drug trafficking. Obviously, the first two issues are a top priority for the countries being visited, while the third was a major concern for the visitor. However, little was heard concerning the dashed spirit of the Summit of the Americas that thus far, 18 months later, has not been formalized in any concrete pro-

ject. On the contrary, the obstacles placed by the U.S. Congress in the way of broadening the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) were confirmed and there was nothing to report on any compensatory formula for Caribbean countries that claim to have been affected by the trade agreement.

The U.S. agencies dealing with the issue reiterated that recent immigration measures are only directed against the undocumented, who, they insisted, mostly come from Latin America. The negative effects the involuntary repatriation of its citizens could have on the fragile economies of various countries did not receive any attention that was made public.

However, on the question of drug trafficking, the way information was divulged was very special. This issue, a national priority for the United States, does not admit exceptions. Its unilateral focus is best expressed in the certification process used by Washington to rate the support other countries provide to its anti-drug agencies.

The procedure was imposed in 1986 on the U.S. presidency by Congress, with the aim of creating mechanisms to pressure other governments to cooperate. If that cooperation does not reach acceptable levels, the country in question is decertified, with severe and arbitrary consequences, particularly given the inequality reigning in today’s world. It is important to emphasize that in adopting any decision, be it positive or negative, the domestic

\* Former Mexican Ambassador to the United Nations.  
Translated by Peter Gellert.

effects of the measures to be taken are not being considered at all. In general, this has made for high human and economic costs for the peoples and governments being evaluated.

The suspension of U.S. government economic and technical aid, obstacles to obtaining any loan requested from international financial institutions, and the stigma of being branded a country that favors drug trafficking, are just some of the effects that a condemnation generates. This unilateral action provides the U.S. State Department with additional leverage vis-à-vis many countries, since it is responsible for presenting the certification report to Congress.

It is not new to attribute U.S. domestic drug consumption to foreign interests. From the beginning of this century, Washington has had a simplistic explanation: it has considered the illegal drug trade the exclusive responsibility of the rest of humanity, a problem controllable only by enforcing the law, intercepting shipments and eradicating drugs in producer countries.

Such arguments are increasingly difficult to swallow, as can be shown, for example, by the funds earmarked for intercepting drug shipments, which between 1981 and 1995 increased from U.S.\$350 million to U.S.\$2 billion, with results that are at best open to discussion. Funding has recently been reoriented toward eradicating drug cultivation. However, statistics from the State Department itself show how little effect such programs have. In 1995, 55,000 hectares of coca were eliminated, which would have produced just 270 metric tons of cocaine. In the same period, coca was planted on an estimated 1.4 million hectares, with a potential production of 7,250 metric tons of cocaine.

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illegal drug trade  
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Today, more than half of the marijuana consumed in the United States is supplied by domestic producers, mainly in Tennessee, Kentucky, California and Hawaii. The most important drug rings involved in marketing cannabis are run by large scale U.S. producers. Their relations with multinational groups will surely allow them to broaden their markets soon. In this sense, it is important to mention that several U.S. states have recently adopted flexible norms that will facilitate the legal use of this drug.

It is interesting to recall that the chemical ingredients, money laundering, illegal arms trafficking and the social impact of drug consumption are unfortunately all of U.S. origin and booming there. Neither is the traditional battle to alternately place the blame on supply or demand anything new. While it is true that as long as consumption among the U.S. population persists, production abroad will continue, domestic production is now added and faces no border problems in shipping its products, which are just as illegal as drugs coming from other parts of the world.

It is clear that if the certification criteria were also applied in the United States, many members of Congress and senators would have to reject out of hand the presidential report, given the negative effects it would cause in their districts and states. It is well known that when one source of drugs is eliminated, another immediately takes its place in areas where activities aimed at eradication or repressive legal measures are more flexible. It is paradoxical that today, for example, some drug substitution is occurring where consumption itself takes place, although for practical reasons it is indispensable for the U.S. government to maintain the hypothesis that everything comes in from overseas.

During the first years of the certification process, decertification was reserved for governments with which the United States had distant and sometimes non-existent relations, such as Iran, Myanmar, Laos, Nigeria, Afghanistan and Syria. During the Clinton administration, the criteria has become more rigid, extending to countries with clos-



Elsa Medina

Barry McCaffrey, during his recent visit to the Mexican side of the border.

er ties. This is the case of Colombia, which in the past year has suffered the consequences of this unfriendly, hostile decision, something that apparently could continue for quite some time.

Other groups are granted exceptions to the rule for reasons of U.S. national interest. This transitional formula serves, according to those who apply these policies, to exert pressure without generating instability.

The statistics are impressive. In the 11 years certification policies have been implemented, they have had no positive effects on fighting drug trafficking. The United States should accept, given such evidence, that it is indispensable to intensify both bilateral and multilateral respectful cooperation in this field. However, the United States has always had major problems with this kind of international cooperation, both regional and world wide, above all because it would make imposing unilateral criteria more difficult. It would also mean that the U.S. government would have to undertake an intro-

spective review of its policies, particularly taking into account its own population's proclivity to drug consumption, as well as the development of a formidable criminal organization that uses the best technology in its entire chain of production and distribution of some drugs, especially some narcotics byproducts that are highly profitable for its economy, which worsens the problem on a world level.

At present, nothing is more unfair than to judge the efforts of Mexico and many other countries of the region in the fight against drugs. The accusation, in the case of Mexico, that the person in charge of the fight against the drug trade turned out to be involved in illicit activities is, to say the least, childish, if this is aimed at disqualifying and disparaging the work of the entire government.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This is in reference to the case of General Jesús Gutiérrez Rebollo, charged with collaborating with the Mexican drug cartels when he was the head of the Mexican Institute for the War on Drugs. [Editor's Note.]

Drug trafficking necessarily requires cooperation between consumer and producer countries, as well as an honest commitment to share the responsibility. The certification process perpetuates the myth that it is supply, more than demand, that is the principal cause of the alarming indexes of consumption in the U.S. population. Nowadays, this is an unacceptable fallacy.

During 1997, Mexico will be certified not once, but twice. As a result of the turbulent debate that in both houses of the U.S. Congress led to approval of a favorable report on Mexico, President Clinton felt obliged to offer a follow-up report that will be sent to the Senate in September. It is likely that this will spur the same appetites for the spotlight and front-page headlines among congressmen and senators who belittle Mexico's efforts against the drug trade.

It is clear that these procedures based on domestic considerations generate a climate of friction that will inevitably undercut trade, financial markets and investor confidence. In addition, they awaken dormant nationalist sentiments and spark an intensive guerrilla war in the media

in both countries. In short, they undeniably confirm the extraterritorial character of the certification procedure.

Mexicans have already begun to draw some lessons from this unjust and debilitating debate. It must be said that the U.S. Congress created this procedure for domestic considerations, to make political hay and favor special interest groups. Therefore, despite the sensible voices that have been raised, it is not likely that the procedure will be eliminated for quite some time. Therefore, it would be correct for each of the affected countries to begin to seek mechanisms that would allow them to minimize the effects domestically. More voices are continually being raised that demand the "Mexicanization" of the material resources employed in the fight against drug trafficking. This viewpoint sustains that Mexico has sufficient funds to acquire helicopters, spare parts, radar equipment, etc. On the other hand, the political costs of receiving them as part of aid programs are too high.

Bilateral, regional and worldwide cooperation is not only inevitable, but indispensable. As a result, it is impor-



Elsa Medina

Cooperation between the United States and Mexico has begun to increase in the recent months.

tant to establish the guidelines that should regulate such cooperation, based on respect for the sovereign decisions of each government. This is a difficult task, since the U.S. government has always put up significant resistance to opening up the field to multi-lateral efforts. It is correct to point out, however, that the dialogue has improved between the two countries, as shown by the diagnostic report elaborated by the High Level Contact Group to Control Illegal Drugs.

In the bilateral debate, the two heads of state have made important efforts to find formulas for cooperation. It is in more specific cases, on an operational level, in which a series of unacceptable conditions have been demanded of Mexico. These have inflicted further major damage on bilateral relations.

This is the case with the proposal to allow immunity for Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) agents in Mexico and allow them to carry weapons, or to allow U.S. ships and aircraft to enter Mexican territory to undertake punitive actions. Such requests, given their interventionist nature, have always been rejected by the Mexican government. Another list of topics includes the common goal of detaining the leading drug lords, a field in which Mexico has achieved real progress, while in the United States no significant arrests have thus far taken place. With regard to extradition, there have been no objections from the Mexican side to comply with the current treaty, with the stipulation that the spirit and letter of the accord be respected in the case of criminals who could be subject to the death penalty. The treaty is very clear in such cases. Mexico will judge these criminals based on its own legal traditions. In terms of sending drug lords to the United States, the Mexican government should extradite only those who do not have cases pending before the Mexican judiciary system. If they do, obviously they should first serve their sentences in Mexican jails.<sup>2</sup>

*The certification process perpetuates the myth that supply, more than demand, is the principal cause of the alarming indexes of consumption in the U.S. population. Nowadays, this is an unacceptable fallacy.*

Clearly, in the case of money laundering, some of the norms regulating both banking systems must be brought up to date. This is a task for both countries. After all, it is pertinent to ask how some Mexicans currently facing trial in the United States could deposit millions of dollars in U.S. banks, without any sort of legal monitoring and why this was only made public when they were arrested.

This is another lesson we cannot ignore: the double moral standard that sees only minus signs on one end of what is clearly a chain. The *New York Times* itself, in less than 72 hours, provided an example of this kind of exercise. On February 23, the editorial concluded that Mexico had not cooperated, but should not be decertified for reasons related to national interest, recommending instead a qualified certification. Three days later, in the same section, a long article was published explaining the ineffectiveness of the certification process, arguing for its elimination.

Another recent example is an arrogant letter sent to President Clinton by 40 congressmen and senators, in which the authors provide a list of deficiencies in Mexico's attitude toward the war on drugs, with the argument that Mexico has supposedly shown a fake incapacity and lack of political commitment on the issue. The letter was signed by six out of eight senators representing the four border states. A seventh senator expressed similar views from some where in Texas. It is impossible to deny the negative impact on bilateral relations that results from this type of activities.

<sup>2</sup> In November 1995, Juan García Abrego, head of the Gulf Cartel, was handed over to U.S. authorities, even though he committed crimes under Mexican law. [Editor's Note.]

Most of the signers, and others who have opposed certifying Mexico, are the same legislators who had actively opposed NAFTA. The trade agreement will also be subject to a U.S. presidential and congressional evaluation during the next few months. Obviously, the professional "bashers" will have their day. It is key that Mexico be prepared to use the tools of political action that work in the United States: lobbying the government and Congress, mobilizing the private sector and developing a media policy and an approach to centers of political reflection, such as the universities, etc.

Another lesson that can be drawn from these debates in the U.S. Congress is that they take place under very unequal conditions. For the time being, we cannot place very high expectations on legislators of Mexican background, as has constantly been confirmed in the lack of solidarity and support actions when questions like undocumented immigrants, for example, have been discussed. From this flows the importance of broadly and appropriately publicizing the activities that continuously go on at U.S. think tanks and academic institutions interested in Mexico.

Some conclusions:

1. The unilateral way in which the United States conducts the struggle against the drug trade is not very respectful of the sovereignty of the countries from which it demands cooperation. In particular, the U.S. congressional certification process violates the most elemental principles of equality between nations. We should insist

*It is clear that if the certification criteria were also applied in the United States, many congressional representatives and senators would have to immediately reject the presidential report, given the negative effects it would cause in their districts and states.*

on its elimination for both political reasons and tactical considerations, since it has been proven completely ineffectual.

2. On a bilateral level, the countries in the region should expect reciprocal treatment. It is important to recognize the increase in the number of drug users, but also that U.S. domestic production has increased to the point where in some cases it is self-sufficient.

3. The strategy of only intercepting drug shipments has not been very effective, as shown by the fact that drugs coming from abroad are cheaper today in the United States than 10 years ago.

4. The focus of the war against drug trafficking adopted by U.S. administrations has created unnecessary tension in many countries, particularly in Latin America, political unrest in peasant areas where the drugs are produced, human rights violations during attempts to eliminate crops, corruption of police forces and the military, as well as a growing and unnecessary participation of the armies in this fight, encouraged by their counterparts in the Pentagon.

5. The United States should recognize the advantages of working on a multilateral and regional level. Reinforcing existing mechanisms in the United Nations and the Organization of American States is one possibility. Another option is to create ad hoc mechanisms for functioning on the highest political and police levels. This proposal is not accepted by U.S. authorities, who feel it is not very effective for unilaterally applying pressure on the countries involved.

6. The U.S. government and Congress should support the initiative of Latin American and Caribbean countries to hold a special session of the UN General Assembly to study collective strategies in the war against drug trafficking. That assembly would take place in New York in June 1998.

7. The governments of the region would respect a decision whereby the same level of demands they are subject to by U.S. author-



Authorities burn more than nine tons of cocaine and marijuana. Mexico has made a big effort in the fight against drugs.

ities and agencies were also applied within the United States. In particular, intensifying educational programs designed to reduce domestic drug consumption, carrying out major campaigns to eliminate marijuana fields in several U.S. states, prohibiting the production of synthetic drugs, controlling the flow of chemical inputs in the region, halting arms trafficking and seriously combating money laundering, which is mainly conducted within the United States and U.S. financial institutions.

8. Drafting a document on this issue, along with concrete proposals, is important. It should be supported with the participation of leading public figures with experience and political weight, both in the United States and Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as

members of the private sector and the media. The aim would be to incorporate recommendations to facilitate tackling the problem, whose solution does not seem likely in the long run, but which is causing a deep deterioration in U.S. relations with Latin American and Caribbean countries.

9. The focus of the study should cover all areas, including production, consumption, shipping, chemical inputs, production of synthetic drugs, arms trafficking and money laundering. To avoid writing an academic document, it should be oriented toward decision-makers in the countries involved, in government, the legislature, the private sector, university circles and the media. **VM**

ENERO-JULIO 1997

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## REGIONAL GEOPOLITICS

# *The United States and Cuba*

Santiago Pérez Benítez\*

**T**he ultimate goals and basic instruments of U.S. foreign policy vis-à-vis Cuba have not changed in more than 30 years. In my view, that “consistency” has several explanations:

1. The few changes in the Cuban system in the last 30 years.
2. Cuba’s role as an example of the vulnerability of U.S. hegemony, both in Latin America and worldwide.
3. The alternative model that Cuba poses for Third World societies.
4. The role that the right-wing Cuban community plays in domestic U.S. politics.
5. The high domestic cost to any politician who changes U.S. policy toward Cuba and the relatively few benefits that he would accrue from it.<sup>1</sup>

For these reasons, in the main, U.S. policy toward Cuba has most frequently consisted of keeping up the pressure on Havana by traditional means: export embargo, international isolation, backing domestic subversion (whether peaceful or armed) and military quarantine. Sometimes, the stratagem has been to step up the pressure, as in the early part of the Reagan administration when the Torricelli and Helms-Burton Acts were passed.

\* Guest researcher at CISAN.

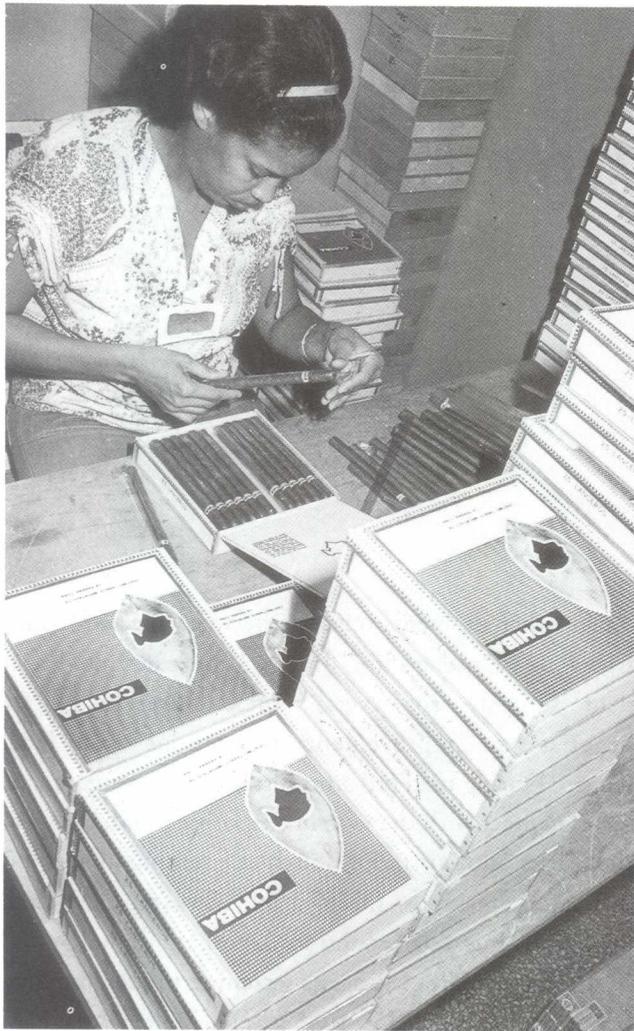
<sup>1</sup> The pragmatic dynamic of U.S. thinking and institutions is brilliantly dealt with by José Luis Orozco in his book *El Estado pragmático* (Mexico City: UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences, 1997).

