

Voices of Mexico

MEXICAN PERSPECTIVES ON CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

Fleeting
Shadows

CISAN • UNAM

After liberalism

Mexico's position on the
Non-Proliferation Treaty

Chicana writers



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Cover: Carmen Parra, *Monarch Butterflies*, 1993.

Photos of "Where the stelae speak" (issue 31) were taken by Antimio Cruz.

Our voice

In this issue, we discuss some interesting repercussions of the Mexican economic crisis. Victor Rodríguez-Padilla and Rosío Vargas analyze Pemex's perspectives for transformation, highlighting the issues of Mexico's petroleum sovereignty and U.S. energy policy toward Mexico. Emilio Zebadúa examines the politization of Mexico's economic policy which was prompted by the recent change in government, the devaluation of the peso and the economic crisis. Finally, Mary Schneider Enriquez describes the efforts of Mexican society to maintain the vitality and persistence of its art given the scarcity of resources caused by the country's economic crisis.

We also present topics related to bilateral relations between Mexico and the United States. Mónica Vereá analyzes the renewed activism of the Mexican government's foreign policy through the strengthening of links with Mexican communities abroad, which has permitted new forms of lobbying for Mexican interests and in defense of human and labor rights.

Bernardo Méndez explains how Proposition 187 may affect the education of 40,000 students of Mexican origin, worsening the already depressed socioeconomic conditions characterized by poverty and a low level of education.

Claire Joysmith studies the efforts of Chicana writers to restore and redefine their identity through the "reevaluation" of Mexican traditions transmitted by the family.

Regarding the changing situation in North America, Joshua Cohen and Joel Rogers suggest measures to increase the active participation of citizens in the democratic process of the United



States, with the aim of defending social benefits, environmental and worker protection programs, to compensate for the support given to corporations as a result of the agenda of a resurgent Republican Party.

We reprint the document "Mexico's position on the Non-Proliferation Treaty," which was presented by Mexico's Chancellor, José Angel Gurria, to the International Conference on this theme of vital importance to humanity. The conference was held in New York on April 18, 1995.

Jorge Madrazo examines the problems and accomplishments observed during the first five years of the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) in Mexico, as well as perspectives for its protection. He analyzes the scope, limitations and jurisprudence of the CNDH within the framework of the country's institutions of justice and their procedures.

On the subject of the cultural splendor of Mexico, Mónica Ching relates the history of the paradisiacal Chapultepec Forest, which is essential to Mexico City's identity.

Chapultepec was a sacred place, a military fortress and government center. It houses the Castle built by Maximilian, the presidential residence Los Pinos, a spacious public park, seven first-class museums and the National Auditorium.

James Olsen writes about five majestic Franciscan missions established in the 18th century. Today these same missions continue to provide social services to the communities of Sierra Gorda. Alberto Ruy Sánchez writes of the artistic wealth of Mexican painters from the state

of Jalisco, who include important figures such as Dr. Atl and José Clemente Orozco.

John Mitchell tells the story of the assassination of Leon Trotsky in his Mexico City house, now converted into a museum.

On a different subject, Anthony Stanton presents an interesting review of Octavio Paz' book on the life and work of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in the context of New Spain's society of the 17th century.

We also review the book by Helen Delpar which contains a complete and detailed biographical dictionary of the intense and productive cultural relations between vanguard artists and intellectuals of Mexico and the United States, between 1920 and 1935. These personalities include Diego Rivera, Rufino Tamayo, John Dos Passos and Ernest Gruening.

We pay homage to the memory of Benita Galeana, the untiring fighter for social justice, and we present the eloquent speech by Octavio Paz to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the death of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Finally, Fernando Ortiz Monasterio and Eduardo Matos Moctezuma tell of the marvelous phenomena of the metamorphosis and migration of the monarch butterfly which travels about 3,000 miles between Canada, the United States and Mexico. The monarch has inspired the artistic work of Carmen Parra. The prodigious migration shows us that the North American Free Trade Agreement has existed since time immemorial for the infinite miracles of nature. ❧

Hugo B. Margáin
Editorial Director.

The oil agenda at the end of the 20th century

*Víctor Rodríguez-Padilla**
*Rosío Vargas***

Rogelio Cuellar.



Sovereignty over resources

The exercise of sovereignty, by whatever means it judges suitable to its particular circumstances, is the inalienable right of every government to make decisions within its boundaries. Sovereignty in the field of natural resources means effective control over these resources and their exploitation. In the case of hydrocarbons, the Mexican state has exercised this right constitutionally, by awarding itself exclusive and complete ownership of oil and gas found within the nation's territory, both in the subsoil and at surface level; the exclusive right to carry out all activities related to said products; and decisions relating to the regulation and planning of these activities.

Until the early 1980s, Mexico and many other producer countries tended to equate the principle of sovereignty with that of autarchy, confusing sovereignty with nationalism. At that time the oil industry was the responsibility of the state, which took charge of everything having to do, directly or indirectly, with hydrocarbons.¹ In the '90s this schema has become unsustainable, for a series of reasons:

1. The result of management based on short-term political criteria and objectives has brought decapitalization, inefficiency, low productivity and loss of technical and economic control over the petroleum chain. Serious problems have been caused by not taking into account the fact that oil is an international, high-risk,

¹ Víctor Rodríguez-Padilla, "Sovereignty Over Petroleum Resources: The End of an Era?", *Energy Studies Review*, Vol. 3, No. 2, October 1991.

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** Researcher at the Center for Research on North America (CISAN), UNAM.

capital-intensive industry which matures over the long term.

2. The new two-headed structure of the international oil industry, in which producer countries control production and commercialization while multinationals have majority control over transport, refining and distribution, makes it imperative to consider the interdependence linking the two groups.

3. The global context of a retreat by government in favor of the private sector, bringing with it the disincorporation and privatization of government economic activities.

4. The opening up of trade (joining GATT), the formation of economic blocs (such as that of North America with the signing of NAFTA) and the massive acceptance of foreign capital (Mexico's new investment law is one example) are measures which exercise pressure for freeing up investment and trade in the hydrocarbon sector, as well as for a growing integration of the local and foreign oil industries.

Five key, interrelated points make up the oil agenda for the end of this century: sovereignty over resources, Pemex's link to the state, the relation of Pemex to the private sector, participation in the world market and U.S. energy policy towards Mexico.

The current world-wide tendency is to separate the tasks of regulation on the one hand from property in resources and the exercise of productive activities on the other. The latter are left in the hands of the private sector and the former in those of the state.²

Due to considerations of an economic, financial, commercial, political, ideological and geo-economic nature, Mexico is on the road to a different solution, one better fitted to its present situation and to the specifics of

the Mexican petroleum industry. The principle of this solution is that the best way to exercise sovereignty to the fullest is by conserving:

Exclusive and complete ownership of hydrocarbons in the subsoil. This means excluding risk contracts *stricto sensu* and service contracts with access to production, in which payment for services rendered is made in kind, providing the contractor with property rights over oil and gas *in situ*, directly in the first case and indirectly in the second. Nevertheless, the possibility of making other "arrangements" satisfying the interests of both parties is not excluded.

*A monopoly of essential activities under Pemex's responsibility.*³ This implies, on the one hand, defining which activities are considered to be essential and, on the other, granting the state company broad autonomy for defining and implementing a strategy allowing it to fulfill the tasks assigned to it by the nation, with the means it considers necessary, including associations with the private sector (for more effective, efficient and less costly operation), so long as this does not compromise present and future production.

Regulation of oil-related activities. This is through an ad hoc regulatory commission.

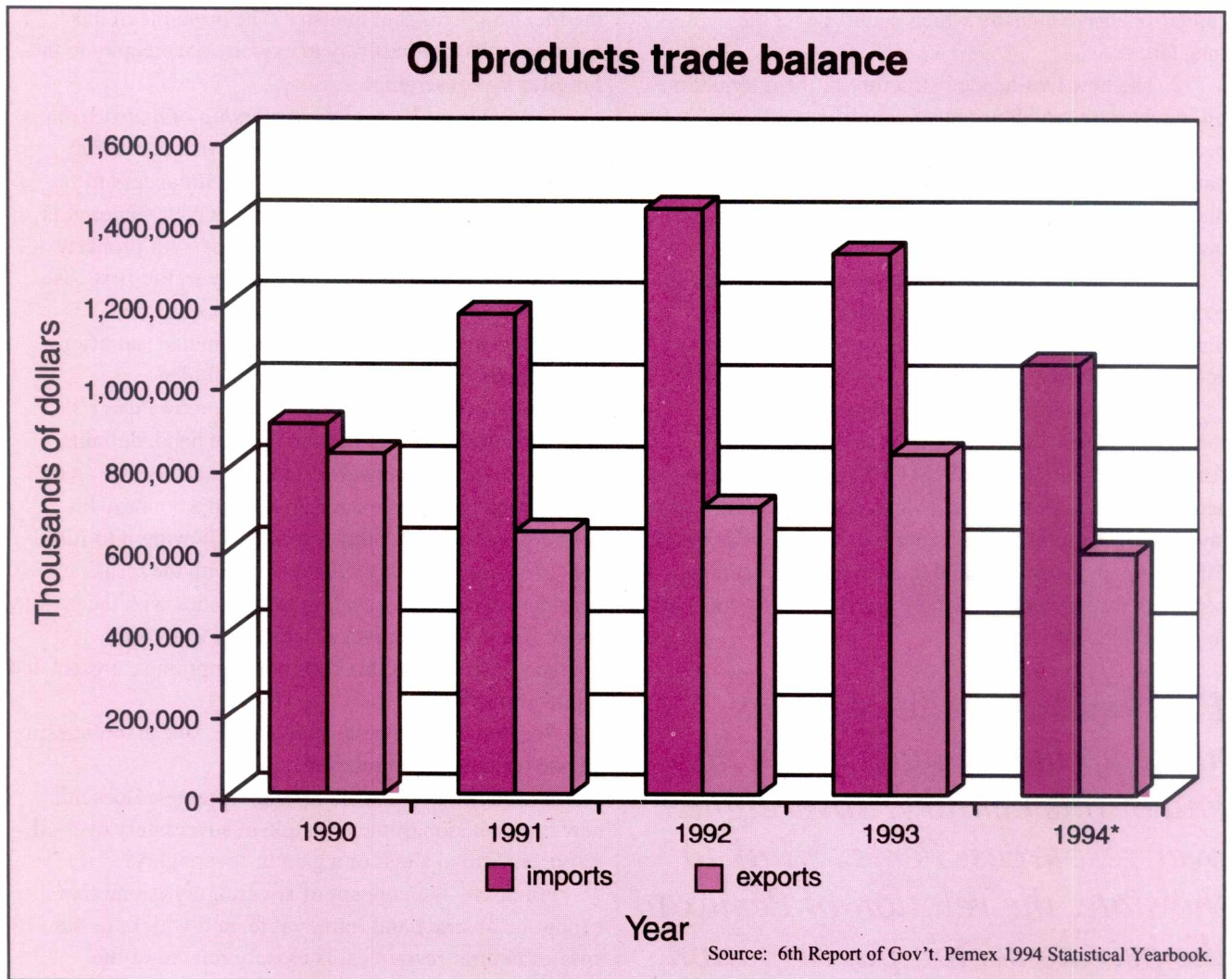
At this point it is worth asking ourselves: Does this new interpretation of the principle of sovereignty over oil resources lead to a loss or a gain in sovereignty?

For some, the concept of sovereignty is one that cannot be abstract and immovable, and which, in the case of natural resources, is closely related to the "national project" to which one aspires. The strategy for advancing towards the fulfillment of that project, realistically and objectively, requires a coherent and consistent interpretation of sovereignty. This would therefore be defined according to context, circumstances, the relation of forces and the dominant ideology.

This pragmatic interpretation is refuted by those who consider that the notion of sovereignty has a precise meaning: being able to make decisions and take action freely and autonomously, without the resulting decisions and acts affecting, sooner or later, the future power to decide and act. Thus, from this perspective, managing the oil industry according to exclusively commercial objectives and criteria is incompatible with sovereignty. For example, granting long-term guaranteed supply contracts, within the framework of a strategic alliance, is an act which limits sovereignty, since such a decision "ties up" that part of production which is committed to such contracts, and the

² Ascher William, "Survey of Issues in Government Policy and Public Management of State Oil and Mining Companies in Developing Countries," *Natural Resources Forum* 18 (1), 1994, pp. 3-11.

³ Pemex is *Petróleos Mexicanos*, Mexico's state oil company.



government is not free to use that portion at its convenience. This is the case even if such contracts involve a secure buyer and an acceptable economic return on the exported product. The state loses the possibility of selling hydrocarbons to whomever, for economic, political or geostrategic reasons, it chooses to sell to, and the sovereignty which was to be protected is thereby diminished.

The state's relation to Pemex

In the drive to achieve higher levels of productivity and technical, administrative and operational efficiency, Pemex has carried out spectacular changes, making the shift from a "closed" growth model to an "open" one. These changes have included streamlining the company, operating along business lines, modernization of its administration and industrial programs, heightened fuel

quality and the incorporation of environmental protection measures.⁴

Nevertheless, it is still not a modern enterprise with the ability to participate efficiently in an ever more competitive world market, promptly fulfill its responsibilities, face challenges nor take advantage of the opportunities it encounters. The result is a certain degree of vulnerability vis à vis other players on the international oil stage, since up to the present its relation to the government has remained substantially unchanged.

Despite its restructuring, the state company continues to be managed in line with non-business objectives, and continues to serve as the

⁴ See F. Colmenares, *Pemex: crisis y reestructuración*, Mexico City, UNAM, 1991; and H. Leos, *Origen y naturaleza de la modernización de Petróleos Mexicanos*, Mexico City, UNAM, 1993.

indispensable, fundamental instrument for dealing with macroeconomic imbalances. Its financial and administrative autonomy is quite limited, as is the openness of its decision-making; its fiscal burden—albeit improved—is unstable and inefficient from an economic standpoint; and key decisions and personnel appointments are the prerogative of Mexico's president.⁵

The government's objectives with regard to petroleum—objectives to which Pemex is subordinated—are counterposed in a number of ways. Among them are to respect the Constitution, renew reserves and production capacity, face up to increasing technical costs, maintain export-generated profits, satisfy internal demand, provide the national treasury with substantial resources, keep the hydrocarbon sector under control, provide an opening to the private sector, maximize the price of petroleum sold on the world market, preserve the environment, etc. In light of the situation, it is urgent and fundamental to establish priorities.

Today, the most important task is to redefine Pemex's relation to the state, especially in terms of the role each will play in designing and carrying out oil policy and long-range strategic planning.

The central objective of this new relationship must be to allow Pemex to operate as a business with the following characteristics:

- *Autonomy.* With the freedom and ability to make economic, financial, commercial and technological decisions without interventionism and without being conditioned by the government's political commitments and objectives.
- *Modernity.* So it can act efficiently and productively, broaden technical and economic

control over the oil and gas chain, and be highly competitive.

- *A solid presence abroad.* So it will remain part of the world oil industry long after Mexico's reserves have run out, and carry out profitable business for the nation's benefit.

In line with these conceptions, the state must focus exclusively on defining oil policy and seeing that it is followed: regulating the activities of the national company and its partners, supporting Pemex's international strategy, and applying a fiscal regime that strikes a balance between the principles of economic efficiency and political acceptability. This means, in the first place, that the fiscal regime be applicable, equitable and neutral; and secondly, that it reflect the role petroleum policy is projected to play within overall



⁵ V. Rodríguez-Padilla, "Les sociétés nationales et la modernisation du régime fiscal dans les pays exportateurs d'hydrocarbures," *Économies et Sociétés*. Cahiers de l'Ismea, Série l'Économie de l'Énergie (6), September 1994.

economic policy, without the company becoming, in practice, an appendage of the Treasury as it has been until now.

Pemex and the private sector

Foreign companies' resources and experience can be put to work for Pemex's benefit, helping fill its considerable needs on the financial, technological, industrial, administrative and commercial levels.⁶ Contractual and financial modalities exist which can facilitate this cooperation without a loss of ownership over geological assets. This would, however, not be the case with regard to industrial assets, which from now on are to be shared.

Among these modalities are service contracts, which can cover all oil activities, from geological surveys through product distribution; contracts for facilities rental; financial participation in refining abroad; and strategic alliances for joint action throughout the

⁶ B. Bourgeois, "Les relations entre compagnies pétrolières nationales et internationales: des accords contractuels aux relations de coopération?", international IEPE/CGEP seminar, *L'avenir des sociétés nationales des pays exportateurs d'hydrocarbures*, Paris, May 26-27, 1994.

petroleum chain. The breadth and time-frames for establishing associations are key and should be the object of serious, deep-going study.

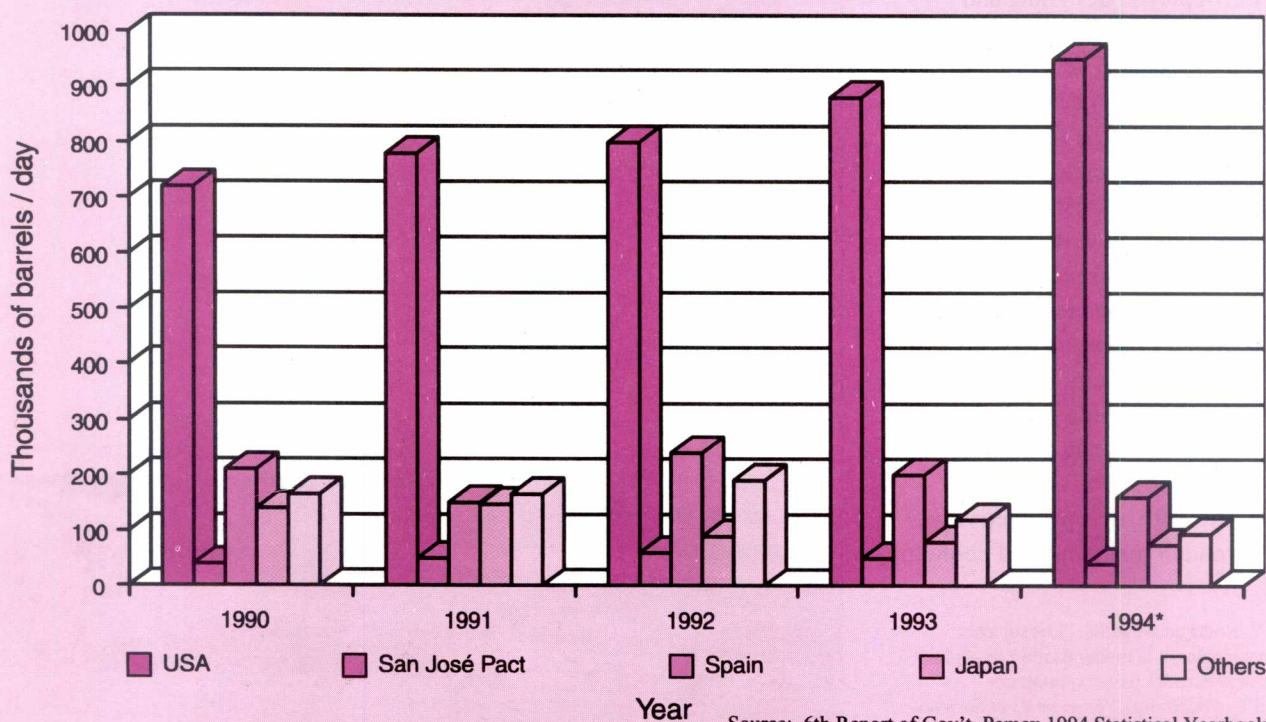
Well-designed strategic alliances could allow the national company to ensure commercialization and, above all, to improve its technical and economic grasp of the petroleum chain. These alliances, above and beyond simple risk and service contracts, could—under certain circumstances—be the solution to decapitalization, technological lags and Pemex's technical and administrative inefficiency.⁷

Nevertheless, these accords are subject to negotiations in which each party must look out for its own interests, in addition to having important political repercussions which should be very carefully weighed. We should not let ourselves be swayed either by the siren songs of those who describe the enormous benefits to be had with the entry of foreign companies,⁸ nor by the

⁷ V. Rodríguez-Padilla, "Las nuevas formas contractuales en la industria petrolera internacional: contratos de servicio o de riesgo?", *El Financiero*, February 8 and 16, 1994.

⁸ G. Baker, "Tax Consequences of the Unthinkable: U.S. Oil Companies as Pemex, Upstream Partners?", *Mexico Policy News*, No. 9, Fall, 1993.

Oil exports by geographic destination



Source: 6th Report of Gov't. Pemex 1994 Statistical Yearbook.

catastrophic scenarios prophesying massive imports if such entry is not accepted.

Participation in the world market

Oil-exporting countries have very diverse objectives in the economic, ideological, social, political and military fields. If we add to this their different economic, demographic and geological characteristics, we get multiple—and even counterposed—development models and oil pricing strategies. Nevertheless, all these countries share the same need and demand: maintaining world market stability.⁹

⁹ A. Ayoub, "Rente pétrolière et développement économique dans les pays arabes producteurs de pétrole," *La Revue de l'Énergie*, No. 451, 1993.

Since 1982, when the oil market became a "buyers' market," OPEC has been experiencing the uncertainties and instability of an "impossible cartel." Its chronic instability has produced similar effects everywhere, convincing all and sundry of the need to work towards a stable market based on three conditions:

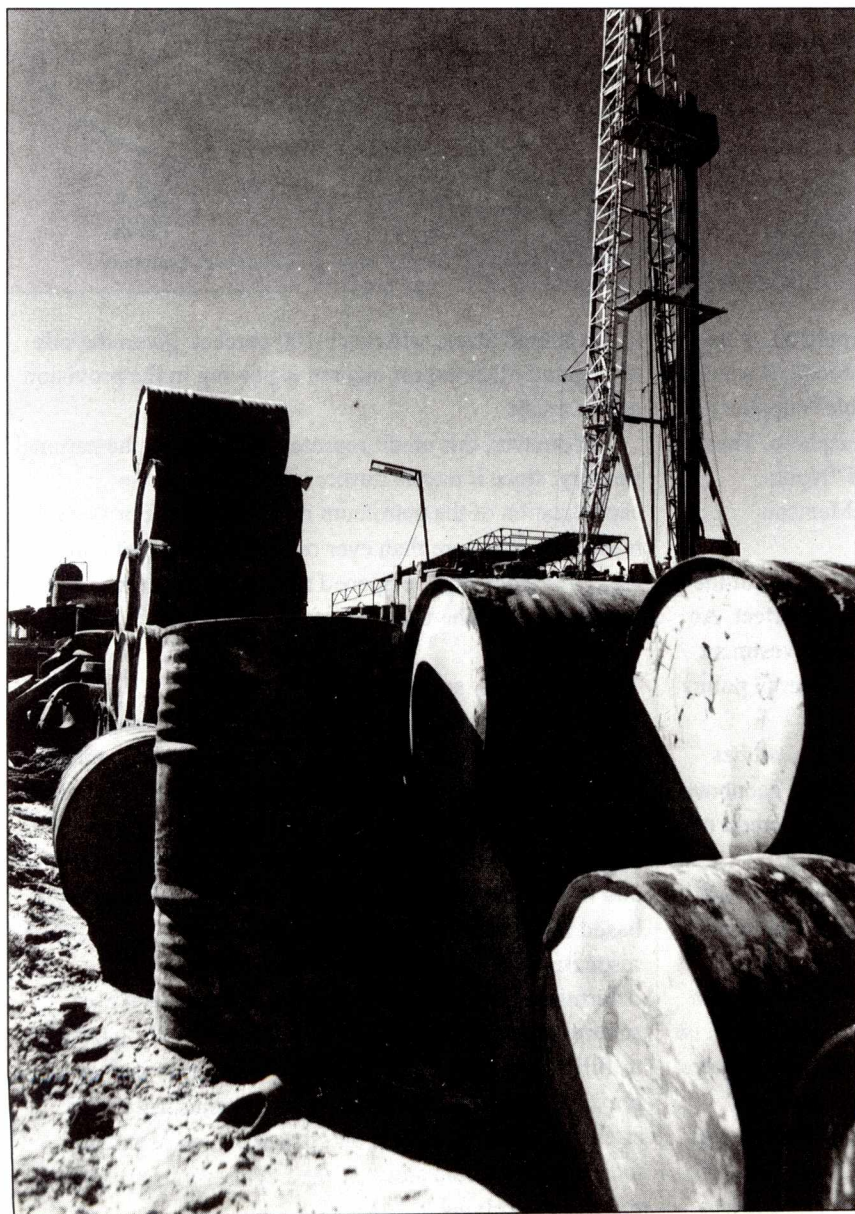
1. Returning to a certain form of vertical integration.
2. Taking into account the structural changes that have occurred since that time, with a recognition of the interdependence among producer countries, companies and consumer countries.
3. Designing and putting into effect new forms of "upstream" and "downstream" cooperation.

Mexico must define the role for which it is most suited and which it can play in the restructuring and integration of the international petroleum industry. Right now, what is required is a reformulation of export policy. To increase sales volume—for conjunctural budgetary reasons—when there is a situation of overproduction in no way contributes to market stability; on the contrary, this accelerates the exploitation of reserves. On the other hand, to sacrifice short-term profits in favor of longer-range benefits is to think of future generations.

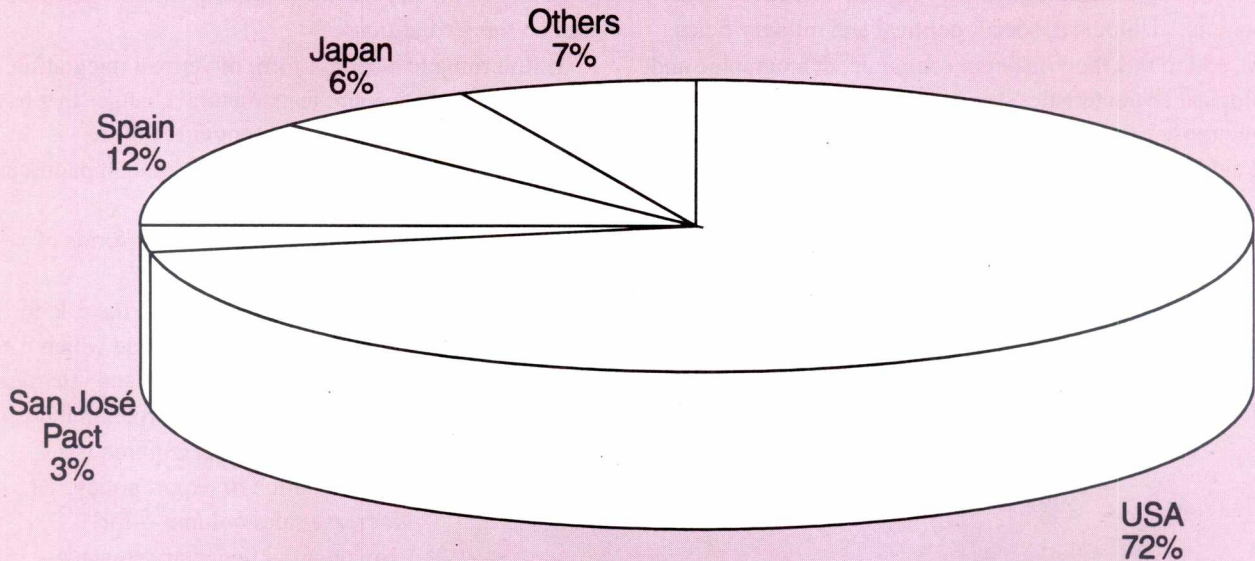
U.S. energy policy towards Mexico

Two key aspects will have to be analyzed over the course of the rest of this decade.¹⁰ In the first place, the pressures on the Clinton administration to take on a more active role in questions related to the environment, security and income distribution. Belief in an unavoidable and growing dependence on the producer countries of the Persian Gulf has led some specialists and officials to pressure the White House to see that the objective of energy security is not left solely to

¹⁰ R. Vargas and V. Rodríguez-Padilla, "El mercado petrolero internacional y la seguridad energética estadounidense," *El Financiero*, June 9 and 20, 1994.



Percentile distribution of exports by geographic destination 1994



Source: 6th Report of Gov't. Pemex 1994 Statistical Yearbook.

market forces. The policy to be followed would be, at the domestic level, greater energy efficiency; abroad, it would involve strengthening production by "reliable" suppliers, above all those located in the Western Hemisphere. Thus it is not surprising that there is already talk of "North American oil reserves," most of which are Mexican reserves.

The other pertinent aspect will be the evolution of the regional energy market since NAFTA went into effect. An important part is played in this regard by both investment trade flows and the reformulation of national energy policy by Mexico, the United States and Canada.

In light of the 1995 Mexican financial crisis, oil has once again taken on a leading role in the national economy. As in the '80s, oil has become the collateral for a credit on the order of 20 billion dollars, granted by the U.S. executive branch, so that Mexico can restructure its short-term debt with this credit's backing. Only this time, the conditions are much harsher and give a glimpse of the terms of the future relationship with the U.S. The 7 billion dollars which Pemex obtains annually from oil sales will be deposited in a Bank of Mexico account at the United States Federal Reserve (the "Fed"), with the evident goal of guaranteeing payment on the credits. If the prior prognosis was that by late 1995, 80 percent of total oil sales would be concentrated in the U.S. market, it now looks like exports

to the United States will reach 100 percent, given the role of guarantor that export income is playing in the provision of this credit.

Moreover, this credit represents a drain on the national treasury, since it means further restrictions on the capitalization of the petroleum industry itself. For these reasons, today more than ever one can expect that many areas of Pemex will be opened to direct foreign investment, especially from the United States.

Towards a new social contract in oil

It is urgently necessary to work out a new social contract with regard to oil, establishing that the income generated by this finite, non-renewable resource should be directed solely towards raising the population's living standards. It is likewise necessary to redefine the goals of oil policy and to design a suitable, effective, open and consensus-based long-term strategy. Suitable, in terms of respecting and strengthening the principle of self-determination, national interests and independence, sovereignty and security; effective, so it will be possible to fulfill the objectives established; open, in order to prevent changing situations from determining its interpretation; and based on consensus, so Mexican society will be conscious of the expectations, challenges and risks involved. ❖

Everything in its own time: the political consequences of Mexico's devaluation

*Emilio Zebadúa**

A bitter struggle is currently being waged in Mexico to determine precisely who is responsible for...the devaluation of the Mexican peso.

As a result of this dispute both ex-President Carlos Salinas de Gortari (who left his post on November 30, 1994) and his successor, the current President of the Republic, Ernesto Zedillo, have been forced to participate openly in the discussion of a subject which—until recently—was kept secret from the public: the management of public finances.

The main point of debate revolves around what was done (or not done) in the critical period during the transfer of power—from August 21, 1994, the date of the presidential elections, until December 1, when Zedillo took over the presidency. Historically and practically, this period of transition between one administration and another presented a logical opportunity to carry out whatever adjustments were deemed necessary, in strictly economic if not political terms.