At other moments tensions between the two countries have “loosened up.” In 1963, for example, President Kennedy sent several representatives to secretly negotiate an improvement in relations with Fidel Castro. During the Ford administration, Kissinger made secret contact with the Cuban authorities; and, early on, the Carter administration sought a lessening of tensions in bilateral relations. In 1977 the U.S. and Cuba each opened an Interests Section in the other’s capital.

In the last part of Reagan’s second term, the immigration accord suspended in 1985 was renewed and the New York Accord on Southern Africa was negotiated. After the end of the Cold War, the Bush administration declared that the United States would not pursue the overthrow of the Cuban government by military means and, despite a few incidents, bilateral tension did not escalate until the signing of the Torricelli Act in 1992. In the post-Cold War dynamic, the fact that the United States did not increase tensions constitutes a certain “moderation” in its policy.

Under William Clinton, before the passage of the Helms-Burton Act in March 1996, the May 1995 Immigration Agreement was negotiated, putting an end to the crisis caused by the influx of Cuban refugees traveling by rafts to the U.S. and increasing authorized contact with Cuban society.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The Track Two policy sought “to erode Cuban consensus from within with the aim of setting up a democracy.” Richard Nuccio, special advisor



Cuban cigars, famous the world over.

*In the main, U.S. policy toward Cuba has most frequently consisted of keeping up the pressure on Havana by traditional means: export embargo, international isolation.... and military quarantine.*

In my view, beyond specific conditions at any one given time, two general factors are present in all cases. First, it is in U.S. interests to solve specific problems in its relations with Cuba, whether they be migratory questions or Cuban troop withdrawal from Africa, just to give two examples.

Secondly, the United States has a greater interest in sustaining a less confrontational policy vis-à-vis Latin America than in pursuing other momentary objectives on the White House's domestic or foreign agenda.

For example, when Kennedy sent his secret emissaries to Havana, his administration was completely committed to improving relations with Latin America through the Alliance for Progress.<sup>3</sup> No elections were on the horizon and Kennedy felt strong domestically after his victory over the Soviets in the 1962 Missile Crisis.

President Carter's Cuban policy was part of a package of proposals to better relations with Latin America. Among these proposals were the signing of the Panama Canal Treaty and better relations with Cuba. There were as yet no signs of instability in Central America, and the benefits of a "moderate" policy toward Cuba made it possible to accept the cost of the Cuban presence in Angola.

U.S. interest in signing NAFTA with Mexico and establishing a free trade zone in all of the Americas—besides the idea current at the time that the Cuban government would topple of its own weight—were the backdrop for the slight increase in tensions under the Bush administration. Later, in 1992, electoral politics weighed more than relations with Latin America. The Torricelli Act was passed.

Clinton's first period was taken up by preparations for the Summit of the Americas in Miami, where the question of Cuba was barely touched on.

In the midst of the 1996 electoral campaign, U.S. relations with Latin America and Cuba in particular worsened significantly. Mutual criticism increased around

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to President Clinton on Cuba, designed this policy. See his paper "La política de la Administración Clinton hacia Cuba" presented at the Guadalajara conference of the Latin American Scholars Association (LASA 97) in April 1997.

<sup>3</sup> About this period, see the classic work by Arthur Schlesinger Jr., *Los mil días de Kennedy* (Havana: Edit. Ciencias Sociales, 1970).



President of Mexico's Press Office

U.S.-Cuban relations have worsened in President Clinton's second term.

questions of protectionism, drug trafficking, migration and finally, the Helms-Burton Act, which toughened the U.S. embargo against Cuba and kindled severe criticisms throughout the region.<sup>4</sup>

At that stage, the United States —particularly the congress— was not concerned with good relations with the area, nor were the costs of Helms-Burton greater in the eyes of the Democrats than the Clinton administration's electoral wins in Florida.

In 1997, however, the panorama has changed. Contradictions between the United States and Latin

<sup>4</sup> Good analyses of the Helms-Burton Act can be found in Stempfen Licio, "Helms-Burton and the Point of Diminishing Returns," *International Affairs* v.72.4 (1996); Peter Hakin, "To Help Cuba Most, Think Beyond Castro," *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), 29 June 1995; and Jorge Domínguez, *The Helms and Burton Bills on Cuba: An Early Assessment, Policy Brief* (Washington, D.C.: Interamerican Dialogue, May 1995).



Prensa Latina

It seems unlikely that President Castro will ever bow to U.S. pressure.

America have abated and U.S. interest in the area has intensified.<sup>5</sup> Besides his May 1997 visit to Mexico, Clinton has slated two more trips to Latin America. The idea of reopening the road toward an "Enterprise for the Americas" has begun to be debated again in view of preparations for the March 1998 Santiago de Chile Summit.

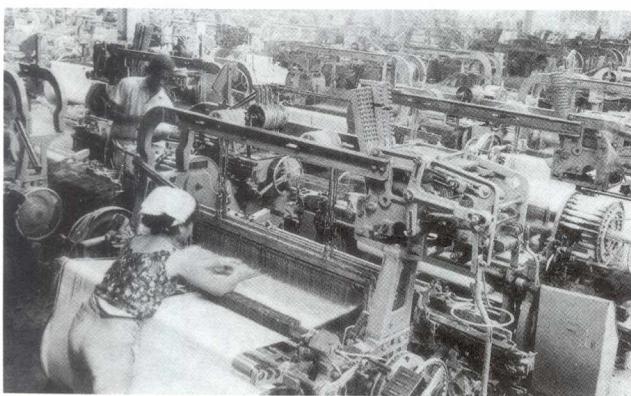
Obviously, relations with Cuba are not going to improve. In addition to the structural factors pointed out at the beginning of this essay, the Helms-Burton Act eliminates any ability the Clinton administration might

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, Madeleine Albright's initial statements during her Senate confirmation hearing in Jim Cason and David Brooks, "Mayor atención a América Latina, propone Albright," *La Jornada* (Mexico City) 9 January 1997. See also Martin Walker, "Present at the Solution. Madeleine Albright's Ambitious Foreign Policy," *World Policy Journal* (spring 1997).



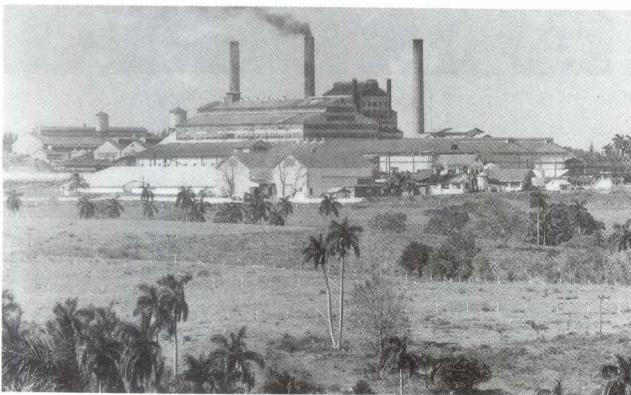
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Cubans demonstrate against foreign intervention.



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Cuba's industry struggles to survive.



Joaquín Viñas

Camilo Cienfuegos Sugar Refinery Plant.



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Seaside walkway in Havana.

have for taking its own initiatives in policy toward Cuba.<sup>6</sup>

However, it would seem that neither is U.S. policy going to take a more aggressive turn. From a cost-benefit point of view, whatever gain might stem from escalating tensions with Cuba apparently would not compensate the costs the United States would have to bear in its hemispheric relations.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, there really is not very much room for escalating U.S. policy toward Havana short of either paramilitary or outright military security action, always very costly from any point of view. In fact, Clinton's January 1997 plan for a Cuban transition shows that gradual domestic subversion, and not armed intervention, will be the predominate note in U.S. policy.<sup>8</sup> Another feature of this policy is seeking cooperation from Europe—which has already been forthcoming—<sup>9</sup> and Latin America in pressuring Havana to effect domestic changes.

U.S. policy toward Cuba will continue to be unpredictable. It could change if other domestic goals or aspects of U.S. foreign policy begin to be more important than good relations with Latin America. Situations of this kind, then, may come up during the next congressional elections slated for 1998, the year 2000 presidential elections or if the idea prevailed that escalating tensions could thwart Cuba's economic recovery. A brusque change in U.S. policy toward Cuba could also occur in the face of another incident like the February 1996 airplane affair or if the administration came to the conclusion that the weakening of the Cuban government made "decisive" U.S. action "acceptable." ❧

<sup>6</sup> My analysis of the impact this law had on Cuba and U.S. policy is laid out in an interview Miguel Angel Granados Chapa did with me, "La Ley Helms-Burton, otra vuelta de tuerca," published in *Mira* (Mexico City), 26 June 1996.

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that in its 1997 annual report, the influential magazine *Diálogos Interamericanos* situates Cuba and drug trafficking as the most conflictive factors in U.S.-Latin American relations in 1996 due to unilateral U.S. policy.

<sup>8</sup> For a description of the plan, see Stanley Meisler, "Clinton Pledges Aid for Post-Castro Cuba," *Los Angeles Times*, 29 January 1997.

<sup>9</sup> A good discussion of this question can be found in Jay Branegan, "Trading Truce," *Time*, 28 April 1997.

# BLITZKRIEG

## *The 1997 Canadian Elections*

Julián Castro Rea\*

Only three years and six months after taking office, on April 27, 1997, the Canadian government headed by the Liberal Party asked the governor general —the representative of Queen Elizabeth II, head of the State of Canada— to dissolve parliament and call general elections. June 2 was chosen as the date for thirty-sixth general elections held since Canada became a federation in 1867.

Although Canada has a parliamentary system inspired in the British tradition (the Westminster model), which in principle grants the government the right to decide when elections are to be held, in practice, administrations have called elections in their fourth year in office, before the five-year legal limit has concluded.

The reason for this early call to the polls is that the Liberal government wanted to take advantage of the conjunctural situation favorable to its reelection, and probably to strengthen its position beyond the year 2000 as well. The Liberals' expectations were based on the following considerations:

- a) The governing party had been heading up the voter preference polls since the end of last year.
- b) Lack of credible governmental alternatives for most Canadians.

- c) The need to strengthen their position and win a clear mandate for a constitutional convention that, by law, the Canadian government should call this year to revise the terms of the 1982 reforms.

Leading up to the elections, one of the shortest electoral campaigns in the history of Canada took place, lasting less than five weeks. According to electoral reform legislation in effect since December 1996, a minimum period of 36 days is required between the time parliament is dissolved to hold elections and the day of the vote itself (previously at least 47 days were required). The government opted for the minimum time period. The election campaign really lasted only 34 days, since campaigning is suspended 48 hours before ballots are cast. For the parties, then, it was truly a *Blitzkrieg*.

### HOW THE ELECTIONS WERE ORGANIZED

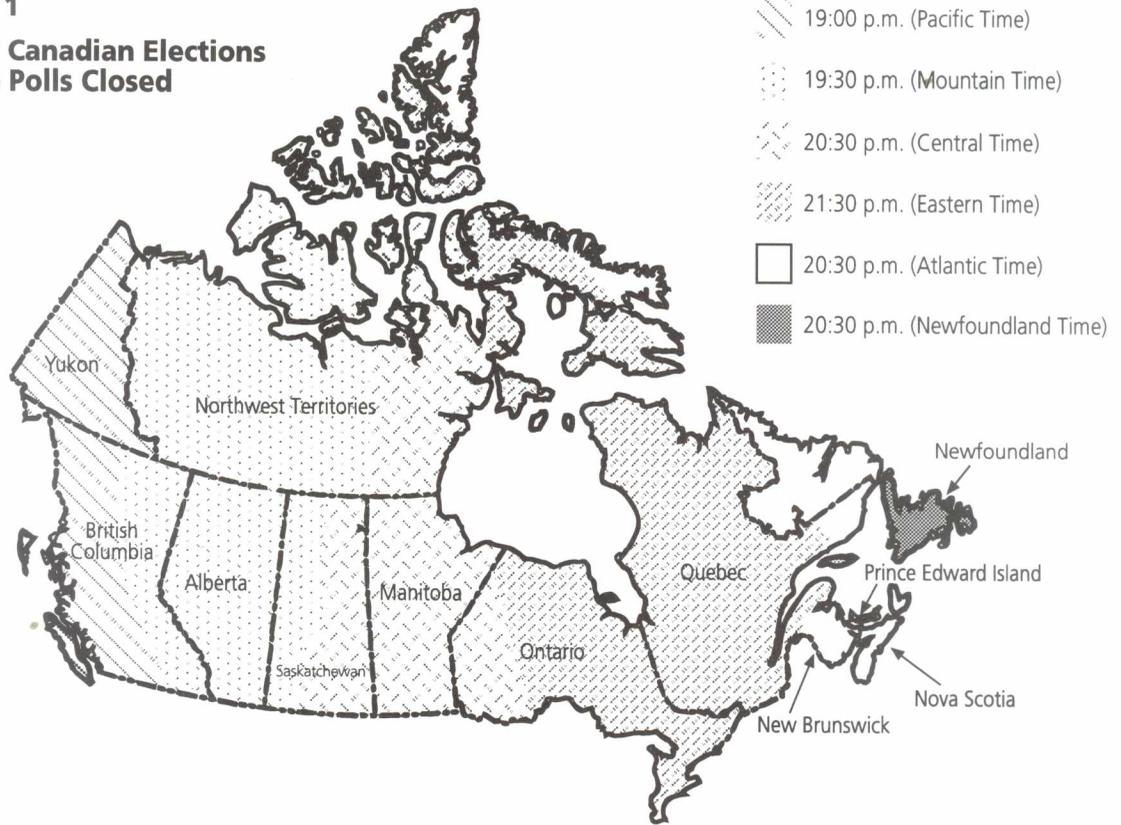
Voting takes place in Canada based on the British system: single member constituencies and the highest vote getter wins the race. This system has a series of consequences for electoral arithmetic, some positive, others negative.

- In general, it results in governments with a clear majority, armed, therefore, with clear political mandates. In other words, it favors governability. This is because the way ballots are counted favors the majority parties to the detriment of smaller parties.

\* Researcher and coordinator of the Canadian Studies Department at CISAN.

Translated by Peter Gellert.

**Map 1**  
**1997 Canadian Elections**  
**Time Polls Closed**



- For the same reason, it encourages a disparity between the real popular vote as expressed at the polls and the contending parties' representation in parliament.

- On an organizational level, the 1997 Canadian elections were innovative with respect to previous balloting: the number of seats in the House of Commons increased from 295 to 301, due to demographic growth. In addition, four districts were added in Ontario and two in British Columbia.

- As a result of the December 1996 electoral reform, for the first time an attempt was made to counteract the effect of the country's vastness on voters decisions. Six different time zones span Canada, which means that before the 1997 elections, the results in the eastern provinces were known before the western regions of the country had finished voting, allowing residents there to know the electoral trends before casting ballots (since preliminary results, which differ little from the definitive tally, are known half an hour after the polls close).

The reform legislation establishes different times for closing the polls in the different time zones, so that results are available at approximately the same real time nationwide (see Map 1).

In the Newfoundland and Atlantic time zones, the polls closed at 8:30 p.m., with preliminary results available half an hour later. Although the electoral law prohibits the mass media from announcing results beforehand, these were available on the Internet between 4:30 and 5:00 p.m., two hours before the polls closed on the West Coast (Pacific time). But the eastern provinces only represent 11 percent of the seats in the House of Commons, which cannot indicate nationwide tendencies. The majority of the vote was concentrated in the eastern time zone (most of Ontario and Quebec), in which the three largest cities —Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa— are located. In this zone, the polls closed at 9:30 p.m., and therefore results from there were only known at 7 p.m. in the Pacific time zone, which was when the polls were closing. The hour the polls closed in the two other zones (Central and Mountain) was adjusted to coincide with the 7:00 p.m. deadline on the Pacific coast.