On previous occasions, the transition period was characterized by the outgoing president's gradual transfer of real, if not formal, power to his successor, who would begin to take control over fundamental government affairs even before the changeover. Of course, this also happens in other countries, with different political systems, and has regularly occurred here in an almost cyclical manner at the end of previous presidential terms.

However, in 1994 Mexico, and at the end of the six-year presidential term of Carlos Salinas, things turned out to be very different. The transfer of power did not occur until the very last moment; and when it did, the new government team—which sought to assure the Mexican public and foreign investors that there would be that "continuity with stability" promised in Zedillo's electoral platform—found itself deprived of the tools it needed in order to maneuver in a very delicate situation. Its inability to provide short-term solutions to the market's demands for exchange-rate stability provoked the abrupt fall of Mexico's currency only a few days after the transfer of power.

By December, the peso was in an extremely vulnerable position. The persistent uncertainty plaguing the markets in the months leading up to the August presidential elections

* Professor at El Colegio de México. Doctorate in political science from Harvard University. His most recent book is *Banqueros y revolucionarios* (Bankers and Revolutionaries).

**General Office for Economic Affairs
Secretariat of Foreign Relations**

First results of the Program for Overcoming the Economic Emergency of 1995

**External Sector
Trade balance.**

Over the first two months of 1995, preliminary trade-balance indicators showed the following:

Table 1

HEADING	JAN-FEB 94*	JAN-FEB 95*	%**
Trade balance	-2,967	-78	-97.4
Exports	8,621	11,320	31.3
-petroleum	987	1,335	35.3
-non-petroleum	7,634	9,985	30.8
-manufactures	6,930	8,766	26.5
Imports	11,588	11,398	-1.6
-consumer goods	1,290	1,028	-20.3
-intermediate goods	8,352	8,826	5.7
-capital goods	1,946	1,544	-20.7

* millions of dollars

** percentage growth in comparison with the same period in 1994

had led to erratic behavior in the Stock Exchange throughout the presidential campaign period. The March 1994 assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the original presidential candidate of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI, the official government party), caused an immediate fall, of around 30 per cent, in the level of the Banco de México's international reserves—which turned out to be a warning of things to come.

Yet of even greater long-term significance, particularly in terms of the eventual fate of the Mexican peso, Colosio's death also brought a substantial modification in the way monetary policy was handled by the Salinas government.

The Banco de México's easing up on public credit, together with the announcement that an emergency credit package of about 6 billion dollars had been made available by the United States Treasury Department, then headed by Lloyd Bentsen, temporarily headed off the need to change the peso/dollar exchange rate.

The increase in internal credit prevented a recession, whose adverse effects during a presidential election could have derailed the smooth transition on which both

the PRI and investors had placed their bets. But international reserves continued to fall, reaching a low point in late 1994, although at the same time interest rates remained relatively low and—most importantly—the economy grew by over 3 percent that year. The PRI candidate, Ernesto Zedillo, won the election and President Salinas' strategy for the last year of his term was successful.

In fact, the *financial* aspect of the government's strategy for bringing the Salinas administration to a happy conclusion was based centrally on maintaining the peso's value, within a margin which had previously and repeatedly been worked out with Mexico's key economic sectors and—less formally but no less crucially in practice—with international investors as well.

"The Pact," which was created as an ad hoc institution in late 1987 during Miguel de la Madrid's presidency, brought together the leaders of the most important trade unions and business associations. Over time it became the government's main tool for making and carrying out macroeconomic policy. Periodic agreements were reached within the framework of

the Pact regarding salaries, prices and exchange rates —most recently, after the elections of August 21, 1994.

Even after its electoral victory, the government was forced to respond to financial markets' increasing worries about the perception that the peso would be subjected to more pressure at the end of Salinas' term. The official response, which had the backing of president-elect Ernesto Zedillo and his economic team, was to again confirm, during two successive meetings of the Pact (held during the months of September and November, 1994) that "the peso will not be devalued." Zedillo himself was present at the second of these Pact meetings.

The message sent to the markets was clear and unequivocal. The Mexican government's macroeconomic policy would not be modified on the eve of the change in administrations. Even one of the most outspoken economic analysts, David Malpass of Bear Stearns & Co., overconfidently distributed a document which would later turn out to be highly counterproductive, an analysis assuring his clients and subscribers of "15 reasons why the peso will not be devalued." He went so far as to put forward an additional "5 reasons why the peso may strengthen."

"Bottom line: No devaluation. Period," said Malpass and countless other analysts like him. When Legal Research International's Christopher Whalen wrote in *The International Economy* (January 1993) that the peso would be devalued in the near future, high-level criticism (and pressure on the magazine's editors) were not long in coming. There was an extremely broad

consensus on the Mexican peso's stability, come what might, until December 1994. Criticism, or even recommendations for alternate policies, were for all intents and purposes excluded.

However, it should be remembered that this consensus was based not only on the enormous credibility of President Salinas' economic team, headed by Finance Minister Pedro Aspe, but fundamentally on a fiscal and monetary policy which, until Colosio's death, had as its main goal the maintenance of the overvalued (and stable) exchange rate between the peso and the dollar.

To achieve this, the government promoted an additional measure which —on top of two renewals of the Pact, Zedillo's agreement to the continuity of Salinas' policies and the fall in international reserves— would allow the peso to maintain its value throughout President Salinas' last year, but would become the specter haunting the current administration. This measure was the growing emission of Treasury bonds, a financial instrument which minimizes exchange-rate risk to bond holders.

During the election campaign, the Salinas government committed itself to covering up to 30 billion dollars in Treasury bonds which, once in the hands of Mexican and foreign investors, became a short-term debt for the Zedillo government. The new president, who holds a doctorate in economics from Yale University, now argues that "I was not aware of the problem represented by the Treasury bonds." And the fact is that nothing was to defuse this financial time bomb.

Table 2

HEADING	JAN*	%**	FEB*	%**
Trade balance	-530	63.7	452	-130
Exports	5,698	39.3	5,622	24.0
-petroleum	686	34.3	649	36.4
-non-petroleum	5,012	40.0	4,973	22.6
-manufactures	4,467	35.7	4,299	18.2
Imports	6,228	12.2	5,169	-14.4
-consumer goods	507	-17.7	521	-22.7
-intermediate goods	4,889	22.8	3,937	-9.9
-capital goods	832	-12.9	712	-28.2

* millions of dollars

** percentage growth in comparison with the same period in 1994

Peso-to-dollar exchange rate*		Interest rates	
		Cetes**	TIIP**
November	3.44	13.74	19.29
December	5.00	20.07	28.02
January	6.15	37.73	46.12
February	5.97	41.69	54.02
March	6.80	90.97	74.51

* Monthly average of same day interbank sale exchange rate.

** 28-day instrument; monthly average. (Note: Cetes are treasury certificates; TIIP is the average interbank interest rate.)

Two new reference rates were recently created: the Interbank Balance Interest Rate (TIIE), with a value of 88.5% on March 31, 1995; and the Nafin Rate (TNF), which was 60.16% in April 1995, the first month of its operation.

The peso's stability (within the "flotation band" established by the Pact) was thereby passed along as the former administration's main legacy to its successor. Zedillo himself accepted that this is how it would be. With its participation in the final Pact meeting, and through the communication established among those who would end up holding the key posts in its economic cabinet (Jaime Serra in the Treasury, Guillermo Ortiz in the Secretariat of Communications and Transport and Luis Téllez in the Office of the Presidency), the incoming government assumed responsibility for continuing the economic policies of its predecessor.

Despite what President Zedillo and those close to him now allege, he never had any kind of solid argument (whether political or intellectual) for dissociating himself

from the measures his predecessor took in order to preserve the currency's value within the range established by the last Pact. The "model" seemed successful to all those who had trusted in Salinas; among them, in particular, the person who would become the next President of the Republic.

Moreover, the peso's stability was in the interests both of Zedillo and Salinas, and thus it is clear that Zedillo did not seize any of the numerous opportunities within his grasp, during the August-December transition period, to work out (whether publicly or privately) a campaign aimed at modifying the financial and monetary terms being bequeathed him by Salinas. Innocently or not, the person who most believed in the success of the "model" was Zedillo himself. Now he is its main hostage.

To free himself of this legacy he has recently tried to link ex-President Salinas' loss of prestige among the majority of the country's population to the reasons for the devaluation, initiating, from the halls of government, a debate about the handling of public finances. Thus, in Mexico, economics has been politicized. And all the previous government's efforts to keep economic policy as an island unto itself have now been frustrated by the broad-ranging discussion over the causes of the "error" which led to devaluation.

While the debate between the followers of Salinas and Zedillo has, until now, prevented the working out of a coherent economic strategy which would allow the country to return to international markets and again enjoy growth and stability, the current government contents itself with presiding over one of the severest recessions in the country's modern history. This has been the most serious practical result of the devaluation. And we are still experiencing its consequences. ❧

International Reserves millions of dollars

1994	
October 31	17,242
December	6,148
1995	
January 30	3,483
February 28	8,978
March 24	7,863
June 2	10,438

Challenges and prospects of Mexico's non-jurisdictional human rights protection system

Jorge Madrazo*

Introduction

June 6 of this year marks the fifth anniversary of the National Human Rights Commission. Despite innumerable obstacles and difficulties, these first years allowed the commission to root itself in society and show the first fruits of its humanitarian efforts.

It has not been a simple matter for the [newly created post of] ombudsman to clear a path within the juridical and socio-political context of our country, where national culture regarding the basic rights of man is still incipient and fragile. The consolidation of this culture should have three effects: a) with regard to public servants, the consciousness that their first professional duty is to respect human rights in all their daily activities; b) with regard to the governed, a knowledge of their basic

prerogatives and freedoms as well as the means, resources, agencies and procedures for their defense and protection; and c) with respect to social activists for human rights, a clear understanding that this cause knows no party, ideology or religious creed, and that its defense must be based on humanitarian concerns.

Those of us in the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH, from the initials in Spanish) believe the agency has contributed to the task of strengthening the culture of human rights, along the lines of the three aspects noted above. Almost 40,000 claims have been dealt with in these five years; penal or administrative disciplinary measures have been taken against approximately two thousand public servants; around one thousand recommendations relating to human

rights violations have been made available to public opinion; countless training courses have been given to public servants and authorities.

After five years, the debate on human rights is reflected on a daily basis in the mass media. The term "ombudsman" has ceased to be unpronounceable; the practice of public exposure and active participation has become more extensive and vigorous; there is a growing recognition of the important role played by non-government organizations, as agencies of conscience, and progress has been made in their collaboration with public commissions, as agencies of law for the defense of human rights.

I have stated in the past, and repeat today with renewed conviction, that whoever denies the advances that

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* President of the National Human Rights Commission.

“After five years, the debate on human rights is reflected on a daily basis in the mass media”

have been made is suffering from myopia produced by their lack of information or their political or personal interests; at the same time, whoever makes the specious claim that the battle for human rights has been won is engaging in pure and simple demagoguery.

With the exception of ill-intentioned and over-politicized voices, the overwhelming majority of opinions publicly expressed about the National Human Rights Commission and its counterparts in the different states call not for the abolition of these bodies but, on the contrary, for strengthening their autonomy, extending the scope of their action and making their work more efficient. These criticisms, motivated by good faith and frequently characterized by good sense and veracity, must be discussed publicly and calmly in order to achieve the objectives sought by those who make them.

I will refer below to three aspects which, in my opinion, have been the most significant as well as those most frequently cited in the media: the procedure for designating heads and members of public agencies for human rights protection; possibilities for broadening these agencies' current scope; and the effectiveness their recommendations should carry.

The issue of ombudsman designation

This is a question of the highest importance. As with any procedure for designating a public agency's chief officer(s), the objective is that the selection mechanism make it possible to choose the best-suited, best-trained and most honorable people to fill a given public office. In the case of ombudsmen, moreover, the selection procedure should

guarantee the autonomy, independence and non-partisanship of the agency's chief with regard to actions taken by government powers.

Comparative law records a wide range of procedures which may be followed in designating ombudsmen, which we can classify into three groups: designation by the head of government; designation by parliament; and a mixed procedure involving both the executive and legislative branches. The latter is the one adopted in Article 10 of the Law on the National Human Rights Commission.

There are, of course, no perfect procedures, and each has its pros and cons. As examples, one could cite various cases of exclusively parliamentary designation in which ombudsman selection was the result of political negotiations among parties which included issues having nothing whatsoever to do with the agency itself or the candidates for heading it. It's not unusual for the office of ombudsman to remain vacant for long periods as a result of difficulties caused by negotiations among political parties. In some cases the final choice was a rather unfortunate one.

In the case of the National Human Rights Commission, the nation's president proposes the agency's ombudsman and consultative council, and the Senate approves the choice through simple majority vote. The system has been used on one occasion only for designating a new CNDH president and on two occasions for choosing council members.

Some critics have maintained that the executive branch's intervention in the designation process reduces the institution's working autonomy and independence. Yet this has never been the case. The ombudsman's autonomy

and independence are manifested in his daily work, in receiving and investigating complaints, and in his public pronouncements.

There are several advantages to the president making nominations for approval by a legislative body; first and foremost, that this procedure prevents partisan wheeling and dealing. The final power to approve or reject presidential proposals lies with the legislative branch. In the event of rejection, the chief executive would then have to put forward a new nomination.

In order to maintain the advantages of the mixed system, while broadening the legislature's participation and therefore its commitment, several possibilities present themselves for consideration, among them:

1. That the executive present a list of three candidates, as it does presently in order to fill vacancies in the Supreme Court.
2. That the approval process be transferred from the Senate to the House of Representatives, so that a larger number of legislators may participate in the decision.
3. That regulations be drawn up for the procedures according to which candidates testify before the legislative branch, so that the corresponding debate will be genuinely deep-going and well-informed.

Whatever decision is made by Congress, including that of modifying the procedures specified in Article 10, it must always be kept in mind that the National Human Rights Commission is a technical organ of the law and not a public agency of protest and denunciation, and that the ombudsman's work must necessarily be non-partisan and based on profoundly humanitarian considerations.

Any procedure must guarantee aptitude and the requisite knowledge, experience and ability, impartiality and honesty, autonomy and independence, non-partisanship and humanitarian commitment.

In order to make such a candidate profile possible, the prerequisites set forth in Article 9 of the CNDH law must be perfected.

Limited domain

Article 102, Section B of the Mexican Constitution establishes four limitations to the work of public agencies for the protection and defense of human rights: that they may not infringe on electoral, labor or jurisdictional matters, nor on matters pertaining to the nation's judiciary.

For its part, the June 29, 1992 CNDH law establishes another limit, with regard to "consultations undertaken by authorities, individuals or other entities on the interpretation of constitutional and legal provisions."

These are the five limitations to the ombudsman's work of protecting and defending human rights. Each of them should be analyzed separately, keeping in mind that said limits clearly do not negate the fact that such prerogatives and freedoms are themselves in the nature of profoundly important human rights.

Electoral affairs. In this regard, Article 7 of the law amplifies on what should be understood as electoral matters, solely for the purpose of defining the CNDH's scope, indicating that what is involved here are the actions and resolutions of electoral agencies and authorities.

It follows that not all political rights are beyond the competence of the CNDH; only those of a strictly electoral nature.

What the CNDH cannot do in this field is review the functioning and

decisions of electoral agencies and authorities; that is, become an appellate body. To broaden the National Commission's scope to cover such matters would mean politicizing an agency whose functions are instead of a technical nature.

It has long been a commonplace to affirm that our electoral system—that is, the system for the organization, development, oversight and evaluation of electoral processes—needs to progress and perfect itself. It is within the context of this effort that we must approach the defense of the politico-electoral rights of the governed, in order to regulate this task in a precise and unambiguous fashion. Sooner or later, the decision will have to be made as to whether the resolution of electoral conflicts should be a political procedure or, on the contrary, a genuinely jurisdictional process directed by professional judges.

If the decision were made to opt for a political format and modality, it would be inconsistent for the CNDH to devote itself to reviewing decisions based on political considerations, given that, once again, the National Commission is a technical agency.

If the decision were to adopt a fully jurisdictional format and modality, would the judges agree that, in contrast to other jurisdictional organs, their decisions would not have full authority and would moreover be open to annulment, revocation or rectification by a non-jurisdictional agency such as the CNDH? The answer would appear self-evident.

In my view, the key to guiding and resolving this debate lies in legislative work aimed at a deep-going reform of the Mexican electoral system. As important as the CNDH is, it is far from being a panacea for resolving any and all national controversies.

Labor issues. The National Human Rights Commission's original Internal Regulations stated that the CNDH is not competent to deal with "labor conflicts involving an individual or collective controversy between workers and employers, in which this is a matter of jurisdictional competence."

The regulations specified that the agency would have competence in labor conflicts where an administrative authority intervened and there are allegations that individual and social rights were violated.

This differentiation and specification of the agency's scope was deleted in 1992 by the Constitutional Review Board, since the passage of Section B of the Constitution's Article 102 set forward a simple generic exception in terms of labor issues, without the agency's regulations specifying anything in this regard. The regulations note the exception by means of the expression "labor-related conflicts."

This has been another, constant source of criticisms of the CNDH and its counterparts in the various states. A number of points should be made in this connection.

The National Commission would be unable to intervene in any conflict between a worker and an employer when the latter is a private individual, given that in any case private individuals commit not violations of human rights, but crimes.

The issue would thereby present itself only in those cases where the employer is a public authority or public servant and thus capable of violating human rights; and an additional distinction is appropriate here: the question of whether or not the conflict can be resolved jurisdictionally through the conciliation and arbitration boards.

Given that in the labor jurisdictional process workers and employers are on an equal footing and due to the characteristic structure and functions of these specialized tribunals and the existence of attorney general's offices for the defense of federal, state and municipal employees, it may be understandable that such acts are not within ombudsmen's area of competence.

Nevertheless, a valid justification would not seem to exist for the fact that in labor conflicts where the employer is a public servant who carries out actions in his capacity as an authority, and where those acts cannot be redressed through specialized tribunals, citizens whose basic rights may have been violated are left without ombudsman protection.

At the appropriate time, legislators may turn their attention to the original CNDH regulations in order to clarify this issue.

Jurisdictional and federal judicial matters. The ombudsman is not a court of appeals or of last resort with the ability to modify judges' decisions. If the National Commission had that ability it would itself be a juridical "demiurge," a political aberration and an infringement of the fundamental political determination that there be a balance of powers. Thus, Article 102, Section B of the Constitution categorically excludes jurisdictional matters, of whatever nature, from the agency's field of competence.

However, Article 8 of the National Human Rights Commission Law passed by Congress, in specifying the scope of pertinent constitutional precepts, stipulates that the CNDH will only be able to deal with complaints and claims made against acts or omissions by judicial authorities, except those of a federal nature, when said acts or omissions

are of an administrative character, and concludes by reaffirming that the agency may by no means examine issues of a jurisdictional nature.

Three conclusions flow very clearly from this:

1. The CNDH and its counterparts in the states may under no circumstances deal with issues of a jurisdictional character.

2. These public human rights protection and defense institutions

This explanation would certainly appear to be a weak one, given that deviations from the prompt and fair administration of justice may occur at both the state and federal levels.

The 1995 judicial reform which created the Council of the Judiciary, an agency whose powers are solely administrative and non-jurisdictional, may serve as a magnificent aid in deciding between the only two possible scenarios: either it is legally

“The ombudsman is not a court of appeals or of last resort with the ability to modify judges' decisions”

may, however, deal with issues of an administrative nature having to do with the agencies and functionaries of the judicial branch.

3. With regard to the federal judiciary, the National Commission may not deal with jurisdictional affairs, nor with those related to the administration of the federal judicial authority.

In terms of the last item, the states' Superior Judicial Tribunals have stressed the distinction between local and federal judicial authorities, which has led to mistaken interpretations and irritated responses, given that ombudsmen do have competence on questions of form in relation to the local authorities but not in relation to federal judicial institutions.

During the 1992 parliamentary debate leading to the addition of Section B to Article 102 of the Constitution, it was argued that, given that the federal judicial branch is of higher rank since it is charged with interpreting the Constitution, its actions may not be analyzed by the ombudsman, even if these acts are of a purely administrative nature.

established that the Council of the Judiciary will fulfill the functions of a judicial ombudsman, or it is accepted that administrative acts carried out by the federal judicial branch in violation of human rights may be dealt with by the National Ombudsman. Such a decision, which like any other involves both advantages and disadvantages, must be undertaken precisely at this time, when parliamentary work towards the legislative development of the 1995 judicial reform is beginning.

Another problem which many believe has not been totally resolved has to do with being able to specify, with complete clarity, what should be understood as a fundamentally jurisdictional matter and what should be considered a matter related to the administration of the judicial branch, in order to easily determine when an issue does or does not fall within ombudsmen's field of competence.

The National Human Rights Commission's November 12, 1992 Internal Regulations state that the criterion for determining whether an act is jurisdictional or administrative

is based on the specific nature of the given act. If a judicial public servant carried out a juridical evaluation in order to state his decision, then we are dealing with a jurisdictional matter; if he did not do so, the matter is considered to have an administrative character.

Needless to say, this criterion can and must be reviewed and enriched. The specific listing of administrative acts by judicial agencies which may involve the violation of recognized human rights could be a good basis for resolving a controversy which our ombudsmen face daily.

The nature and efficacy of recommendations

Despite the fact that all the ombudsmen existing in the world emit pronouncements which are actually recommendations, and which go by that name, in Mexico, paradoxically, this feature has been the object of the most criticism, with the expressed objective of making these recommendations binding. In order to resolve this paradox we must lay out a series of points.

In the first place one should consider that if a recommendation is binding, that is, if it may be imposed on the authorities in obligatory fashion, it will be anything but a recommendation. In reality, imperative and obligatory measures are the domain of judicial decisions, and it is therefore a question of actions of a jurisdictional nature which, at a given point, become definitive and assume the status of judicial writ. In other words, it would be a question of rulings.

If the National Human Rights Commission were to pronounce obligatory decisions, that is, rulings, it would serve as anything but an ombudsman; in reality it would be a court; and if it were to be a court such

an act of insanity would completely wreck the Mexican Constitution.

It is unquestionable that in order for ombudsmen's recommendations to be fulfilled, what is necessarily required is that the authority receiving these recommendations have the will to fulfill them; that in light of evidence that a human rights violation has been perpetrated, said authority be convinced that this is the case and order an end to the violation, the reparation of damages and punishment of the public servants responsible.

The force of ombudsman recommendations must therefore be sought in factors other than such an impossible coercive power. It lies in the moral authority of the agency making the recommendations; in publicizing their contents; in the agency's ability to create significant currents of public opinion to back them up and move the given authority towards fulfilling them completely; and in the effects that periodic official reports, presented essentially to the chief of state and parliament, should have.

sufficient to note that 52.3% of its recommendations are now considered to have been completely fulfilled.

However, neither does it mean that the CNDH's recommendations are invariably fulfilled rapidly and sufficiently. 43.5% of the recommendations are currently considered partially fulfilled. 21 recommendations out of more than 900 have not been accepted by the authorities to which they were sent. In any case, the National Commission is not satisfied with the results obtained and has made this public on many occasions.

These points of clarification are made here not only in order to clear up the aforementioned paradox but, at the same time, to seek procedures and methods for making the recommendations more effective, without depriving them of their real spirit and juridical nature.

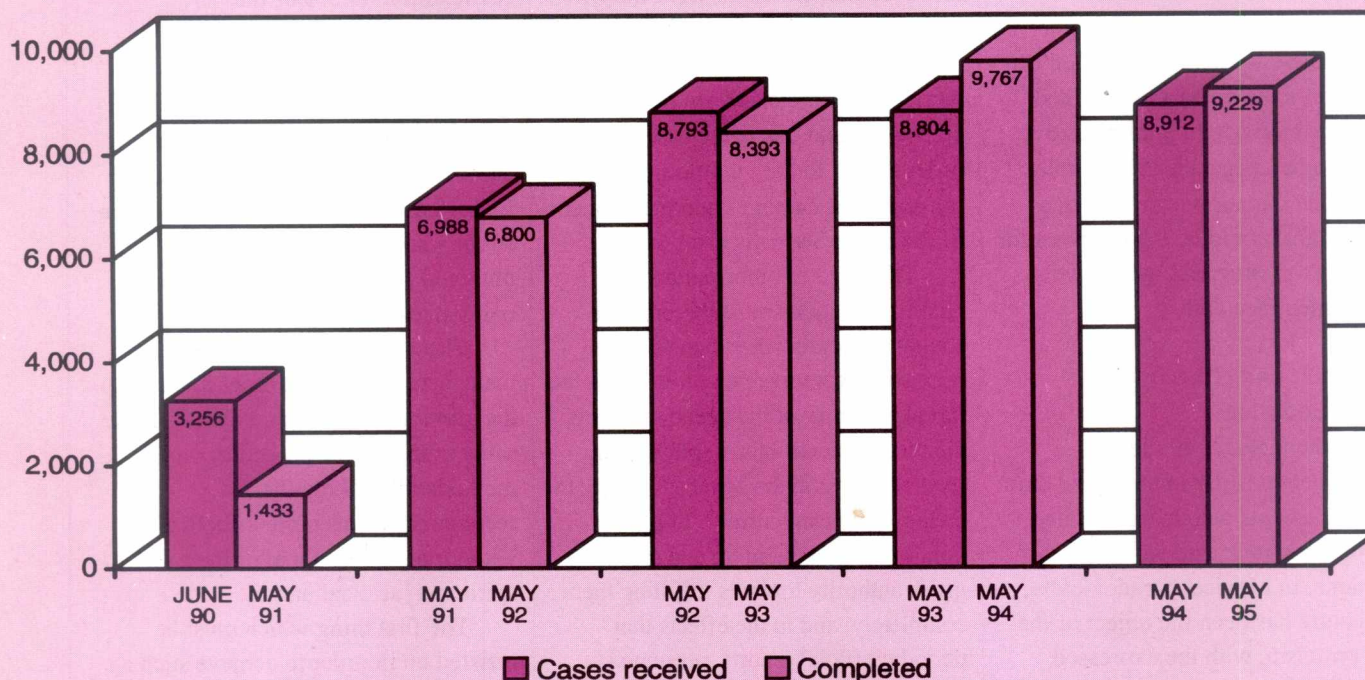
The first thing which must be insisted on in order to achieve such an objective is that the authorities to which the recommendations are sent

“It is unquestionable that in order for ombudsmen's recommendations to be fulfilled, what is necessarily required is that the authority receiving these recommendations have the will to fulfill them”

In Mexico, unfortunately, the indispensable will of the authorities which receive the recommendations has not been extensive enough as to lead to the full and rapid fulfillment of said recommendations. This does not mean that the National Human Rights Commission's recommendations are never fulfilled. In this regard it is

see them not as public acts of censure, but rather as civic exercises in collaboration which help to correct errors, to perfect norms, behavior and attitudes, which seek to prevent impunity and thereby strengthen our state of law. No bureau secretary, no attorney general, no governor should feel personally offended by a

Comparative analysis per year June-May 1990-1995



Since the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH) was founded five years ago, it has received 36,753 complaints. The Commission has completed 35,622; still in process are 1,131 cases. This means that 97% of the cases presented to the Commission have been attended.

recommendation. It is not their agencies' or offices' behavior which is being reproached, but rather that of public servants within those bodies who have disobeyed normative mandates and higher orders. The Human Rights Commissions are not seeking to wound our institutions; on the contrary, we seek to strengthen them so they may efficiently fulfill the functions assigned to them by law.

If this approach to what the recommendations mean remains unchanged in a number of public servants, progress will be much slower and more difficult; but finally, sooner

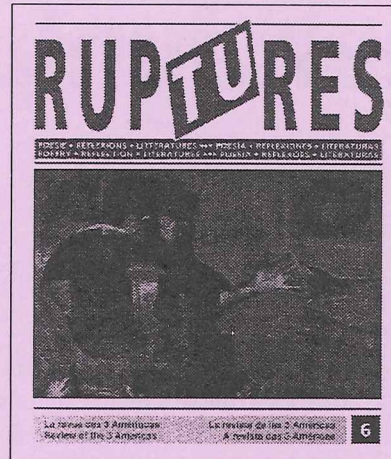
or later, the cause will win out and it is they who will be changed. Full recognition of the dignity of human beings can be halted or interrupted, but it can never be obliterated.

In order for the fulfillment of recommendations to be less cumbersome, quicker and more effective, and while skeptics are being converted to the cause, it is indispensable that legislative bodies, at both the federal and state levels, take on a more active role of supporting the public agencies for the protection and defense of human rights.

It is therefore that I respectfully propose a reform of the basic laws of our country's congresses and legislatures so that, after the respective ombudsmen present their annual reports, the corresponding parliamentary commissions may require the testimony of the recipients of those recommendations which remained unaccepted or were negligently unfulfilled, so they may explain to the people's representatives the reasons for such omissions. On the basis of this testimony, the legislative bodies would take such measures as their sovereignty would determine. ✕

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The five missions of Father Junípero Serra

*James Olsen**

The most remarkable thing about the five missions established by the Franciscans in the 18th century, in the central part of Mexico called the Sierra Gorda, is that they are still alive and well today. More than two hundred years later, these churches are community centers throbbing with births, deaths, marriages and masses, artisans making wool and cotton garments, children playing, people talking, tourists taking pictures, and workmen restoring the churches' facades. The five missions are not museums. Rather they are living, pulsing tableaux, part of the warp and woof of their rich and vibrant physical and social environment.

The man responsible for this incredible achievement was Father Junípero Serra, who was born at Petra on the island of Majorca, in the year 1713. He was a well-educated Franciscan who took his holy orders at the age of 25 and his doctorate in theology at 30. During his doctoral studies, he read about the great Franciscan missionaries and said that he wanted to be like San Francisco Solano, who while walking the length of Peru, Chile and Argentina baptized almost 100,000 natives.

* Staff writer.
Photos by Pastor Ojeda.

When he arrived in Mexico, he was soon sent to the Sierra Gorda region, and for the next 35 years he and his group of ten missionaries devoted themselves to the missions of this region as well as Upper California. The missionaries engaged in direct physical work such as clearing the land, building houses, cisterns, reservoirs and barns. They planted gardens and orchards, raised livestock, and taught the women to spin and weave. In effect they transformed these nomadic tribes into the sedentary agricultural societies that remain there through the present. In addition, of course, in the evenings they taught the message of Christ, the liturgy and singing. Thus they not only founded these five missions, they created communities.

Tancoyol

Start with Tancoyol which, if you are driving in the region, is the furthest away and the best place to begin. The name itself comes from the Huastecan language and means "the source of wild dates." You enter a small town square with shade trees and benches and a fountain in the middle of it all. Then you see a wall with a serrated top and a simple elevated entrance. You go up five stairs and through a wooden gate. You will notice what seems to be a

stone snake on the top of the wall, but may also represent the ceremonial cord of the Franciscan robe, without the knots. The ledges feature two sculptures: one of St. Peter with his keys and the other with St. Paul with his sword. You will also see a placard dated May 1994, which states: "This work was made possible through our ancestors' sacrifice and abnegation."