- For the first time, Canada used a system of permanent voter registration. Until 1993, before every election, more than 100,000 voter registration representatives visited all Canadian homes —as well as hospitals, old age

homes and prisons—to create the voter registration rolls. This process was done massively for the last time in 1997. The decision to create a permanent voter registration list faced opposition from many Canadians who feared a loss of privacy if the government had a single computerized list containing personal data on all adults in the country.<sup>1</sup>

• To finance the campaigns, Elections Canada, the agency in charge of organizing the vote, fixed campaign spending limits for the parties based on the number of registered voters. In 1997, the limit was Can\$11 million per party on a nationwide level. In addition, there was an authorized limit per candidate, which fluctuated between Can\$50,000 and Can\$78,000 per riding, depending on the number of voters, the size of the riding and population density.<sup>2</sup> This year, despite the short campaign period, the parties and candidates together spent about Can\$100 million—Can\$21 million more than in the previous federal elections in 1993—a record figure for an election in that country.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE CONTENDERS

Elections Canada registers the parties that wish to participate in the elections. These parties maintain their ballot status independently of whether they get to elect candidates to parliament, as long as they run at least 50 candidates in as many districts, that is, a sixth of the total. As opposed to the United States, in Canada parties are prohibited from promoting hatred and/or engaging in insults or discrimination based on race, ethnic origin or religion.

Although 10 parties were registered for the 1997 elections, running a total of 1,672 candidates, undoubtedly

the most important were the five parties with parliamentary representation.<sup>4</sup> These parties are:

1. The Liberal Party of Canada, currently in office. Its leader is Prime Minister Jean Chrétien.
2. The Progressive Conservative Party voted out of office in the 1993 elections. This party together with the Liberal Party of Canada, are the country's two historic political parties, the only currently existing parties that date from the nineteenth century. The Conservative leader is Jean Charest.
3. The Bloc Québécois (BQ), created in 1990 with the explicit aim of promoting independence for Quebec from the halls of the Canadian capital. As of March 15, 1997 its leader is Gilles Duceppe.
4. The Reform Party, a right-wing populist party established in 1987, whose support and electoral base corresponds to discord in the western provinces, particularly Alberta and British Columbia. From the beginning, its leader has been Preston Manning.
5. The New Democratic Party (NDP), a socialdemocratic formation that represents the Canadian parliamentary left. For the second time the party is led by a woman, this time Alexa McDonough, since October 1995.

The current Canadian ideological spectrum is not very clear. Traditionally, the Conservative Party occupied the right end of the field, the NDP the left, and the Liberal Party the center. The emergence of new parties and new socioeconomic realities has undercut these distinctions. The Reform Party replaced the Conservatives on the right, with a fiscally and socially ultraconservative program. Meanwhile, the Liberals, once in office, forgot their campaign promises and put a priority on reducing the public deficit, moving against the Canadian welfare state. The NDP maintains, not without reason, that there are currently three national parties that are competing for the right-wing end of the spectrum—the Liberal, Conservative and Reform

<sup>1</sup> Mario Cloutier, "Una opération de 10 millions afin d'économiser le double," en *Le Devoir*, 10 June 1997, 8. The permanent voter registration list is inspired in Mexico's voters rolls and was drawn up with the advice of Mexican electoral authorities, as admitted by Jean-Pierre Kingsley, chief electoral officer of Elections Canada in an interview by the author in June 1995.

<sup>2</sup> Data provided by Jacques Girard, attorney, executive director and general counsel at Elections Canada, May 14, 1997.

<sup>3</sup> Ross Howard, "Parties Set to Spend \$100 Million," in *The Globe and Mail*, 14 April 1997.

<sup>4</sup> The other parties are, in order of founding date, the Green Party, the Christian Heritage Party, the Natural Law Party, the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada and the Canadian Action Party.

parties— while there is only one on the left —the NDP— that continues to call for the state to promote economic activity and fight inequality through social programs.

Dynamics of parliamentary life have also experienced a strange twist of fate since 1993. In that year's elections, the largest minority was the Bloc Québécois, which therefore obtained the title of "Official Parliamentary Opposition." It's paradoxical that a party that rejects the Canadian federation, with deputies elected exclusively in Quebec, was the government's official parliamentary intermediary, acting in the name of all Canadians.

In addition, the main parties have defined regional bases of support: the Liberals in Ontario, the Reform Party in the West and the Bloc Québécois in the province of Quebec. This situation led to a dynamic of constant confrontation and little cooperation in parliament, since what a party would gain is seen as a loss for a region in which it has a small presence or none at all.

#### THE CAMPAIGNS

As a result of the parliamentary system, Canadian voters can express their preference through only one ballot, for the candidate for member of parliament (M.P.) from their district. Therefore, when voting, they should take various factors into account: the candidate's profile, the ideology of the party he belongs to, the probabilities that his party will win the elections (and, in this case, form the government and have access to power and resources for those it represents), and the profile of the party's leader in case he becomes prime minister. Of course, the parties use these factors in a way in which they gain the greatest advantage.

As a result, the personality of the party leader is an element that may or may not be utilized by campaign strategists. If in 1993, the Liberals generously hedged their bets on Chrétien's personality, in 1997 they practically didn't do so at all, because three and a half years of his administration damaged his reputation due to accumulated errors. The main failings of his government were not having fulfilled the election campaign promise of eliminating the value-added tax, known in Canada as the Goods and Services Tax, poor performance on job creation —supposed-

ly a priority of his administration— and budget reductions that have affected the quality of medical service.

On the other hand, the Conservatives placed considerable emphasis on the character of their leader, Jean Charest, an excellent speaker in both English and French and 25 years younger than Chrétien. The Conservative strategy was successful. Charest's excellent performance in the televised debates (Monday, May 12 in English; Tuesday, May 13 in French) boosted the popularity of the Conservatives, who not only tried to convince undecided voters, but also went after disgruntled Liberals. However, the leader was even more popular than the party, which is not very productive in the Canadian electoral system.

As in the 1993 elections, in 1997 the main concern of Canadian voters was unemployment. In a poll conducted in September and October 1996, 46 percent of those surveyed mentioned unemployment as the number one priority for the future administration.<sup>5</sup> This should not be too surprising, since despite the Liberals' 1993 campaign promises for an ephemeral government program to create jobs through construction in infrastructure projects, and the incipient economic recovery following five years of economic crisis, the unemployment rate remained persistently high, with a national average of 9.9 percent of the economically active population.

In December 1996, in a television program with live questions-and-answers, Chrétien declared that unemployment was not the government's fault, that finding a job is a question of luck and people should move if they cannot find a job in their place of origin. These responses cost Chrétien public censure for his lack of understanding and indifference concerning unemployment, attitudes that were in marked contrast with his election campaign promises three years earlier.

Voters' second most important concern were aspirations for Quebec independence, which they correctly viewed as a threat to national unity. Of those polled, 42 percent view the issue as a priority. The parties responded from very different points of view in the campaign debate.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Rae Corelli, "How Very Different We Are," in *Maclean's*, 4 November 1996.

<sup>6</sup> See Susan Delacourt, "Unity Returns as Passionate Issue," in *The Globe and Mail*, 22 May 1997.

The Liberals tried most to avoid the issue. For them, the results of the October 1995 referendum on Quebec were a big blow. Although Québécois voters in the end rejected independence, the margin with which they did so was too narrow, 50.58 percent vs. 49.42 percent, a mere 1.6 percent difference. These extremely close results were a rude wake-up call for Canadians outside Quebec concerning the real strength of support for independence and belied Chrétien's triumphalism. For many voters, the prime minister did not keep his promise of resolving the conflict that has pitted Quebec against Ottawa for more than 30 years. Jean Charest and Preston Manning moved in to exploit voter frustration, accusing Jean Chrétien of incompetence on the question.

The Reform Party represented the hard line on this issue. It opposes any concessions to Quebec in terms of recognizing a special status for the province within the Canadian federation. Scorning the caution expressed by the other parties, the Reform Party did not mind opening the Pandora's box and place Quebec independence at the center of the campaign debate. This is easily understood, since it had little to lose in the French-speaking province where it had practically no candidates, and it had much to gain in possible support among more intransigent voters in the West. Therefore, party leader Preston Manning appealed to the sentiments and prejudices of English-speaking Canada, especially in the western provinces, against demands from the Québécois population.

The party most interested in raising the issue was, of course, the Bloc Québécois (BQ), because it is directly tied to its *raison d'être*. In the French-language televised debate, when the question was raised and Bloc leader Gilles Duceppe moved to present his group's proposal, the moderator fainted and the debate had to be abruptly postponed. The BQ lost a precious opportunity to halt the decline in voter support. Even so, the main battle for Quebec's 75 seats was between the Liberals and the BQ, with the Conservatives in third place.

Another important issue in the election campaigns was reducing the public deficit and taxes. The current Liberal government had given priority to reducing the deficit, which stood at Can\$42 billion when it took office. Its efforts met with success. This year the party

promised to reduce taxes, thus appropriating an important slogan of the Conservatives and the Reform Party. But the deficit reduction was carried out at the cost of a drastic cut in public expenditures, particularly transfers from the federal government to the provinces, which has translated into a decline in social services, especially health care. And it is on this flank, of course, that the other parties were attacking the government, particularly the NDP, which pledged to maintain a balanced public budget, while at the same time promoting job creation.

A theme closely related to this issue is medical insurance, whose universal character and quality has distinguished Canada in the international community, especially when compared to the United States. The opposition accuses the Liberals of having gravely damaged this pillar of Canadian national solidarity because of their obsession with reducing the deficit, of which Can\$7 billion was slashed from funds budgeted for health care. And once again, the NDP tried to distinguish itself from the other parties with its promise to expand the health system, which would be financed with a major increase in taxes on corporations and high-income groups.

#### RESULTS AND PERSPECTIVES

With a voter turnout of 66.7 percent, 80 new M.P.'s took office on Parliament Hill. As can be seen in Table 1 and Chart 1, the Liberal's gamble on calling early elections was successful, although relatively so. While the Chrétien administration managed to convince voters to approve of its work in office and ratify its mandate, the margin of vic-

*The Liberals won,  
not because citizens were satisfied  
with their performance but  
rather because many saw  
no other alternatives.*

**Table 1: Election Results  
June 2, 1997\***

Parties	Seats	% Popular Vote
Liberal (LP)	<b>155</b>	<b>38.33</b>
Reform (RP)	<b>60</b>	<b>19.39</b>
Bloc Québécois (BQ)	<b>44</b>	<b>10.68</b>
New Democratic (NDP)	<b>21</b>	<b>11.06</b>
Progressive Conservative (PCP)	<b>20</b>	<b>18.86</b>
Independents	<b>1</b>	<b>1.69</b>

\* Voter participation.

Source: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

tory it obtained in the House of Commons was drastically reduced. While before the elections, the Liberals controlled 175 of the 295 seats, they now have 155 of the current 301 spots. If in 1993 they obtained 42 percent of the popular vote, in the 1997 elections support fell to just 38 percent. Chrétien himself had problems holding on to his seat, winning by less than 1,000 votes. The opposition will be stronger and, as a result, the government will have less maneuvering room. It should especially proceed cautiously in submitting important legislative proposals to a vote since, according to the rules of the parliamentary system, the government must resign if a bill reflecting an important part of its program or with budgetary implications is rejected.

Before deciding to call early elections, the Liberals should perhaps have heeded the words of a 10-year-old British schoolboy who, in a natural sciences exam, when asked how spoiled milk can be avoided, replied, "Keep it in the cow."

One possible explanation of the Liberal's narrow victory can be found in the opinion polls. These indicated that Canadians in general do not have much confidence in their current government. In a poll conducted in September and October 1996, when the Liberals' popularity stood at 55 percent, half of those who planned to vote for the Liberals said they would do so because they didn't like

the other parties. In March 1997, 73 percent of those surveyed said they felt deceived because the Liberal government did not fulfill its campaign promises. In other words, the fact that the Liberals won is not because citizens were satisfied with their performance in office, but rather because many did not see any other alternative.

As opposed to the previous parliament, in which the main opposition were the M.P.'s supporting Quebec independence, at present the bulk of the opposition can be found on the right wing of the political spectrum. This result is a corollary of the undeniable rise of conservative ideology in Canada during the 1990s. The right wing first permeated the federal parliament, with the massive presence of the Reform Party; later they became a force in provincial politics, with radical Conservative administrations in Alberta (since 1992) and Ontario (since 1995); and finally they began to influence national policy decisions, when the Liberals adopted the policies to cut public spending promoted by the right. The government's critics argue that as a result of these policies, the state and the fabric of Canadian society are in decline, a consequence of having sought both a balanced budget at all costs as well as international competitiveness, which benefits, above all, large corporations.

Although both parties are right-wing, a distinction must be made between the Reform Party and the Conservatives. The Conservatives are descendants of the British Tories, who defined the Canadian political panorama in the nineteenth century. Toryism is colored by premodern aristocratic notions and is implicitly nourished by the ideas of well-known conservatives like Edmund Burke and Benjamin Disraeli. According to the Tories, different classes and social groups are organically linked and have mutual responsibilities. Their idea of government rests on the idea of the "common good." A "good government" should respond to the community's needs, not particular interests. Those governing —be they elected, designated or having inherited their post— should act on the basis of this principle, tied to the social obligations imposed by their office, but autonomously of the particular groups or interests they represent.

The idea of the "common good" is key for the Tories. Although they defend individual liberties, they sustain

that the collective has the right to restrict them if such liberties enter into conflict with society's welfare. Therefore they defend a strong and centralized government, which can involve itself in all social spheres when the "common good" so justifies it. As a result, many Conservatives have promoted social programs in Canada.<sup>7</sup>

The Reform Party, on the other hand, is right-wing populist, composed of those who firmly believe in individual liberty as an absolute value and mistrust activities of the state, which they conceive as a necessary evil. From this flows their criticism of government intervention designed to tend to the population's needs. The Reform Party wishes to radically limit public spending as a means of eliminating the deficit and reducing debt. It opposes the official policy of two national languages, as an expression of its rejection of a special status for the province of Quebec within the Canadian federation. The party maintains nativist<sup>8</sup> theses and calls for restrictions on immigration. In addition, it is socially conservative on questions such as the death penalty, minority rights and abortion. In short, it is a current marked by right-wing individualism and intolerance toward differences, in contrast with the Canadian conservative tradition. Due to the party's decidedly conservative message, its greatest support comes from rural rather than urban areas, even in the West.

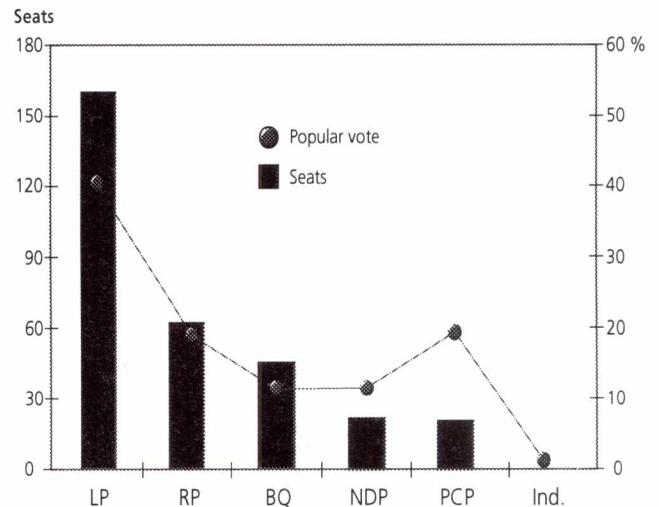
The Conservatives have very frequently denied rumors or commentaries in the press concerning a possible merger with the Reform Party. However, it is the Reform agenda that is leaving its mark on national and provincial government actions. This trend will even deepen now that the Reform Party has become the official opposition after winning 60 seats in the House of Commons. As opposed to the recent victories of the left in Great Britain and France, based on the results of Canada's recent federal elections, the future would seem to include a deepening of rightist tendencies in political life, and the same trend in public policies.

Again, the vote was marked by regional variables. The provincial base of support of the three main parliamen-

<sup>7</sup> See Charles Taylor, *Radical Tories. The Conservative Tradition in Canada* (Toronto: Anansi, 1982).

<sup>8</sup> By nativism, we mean an ideological outlook that gives priority to those born in Canada over recent arrivals (immigrants).

**Chart 1: Election Results  
June 2, 1997**



Source: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation.

tary parties—the Liberal Party, Reform Party and the Bloc Québécois—was consolidated. Following the elections, the regional political panorama appears as shown in table 2 and map 2.