This church is dedicated to Our Lady of Light and was founded in 1744 by Colonel José Escandón. The Franciscans worked on it for seventeen years. The church was rebuilt later and its front coruscates with angels, saints and shields in high relief. The atrium has a yard embellished with a cross of iron. The lines of the cross repeat the form of the tower's spire. Your eye is drawn to the main altar and its raised pulpit, with two small flanking side altars. The old cracked stone floor is strewn with tinfoil-covered cans containing water.

A mother and daughter enter the church to light a holy candle. A campesino family comes in to pray. Near one of the side altars, a priest is preparing a group of boys and girls in their catechism lessons, to make their First Communion. An old lady in the back is quietly saying her rosary. On the bulletin board there is a notice reading: "Everyone is



Landa de Matamoros.

invited to life's banquet. Let us distribute the fruits and wealth of the earth so that we can all participate in the benefits of creation."

Tilaco

Tilaco is a Nahuatl word for "black water." There are three sections to the frontispiece at Tilaco. At the lower base are pedestals. They support four spiral columns with Corinthian capitals. In the front of these are vaulted niches containing the images of St. Peter and St. Paul. The entrance is semi-circular with two angels framing it. Above them are two cherubs. There are two more sections above.

This church is truly a marvel of 18th-century Baroque architecture.

Indeed, this may be the most beautiful spot in the Sierra Gorda. Certainly the setting is extraordinary, with its church, a convent, an atrium and an open chapel. Near the church entrance are two small confessionals, a worn tile floor and a simple altar with Christ on the cross. The day we were there, singing birds were temporarily trapped inside and one had the sense that time had come to a complete stop...that we had returned to a more tranquil, simpler day in this small, fertile valley.

Across the way there is a grocery store with children buying ices and sodas and people milling around near a bench on the outside. Young adolescent boys and girls are standing

around and quietly talking, and suddenly the church's bells start tolling. The sun is starting to set now and the last light is reflected off the huge, old wooden doors of the church. A boy of about seven comes up to me and says in English, "Hello." He then proceeds to count in English from one to ten. There are still innocent places in the world.

Landa

Landa comes from the Chichimeca word meaning "swampy." The facade of this church, like the others', has three sections and a pinnacle. At the base there are no ornamental features and the main entrance is in the form of a semi-



Tancoyol.



Relief of Franciscan shield, church of San Miguel Arcángel, Concha.



Concha.



Jalpan.



Tancoyol. Facing page: Tilaco.

circular arch over a panel between four Baroque pilasters. Within the arch itself, there are two spiral columns where St. Dominic and St. Francis appear on ledges, each carrying a crusader's banner containing the escutcheon of their orders.

The church at Landa is the largest and perhaps the most profusely decorated of the group. Over the entrance there is a statue of the Virgin Mary, joining her hands in the posture of the Immaculate Conception; under her there are two vases. Above are two playful angels. The facade contains sculptures of the founding fathers Domingo (St. Dominic) and Francisco (St. Francis). Then there are the Franciscan shields, on top of which

sit niches for San Pedro (St. Peter) and San Pablo (St. Paul). The top sculpture on the facade portrays San Miguel dramatically and decisively slaying the Devil. This is a replica of the statue in the Conca mission and the two-part tower is similar to the one at Jalapan.

There is a town park contiguous to the church, with a monument to Benito Juárez. The stonework of both church and park is extraordinary, because flat, round, rough, dull, smooth, shiny, short and long stones are juxtaposed in complex patterns. There is a funeral in progress with a group of perhaps fifty people following the coffin. The crowd has its best clothes on and all carry lit candles as they trod in a long line. A young boy, who has escaped being part of the

funeral procession, breezily rides by on a bike and quickly looks away from the spectacle.

Conca

The smallest of the Serra missions is the church of San Miguel Arcángel de Conca (St. Michael Archangel). The word *conca* itself has several possible etymological origins: from the Nahuatl, meaning "the place where pots are kept," or the Pame word for "with me," or from the Chichimeca for "the place where frogs are found." The portal has a low elliptical arch and on either side are four mixed Doric columns; in the middle are two semi-circular niches with ledges. The one on the left contains a statue of St. Francis, and that on the right a statue of St. Anthony of Padua.



On the facade there is a giant Franciscan shield with crossed arms coming up from the world, that are pierced by a sword and a scepter. The whole is framed with a knotted Franciscan friar's cord. Once again the Devil is being vanquished by Saint Michael, but this Devil is missing a horn. At the apex of the church are three young people talking. They represent the Trinity. The tower has only one section with simple paired columns and semi-circular arches. Some are open while others are blocked. There is also a tiny cupola and a pinnacle. Four of the ten missionaries worked on this mission for seventeen years.

Some children are riding their tricycles while others are playing

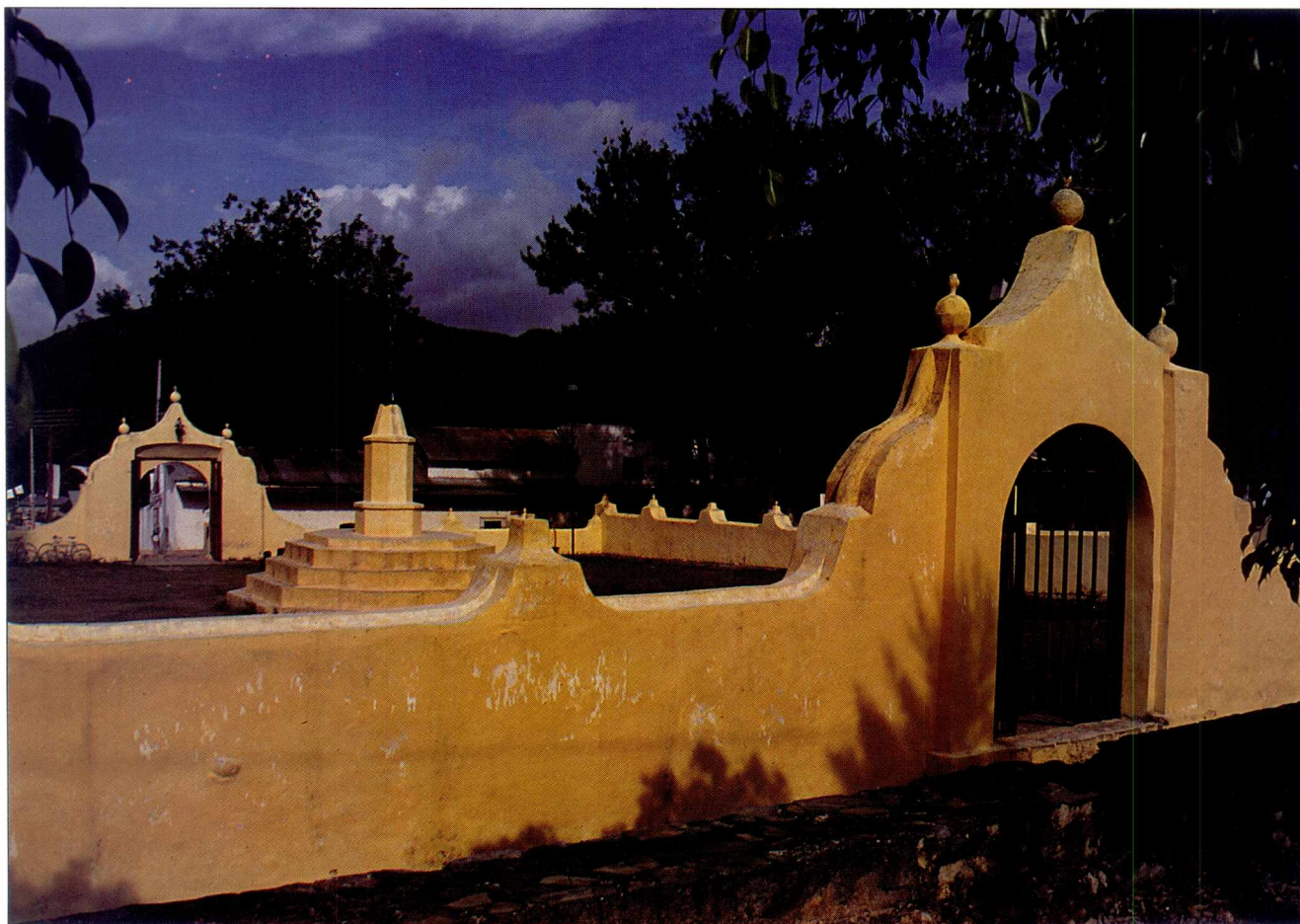
soccer, in the stone courtyard near the seminary attached to the church. Today is Sunday but the mass is over, and the children are gathered around flavored ice vendors near the church. They shave the ice, pour syrup onto it and thrust the cup into eagerly waiting young hands. The restaurant across the street is crowded with people who are drinking coffee. A young girl in the churchyard is getting water from the open tap, and as it fills the orange plastic pail, she allows it to flow through her open hands. She is going to water the flowers. Meanwhile flowers from the altar are being placed in the church's entrance.

The doors to the houses in the village are open today and families are

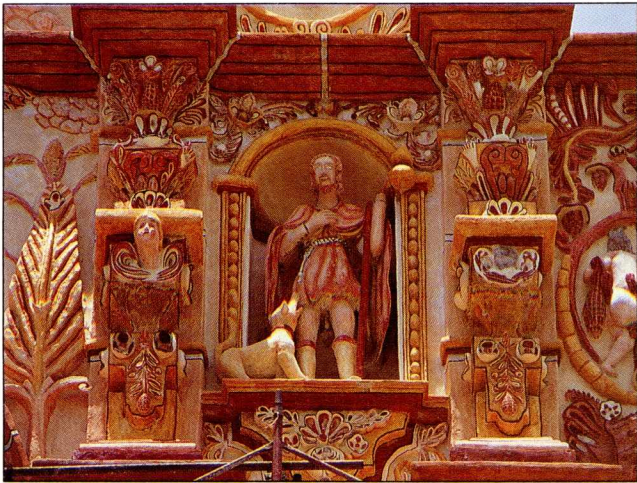
visiting one another. The orange trees are in bloom and the color and light of the day are having a riotous union. Shrill children's shouts rend the calm from time to time. Voices of the few remaining people in the church echo across the stone courtyard.

Jalapan

Jalapan comes from the Nahuatl word meaning "on the sand of the hill." On either side of the entrance on the base of the foundation the Mexican eagle devours the serpent. At the foot of the pilasters above it, there are four pomegranates which is a typical detail of eighteenth century Baroque architecture. The frieze has garlands and flowers and inset above the entrance there is a shell



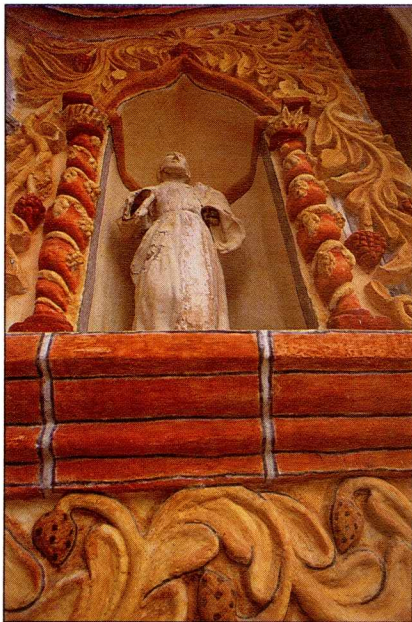
Landa de Matamoros.



Tancoyol.



Jalapan.



Jalapan.



Landa de Matamoros.



Conca.



Tilaco.



Tancoyol.

containing two niches with sculptures of St. Peter and St. Paul. The entrance itself is an escutcheon with five wounds, a symbol for the Franciscan order. Above this shield is another Franciscan coat of arms which shows the crossed arms of Christ and St. Francis. The facade's third section holds a clock which was placed there at the end of the last century.

The church of the apostle Santiago of Jalapan (St. James) was built over an approximately twenty-year period from 1750 to 1770. This church starkly represents the union of the Indian and Spanish cultures in the unique social amalgam called Mexico. Spanish sensibilities and Indian craftsmanship are beautifully conjoined. The church tower has two

parts with semi-circular arches, spiral columns and a polyhedral prismatic pinnacle as the roof, topped with a beautiful wrought-iron cross. To the right is a patio with a fountain enclosed by iron gates.

There is a banner in the church proclaiming: "God is my pastor, he never fails me." Fluorescent lights mar the ambience for me, but Mexicans have a way of taking modern things like that and making them their own. They have an incredible capacity to absorb the new and transmute it, through the alembic of their own culture, into something entirely different. I start thinking about how extraordinary this all is, and how tired yet incredibly exhilarated Father Junípero Serra, this Franciscan born

in Majorca, must have felt as he walked down the mountains to Jalapan. Did he look back toward what he had built? Today we have the heritage of these five 18th-century Baroque missions in what is still an untamed and sparsely populated part of the country.

The day of my visit, government workmen are repairing the facade. I read that the church was completed in 1768 and then repaired in 1895. Now, almost one hundred years later, here they are repairing again. Working within the cultural and intellectual traditions of 16th-century utopian humanism, these friars not only built marvelous churches; they created a whole social reality that as yet has not been destroyed by modernity.

Clearly, Mexico will endure. ✕

Mexican foreign policy's new activism in the U.S.

*Mónica Vereá Campos**

Until a few years ago, the Mexican government's efforts in the United States concentrated almost exclusively on establishing high-quality representation, above all in Washington and some key cities where there is a heavy flow of human and economic resources between the two countries. In terms of the executive branch, only a few channels had been

opened, other than in the State Department, while relations with Congress were virtually non-existent.

One of the reasons given for this limitation has been a lack of knowledge regarding the U.S. political system, linked to a desire to export our own centralist view of political management, giving excessive weight to the executive and very little to the legislative branch. Yet it was not until the beginning of this decade, when we began negotiations towards the North American Free Trade Agreement

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Undocumented workers at the U.S.-Mexico border.

Marco Antonio Cruz / Imagenlatina.

(NAFTA), that we understood the need for significant efforts aimed at providing Mexico with more connections in the United States. Thus, in order to get the treaty approved, multiple contacts were established with key players, as well as with many different agencies of Congress and the executive branch, mainly in Washington.

Mexico's new activism in the United States also motivated a much more active dialogue among many different players, creating a myriad of networks and interactions among officials from very different sectors and levels, which has led to a more extensive inter-institutional relationship between, for example: governors and officials from both nations' border states, workers, academics, communications media, merchants, businessmen and members of the Mexican communities in both countries. Noteworthy as well is the basic role Mexican political parties have been playing in several regions of the U.S., above all during the 1988 and 1994 election campaigns, where leaders of several parties campaigned heavily in order to obtain support.

Starting with NAFTA negotiations, the Mexican and U.S. governments adopted a new, positive attitude, baptized the "spirit of Houston,"¹ marking the beginning of an ongoing, continual dialogue within the framework of bilateral negotiations and consultation.

In the United States, at the beginning of NAFTA negotiations, the immigration issue had a low profile in comparison with other topics. In Mexico, on the other hand, a number of sectors pressured the government to have this issue included, in line with the view that just as there should be a less cumbersome exchange of products, so should there also be freer passage for workers on both sides of the border. Despite numerous pressures, the Mexican government opted not to include the immigration issue in the negotiating agenda, arguing that its inclusion would probably lead to the treaty being rejected. As a counterbalancing point, the argument was made that one benefit of NAFTA's approval would be that a more dynamic exchange of products would promote greater economic development throughout North America, thereby creating a significant number of jobs and, consequently, reducing prevailing pressures in Mexico for emigration to the north.

It is worth recalling that the Mexican government has been seeking dialogue on immigration matters since 1940 and, while this dialogue has been initiated on a number of

occasions, in reality collaboration between the two nations' governments has been highly limited. While on innumerable occasions Mexico has sought to have the issue negotiated bilaterally, the U.S. decided to deal with it unilaterally.

A recent example was approval of the 1986 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), when U.S. authorities did not consult the Mexican government, either *a priori* or *posteriori*, regarding the consequences this bill could have. For its part, Mexico abstained from intervening or engaging in political activism in the United States aimed at preventing or discouraging approval of this law, which could have led to mass deportations during periods when Mexico was going through economic crises. This near-silence was interpreted as tacit agreement or acceptance of the bill, since, in some ways, many thousands of Mexicans who were living without documents in the U.S. would be favored by provisions for regularizing their status through the temporary or permanent legalization of around 2.5 million undocumented Mexican immigrants.

During the late 1980s attention could be said to focus almost exclusively on a significant reinforcement of resources, both human (with better prepared diplomats and specialists on various aspects of bilateral relations) and economic, in embassies as well as consulates at the main points of interchange and conflict in the United States.

But starting with NAFTA negotiations an unprecedented period began in Mexico's foreign policy, featuring the working out of policies aimed at getting the treaty approved, through the use of new strategies such as the lobbying method. Through this method, used mainly with leaders of Hispanic origin, the effort was made to convince their sector or communities that NAFTA would be beneficial for the countries involved.² At the same time, Mexico used its 41 consulates as never before. Not only did they play the role of diplomatic enclaves dedicated to serving and defending compatriots; they also became missions for promoting free trade, above all within the Mexican-American community.

In general terms, the Mexican government, with the considerable resources it devoted to lobbying, was successful in obtaining a favorable response in several milieux. It gained a more positive image, despite the

¹ The "spirit of Houston" —a watershed in Mexico-U.S. relations— characterized the presidential session held in Houston in October 1989, where George Bush and Carlos Salinas decided to undertake NAFTA negotiations for the benefit of both countries.

² It is important to stress the hiring of prominent Hispanic leaders such as Washington attorney Abelardo Valdez, Edward Hidalgo and Tony Anaya (Todd Eisenstadt, "Cabildeo y relaciones públicas," *Este País*, June 1992). The last twelve votes needed for approving the treaty's so-called "fast track" in the United States Congress were obtained thanks to lobbying efforts directed at Mexican-American or Hispanic groups.

Proposition 187 and higher education

In order to evaluate the impact Proposition 187's approval may have on higher education for California's population of Mexican origin, one should keep in mind that Latinos or Hispanics are considerably behind in terms of education, and that the highest drop-out rates and incidence of learning problems are found among the Mexican-derived population.

The problem begins at the elementary-school level, in the overall context of unfavorable socio-economic conditions for Mexican communities in the U.S. The situation is particularly serious for the undocumented population, for temporary and newly-arrived residents, although it has been shown that there is not always a correlation between longer periods of residency and better school performance.

The reality is that complex problems of school and learning segregation influence the low rates at which Mexicans and Chicanos enter higher education, as well as their high drop-out rates. In the field of education, despite the gains made in the '60s and '70s, the '80s brought a clear pattern of retreat in terms of coverage, bilingual education and access to higher education.

In a paper read in Mexico City, Chicana expert Margo de Ley noted that recent studies show an erosion in the educational position of the Chicano population and in particular among Mexican groups recently arrived in the United States. "Less than half of young Chicanos finish high school," she noted. This translates into lower rates of entry to higher education.

The overall educational scene was discouraging at the end of the last decade because of reductions in the U.S. budget for education. According to Ley: "There was a reduction in funds for the program aimed at keeping young people in higher educational institutions, as well as cuts in pre-school education, bilingual education and university recruitment programs."

The problem of scarce access to middle and higher education for the Mexican-derived population is directly related to this sector's high levels of social disadvantage. In 1990 more than 6 million Latinos (of whom an estimated 4 million are of Mexican origin, half of them living in California) were below the poverty line.

Of the six million Latinos living in poverty, 2,750,000 were under the age of 18. More than two million (1.3 million of them under the age of 18) were in families headed by single mothers. An estimated 500,000 Mexican children were living in this situation in California.

The socio-economic conditions of the Mexican-derived population, together with the growth of educational policies which restrict bilingual education budgets or coverage, help explain the deterioration of education, high drop-out rates and low scholastic performance seen in recent years.

Nevertheless, one should avoid mechanically applying the idea that recent immigrants, who are relatively poorer and less integrated into Anglo-Saxon society, always make fewer educational advances. Studies by María Matute-Bianchi showed that the most recent Mexican immigrants, as well as descendants of Mexican immigrants who maintain a separate identity as Mexicans within the context of their experiences in the United States, tend to have relatively good school performance, often outstripping Chicano students.

In fact, in California Mexican immigrants as a group have higher school performance than Mexican-Americans born in the U.S., according to a 1989 University of California study entitled *The Challenge, Latinos in a Changing California*. Most of the estimated 300,000 undocumented Mexican students in California are in primary or secondary school, while only 15 percent of Latino high-school graduates are admitted to California's state university system, and only a fraction of that number actually enroll.

Rodrigo Martínez, an educational researcher based in Tijuana, estimates that over 40,000 Mexican higher-education students risk losing their educational rights if Proposition 187 is applied. The majority of undocumented Mexicans in higher education attend two-year community colleges. Less than 10 percent of students in California's university system are of Mexican origin, while between 30 and 50 percent of students in community colleges are Chicano or Mexican, and in the Los Angeles area this figure is even higher.

One current problem relates to Mexican students along the border who live in Mexico but study in California schools, with legal residency or citizenship in the U.S. California authorities are sure to exert more pressure for preventing such students from attending public schools near the border, on the basis of Proposition 187.

In conclusion, Prop 187 reaffirms and deepens a segregationist tendency already existing throughout the United States and, in the specific arena of higher education, it may bring greater demand on the Mexican side of the border. Mexico's Secretariat of Public Education states that sufficient educational infrastructure—particularly at the higher-education level—exists to satisfy the demand that could be generated by students returning to Mexico.

Bernardo Méndez Lugo

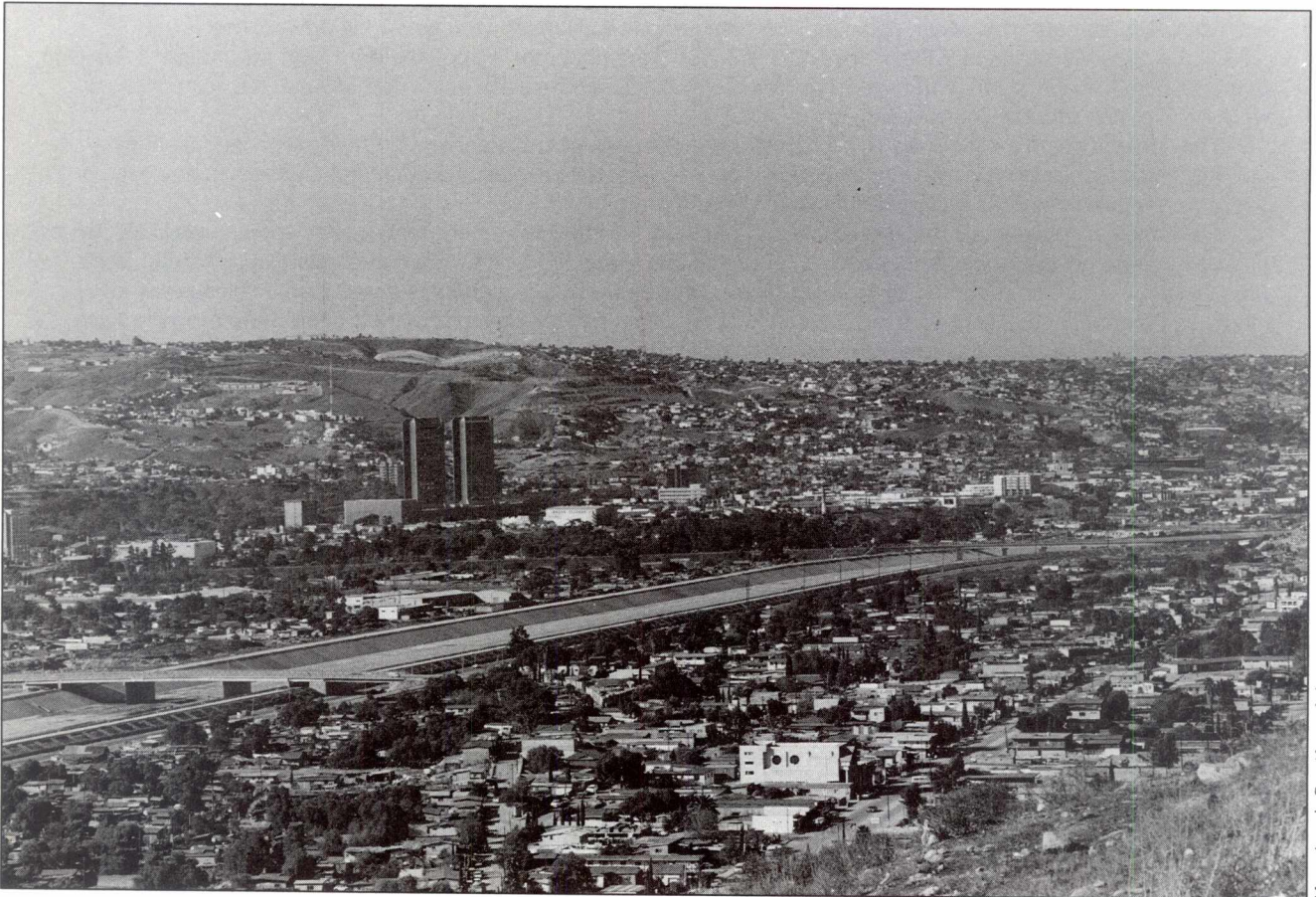
negative arguments put forward by some politicians—among them Jesse Helms and Ross Perot—and trade-union leaders, as well as the obstacles and multiple oppositions presented in the U.S. Congress with the aim of preventing NAFTA's approval in late 1993.

We believe that the strengthening of Mexico's relationship with the Hispanic community in the U.S. was an important achievement by the Salinas administration. Mexico's government finally recognized the crucial role of the large U.S. Hispanic population, which is principally of Mexican origin, and the need to draw closer to it. According to the 1990 Census there are 22.6 million Hispanics in the U.S., 65% of them—that is, around 15 million—of Mexican origin. The projection is that by the year 2020 this population will constitute an absolute majority in California and Texas, which means it will have a great political potential, above all in those two states.

Despite the fact that there has always been an intense personal relationship between Mexicans in both countries, there was only a weak linkage between Mexico's institutions and Mexicans in the U.S., and negative stereotypes had moreover begun to develop on both sides of the border. The

Mexican government was conscious that only isolated projects were in place and that few meetings were held between the two nations' federal agencies. Almost everything was concentrated on the work of our consular representatives, who were mainly devoted to dealing with requests from our compatriots for defense against discriminatory acts in the labor and human-rights fields. Thus, through the Secretariat of Foreign Relations, then under the leadership of Fernando Solana, the government created the Program for Mexican Communities Abroad, in 1990. The goal was to develop policies for communicating with and drawing closer to these communities.³ This program has already promoted the creation of cultural institutes and centers, covering exchanges not only in the

³ The program's main objectives are: improving links with the Mexican and Mexican-origin population in the United States through the development of concrete programs of mutual interest and benefit; promoting a better image of Mexican-Americans through adequate coverage of their struggles and achievements, as well as advancing knowledge of and respect for expressions of their culture; and favoring a better knowledge of Mexican reality among Mexican communities abroad (Roger Díaz de Cosío, "Los mexicanos en Estados Unidos: una política de acercamiento" [unpublished document], Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, 1994).



Panoramic view of Tijuana.

field of culture but also having to do with education, sports and multi-purpose community organizations.⁴ At the same time the "Aztec Eagle" award was established, as the highest honor bestowed by the Mexican government on citizens of other countries. This is a manifestation of the respect and admiration Mexicans have towards Mexican-origin citizens who fight to build themselves a better future while preserving and disseminating our culture and defending our compatriots' rights in frequently hostile environments.⁵

This new activism on the part of the Mexican government became apparent with the beginning of the campaign for California's Proposition 187, in 1994. The protests that the Mexican government sent to U.S. officials, as well as countless protests undertaken by a large number of individuals and groups, were also manifestations of this new way in which our politics were becoming internationalized.

It should be stressed that this attitude was unprecedented, since one of Mexican foreign policy's basic principles has been non-intervention, and our traditional diplomats always considered that expressing an opinion against unilaterally-adopted measures constituted intervention.

During a ceremony held on August 13, 1994 in Los Angeles, California, then Deputy Foreign Minister Andrés Rozental gave a speech in which he stated, regarding Proposition 187: "...We recognize the domestic character of SOS [Save Our State]. We scrupulously adhere to the principle of non-intervention in other countries' internal affairs. But in this case, Mexicans feel directly affected and their government cannot avoid clearly expressing its categorical rejection and its commitment to work very closely with all those opposed to Proposition 187...."⁶

Shortly thereafter, "Yes on 187" coordinator Rick Oltman sent a letter to President Salinas requesting immediate clarification of the Mexican government's position on California's political processes in general and Proposition 187 in particular: "...The arguments put forward by Deputy Minister Andrés Rozental were highly offensive to us.... It

bothers us that an invitee to our country would seek to interfere in our electoral process.... Illegal immigration and foreign interference with our electoral process represent a threat to our sovereignty and will not be tolerated...."⁷

On behalf of the president, Minister of Foreign Relations Tello subsequently responded, clarifying that Rozental had offered only moral support—and not economic support, as had been reported—to those who were working against Proposition 187, as well as pledging to redouble efforts aimed at protecting Mexicans in California. Tello also noted: "the times have changed, and Mexico is more open to international scrutiny, and our new profile as NAFTA partners today obliges us to accept criticism in areas which until recently were considered attacks on our sovereignty." He also cited the presence, during Mexico's recent national elections, of international—mainly U.S.—observers, who freely expressed their views on the electoral process and its results.⁸

We see this exchange of correspondence as an example of the changing attitude towards greater activism in defense of our interests, as a new way of pursuing policy abroad. It is not surprising that Mexico's government should be concerned over the passage of Proposition 187, given that this measure has generated an anti-Mexican attitude—as Mexican-American spokesmen repeatedly called it—and has been harmful to our compatriots, in addition to contributing another irritant to the already conflict-ridden bilateral relationship and a possible limitation to cooperation on an issue as delicate as migration has proven to be for both nations.

Finally, in line with this new framework of Mexican policy internationalization manifesting itself in greater activism, an audacious proposal was recently made to reform the Mexican Constitution (specifically articles 27, which prevents foreigners from owning properties in Mexico, and 37, relating to the concepts of citizenship and nationality) in order to make it possible to grant dual nationality.

This initiative, currently under discussion by Congress, would allow Mexican nationals residing legally abroad to adopt another nationality without having, *ipso facto*, to renounce their Mexican citizenship as the Constitution currently stipulates. While this proposal was recently introduced by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), in 1982 the 90,000-member One Stop Immigration and Educational Centers, Inc. called for Mexicans to be able to obtain dual nationality. At that time, PRI supporters as well as various trade-union groups opposed this proposal, and even members of what is now the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) rejected it on the grounds that it would

⁴ By early 1994 institutes and cultural centers had already been created in 14 U.S. cities: Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago, Denver, Fresno, Miami, Houston, New York, Los Angeles, Phoenix, Sacramento, San Jose, San Diego and San Francisco. Institutions had previously been created in San Antonio and Washington (*ibid.*, p. 3).