The Liberals again obtained their greatest electoral support in Ontario, where they won 101 of the 103 ridings. This means that almost two-thirds (101 of 155) of the Liberal's parliamentary caucus comes from Ontario. In other words, the Liberal Party will govern the entire country based on a mandate received essentially in a single province. And a province that, in addition, is the seat of the country's capital and whose provincial capital, Toronto, is Canada's largest city. Ontario is also the country's most populated and richest province. This situation feeds the frustration of many Canadians who feel condemned to a Canadian federation they accuse of being centralist.

The Conservatives achieved a modest rebound thanks, above all, to the votes they received in the Atlantic provinces and Quebec. In the latter, the charismatic Conservative leader Jean Charest gained popularity and votes for his party at the expense of the BQ's novice leader, Gilles Duceppe. However, most of the Conservatives' support comes from the Atlantic provinces, where they won 13 out of 20 seats in their current caucus. The main losers in this region were the Liberals, who in 1993 won 31 of

**Table 2: Distribution of Seats in the House of Commons  
By Province and Party, 1997**

Province	LP	PC	R	NDP	BQ	Ind.	Total
Newfoundland	4	3					7
Nova Scotia		5		6			11
Prince Edward Island	4						4
New Brunswick	3	5		2			10
Quebec	26	5			44		75
Ontario	101	1				1	103
Manitoba	6	1	3	4			14
Saskatchewan	1		8	5			14
Alberta	2		24				26
British Columbia	6		25	3			34
Northwest Territories	2						2
Yukon				1			1
<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>301</b>

Source: *Maclean's*, 9, June 1997, p. 19.

the 32 ridings and now just have one. Apparently, the patience of the Canadian Atlantic coast, a relatively poor region, vulnerable to cutbacks in social programs, had reached its limit.

As with the Conservatives, the NDP managed to penetrate the Liberal bastion in the Atlantic provinces. The Nova Scotia origin of the new NDP leader played a role in this. In addition, although the party only has a total of 21 seats, it is the only party that can really boast of having a truly national presence, from East to West, from North to South.

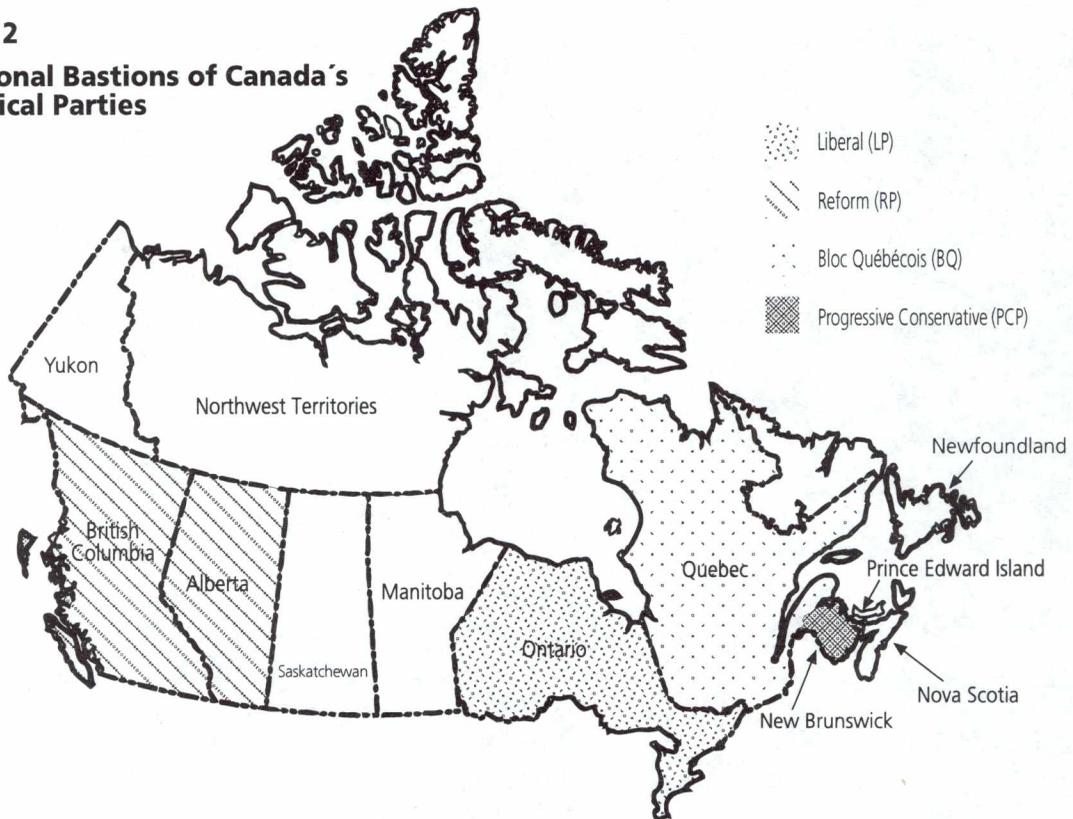
Once again the Reform Party consolidated its presence in the western provinces, particularly Alberta and British Columbia. It also achieved an important vote in Saskatchewan, a province with a social democratic tradition, normally resistant to right-wing parties. The Reform leader Preston Manning managed to gain support in the Canadian West as a result of his intransigent approach to Quebec. Unfortunately, the party's new status as Official Opposition guarantees that the dynamic of regional confrontation that existed in the previous parliament will persist in the new one as well.

The pro-independence Bloc Québécois, which invariably only presented candidates in Quebec, won 44 of the province's 75 seats. Even though its strength declined by nine seats and 10 percentage points of the popular vote, it continues to be the most representative parliamentary force in Quebec. Its popular vote in the province fell from 49 to 39 percent, which could very well represent a decline in support for independence. A recent study showed that about a fourth of those who voted in favor of independence in the 1995 referendum voted in 1997 for the Conservatives and not the BQ.<sup>9</sup> That is why the pro-independence forces might strike while the iron is still hot, and issue an early call for elections to prepare a new referendum on sovereignty. They can count on a polarization of positions that the Reform Party will continue to provoke in the House of Commons, as the BQ leader openly admitted.

The new Liberal cabinet had to do without the presence of two ministers, who lost the elections in their respective ridings: Doug Young (defense minister) and David Dingwall (health minister). Although the number of min-

<sup>9</sup> Richard Nadeau, et al., "Le chef et la cause," in *Le Devoir*, 4 July 1997.

**Map 2**  
**Regional Bastions of Canada's Political Parties**



isterial positions increased from 24 to 27 and several portfolios had to be shifted, Chrétien maintained the key ministers in their posts: Paul Martin in finances, Lloyd Axworthy in foreign affairs, John Manley in industry and Stéphane Dion in Canadian intergovernmental affairs. His most important new recruit was Anne McLellan, from Alberta, named as minister of justice. This nomination has been interpreted as a reaction to the growing strength of the Reform Party in the western provinces and its hard line on Quebec.

The new minister will have to deal with a case the federal government has pending before the Supreme Court, whether Quebec independence should be handled as a question of international law, as the pro-independence forces contend, or domestic law, as the federal government maintains. If the Supreme Court sides with the federal government, it will immediately have to decide if Quebec could withdraw from the Canadian federation without the consent of the nine other provinces. For the time being, Minister McLellan has not expressed any opinion different from those formulated by her colleague

Stéphane Dion, namely that the consequences of choosing independence should be clearly presented to the Quebec voters. Moreover, if Canada can be divided, so can Quebec, so as to allow those parts of the province that do not wish to be part of Quebec to remain within the federation.<sup>10</sup> And, of course, McLellan supports the federal government's position on the dispute pending before the Supreme Court.<sup>11</sup>

Briefly stated, Canada will usher in the twenty-first century with a renewed yet weak government, with a pluralist parliament, although divided by regional criteria, with a strong opposition but leaning to the right. This is not very encouraging given the approaching convention to review the terms of the 1982 constitutional reform. They indicate difficult times ahead for the institutions, people and unity of this vast North American country. ❖

<sup>10</sup> This approach is known as "partitionism." See Claude G. Charron, *La partition du Québec. De Lord Durham à Stéphane Dion*, (Montreal: VLB, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> "Le Canada ne peut être tenu en 'otage'," in *Le Devoir*, 26 June 1997.

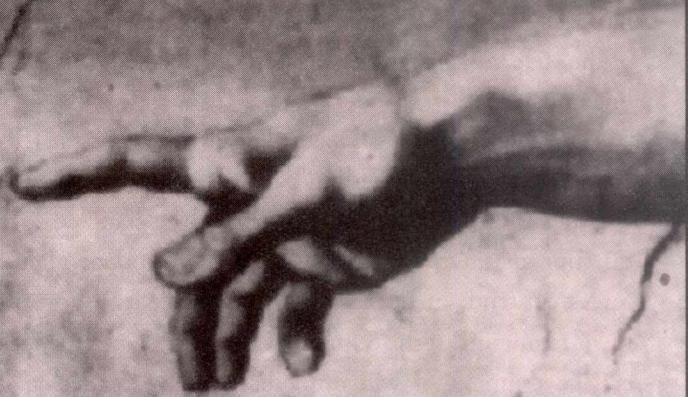
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LA CREACIÓN SE ESCUCHA

# Internal Trade Barriers

## A SPECIAL CHALLENGE FOR THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

Elisa Dávalos López\*

In a world where national economies are more and more determined by the global economy, where national states are less and less independent in their capacity to direct their internal economies, and where transnational companies' trade and investment flows have linked national economies in increasingly complex networks, it is difficult to conceive that Canada had internal trade barriers up until July 1995.

Just as the twenty-first century is about to begin, and several years after reaching free trade agreements with other nations, first with the United States and then with Mexico, Canada has decided to free up trade within its own borders. This is obviously one more peculiarity of the many that characterize Canada. One can only be surprised that a country that belongs to the group of seven most industrialized nations of the world has agreed so recently to eliminate its internal barriers to the trade of goods and services and to the free movement of investment and labor across its provincial borders.

The negotiating process for the elimination of internal barriers began in 1987, when the prime minister of Canada established the Committee of Ministers on Internal Trade (CMIT). By 1991 two accords had been negotiated: the Inter-governmental Agreement on Goods Procurement and another on the sale of beer. Talks only concluded in June 1994,

with the Internal Trade Agreement (ITA) which was ratified and went into effect in July 1995.

Article 102 of the agreement gives us an idea of its content:

- a) Parties will not establish new barriers to internal trade and will facilitate the cross-boundary movement of persons, goods, services and investments within Canada;
- b) Parties treat persons, goods, services and investments equally, irrespective of where they originate in Canada;
- c) Parties reconcile relevant standards and regulations to provide for the free movement of persons, goods, services and investments within Canada; and
- d) Parties ensure that their administrative policies operate to provide for the free movement of people, goods, services and investments within Canada.<sup>1</sup>

A very clear example of how internal trade barriers worked in Canada is that of the famous Moosehead brewery. This company began in Nova Scotia as a small family business that has continued for six generations, and today is the most important Canadian brewery that has not been bought out by foreigners.<sup>2</sup> Moosehead tried to expand to cover the national market but it met with

<sup>1</sup> Agreement on Internal Trade, Ottawa, 18 July 1994.

<sup>2</sup> Derek Onland, "Moosehead Beer: Blocked in Canada, Hits Big Time Worldwide" in *Canadian Speeches* 10, no. 1 (April 1996).

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Translated by Jacqueline Buswell.

major obstacles: “We realized that the internal trade barriers demanded we set up a factory in each province... and we simply didn’t have the capital to enter the markets of the western provinces.”<sup>3</sup>

The firm decided to focus on the enormous southern market and entered the 50 states of the U.S. with great success and later ventured into various areas of the rest of the world, like Australia, Europe and Japan.

It was not until 1992, when internal trade barriers on beer were eliminated, that Moosehead began to sell in Ontario and British Columbia, and later in Alberta, Newfoundland and Manitoba, with a curious slogan: “Now imported from Canada.” Currently, the firm that first conquered international markets has also won a strong share of the national market.

There were various ways in which internal trade barriers affected the economies of the provinces. Some examples are:

1. The laws of some provinces prohibited the purchase of energy from others even when this would be cheaper.
2. From one province to another, trucking companies had to observe different safety regulations for heavy vehicles on highways.
3. An architect with license to work in one province had to apply for permission to work in another.
4. Soft drink companies had to comply with different bottling laws. There were also different regulations for food products, for example, in coloring additives to margarine, in the production and distribution of milk and in the volume requirements for packaging fruit and vegetables.
5. Government purchases were also restricted geographically: some provinces ruled that municipal councils use only materials that originated locally.

There is no doubt that Canada’s participation in globalization processes and in the North American bloc demanded the disappearance of barriers to internal trade. The economic liberalization carried out both inside Canada and abroad (NAFTA) follow a global logic, present in the entire world economy, directed to achieve greater efficiency and competitiveness. If a closed national economy is not functional

in this day and age, the trade barriers among Canadian provinces were even less so. Thus, it is easy to infer that the process of universalization<sup>4</sup> of the world economy has intervened in the development of the Canadian economy and has accelerated national processes of political and economic change, heightening the already pertinent debate on the structure of the federation and the relationship of the federal government with the provinces and territories.

Due to its content, the ITA forms part of the same project as NAFTA. In fact, ITA contemplates the reforms necessary to set both agreements in action. For example, in Article 1809, the ITA states that “mechanisms exist to establish connections with NAFTA and the World Trade Organization (WTO).”

How can we explain that foreign trade was liberalized before barriers to internal trade were eliminated in Canada? The first general agreement on trade liberalization, the Canadian-United States Free Trade Agreement, was signed in 1989; Mexico joined in some years later (NAFTA went into effect in January 1994), while the Internal Trade Agreement was signed in 1994 and was ratified and went into effect in 1995.

The reason has to do with the complex relations between the federal government and provincial governments in Canada. The Canadian federation is highly decentralized, and the Constitution gives the states wide decision-making powers on issues as important as the laws governing production, transportation, and state government procurement policies.<sup>5</sup> It also gives the provinces ownership of natural resources located within their boundaries. This autonomy has given rise to a situation where each province legislates as it sees fit, seeking to establish protectionist policies that support job creation and local production, which has clearly caused difficulties for the functioning of a really integrated national market. These provincial economic and political structures are a result, to a great degree, of Canada’s constitution-

<sup>4</sup> The term “universalization” refers to a long range process of economic integration that includes the entire history of capitalism and that has adopted various forms, the last of which is globalization. This phase is marked by the use of new technologies through which the financial, trade and productive markets have become integrated in a way never achieved before.

<sup>5</sup> Jeffrey Thomas, “The NAFTA and Canada’s Internal Trade Agreement: You Can’t Have One Without the Other.” Lecture presented in Mexico, organized by the UNAM’s Institute for Legal Research and the Council for North American Business Studies of Simon Fraser University, April 19, 1996.

<sup>3</sup> Derek Onland, *op. cit.*, 27.

al accords, and have created interests that go back many years, and explain why the federal government cannot easily decree a change in the rules of competition.

But a third factor, the external market, unified the interests of the important industrial, commercial and financial sectors and agreements were reached, on a federal and provincial level, to open the southern border. This opening presupposed the free movement of goods and services within Canada. What's more, the external sector had already lobbied against internal protectionism on previous occasions. Thus, through the GATT (now the WTO), some foreign companies had registered complaints against protectionist measures in certain Canadian provinces and some barriers had been eliminated for foreign firms.

It is early yet to judge the results of the Internal Trade Agreement; while successful cases have existed like that of Moosehead beer, major obstacles have also arisen in putting the accord into effect, because, according to Canadian experts on the topic, restrictions on internal sales of certain types of goods still exist, as well as on public sector purchases, where favoritism continues.<sup>6</sup>

In spite of the possible difficulties facing its implementation, one can conclude that both the NAFTA and the ITA are influencing all of Canadian society to link it up with the hemispheric economy of the North American bloc. ❧

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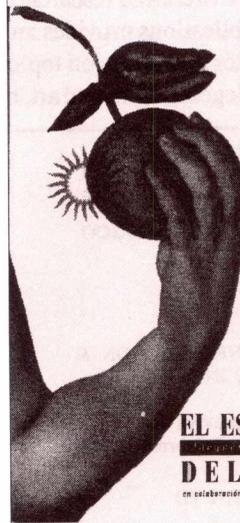
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<sup>6</sup> See John Britton, *Canada and the Global Economy* (Montreal: McGill Queen's University Press, 1996).

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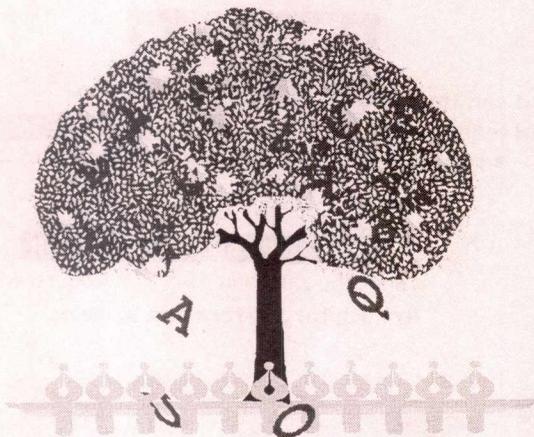
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# CIRQUE DU SOLEIL

## *A Canadian Product?*

Graciela Martínez Zalce\*

**B**y “reinventing” the circus, *Cirque du Soleil* has given dignity to a kind of performance which has sometimes been associated with the grotesque. This article will attempt to analyze *Cirque du Soleil* as a cultural product of Quebec and deal with the way it is identified as a Canadian cultural symbol in the eyes of the world, quite specifically by Mexican audiences. I will also try to discover the ways in which it has changed our way of perceiving circuses with a Canadian identity, meaning, for example, that they are multicultural, Quebecois and avant-garde.

When I was a child nothing was more terrifying than the promise of visiting the circus. The floor covered with sawdust, the intense animal smell, the loud, distorted voices, all those people who seemed so very sad, but tried very hard to be funny and look happy. And then, too, those skinny fox terriers in skirts, elephants whipped until they stand on two feet or horses crowned with feathers forced to run in circles and carry a mountain of men and women. This is not just my story; for many people in my country the idea of the circus is associated with poor performances, sometimes so bad that they are ridiculous and farcical.

One day, I saw a video called *Saltimbanco* on HBO Olé. Like many others, I was surprised to learn that what I was seeing was *Cirque du Soleil* and that it was

Canadian. Dignity and an artistic nuance had been brought to a form of popular entertainment sometimes considered grotesque.

*Cirque du Soleil* is a cultural product of Quebec. Based in Montreal (though it also has a European base in Amsterdam), the company’s history starts at the Baie St-Paul, where a group of street performers —stilt-walkers, fire-eaters, jugglers and trampoline acrobats— created a summer festival in 1982, *La fête foraine*. There, under the aurora borealis, Gilles St-Croix and Guy Laliberté conceived the idea for the *Cirque du Soleil*, in a country with no previous circus tradition. Perhaps beginning from scratch made what they call the “reinvention” possible, a “reinvention” which is really the restating of the concept of what happens inside the magic circle.

They named themselves after the sun, the symbol of the power of life, and started the company in 1984 with provincial government support and 75 employees. Today, they have a troupe touring in Canada and the U.S., another in Europe and still another in Asia, besides the one permanently based in Las Vegas, which means that they are simultaneously staging four shows on three continents.

Their statistics are very impressive: in 13 years, over 10 million spectators have seen their shows; they employ 1,300 people, including 220 performers, whose median age is 28; they have performed in more than 118 cities, from Los Angeles to Osaka, Vienna and Berlin.

\* Researcher at CISAN.



Photos by Al Seib. Reprinted courtesy of Cirque du Soleil, Inc.

Personnages (*Quidam*, 1996-1998).

Their plans for expansion are also impressive. For example, Walt Disney World, Co. and *Cirque du Soleil* have reached a long-term agreement for a new circus style theatrical show produced by *Cirque*, which will be housed in a theatre with a 1,650-seat capacity to be constructed at Florida's Disney World. It will be a new production, with a 12-year contract, premiering in November 1998, with a cast of around 70 performers.

They were also the creative consultants for the Atlanta Olympic Games and participated in the creation and production of the opening and closing ceremonies.

Besides that, Admission Network, one of Canada's major ticketing services, marked its entry to the U.S. market, making its debut with *Quidam* in 1996; Admission Networks USA will be the exclusive ticketing service for the show during its entire three-year tour. They have a 1-800 number and 20 outlets in Southern California.

They are also planning a new show and theatre in Las Vegas, an aquatic circus. By August 1998, there will be two shows running there.

But the United States is not their only target. They will also be presenting a permanent show in Berlin,



Character, John Coilkey (*Quidam*, 1996-1998).



Nymphs (*Alegria*, 1994-1995).

scheduled to premiere in the year 2000; the project will ensure their activities there until 2015.

So, obviously, *Cirque* has developed into a major business over the years. At the same time, the various companies that make up the *Cirque du Soleil* group have developed audiovisual, recording, merchandising and box office activities and have been involved in building theatres and performing arts complexes; it has become one of the largest cultural businesses in North America. And it has a Quebecois label.

But, what is the concept behind all this?

*Cirque du Soleil* produces entertainment; they say they have a message to deliver: they are merchants of happiness. When they first went abroad, they had a five-year plan to conquer North America, starting in Los Angeles and ending in New York. That's how it began growing. The company became more structured, less personal, but tried to keep the same spirit that fired its beginnings: to be creative and audacious; to be a provocation and a celebration.

*Cirque du Soleil* has created and produced nine shows: *Cirque du Soleil* (1984-1985), *La Magie Continue* (1986), *We Reinvent the Circus* (1987-1988), *Nouvelle Expérience* (1990-1991), *Fascination* (1992), *Saltimbanco* (1992-1996), *Mystère* (playing in Las Vegas continuously since 1993), *Alegria* (1994-1998) and *Quidam* (1996-2002).



Spanish webs (*Quidam*, 1996-1998).

In all of them, the establishment of a stage language is very important; the ritual circle of the circus ring is the place where the breakdown of old ideas and preconceptions has to be achieved by defying the limits of physical reality and projecting the spectator into the intense realm of the imagination. Their energy and the absence of words seem to be able to elicit just about anything from the bodies of the performers.



Aerial contortion (*Quidam*, 1996-1998).

Franco Dragone, the stage director, says: “I have no artistic pretensions and I have no ideas, I try to observe and catch the moment when something happens; then if I’ve observed well and caught it right, then I can talk to the artists, tell them, ‘this is what we’ll do.’ The source of my inspiration is the way I look at things.”

And even though he denies artistic pretensions, the artistry is there. It was there in the beginning but it became more obvious with *Saltimbanco*, where the make-up and the clothing are more stylized and the audience has the impression it is seeing a sort of acrobatic ballet, not really circus acts. People dance while they bend, leap, tumble, fly; for them, gravity is just another law to be broken; they kiss danger very seductively. Everything is so plastic that these perfect bodies constantly remind us of sculptures. Their movements always seek symmetry, equilibrium; they tend to perfection by seeking height, by leaving the floor.

The shows are not acts with a beginning and an end followed by another act and so on. They try to do just the opposite. They unravel, destructure the acts to make a show with an integrated concept through colours, music, motion.

One constant in their staging under the tent in the sense of the street performer and the town square where people meet; there’s always a character dressed in street clothes; there’s also a child who participates; anyway, it has become so sophisticated that in that meeting place bizarre things always happen.

The spectator always has the sense of magic, of being inside a dream or a fantasy; live music, specially written for each show, influenced by various cultures, with synthesizers and female voices, and the lights enhance the feeling. There’s a feeling, a concept, that you can grasp.

Dragone says about the performers, “My aim is that when people see you in the street I want them to feel



Dancers (*Mystère*, 1993-1997).

intimidated. One way to stand out is to create a myth. The circus is mythical in the minds of kids and grown-ups. We are seen as wanderers even though we travel differently from Gypsies, from traditional wanderers. So the myth lives on.”

And their success corroborates that they are on their way to becoming a myth: the one that reinvented the circus.

But, outside Quebec, how is this myth identified? Let us remember that for non-Canadians, Quebecois are still identified as French-Canadian; so, *Cirque du Soleil* is a Canadian cultural symbol in the eyes of the world, or at least for Mexican audiences.

I researched into how this Canadian product is introduced into the Mexican market. First, I went to Mix-up and Tower Records and found that you can buy *We Reinvent the Circus*, *Nouvelle Experience* and *Saltimbanco*

there on laser disc and video, imported directly from Miami. But a company called Grupo Barak bought a master in 1996 and today prints copyrighted copies specially for the Mexican market that are cheaper than the imports. They distribute between 800 and 1,000 copies to all the most important supermarket chains and retail stores, selling around 500 copies a month. The only information they have about the *Cirque* is what's printed on the back cover, and though they do no advertising, the three videos sell very well. They think their customers are upper middle class adults, mostly people who have seen or heard about the show in the United States. The videos are not distributed at Videocentros or Blockbusters, Mexico's main video rental chains.

In a second phase of the research, I contacted the *Cirque* marketing department in Montreal and sent them the following questionnaire:



Banquine (*Quidam*, 1996-1998).

1. Has Mexico been programmed for the future? If not, could you tell me why?
2. Do you have a distributor for your products in Mexico?
3. Has NAFTA facilitated the exports of your products (such as videos and laser discs) to Mexico?
4. Is Mexico a significant market for you? If not, do you think it could become one in the future?
5. When advertised, is the *Cirque* presented as a Canadian or a Quebecois product?

6. Is there an explicit will to be identified with a national or regional enterprise?
7. Is there an explicit will to be identified with Canadian multiculturalism since there are so many ethnic nuances in the design of every show?

The only answer I received was the following note:

Dear Graciela,  
We wish to thank you so much for your interest in



birds (Alegria, 1994-1995).

*Cirque du Soleil* and extend our apologies for not responding sooner.

South American market potential is currently being evaluated by *Cirque du Soleil*. However, the project is still at a very early stage. More information will become available in the upcoming years as the project progresses.

Once again we wish to express our gratitude for your interest.

This only confirms many things we already know: for instance, despite NAFTA, for most people, Mexico is still not considered part of North America. NAFTA has not substantially changed the flows of visual and audio material from Canada to Mexico. And finally, since *Cirque du Soleil* is an important part of the cultural indus-

try, it emphasizes profitability, which the depressed Latin American markets do not guarantee.

Perhaps because it has become so huge, because it is on HBO *Olé* and the Discovery Channel in Spanish, even though it will not perform live for Latin American audiences, *Cirque du Soleil* has changed our way of perceiving the art of circus with a Canadian label (meaning, in this case, multicultural, Quebecois and avant-garde).

Last summer I was invited to see *Quidam* at the Vieux Port in Montreal. It was one of the most thrilling experiences of my life. Since I am addicted to everything Canadian, my friends may think that perhaps I'm not being objective, but let me tell you that after visiting the blue and yellow tent, the word circus has a different meaning for me: pure joy, expansion of the human body's limits, beauty. And it comes with a Quebecois label. 

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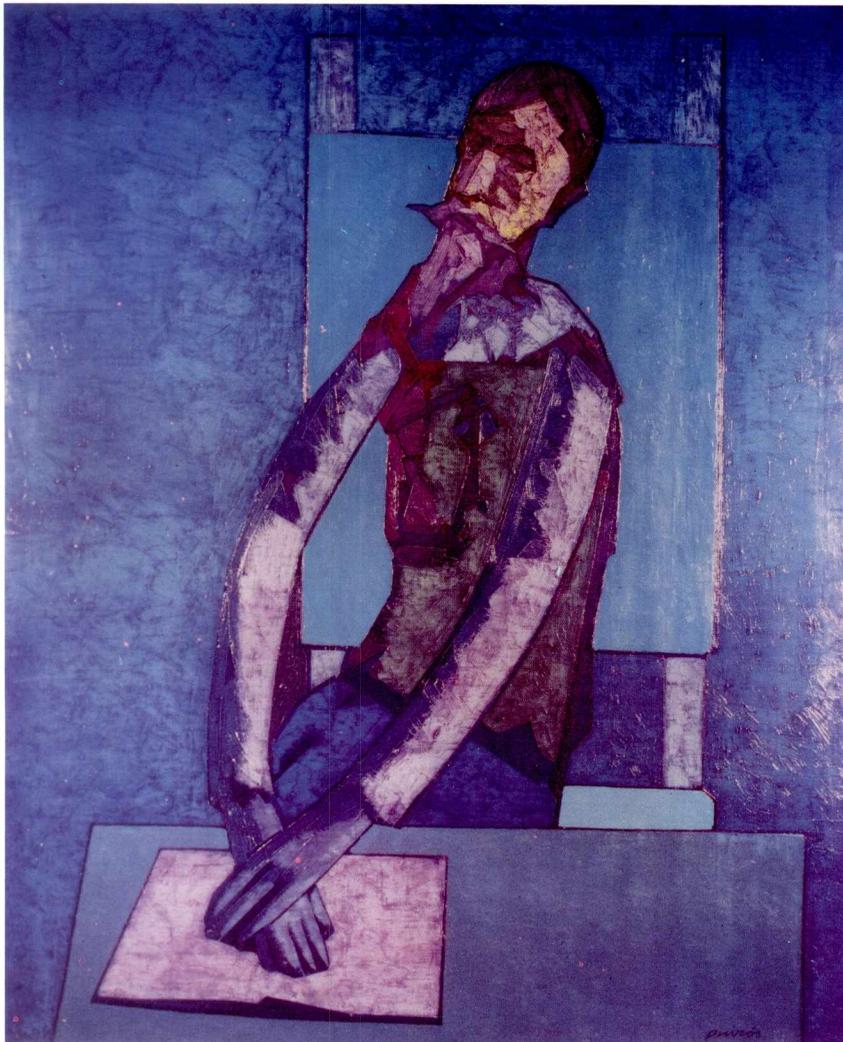
*We Reinvent the Circus*. Directed by Jacques Payette. Produced by Hélène Dufresne. 55:40 minutes. Productions Télémagik, 1989.

# The Quixote Iconographic Museum

*There are moments when the flats of this beach become the plateaus of La Mancha, and I see Don Quixote and Sancho riding their mounts as if they were real. I touch them, I hear them, they are here with us. Cervantes created them to be immortal. Oh, what a relief to read Quixote! To read it in a concentration camp, like the minute hand of the human clock, like the discovery of the ideals that justify the madness of genius in calling for a government of reason.*

EULALIO FERRER

BARCARÈS, FRANCE, JULY 16, 1939.



Photos reprinted courtesy of the Eulalio Ferrer Cervantes Foundation

He has been riding for the more than four centuries since Cervantes' pen immortalized him. His exploits triumph over the barriers of language and are recognized the world over. Don Quixote, the knight of sad countenance, comes alive in every time, in every generous man true to himself who risks his own safety and takes the side of the oppressed.

*El ingenioso Hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* (Don Quixote), translated into practically all written languages, almost obsessively critiqued and annotated, with a bibliography so large it is surpassed only by the Bible, is an image that goes beyond typeset and takes human form, a figure recognizable through all time. Very few people are unaware of what Quixote looks like; no one would confuse him with anyone else. Recreated by the knowing hand of a craftsman, the expert brush of a painter or the sculptor's chisel, in all times

Spanish painter Antonio Quiroz, *This Is How I See Don Quixote*, 145 × 114 cm (oil).

and all places, Quixote always brings to mind only one thing: Quixote.

Of this, the city of Guanajuato offers us proof. Here, on a November day 10 years ago, hundreds of Quixo-

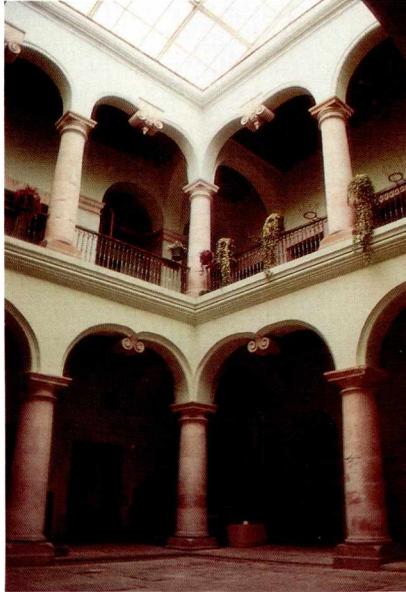
tes from all over the world took over a house-cum-museum to reveal themselves as their creators saw them.