⁵ Among the outstanding individuals decorated with this award have been farmworkers' leader Cesar Chavez, the academician Julian Zamora and the folklorist Américo Paredes, in 1990. Over the following three years it was granted to writer Luis Leal, educator Blandina Cárdenas, attorney Antonia Hernandez, president of MALDEF (Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund)—an organization which over the years has won countless victories for Mexicans in the United States, Los Angeles County supervisor Gloria Medina and Raul Yzaguirre, president of the National Council of La Raza (*ibid.*, p. 4).

⁶ Remarks by Ambassador Andrés Rozental, Deputy Foreign Minister of Mexico, on the occasion of the ceremony awarding the Aztec Eagle to Luis Valdez and Baldemar Velazquez, Los Angeles, California; Mexico City, August 13, 1994; mimeographed.

⁷ Rick Oltman, Letter to the Honorable Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Yes on 187-Save Our State, San Rafael, California, August 22, 1994; mimeographed.

⁸ Manuel Tello, Letter to Mr. Oltman; Mexico City, Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores, September 20, 1994; mimeographed.



Héron Alemán / Imagenlatina.

Deportees return to Tijuana. Immigration is a "revolving door."

involve serious modifications of the Constitution. Today, PRD supporters not only support the proposal but go further, advocating dual citizenship.

It is worth noting that in contrast to Mexican law, U.S. legislation and jurisprudence allow citizens to have dual nationality without their necessarily losing it as a result of participating in another country's elections.⁹

Unlike citizenship, nationality does not involve such rights as voting or occupying elected public office. Citizenship is directly related to the place where an individual lives and pays taxes, and can be the same as, or different from, nationality. We believe this proposal has arisen at this time in response to the prevailing anti-immigrant atmosphere in the United States, principally in California, which encourages discrimination and violations of the human and labor rights of our compatriots.

The view is that our compatriots living in the United States have ambivalent feelings, and sometimes resist becoming U.S. citizens because that would necessarily involve renouncing Mexican citizenship. It should not be forgotten that they are victimized by constant changes in administrative stipulations, which have led to a fear that if

they do renounce their nationality it will be impossible or extremely difficult to regain it.¹⁰

The dual-nationality initiative is important in light of its double purpose, to benefit the interests of our compatriots in particular and Mexico in general. Dual nationality would allow Mexicans abroad to freely and legally demand and exercise their social, civil and juridical rights. As members of Mexican-origin communities, they would be able to exert greater political influence in all fields for the defense of their interests, which —up to the present— have been very weakly represented, above all in the United States, despite these communities' demographic and economic weight.

At the same time, with the pride of possessing dual nationality, these communities would be able to identify themselves as Mexican and to act as a pressure group in favor of Mexico's interests, exercising their influence on U.S. society and government. Thus, we believe this initiative to be of the utmost importance, and that it may be opportune to establish a bilateral agreement on dual nationality. This would be based on the framework of the positive spirit of cooperation between the two countries over the past years; and would at the same time tend to cut against the highly negative anti-immigrant atmosphere currently prevailing in the United States. **M**

⁹ "En EU, válida la doble nacionalidad desde 1967: Schuk" (*La Jornada*, April 16, 1995).

¹⁰ Mexican legislation states that one can regain nationality after renouncing it in order to acquire nationality elsewhere (Roberta Lajous, "Doble nacionalidad," *Reforma*, April 17, 1995).

Chicana writers: recovering a female Mexican legacy

Claire Joysmith*

*You insult me
When you say I'm
Schizophrenic
My divisions are
Infinite¹*

The vision articulated in this quote by the Chicana poet Bernice Zamora is related to the position adopted by many Chicana writers who seek to underscore difference and multiplicity *vis à vis* their identity as a minority group in the United States.

The issues I would like to raise here are related to the Mexican heritage adopted by Chicana writers (particularly from the eighties on) in order to establish, assert and reframe their cultural roots. This they do by upholding their difference versus the dominant Anglo-American culture and by exploring their Mexicanness—as women—not only by recovering their heritage but by transforming and recreating it as well. It is by means of their acts of resistance and creativity through the written word that their singularity and specificity as Chicanas is established, a process that also entails the creation of models for future generations.

The question here in approaching the Mexican-rooted heritage of Chicana writers is not so much whether there is, in fact, such a thing as a homogeneous, monolithic Mexican cultural identity—a huge question of utmost complexity that begs to be asked, but which is beyond the

¹ Bernice Zamora, quoted as an epigraph to "Introduction" in Tey Diana Rebolledo and Eliana S. Rivero (eds.), *Infinite Divisions. An Anthology of Chicana Literature*, Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1993, p. 1.

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Yolanda M. López, *Portrait of the Artist as the Virgin of Guadalupe*.

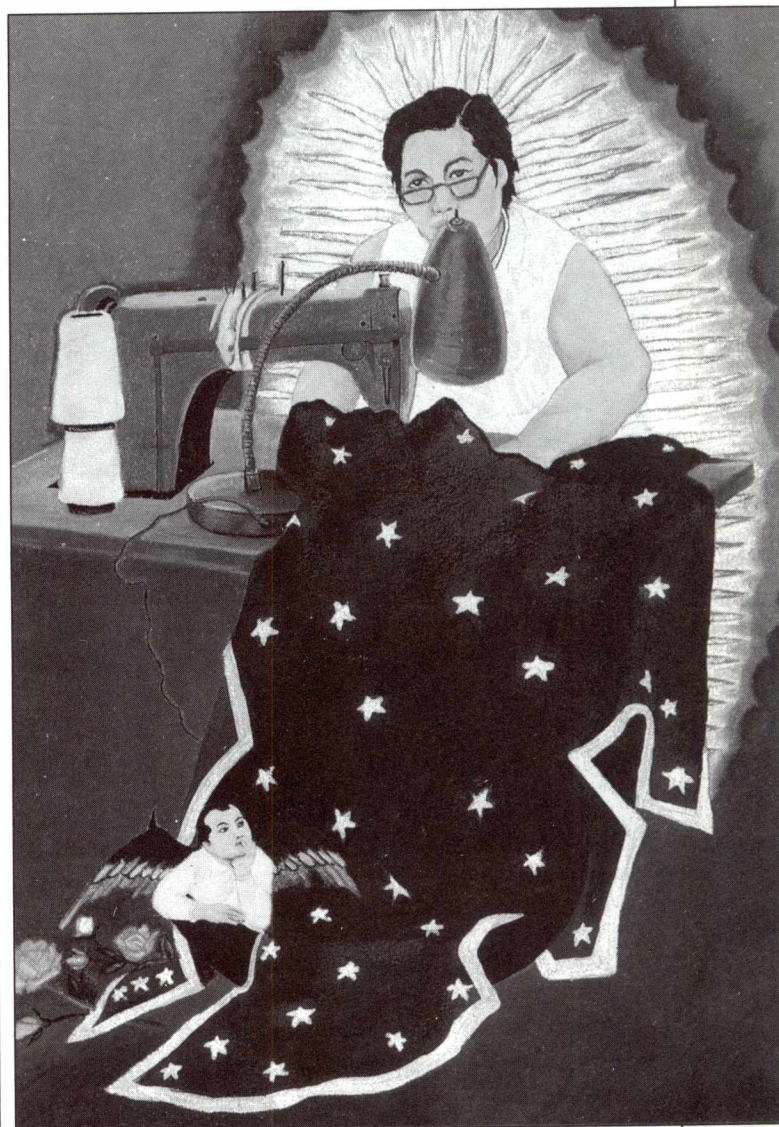
bonding are learned and instilled, where the gusto for food is acquired and its importance experienced first-hand.

Whereas this home-bound role assigned to Chicana women would seem to locate them in a constricted space (literally and metaphorically), Chicana writers perform a displacement act by restoring and legitimizing this nurturing role within that same space. In an essay entitled "Nopalitos. A Testimonio," Helena María Viramontes seeks to recover the undervalued creativity of her illiterate mother who was able to feed—and nurture—a family of eleven with *nopalitos* or prickly-pear leaves grown in her garden and served in a variety of dishes, by creating a parallel between her mother's creative-inventive act and her own act of writing.⁵ This means of legitimizing women's unacknowledged and diminished daily home-labor—which is reminiscent of Alice Walker's own effort to do the same in relation to Afro-American women in her essay "In Search of Our Mother's Gardens"⁶—establishes a Mexican-rooted legacy which she transforms as a Chicana writer, even as she also creates a specifically Chicana legacy for future generations.

Moreover, great importance is given to food and food-making of Mexican origins, such as tamales, chile-sauce, beans, tortillas, and so on. Tortillas, the Mexican staple food, cease to be mere food-for-the masses to become quasi-symbolic of a female-related nurturing object. Indeed, Viramontes compares her mother's daily tortilla-making ritual, entailing early rising, skill and patience, that pat-patting and shaping to a perfect roundness, to the writer's own fiction-making process,⁷ to her use of language that, as Paul Lauter has stated, "forever plays against the edges of meaning."⁸

Female bonding and the subtle subversions of chile-sauce making

The traditional role of Mexican females as home-bound is a role learned early on by children and adolescents—who, it should be added parenthetically, abound in Chicana literature, particularly within the context of a variety of rites of passage. This role is often depicted in Chicana



Yolanda M. López, Margaret F. Stewart: *Our Lady of Guadalupe*.

literature as a nurturing process, particularly when it is a mother or abuelita (grandmother) who presides over the cooking/nurturing rituals, those rituals of everyday survival.

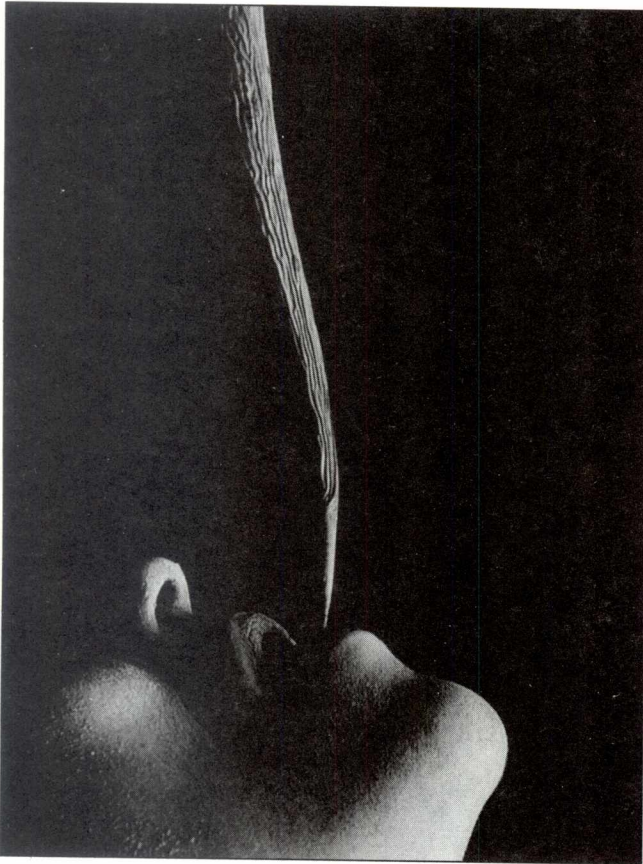
It is by using these two figures that the displacement act performed by Chicana writers relocates these rituals and gives them new meaning(s). For example: in the short story "The Moths" by Helena María Viramontes, the female adolescent protagonist-narrator who flees the Father's Word embodied in an order to attend Catholic mass to cleanse her supposed sins—an order backed by her mother and sisters—seeks sanctuary in her abuelita's home and finds release in a chile-crushing ritual—in which the relation chile-phallus is suggested since in Mexico a penis is also popularly alluded to as a chile.

⁵ See Helena María Viramontes, "Nopalitos. A Testimonio," in Asunción Homo Delgado (ed.), *Breaking Boundaries: Latin Writing and Critical Readings*, Amherst, University of Massachusetts Press, 1989.

⁶ See Alice Walker, "In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens," in *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens. Womanist Prose*, New York, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983, pp. 231-243.

⁷ See Viramontes, *ibid.*

⁸ Paul Lauter, in A. La Vonne Brown Ruoff and Jerry W. Ward, Jr. (eds.), "The Literatures of America: A Comparative Discipline," *Redefining American Literary History*, New York, The Modern Language Association of America, 1990, p. 24.



Gerardo Suter, *Song*.

As she crushes the chiles, sprinkling baptismal tears on them and releasing her contained rage in a purging act (counteracting the father's command to "confess" her sins to a Catholic priest), female bonding with the tradition-bound abuelita figure is reaffirmed within the space created by the food-making ritual: "Abuelita lifted the burnt chiles from the fire and sprinkled water on them until the skins began to separate. Placing them in front of me, she turned to check the menudo. I peeled the skins off and put the flimsy, limp looking green and yellow chiles in the *molcajete* and began to crush and crush and twist and crush the heart out of the tomato, the clove of garlic, the stupid chiles that made me cry, crushed them until they turned into liquid under my bull hand. With a wooden spoon, I scraped hard to destroy the guilt, and my tears were gone."⁹

By performing a traditional female ritual that would seem to keep women in their place (i.e., in the kitchen/home) according to a patriarchal—and a Mexican-macho—cultural legacy, the ritual's significance is displaced,

subversively transforming it into a creative act of self-nurturing rooted in a Mexican heritage, thereby recreating a ritual with specific Chicana markers: "Abuelita touched my hand and pointed to the bowl of menudo that steamed in front of me. I spooned some chile into the menudo and rolled a corn tortilla thin with the palms of my hands."¹⁰

Her food-oriented creative efforts are thereby joined to those of her abuelita. The presumed later ingestion of the sauce she has prepared and which is now blended into the menudo suggests, moreover, a new/home-made ritual only once removed from the ingestion of the Christ-body/host during Catholic rituals.

The abuelita figure as symbolic past and the rebirthing of ancient Mexican rituals

The abuelita or grandmother figure becomes a primary model figure for Chicanas: the symbolic bearer of a purer Mexican tradition, and a representative of family-bonding and a matriarchal legacy of wise female elders. She becomes a quasi-mythical bridge between the Mexican

“One of the major Mexican components of identity is rooted in a literal and metaphorical nurturing process traditionally placed in the hands of women and located in the home”

legacy and the new Chicana/o generations, particularly since the mother figure, who, although often depicted with nurturing qualities, is seen by many Chicana writers in highly conflictive terms, since she is often an intermediary figure, more “assimilated” in many ways to the dominant culture, who often fails to side with her daughter against the male figure of the father/husband.

Because the abuelita figure is related to a mythical Mexican past, she is related to long-standing customs and traditions. In “The Moths” by Viramontes, she is related to ancient rituals that hark back, in fact, to pre-Hispanic times, rituals which are not merely recovered but re-invented within a creative female-centered process of the “byways of cultural production.” Moreover, by doing so, Viramontes is tapping into the spiritual wealth offered by these ancient

⁹ Helena María Viramontes, “The Moths,” in *The Moths and Other Stories*, Arte Público Press, Houston, 1985, p. 26.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

myths as a means of filling in the void left by the need to resist a patriarchally-centered Catholicism, and as a means of recreating alternative meaningful rituals inserted within a contemporary Chicana context.