The Quixote Iconographic Museum is the only one of its kind in the world, not only because it con-

tains more than 600 versions of a single figure done in painting, sculpture, engravings and crafts from a myriad of places, but because of the richness and quality of the works themselves. Its uniqueness also flows



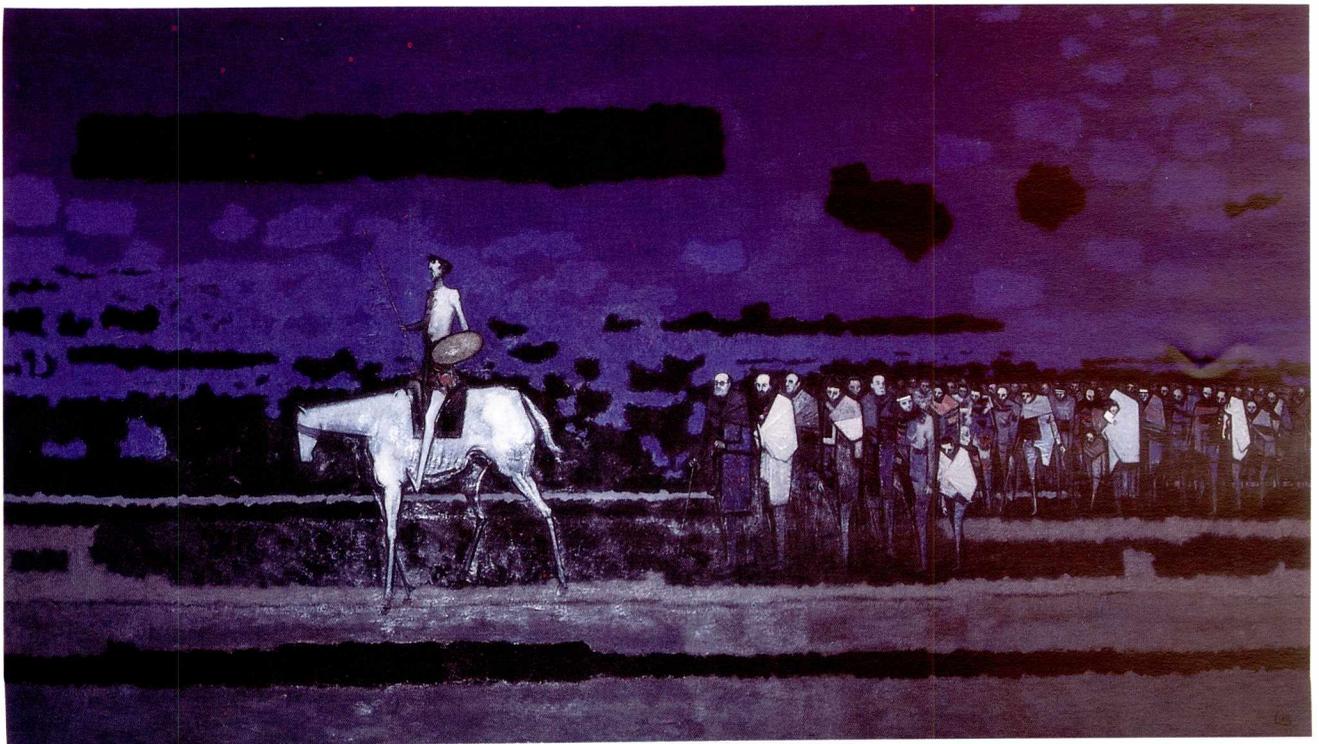
Dante Barrera



Dante Barrera



Dante Barrera



Spanish painter Antonio Rodríguez Luna, *Don Quixote in Exile*, 200 x 350 cm (mural in mixed techniques).

from the passion and care with which the pieces were gathered by their collector, Don Eulalio Ferrer Rodríguez.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE COLLECTION

The first Quixote that Spaniard Eulalio Ferrer ever knew lived in the verses penned by Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. It was his constant companion, read ceaselessly, during the months he spent in the French concentration camps at Argeles and Barcarès in 1939. After burying himself in its pages, the sea became the plains of La Mancha,

and he could see Don Quixote and Sancho approaching, real people, and share with them a single song to freedom.

When he got his liberty, Don Eulalio came to Mexico in the great Spanish exodus that settled here in the early 1940s. His passion for Quixote became a collector's zeal. On his travels through the world, Ferrer acquired any and all interpretations of Cervantes' character that he thought had value: paintings, sculptures, engravings, ceramic pieces. The fecund Quixote characters are represented in their multiplicity of forms, figures and colors, without ever exhausting their creative possibilities. To enhance his collection, Ferrer invited important Mexican and



Mexican painter Alberto Gironella, *After Dore*, 80 × 100 cm (oil).



Mexican painter Pedro Coronel, *Cosmic Quixote*, 355 × 851 cm (mural in acrylic and other techniques).

foreign painters to put their own interpretations of Quixote on canvas. Different sized paintings and moveable murals soon invaded the walls of his home and the vaulted ceiling of his "chapel-library." Six hundred Quixotes, alone or accompanied by the faithful Sancho, riding or hand-in-hand with his beloved Dulcinea, turned his home into a munificent museum. Then, Ferrer decided to part with them all and donate them to the people of Mexico.

The collection was established in Guanajuato, one of Mexico's most beautiful colonial cities and host for the last 25 years of the International Cervantes Festival. Since then, the knight errant from La Mancha and his universe can be accompanied on their unending march by all who visit it.

#### A VOYAGE IN TIME AND SPACE

A collective interpretation, the collection of Don Quixotes and other characters from the piece is exceptional. Ensnared on walls, tables, glass cases and pieces of furniture through the two-story building's 10 rooms, or guarding the corners and recesses of its central patio, they offer a free interpretation of his wanderings.

The character's conception in the author's mind,

*The fecund Quixote characters are represented in their multiplicity of forms, figures and colors, without ever exhausting their creative possibilities.*

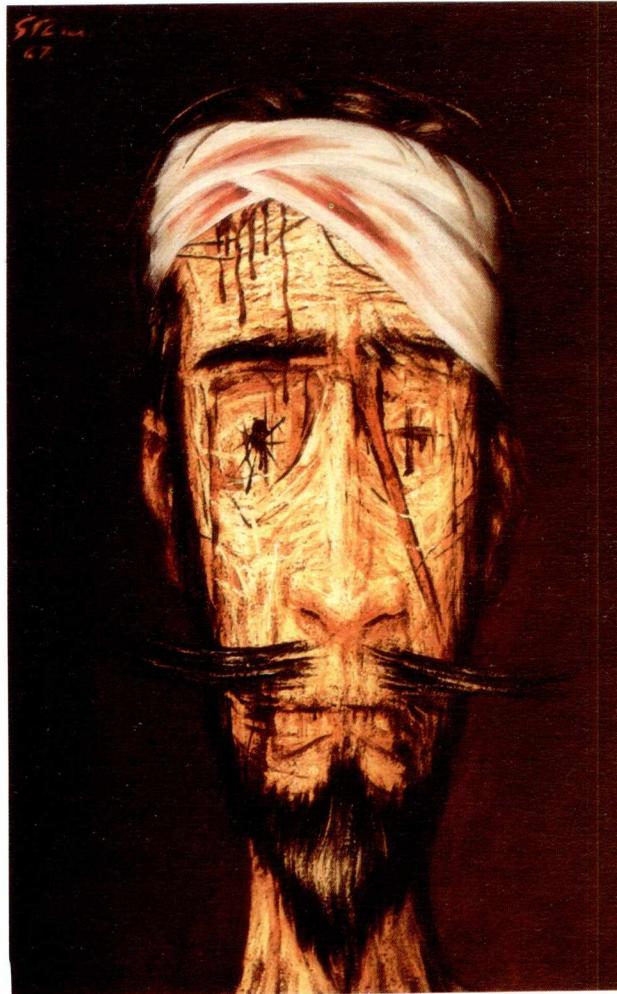
the birth of the Hero in the mind of Alonso Quijano, the character himself, the influence of the novels of chivalry which incited to adventures and fed an unbreakable will, or Quixote's inseparable companions Rocinante and Sancho can all be seen in Gabriel Flores' mural and the paintings of Alberto Gironella, Alfredo Palmero de Grigori, Montoll and Alvaro Delgado.

The dramatic and representative sides of Quixote's idealism burst from the brushes of Spaniards Eduardo Pisano and Francisco Moreno Capdevila and Mexican José Chávez Mo-

rado. José Guadalupe Posada, Mexico's engraver famous for transporting the living to the kingdom of the dead, brings us an original Quixote skeleton that, even in the beyond, takes up the sword unflinchingly against skeletal giants.

Dalí, Picasso, Alfredo Zalce, Raúl Anguiano, Mario Orozco Rivera, Antonio Rodríguez Luna, Benito Messguer, Arnold Belkin, Francisco Corzas, Pedro Coronel: the list is endless. All united in a visual paradox whose interpretative power produces images evoking Quixote at once challenging and fallen, discrete, audacious, combative, serene, contemporaneous, historical.

Many of the Quixotes are outstanding, but none outshines the others. The viewer's gaze wanders over the paint-



Mexican painter Gabriel Flores, *The Martyrdom of Don Quixote*, 75 x 50 cm (oil).

ings, the statues, the engravings, the porcelains, the pitchers, the medallions, the stamps, the platters, the miniature ivory carvings or the chess set on whose board Sancho-pawns, Rocinante-knights, windmill-rooks and, of course, Quixote-kings and Dulcinea-queens face off.

A fiesta of techniques, styles, forms, sizes, materials and visions,

all to please a single character who, as Agustín Yañez would say, deserved to be revered because, “The cult to our lord Don Quixote is the cult of Man’s everlasting prowess and the exaltation of basic values: goodness, beauty, justice, liberty.”

After wandering through the rooms of this very special museum,

your only option is to take the lesson to heart and get up into the saddle of the renowned knight to hear him proclaim, “For liberty... and for honor, life itself can and must be ventured.” **W**

*Elsie Montiel*  
Managing Editor



Dante Barrera

Of the world’s approximately 40,000 museums, only one is dedicated to art whose theme is the work of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra: the Quixote Iconographic Museum, housed in a beautiful, restored, three-story eighteenth century home in the city of Guanajuato, Mexico.

The Quixote Iconographic Museum boasts almost 1,000 pieces in different styles, techniques and tastes: a very up-to-date version of *Don Quixote* and its characters. Several murals grace the museum walls, among them *Cosmic Quixote* (463 sq.ft.), by Pedro Coronel; *Work and Its Inspiration* (420 sq.ft.), by Gabriel Flores; *Quixote Between Life and Death* (344 sq.ft.), by Raúl Anguiano; *Don Quixote in Exile* (301 sq.ft.), by Antonio Rodríguez Luna, whose work is considered exemplary of the Spanish exile commu-

nity. Among the many other pieces are works by Dalí, Picasso, Carbonero, Rafael Coronel, Vela Zametti, Alvaro Delgado, Gregorio Prieto and Francisco Corzas, as well as crafts and historical items.

Then-Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid and Spanish Head of Government Felipe González inaugurated the Quixote Iconographical Museum on November 7, 1987. The works themselves were donated by the Cervantes Foundation of Mexico, headed up by Eulalio Ferrer Rodríguez, as a grateful homage to the people of Mexico for its generosity to the Spanish exile community.

Every year the museum receives 200,000 visitors, among them historians and researchers from the world over who come to study what only this collection can offer, a visual reading of *Don Quixote*.

# Mexican Ceremonial Flowers

Edelmira Linares\*  
Robert Bye\*\*

Flowers have always had a ceremonial importance in Mexican tradition. In pre-Hispanic times they were used to praise rulers and important persons, to honor the gods and to establish contact with the underworld. There were special rules for smelling them, and disease or other harm could come of not following them correctly. Only certain persons of rank were allowed to have flowers, and in some cases they were used to attract a loved one.

Today many of the flowers used in ancient times are still utilized in ceremonies, some of which are based upon indigenous traditions.

The tiger flower is known as *flor de tigre*, *oceloxóchitl*, *cocomite*, *flor de un día*, *achelele*, *jahuique* and *trinitaria*, among other common names. Its scientific name is *Tigridia pavonia* and it belongs to the botanical family *iri-*



[1]

*daceae*, or the iris family. Its flowers have been used by ethnic groups to make wreaths and other decorations; its bulb is edible and is used to reduce fevers. The blossoms, which last only one day, were used to adorn the altars of pre-Hispanic gods, a custom that continues today, as the *flor de tigre* is a common ornament on altars in people's homes.

The orchid *Laelia autumnalis* is known as the lily, the flower of the dead, lily of All Saints and *sandieguitos* and is called *tzacuxochitl* in Nahuatl. As its common name indicates, it is used to decorate altars both in homes and churches on All Saints Day and the Day of the Dead in early

November. Appreciated for its flower's bright colors, the orchid plant is often grown in family orchards, generally thriving when placed on oak branches, and its flowers are used to decorate the home.

*Cempasúchiles*, or marigolds, very popular all over the world in floral arrangements, are strongly associated in Mexico with the festivities of the Day of the Dead. Their scientific name is *Tagetes erecta* and they belong to the *Asteraceae* family.

Every year *cempasúchiles* are placed on altars dedicated to the dead, in homes and cemeteries, which is why Mexicans associate the flower and its scent with graveyards. But the marigold is used as a medicinal plant to treat stomach inflammation and is recommended for controlling diarrhea. It was also used in ceremonies to mark the 11th month, *Ochpanixtli*, when a woman was sacrificed to the gods. Young boys danced every day for a week before the actual ceremony. Then women acted out a battle, during which they threw bouquets of

\* Head of the Department of Education and Public Information of the Botanical Garden of UNAM Institute of Biology.

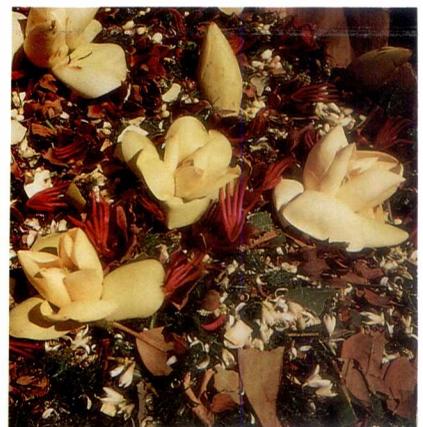
\*\* Director of UNAM Botanical Garden.



[2]



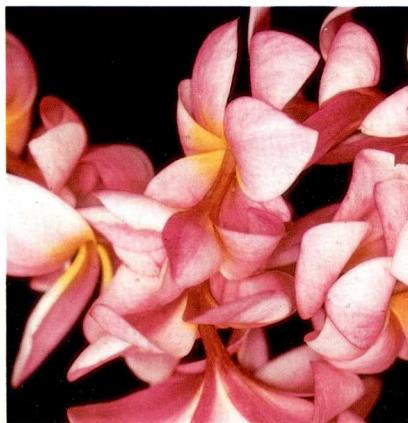
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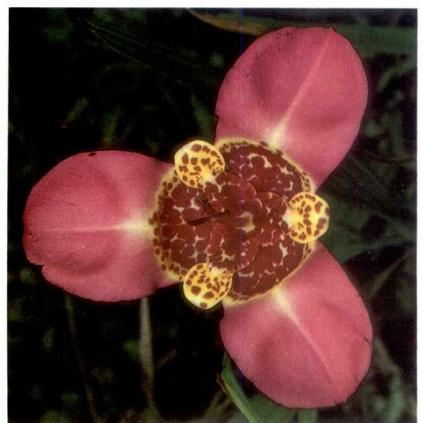
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[5]



[6]



[7]

*Every year  
cempasúchiles  
are placed on every  
altar consecrated to  
the dead in homes  
and cemeteries, which  
is why Mexicans  
associate the flower  
and its scent with  
graveyards.*

marigolds before the woman to be sacrificed, whom they considered an image of the gods. The women acted out this scene so the victim would not feel despondent, because if she were sad then many women would die in childbirth and many men in battle.

Magnolias such as *Magnolia grandiflora* of the *Magnoliaceae* have always been greatly admired for their beautiful shape and delicious perfume. In Nahuatl it was called *eloxochitl* as its blossom resembles a corn cob (*elote*, corn cob; *xochitl*, flower). The king offered these flowers to Huitzilopochtli, the god of war. The bracts were used to perfume choco-

late recipes and they are still used—both fresh and dried—in remedies for heart ailments as they are considered “cordial” or temperate. The fresh, strongly perfumed flowers are used in floral arrangements and mixed into wreaths into church and home altars.

The mayflower, *flor de mayo*, *cacalósúchil*, *nicté* and *flor de cuervo*, was also used by the ancient Mexicans in their ceremonies. Its scientific name is *Plumeria rubra* and it belongs to the family *Apocynaceae*. Its flowers are pink, yellow, white or crimson. The king would offer garlands made with this flower to the god of war and also to important persons. Even today in



[8]



[9]



[10]

the states of Mexico and Morelos these flowers are placed by masons on crosses put up on construction sites on May 3.<sup>1</sup> In Chalma, State of Mexico, the *flor de mayo* is used to decorate wreaths sold to visitors entering the church, and to decorate the church itself. In Yucatán maidens would use the flower to captivate their loved ones, as this flower has long been associated with gods and rituals of love. In May young girls dressed in white make offerings of the flower to the Virgin Mary. ❧

<sup>1</sup> Day of the Holy Cross or mason's day. Construction workers celebrate with a party at their work sites, where they erect a cross and decorate it with flowers in a ceremony to bless the site.

[1] A string of *cacalosúchil* flowers from Ozumba, Mexico, used to decorate crosses on mason's day.

[2] This magnolia is known in Nahuatl as *eloxochitl*, because its flower resembles a corn cob.

[3] *Cacalosúchil*.

[4] A mixture of plants used to heal heart disease, including magnolias.

[5] Magnolia.

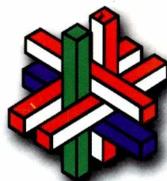
[6] The flowers of *cacalosúchil* are greatly appreciated for their rich colors and perfume.

[7] The *flor de tigre* is so named because its center has a pattern of lines and colors like the stripes of a tiger.

[8] Marigolds are grown in Mexico to harvest at the end of October for the festivities of the Day of the Dead.

[9] The *cempasúchil* is the main flower used in offerings on altars and on tombs in cemeteries in central Mexico.

[10] Flowers were offered to important persons as a sign of respect. Illustration from the *Florentine Codex*.



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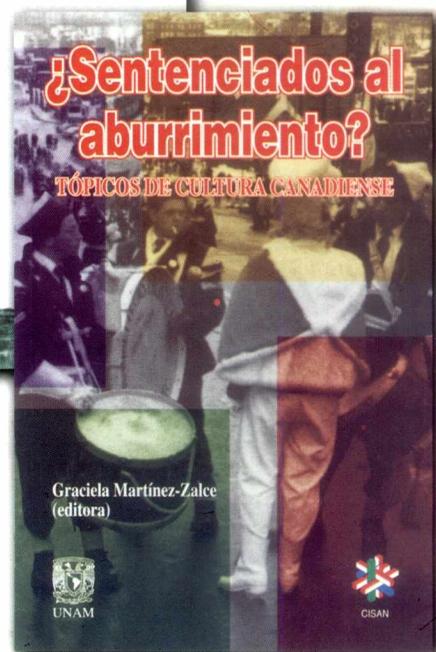


Centro de Investigaciones Sobre América del Norte  
Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México



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TÓPICOS DE CULTURA CANADIENSE



Graciela Martínez-Zalce  
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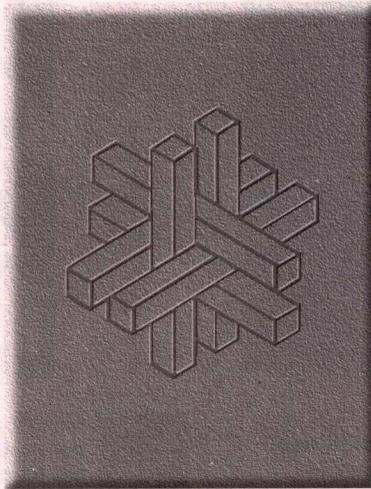
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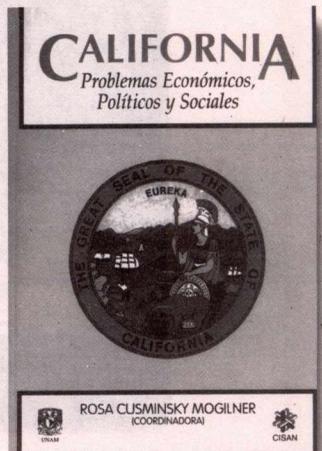




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### California: Problemas económicos, políticos y sociales

Rosa Cusminski (coord). 291pp.

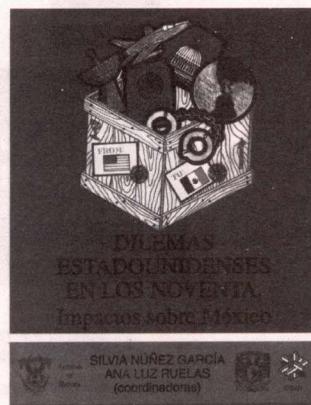
Despite its recent crisis, California is still one of the strongest economies in the world. Moreover, because it is a heterogeneous society, which concentrates immigrants from all over the world, especially Hispanics and the fact that it shares a border with Mexico, makes it of special interest to Mexico. Specialists from Mexico and the United States analyze different aspects of its social, legal, historical, economic, and political life.



### Elecciones en Canadá

Julián Castro Rea (coord). 152pp.  
On November 4, 13, Liberal Party leader Jean Chrétien took office as Canada's twentieth prime minister.

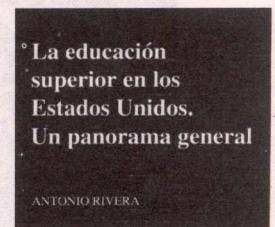
CISAN asked seven academic and journalistic specialists from Canada's key provinces of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec to analyze the changes expected from the new Liberal government. This publication is on the few works in Spanish on Canadian politics and repercussions for Mexico.



### Dilemas estadounidenses en los noventa. Impactos sobre México

Silvia Núñez y Ana Luz Ruelas (coords), 155pp.

Reflections on our inevitable integration offers the reader a more horizontal look at current U.S. problems and their impact on Mexico: among others, the crisis of the welfare state, antiimmigrant paranoia, the changeover from a war economy to a more competitive civilian economy.

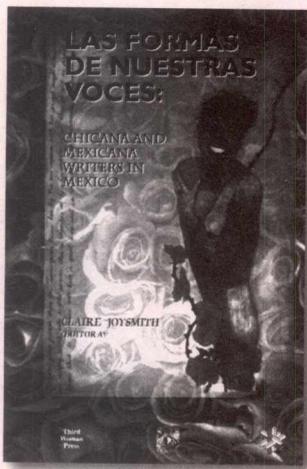


### La educación superior en los Estados Unidos. Un panorama general

Antonio Rivera  
Avances de Investigación

series.73pp.

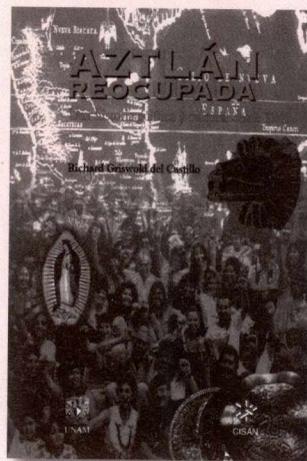
A general perspective on higher education in the United States. It covers its history, structure, and contemporary panorama.



**Las formas de nuestras voces. Chicana and Mexicana Writers in Mexico**

Claire Joysmith (ed). 350pp.

"The chicanas...crossed the 3,000-mile border that separates us from the most powerful country in the world with the Virgin of Guadalupe, the Malinche, the Llorona and Coatlicue on their backs, and they gave them new meaning and an identity they hadn't had before." Elena Poniatowska.



**Aztlán Reocupada A Political and Cultural History of Mexico on Mexican American Society in Post War America.**

Richard Griswold. (bilingual edition). 106pp. Historic overview of Chicano society from 1945 to the nineties. A retrospective analysis of political, economic, social and cultural elements that have determined Chicano cultural heritage and its present situation.



**Me voy pa' Pensilvania por no andar en la vagancia. Los ferrocarrileros mexicanos en Estados Unidos durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial**

Bárbara Driscoll. 278pp. A look at the little known story of nonagricultural Mexican migrant workers in the United States under the Railroad Bracero Program instituted during the Second World War by both the Mexican and U.S. governments.



**México - Estados Unidos: Encuentros y desencuentros en el cine**

Ignacio Durán, Iván Trujillo y Mónica Vereá (coords.). 196pp.

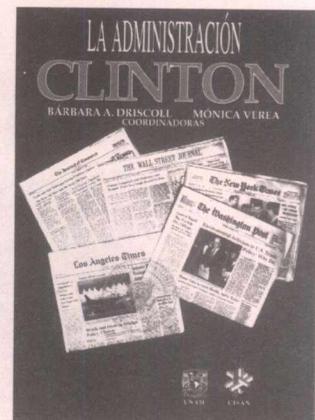
Twelve Mexican and American specialists on art and cinema look into sociocultural problems such as migration, racism and Chicano issues throughout history, from the perspective of American and Mexican films. They analyze the influence of distorted images on both sides and how these stereotypes effect mutual conceptions and misconceptions.



**La gestión de la basura en las grandes ciudades**

Pamela Severini. Avances de Investigación Series. 61pp.

This book compares Canadian and Mexican programs on the treatment of solid wastes in Mexico City and Montreal. Severini states that the problem can only be explained by institutional, demographical and economic reasons and could soon result in some serious conflicts.



**La administración Clinton**

Bárbara Driscoll, Mónica Vereá (coords.). 404pp.

An analysis of the beginnings of the Clinton administration. A basic sourcebook to explain the transition to a Democratic Administration and to evaluate current political events.

# Aunt Jose Rivadeneira

## *Had a Daughter with Big Eyes*

Angeles Mastretta\*

**A**unt Jose Rivadeneira had a daughter with big eyes, eyes like two moons, like a wish. The child had just been placed in her mother's embrace, still set and faltering, when she showed her eyes and something on the wings of her lips that resembled a question.

"What do you want to know?" asked Aunt Jose playfully pretending she understood the child's expression.

As every mother does, aunt Jose thought there was no creature as beautiful as hers in the history of the world. She was dazzled by the color of her skin, the length of her eyelashes and the peacefulness of her sleep. She trembled with pride while imagining what she would do with blood and chimeras beating in her body.

She devoted herself to gazing at the child with pride and delight for more than three weeks. Then, life unassailable had a sickness fall upon the girl that within five hours turned her extraordinary liveliness into an

exhausted and remote dream that seemed to carry her back to death.

When all her healing talents could not succeed in improving the child's condition, Aunt Jose, pale with terror, carried her to the hospital. There, the girl was taken from her arms and a dozen doctors and nurses, hectic and confused, began circling her. Aunt Jose saw the child leave behind a door she was not allowed to go through and then let herself fall to the floor, unable to support both herself and that cliff-like pain.

She was found there by her husband who was a sensible and judicious man, as men are used to pretending they are. He helped her stand up and reproached her for her lack of sense and hope. Her husband trusted medical science and spoke of it as others speak of God. Hence, he was troubled by how unreasonable his wife's position was, unable to do anything but cry and curse fate.

The girl was isolated in an intensive care unit. A white and clean place in which mothers could only stay half an hour each day. At that time it filled up with prayers and entreaties. All women made the sign of the cross over their child's face; they went over their bodies with reli-



\* Mexican writer and winner of the Rómulo Gallegos Prize for literature.

<sup>1</sup> First published in Angeles Mastretta's book of stories *Mujeres de ojos grandes* (Mexico City: Cal y Arena, 1990).

Translated by Omar López Vergara and Carolina Alvarado Graeff.

gious images and holy water, they asked of every God to let them live. Aunt Jose could hardly reach the cradle where her daughter barely breathed to ask her for something: "don't die." Afterwards she wept and wept, never drying her eyes nor moving until the nurses let her know she had to leave.

She again sat down on the benches near the door, her head on her lap, with no hunger or voice, resentful and surly, fervent and desperate. What could she do? What did her daughter have to live for? What offer would be good enough to interest her small body covered with needles and probes in remaining in this world? What could she say to her to convince her that it was worth it to make the effort rather than dying?

One morning, without knowing why, enlightened only by the ghosts in her heart, she approached the girl and started telling her stories from her ancestors. Who they had been, which women had knit their lives with

which men before her daughter's mouth and navel had formed a knot with her. What these women were made of, what toils they had been through, what sorrows and merriments she had inside her as her heritage. Who sowed, with boldness and fantasies, the life she was to continue.

For many days she remembered, imagined, invented. Each minute of each available hour she spoke endlessly into her daughter's ear. At last, one Thursday, as the sun was setting, while she was relentlessly telling some story, her daughter opened her eyes and looked at her, eager and defiant, as she would be for the rest of her long existence.

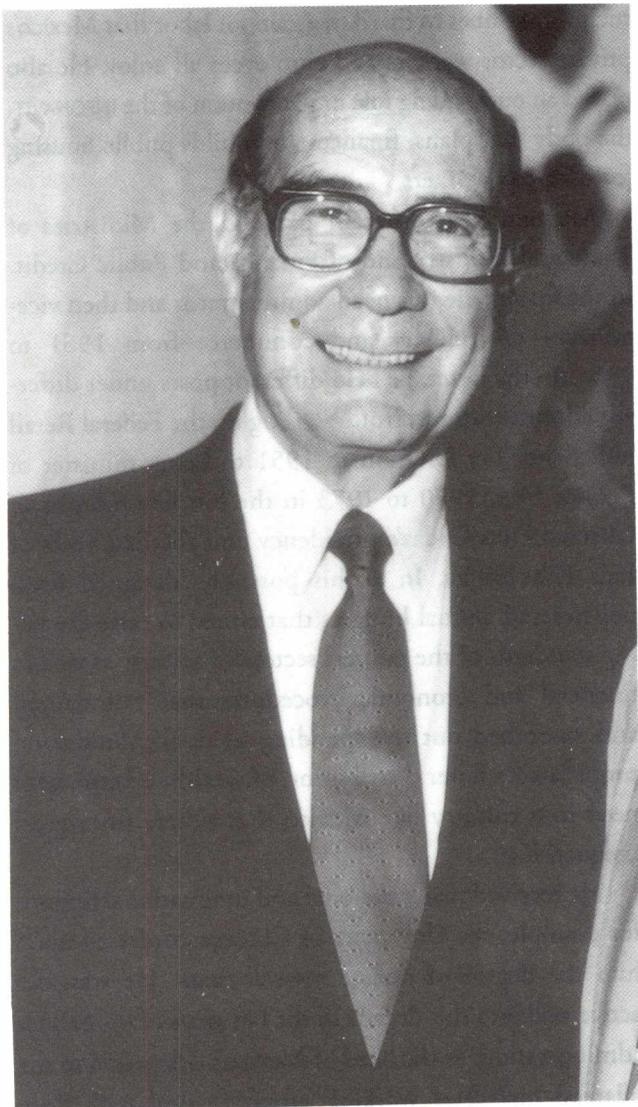
Aunt Jose's husband thanked the doctors, the doctors thanked their science's developments and the aunt held her child and left the hospital without saying a word. Only she knew everlastingly that no science was able to move as much as the one hidden in the coarse and subtle findings of other women with big eyes. **W**

Drawings by Lydia Peña



# HUGO B. MARGÁIN

*Mexican Diplomat, Academic and Statesman*



For the National Autonomous University of Mexico, and particularly for the magazine *Voices of Mexico*, Ambassador Hugo B. Margáin occupies a very special place as a dedicated teacher and an imaginative promotor of culture. As editorial director of *Voices of Mexico*, he began one of our publication's most creative periods. It was then that the magazine became a vehicle for disseminating Mexico's best voices and consolidated itself as the only university publication that aimed to take the most important issues in Mexican culture, art, science, politics, economics and society before the U.S. and Canadian publics. Even prior to regional economic integration, the mission and work of *Voices of Mexico* under Margáin's guidance were an insuperable effort to build bridges of understanding among three countries united not only by history and geography, but, particularly in the case of the United States and Mexico, by a complex bilateral relationship that included difficult, thorny problems. For these and many other reasons, Hugo B. Margáin Gleason's death last September 12 has a profound effect on Mexico's university and cultural communities.

If any of Margáin Gleason's attributes stand out, it is his unswerving love for Mexico. Born in Mexico City in 1913, his love of country led him to outstanding achievements as a professor and editor, a brilliant diplomatic career and to acquit himself successfully in some of the highest posts in public administration.

An excellent lawyer, he graduated in law from the UNAM in 1937. In an interview published in the Mexico City daily *Excélsior*, September 9, 1993, he said his thesis had been on “the gap between the law and reality in Mexico.” From then on, his reflections on his country would become a vocation and the leitmotif of all his professional activities, whether in academia, politics or diplomacy.

Though he was a professor at the Mexico College and the UNAM between 1942 and 1951, his teaching went beyond the classroom since he was a true guide for all the young people who collaborated with him at all the institutions he worked in.

He began his long career in government in 1951 and went into Mexico’s foreign service in 1965. He was Mexico’s ambassador to the United States from 1965 to 1970 and from 1976 to 1982, and he filled the same post in Great Britain from 1973 to 1974. Always respectful, his two periods as ambassador in the United States were characterized by a decided, solid defense of Mexico’s interests in what is undoubtedly the most important country where Mexico has a diplomatic mission, both because of its specific weight in the world and because of the problems that naturally arise from having such a long common border. His role as representative of Mexico was also decisive when he held the posts of president of the Special Group of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank and governor of the International Monetary Fund from 1970 to 1973.

As a civil servant, Margáin enjoyed the admiration, respect, and in many cases the personal friendship of all

*If we were to single  
out any of Margáin Gleason’s  
attributes, we would  
point to his unswerving  
love for Mexico.*

Mexico’s presidents from Miguel Alemán to Carlos Salinas de Gortari. Judging by his own recollections stated in the aforementioned *Excélsior* interview, his closest relationship and collaboration was with Gustavo Díaz Ordaz, Luis Echeverría Alvarez and José López Portillo, whose administrations ran consecutively from 1964 to 1982.

Invariably concerned with the impact on society of the exercise of power and government, Margáin was responsible for important contributions to the well being of Mexico’s working class. It was his idea to write profit sharing into Mexico’s labor legislation; after making the suggestion, he developed the project itself. His time as head of the Commission on Profit Sharing ended in 1963 when the system was formalized, and as such it continues to this day, a gain for labor that Mexico’s private sector workers and employees all enjoy. He also played an outstanding role in the creation of the INFONAVIT, the body that plans, finances and builds public housing for Mexico’s workers.

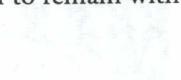
Margáin held different posts in the Ministries of Trade and Industry and of Finance and Public Credit. In the former, he was head administrator and then vice-minister of industry and commerce from 1961 to 1964. In the latter, he held different posts under different administrations, from heading up the Federal Retail merchants Tax Division in 1951 to being minister of finance from 1970 to 1973 in the last few months of Gustavo Díaz Ordaz’s presidency and the first years of Luis Echeverría’s. In all his posts, he designed fiscal policies and annual budgets that aimed to raise the living standards of the poorest sectors of society, as well as financial and economic procedures that rationalized and smoothed out the spending of public funds and propitiated a fairer distribution of wealth, a permanent need in a country like Mexico that suffers from great inequalities.

He received many national and international honors; for example, the University of Chicago conferred upon him the degree of doctor *honoris causa*. He was also active well into this decade in the last years of the Salinas administration, as the head of Mexico’s delegation to the bilateral high-level working group to deal with drug

*As a civil servant, Margáin enjoyed the admiration, respect and, in many cases, the personal friendship of all Mexico's presidents from Miguel Alemán to Carlos Salinas de Gortari.*

trafficking. His ideals and convictions were as solid as his mind was penetrating and shrewd in their implementation, despite some differences of opinion with the presidents he served.

Margáin's love of Mexico led him to accept the invitation made to him to head up *Voices of Mexico* by then-UNAM Rector José Sarukhán and then-director of the Center for Research on North America, Mónica Vereá.

His broad and profound relations with Mexico's cultural and political milieus as well as his vast knowledge of his country resulting from long years of service to the great national ideals made it possible for the magazine to progress greatly under his supervision even in the difficult field of dissemination among such demanding readerships as those in the United States and Canada. To his collaborators and those who have succeeded him in this worthwhile task, his example has been both a stimulus and a model. From the pages of this publication that he loved so much, they wish also to pay homage to him, to his work and his life, which should be known both to his fellow countrymen and the reading public in the countries his efforts were aimed at. That effort, we are sure, will make it possible for him to remain with us always. 

*Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla  
Diego Bugeda Bernal*

Issues 39 to 41 of *Voices of Mexico* were published with the contribution of the U.S.-Mexico Fund for Culture and its sponsors —the Rockefeller Foundation, the Bancomer Cultural Foundation and Mexico's National Fund for Culture and the Arts.

We wish to thank both the fund and its sponsors for their support and recognize their work and interest in binational cultural activities.



# Reviews



Lola Alvarez Bravo  
*In Her Own Light*

## Lola Alvarez Bravo: In Her Own Light

Oliver Debroise

Center for Creative Photography

The University of Arizona Press

Tucson, 1994, 83 pp.

Few Mexican women have been honored by the straightforward presentation that Oliver Debroise gives this distinguished photographer in *Lola Alvarez Bravo: In Her Own Light*. His respect and admiration for her as a person and for her work come through clearly, both in the text and the magnificent images reprinted in this book.

Lola Álvarez Bravo (1907-1993), one of Mexico's best photographers, was born Dolores Martínez de Anda in Lagos de Moreno in the state of Jalisco. After her mother died when she was three years old, Lola left Lagos for Mexico City with her father, who bought and sold objets d'art. He often took her with him on his travels, which is why she was alone with him when he died of a heart attack on a train from Veracruz when she was nine.

Lola then went to live with her half-brother Miguel and his wife in downtown Mexico City. However, since her sister-in-law was not too fond of her, she was sent to a boarding school and came home only on weekends. She

recalled that it was hard to know who was happier —Lola or the nuns— when she came down with typhoid and was sent home permanently.

Lola's life is inextricably woven into Manuel Alvarez Bravo's. They met on the rooftops of downtown Mexico City; they were neighbors, childhood friends and sweethearts. They married in 1925 when he was sent to Oaxaca by the government controller's office to Oaxaca. It was there that Lola learned darkroom techniques, working as Manuel's assistant. She laughingly described the process, saying his orders were to "stir and stir and stir" ("menéale, menéale, menéale").

The couple returned to Mexico City in 1927 and became part of Mexico City's circle of artists and intellectuals. They went to exhibits, and although Lola described being shy at first, they gradually fit in. When Tina Modotti was deported from Mexico, Lola and Manuel bought her cameras and took over her role as Mexico's primary mural photographers.

Lola worked behind the scenes as Manuel's assistant until they separated in 1934. She reported that Manuel had wanted to change their lifestyle: Lola would stay home, leaving the house only to do the shopping. When she asked him how he would change, he scoffed and answered that he would not: he was a man! Encouraged by friends not to put up with his womanizing, Lola and her son went to live with painter Maria Izquierdo for a "few months" which became a few years.

Lola got a job teaching art and was coached by her friends, until she was offered a job as a photographer. She described her terror as she faced the first assignment at the Ministry of Education. One assignment led to another and she became the graphic editor of the Ministry of Education's publication *Maestro rural*. It was here that she began experimenting with photomontage, combin-

ing images, cropping and pasting negatives until she was satisfied with the whole. Lola was among the first women photo journalists in Mexico so when she traveled with a press crew, she put up with a lot of teasing and brow-beating.

Lola's activity as a patron and promoter of the arts and artists began when she and Manuel opened a gallery to show the work of their friends, such as José Clemente Orozco, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Rufino Tamayo, among many others. The first gallery in Tacubaya was not open very long. She opened a second, the Galería de Arte Contemporáneo at Amberes 12, where Frida Kahlo's only solo exhibit was held. This was the famous exhibit that Frida attended "in bed," arriving at the gallery on a stretcher.

From 1937 to 1939 Lola set up and directed the photo lab at the National University. The Ministry of Education hired her to create and manage their photographic archives; that was when she began photography classes. Professional curiosity led her to experiment with film. She never finished the movie she started about Frida Kahlo because she was unwilling to shoot when Frida didn't feel well. She did, however, finish a documentary on the Diego Rivera murals in the former chapel of Chapingo University.

Lola and Manuel were formally divorced 15 years after their separation when Manuel wanted to marry his second wife, Doris Heyden, an American anthropologist. Lola did not return to her maiden name of Martínez, although encouraged to do so by friends, because she felt that she was really born as a person and as a photographer when she married Manuel.

Her talent as a photographer is matched by her flair for story-telling. She knew most of the major figures of the Mexican Renaissance as well as younger artists active in Mexico. She regaled interviewers with stories and two of them noted her way of weaving one anecdote into another and yet another. Her stories reveal a good sense of humor and a great love for her friends.

*Lola Alvarez Bravo: In Her Own Light* is a beautifully designed presentation of this woman's life and work. Although bilingual editions are often cumbersome, readers will not find it difficult to follow the text in either English or Spanish. Lola's photographic images transmit her love for people. She captures curiosity, thought, concern and poetic moments which give a glimpse of her inner being.

Debroise has presented her work and her story as it was. He did not embroider or project hidden agendas on her story as much of the literature about Frida Kahlo and Tina Modotti does. He combined his research and schol-

arly skills with deep respect for Lola's work and his personal joy in their evolving relationship. The book documents and informs in a very pleasant style.

Susannah Glusker  
Free-lance writer and teacher



**La presidencia imperial**  
**Ascenso y caída del sistema político mexicano**  
(The Imperial Presidency  
The Rise and Fall of the Mexican Political System)  
*Enrique Krauze*  
Tusquets  
Mexico City, 1997, 510 pp.

for María Teresa Rivera de la Mora

"A strange job of writing, the history of Mexico."  
*Enrique Krauze*

The idea that the history of Mexico is to be found in the biographies of its great men was not born of an incorrect reading of our history (whether recent or remote), nor is it attributable to the doctrines of individualism or liberalism. Rather, it has been an obsession and a rallying cry for our rulers in different periods and —the other side of the coin— the price we have all had to pay, the fate anxiously experienced by all those who have had to live on the margins of power.

Today it is mainly the citizens who will be able to recognize Mexico's waning political system and "strongmen" in the pages of Enrique Krauze's last book, *La presidencia imperial*, covering the period from 1940 to 1996. A monumental work —if there is such a thing— in almost 500 pages this piece of historical research uses a great many bibliographical sources as well as interviews, a genre which the author himself uses with great mastery. Krauze's interpretation of that profusion of voices does not ignore a subjective look and impression-

istic evaluation of the personalities portrayed, a method he applies particularly in the part of the work dedicated to the period from Luis Echeverría (1970) to Carlos Salinas de Gortari (1994).

Like Marcel Schwob, Krauze knows that his characters may have a habit, an important character trait, that may be decisive when interpreting a more complex or historically transcendental event. Therefore, the “personal leadership style” is at the same time both cause and effect of the Mexican political system which puts the president at its center as the main figure since he has unlimited resources—more like royal prerogatives, some would say—which lead him to govern not institutionally, but personally.

Since his *Siglo de Caudillos*, Krauze recognized his debt to the political thinking of Octavio Paz, citing something the Nobel-prize winner had already pointed out in *Postdata*: the combination of two kinds of religious autocracy in the concentration of power in Mexico, the pre-Columbian indigenous *tlatoani* and that which stemmed from the Spanish Crown, with its *encomendados* (land owners “charged with” the souls of the people on their domains), hacienda owners and viceroys.

In an article published a decade ago in the magazine *Vuelta*, Krauze says that “it was [President] Carranza who in 1917 defended the benefits of *personal* government.” In the same article he says that it was finally [then-Secretary of Public Education Jaime] Torres Bodet who in an amendment to Article 3 of the Constitution finally nailed down the definition of Mexican democracy as “a system of life founded on the constant economic, social and cultural betterment of the people.” In this way, he consummated the perversion of what the men who carried out the nineteenth century liberal Reform movement and Madero, leader of the anti-dictatorial movement that led to Mexico’s 1910 Revolution, understood by democracy. They never thought about putting adjectives in front of the word “democracy.” Krauze’s conclusion is implacable. “If a party could be at the same time revolutionary and institutional, then it is perfectly all right to talk rhetorically about the concept of democracy to the benefit of its transgressors.”

This kind of thinking is the leitmotif that Krauze uses once again 10 years later in his introductory chapter of *La presidencia imperial*. But the zealous historian does not stop there. In the remaining chapters, he intersperses it with detailed research on how, and to what degree of subordination the collective protagonists of history (the legislative and judicial branches of govern-

ment, the press, the workers and peasants, among others) revolved around this “*priista*-presidential sun.”

At the beginning of the book, Krauze says flat out that the Mexican state never based its legitimacy, social vocation or prestige on the ballot box, “but on the notable synthesis of old traditions which operated silently within the very depths of Mexican political culture.” This interpretation should be taken as a courtesy to his readers since it discloses the sleight-of-hand and concealment that official histories practiced for 50 years of PRI rule with institutional blessings. What else was it they were doing but to deny their debt to the Porfirio Díaz regime, which in turn owed a great deal to the Viceroyalty?

In light of the events that have fostered Mexico’s political reform, and in which the opposition parties, the press, the non governmental organizations and guerrilla movements have played a major part, books like *La presidencia imperial* add to these efforts and become very important for educational and dissemination purposes, particularly given its opportune publication. Suffice it to recall, as Krauze does, the expectations raised by the Iberoamerican Summit of Chiefs of State, held in Guadalajara in the middle of the Salinas administration, to note and condemn the negligence of Mexico’s president in carrying out the accords reached there. In the framework of that meeting, in which Latin America’s emerging democracies pledged themselves to “good conduct” and Mexico seemed to be the leader of democracy and freedom, Salinas, at the pinnacle of his power, spent his time ignoring some and rejecting others.

In the last few pages of this magnificent book, Krauze poses his concern about President Zedillo’s ambiguity: his statements to the effect that he would limit presidential interference in party policies were not borne out by his actions, since on many occasions he used his office to ostentatiously support the PRI. Today, after what happened July 6, Krauze—and we with him—can put forward some new, more precise judgements about the Mexican president’s republicanism.

Today, Krauze is convinced that “the institution of the imperial presidency is surrounded by a daily growing democratic movement; but no one can foresee what will happen because history moves following trajectories and structures, human determination and free actions; but as the ancients knew quite well, it is also governed by an inscrutable god: chance.”

Mauricio Grobet Vallarta  
Mexican writer and editor

**PROBLEMAS**  
del  
**DESARROLLO**  
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<b>Presentación</b>	5
<b>OPINIONES Y COMENTARIOS</b>	
LAS RELACIONES MÉXICO-ESTADOS UNIDOS EN LA COYUNTURA ACTUAL	
<i>Fernando Carmona de la Peña</i> Estados Unidos, determinante en la historia de México	7
<i>Ángel Bassols Batalla</i> Profundizar en el conocimiento de las causas y sus efectos	19
<i>Mónica Gambrill</i> Democratización del modelo de integración económica	29
<i>Genoveva Roldán Dávila</i> De visitas y declaraciones. El tema migratorio México-Estados Unidos	37
<b>ENSAYOS Y ARTÍCULOS</b>	
<i>Marcos Cueva Perus</i> Continente cautivo. Estados Unidos y la apertura económica latinoamericana	45
<i>José Luis Calva</i> Mercado y Estado en la economía mexicana. Retrospección y prospectiva	71
<i>Arturo Guillén Romo</i> Alternativas para la reactivación de la economía mexicana	103
<i>Gerardo de la Fuente Lora</i> Mercado: encerrados en el presente	133
<i>Fernando Antonio Noriega Ureña</i> Financiamiento del desarrollo: las perspectivas de la crítica frente al futuro inmediato de la economía mexicana	147
<i>José A. Alonso</i> Las nuevas microindustrias en América Latina, herramientas de la contrarrevolución neoliberal	175
<b>Resúmenes / Abstracts / Resumés</b>	201
<b>HOMENAJE AL MAESTRO JESÚS SILVA HERZOG</b>	
<i>Alicia Girón González</i>	209
<i>Fernando Curiel Defossé</i>	211
<i>Magda Silva Herzog</i>	215
<i>Ana I. Mariño</i>	217
<b>TESTIMONIOS</b>	
<i>Ricardo Torres Gaitán</i>	229
<i>Fernando Carmona de la Peña</i>	243
<i>María Teresa Aguirre</i>	253
<i>Alejandro Hernández y Lisbeth Patricia Mota</i>	265
<b>LIBROS</b>	273

# VOICES of Mexico

## Dear Reader,

Now we want to listen to your voice.

We would like to know what you think about us. Answering this brief questionnaire will give us more information on your interests and tastes and help us improve the quality of the magazine. We are counting on you, so we hope to receive your response as soon as possible.

1. Sex  F  M

2. Age \_\_\_\_\_

3. Nationality \_\_\_\_\_

4. Place of residence \_\_\_\_\_

5. Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

6. How often do you visit Mexico? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Educational Level:

a) high school

b) college

c) post graduate

8. How did you find out about our magazine? \_\_\_\_\_

a) restaurant

b) museum

c) bookstore

d) book fair

e) friend

f) library

g) shopping center

other \_\_\_\_\_

9. In what country? \_\_\_\_\_

10. What kind of articles do you enjoy most in *Voices*?

a) culture

b) politics

c) ecology

d) economics

e) art & literature

f) other

11. What kind of articles would you like to see in *Voices of Mexico*?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. Any suggestions you may have will be welcomed.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*In an initial wave of  
intensity, the design  
intoxicates the eyes.*

*With patient  
observation one  
perceives something  
beyond color.*

*Gradually, taste  
assumes its place and  
remains with us forever.*

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