The unnamed narrator-protagonist's reaction to her abuelita's death later on in this short story is to instinctively perform a ritual in pre-Hispanic traditions, whereby the dead were prepared for their next life. After cleansing the corpse and gently placing it in the uterus-like water-filled tub, she undresses and enters the tub herself, thereby re-inventing a female-bonding and mourning ritual in which the girl rocks her abuelita and herself into comfort and does so in the name of the woes suffered by generations of women facing loss: "... and for the first time in a long time I cried, rocking us, crying for her, for me, for Amá, the sobs emerging from the depths of anguish, the misery of feeling half born, sobbing until finally the sobs rippled into circles and circles of sadness and relief. There, there, I said to Abuelita, rocking us gently, there, there."¹¹

A pre-Hispanic myth is recovered here too, since the adolescent is witness to a host of moths emerging from the abuelita's mouth which, while she was alive, remained silent/silenced —except as a vehicle for the perpetuation of an oral story-telling tradition which the granddaughter carries on by narrating the story of "The Moths." At the moment of her death, however, the abuelita emits symbolic utterances —of a pictorial-representative nature, in accordance with the tradition depicted in pre-Hispanic codices— of an equally symbolic past which is in danger of being lost to the new generations of Chicanas/os, a past represented by the moths, a version of the *papalotl*, the Aztec butterfly symbol of the soul, now free, fluttering towards the light: "Then the moths came. Small, gray ones that came from her soul and out through her mouth fluttering to light, circling the single dull light bulb of the bathroom"; and, "I wanted to rest my head on her chest with her stroking my hair, telling me about the moths that lay within the soul and slowly eat the spirit up...."¹²

The new generation's fear of losing ancient rituals and traditions is manifested in its need to inherit the abuelita's healing, nurturing and plant-growing gifts lest these be lost to future generations, and in its urge to recreate and reinvent past rituals, perpetuating them and relocating them in the present everyday Chicana reality. In "The Moths," part of the adolescent's death-fantasy surrounding her abuelita is expressed by allaying these fears of loss through

the very act of story-telling—in which the narrator and Viramontes herself are immersed—an act which relates the abuelita's nurturing possibilities to the heavens: "Dying is lonely and I wanted to go to where the moths were, stay with her [abuelita] and plant chayotes whose vines would crawl up her fingers and into the clouds...."¹³

Reconstructing traditional Mexican religious, legendary and historical female figures

As Alice Walker has said: "The absence of models, in literature as in life, is an occupational hazard for the artist, simply because models in art, in behavior, in growth of

¹³ *Ibid.*



Yolanda M. López, Victoria F. Franco: *Our Lady of Guadalupe*.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹² *Ibid.*

spirit and intellect... enrich and enlarge one's view of existence."¹⁴ And, I would add, create a legacy for future generations—in this case of Chicanas.

In addition to the abuelita figure, other female figures are also recovered and recreated by Chicana writers. In the process of creating female-centered "byways of cultural production," the displacement act becomes vital, since most female figures are set within a patriarchal-macho context that has given them a set of preestablished values. Values subverted by displacing, relocating, redefining and recreating them.

The three recurrently recreated figures are the Virgin of Guadalupe, Malintzin or la Malinche, and la Llorona, all of whom recent Chicano, Mexican and American revisionist research has done much to reassess by tracing and repositioning their historical and mythical status, that has given them their present place in Mexican culture.

These three figures reappear again and again, in a wide range of manifestations, throughout Chicana literature, and have gradually come to create an inter-referential body of work that will serve for future generations.

Reinventing a historical female figure

Despite the prevalence of the above-mentioned figures, there are other less well-known female figures. The one I wish to mention here, particularly since it is closely related to Mexican history, is an obscure historical female figure who has been recovered from what we could call the silences of history.

This figure, who appears in the short story "Eyes of Zapata" by Sandra Cisneros, is Inés Alfaro, Emiliano Zapata's lover and bearer of his firstborn son, who is barely mentioned in historical accounts.¹⁵ Inés is not only absent from historiographical discourse, but she is a multiply stigmatized figure: branded by race, class and gender, with no claim to the legitimate title of Zapata's wife, she is also a *nahual*, a witch-like figure who, as she clairvoyantly foresees, bears a line of women who sell herbs in Mexico City's marketplace, La Merced. By hailing her witch-stigma as a banner of difference and specificity, she is able to displace and reposition herself: "If I am a witch, then so be

it.... And [I] took to eating black things—*huitlacoche* the corn mushroom, coffee, dark chiles, the bruised part of fruit, the darkest things to make me hard and strong."¹⁶ Moreover, Inés' own story inserts Zapata as a mere character rather than as a hero-protagonist, thereby displacing him, through fiction, from his mythical posture.¹⁷

Although she is a Mexican figure, Mexican historians, including feminist-oriented ones, have not sought to recover her. Cisneros' selection of this figure, rather than other well-known women of the Mexican Revolution, from the silences of history through fiction—since that is what this character is: mere fiction outside the realm of historiographical discourse—serves to underscore her

“Great importance is given to food and food-making of Mexican origins, such as tamales, chile-sauce, beans, tortillas, and so on”

specificity as a figure rescued for Chicana purposes. Because she has been relegated to the silences outside the boundaries of the Mexican cultural patriarchal heritage, she can be displaced, relocated and, of course, reinvented.

This "new" female historical figure functions as a specific Chicana female empowering model rooted in a Mexican legacy that has culturally and historically relegated her to the margins and silence, but has now been relocated by a Chicana writer (Sandra Cisneros), thereby positioning her as a model for future Chicana generations. Moreover, by emerging as a female counterpart to the revolutionary figure of Zapata rescued by male Chicano literature that inserts him within the context of the Chicano Movement, the figure of Inés is recovered from the silences of the history of the Chicano Movement itself, giving those women participating in it a voice as well as a historical and a very different "heroic" figure of their own, thereby creating specifically Chicana "byways of cultural production." ❧

¹⁴ Alice Walker, "Saving the Life That Is Your Own: The Importance of Models in the Artist's Life" in *In Search of Our Mother's Gardens. Womanist Prose*, New York, Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, 1983, p. 4.

¹⁵ See Mario Gill, "El gran reportaje histórico; Zapata: su pueblo y sus hijos" in *Historia mexicana*, vol. 2, n° 2 (6), October-December 1952, pp. 307-8. Also see Enrique Krauze, *Emiliano Zapata. El amor a la tierra*, México, Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1987. In John Womack Jr.'s classic *Zapata and the Mexican Revolution*, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1972, he only mentions her as "another woman", p. 155.

¹⁶ Sandra Cisneros, "Eyes of Zapata" in *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*, New York, Vintage Books, Random House, Inc., 1992, p. 106.

¹⁷ For a broader discussion of this approach to Cisneros' story see Claire Joysmith, "Desplazamiento y (re)construcción: "Eyes of Zapata" de Sandra Cisneros" in *Las formas de nuestras voces: Chicana and Mexicana Writers in Mexico*, CISAN/UNAM/Third-Woman Press, Mexico (forthcoming).

After liberalism

Joshua Cohen*
Joel Rogers**

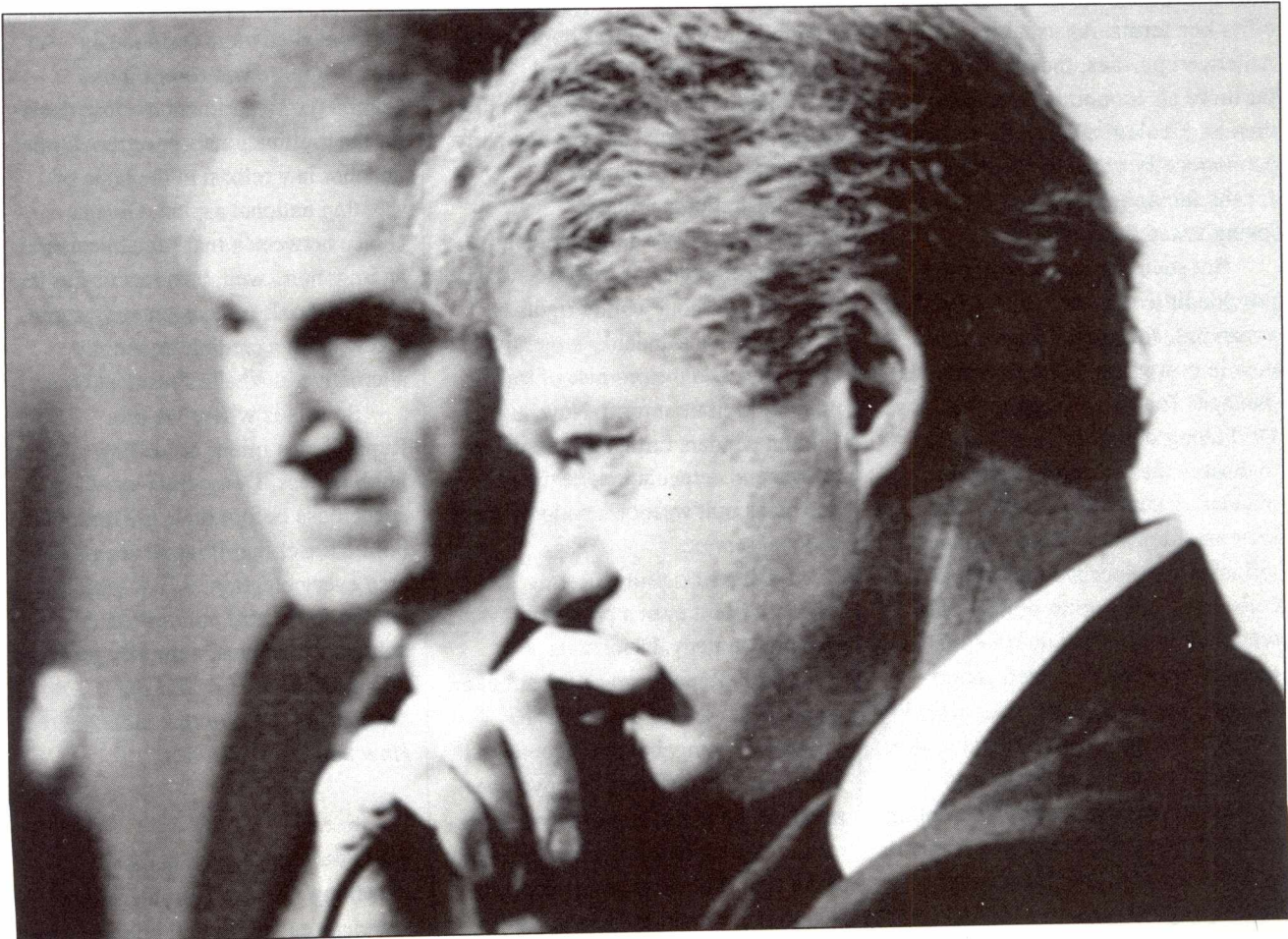
Last November and everything that has come since should be a wake-up call for those committed to democracy in

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America—a call to find a political strategy different from conventional Democratic liberalism. Contract politics and Republican cyberpunks do not announce a general collapse of progressive values in this country. They may not even inaugurate a long period of Republican political dominance. But they are very bad news, potentially lasting in their

effects, and unanswerable by a Democratic Party now lacking a coherent program or social base. Democratic renewal requires a different sort of politics—combining radical democratic reform with efforts at popularly-led economic reconstruction—and new organizations to carry those politics forward.



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are widely recognized and deeply felt. Opinion surveys and election results show massive economic anxiety, profound distrust of business, and sky-high rates of alienation and disgust with government. There is mass discontent with politics as usual and evident hunger for an alternative—some way this economy and society might be newly run for the general benefit. Why don't the Democrats provide it? If they are getting hammered by middle-class anger at a government that doesn't deliver the goods, why not deliver them?

One popular answer looks to Bill Clinton. Having devoted so much of his life to being first in the class, and pleasing his many friends, companions and political supporters along the way, Clinton is now incapable of making the hard decisions needed to confront the Republicans and move the country forward. A more serious answer traces the Democrats' failure to their allegiance to a liberalism of racial preferences that is condemned by once-Democratic white men. A third argument points to contradictory demands on the Democrats as the party of government: they need to expand government's role to deliver benefits to the middle class, but certain needed supporters—consider the Perotistas—reject any such government expansion.

The problem with all these explanations is that they take too narrow a view of Democratic difficulties. New Deal-style social-democratic politics are in trouble everywhere. No party anywhere is winning elections on the old promises—to beat back the market with an affirmative state committed to full employment, a fair distribution of income, and an efficient provision of essential public goods—because the

world in which such promises were credible has largely disappeared. To understand and find a way out of the present disasters of Democratic politics, we need to take measure of that change.

In the old world, the responsibilities of government were understood as principally economic, and the economy operated on Keynesian premises. Aided by unions and other private multipliers of its effort, government policy sought (within limits) to stabilize mass demand, which gave firms markets for sales and thus reason to invest, which increased productivity and lowered the costs of mass consumption goods bought by ever better-paid workers. The damage such consumption-led productivity and income growth did to the environment was not a major issue. Policy inattention to the costs of "social" reproduction—keeping a culture, raising kids—was excused by stable communities and traditional families in which women did most of that work.

More particularly, the politics of the old world relied on:

- A nation-state capable of managing the economic environment within its territory—a national economy sufficiently insulated from foreign

organization throughout the economy. The organization of production within them also tended to underscore some modicum of class solidarity. Working on the assembly line, it wasn't too hard to figure out which side you were on.

- The dominance of *class concerns* in the politics of equality. This dominance depended on a more or less determinate working class (obviously more in Europe than here, but still), whose organizational strength and superiority dwarfed other secular, non-business organizations and concerns. And again it reflected the largely unquestioned acceptance of the division of labor inside the household and an economy organized around steadily increasing consumption and energy use. In the United States, it presumed as well what European social democrats liked to call the "American dilemma"—a simple denial of the effects on equal opportunity of 400 years of racial exclusion.

Today by contrast, the political economy of the United States and other advanced industrial societies is marked by:

“The election was far more an economic referendum than an ideological one”

competitors that the benefits of demand stimulus could be reliably captured by firms within its borders, and a monetary policy apparatus sufficiently insulated from world-wide financial flows to permit unilateral, easy-money correctives to recession.

- The organization of the economic core into a system of *mass production* dominated by large, lead, stable firms. The size and stability of these firms made them ready targets for worker organization as well as levers to extend the benefits of

- More sharply delineated *limits on the capacity of the state to promote the general welfare*. These limits result in part from internationalization—which means that foreign competitors can beat domestic firms to expanding domestic markets, and firms are better able to exit unfavorable tax or regulatory regimes. In larger part they stem from changing demands on the state, which undersore limits on the state's institutional competence. While governments are “all thumbs and no fingers,” fingers are now what is commonly in demand—in economic policy, to address the fine issues of labor market transitions and firm modernization; in social policy, to

pick up where destroyed communities and job-holding women leave off; in economic and social regulation, where common standards need to be applied in diverse contexts or developed through negotiation among affected actors; in political deliberation itself, where money and sound-bites have so fully replaced people and argument that “discussion” seems a waste.

- The collapse of traditional mass production, and with that collapse, the *unmaking of the (male) working class as the privileged agent of equality*. While increased competition among firms has occasioned many strategies of response—from simple sweating of labor to lean production to high-skill

strategies geared to product distinctiveness—all disrupt the commonalities of experience that provided the foundation of traditional industrial unionism. Firms are more decentralized and varied in the terms and conditions of work they offer, career paths and rewards are more jumbled, and the heterogeneity of skills provides a further source of division. The fracturing of the male working class coincided with its changing sexual composition, as women joined men in wage slavery. In addition to complicating the tasks of working class organization, their entry presses into sharp relief the costs of social reproduction—once confidently assigned to



democratic practices and organizations required to give that alternative a fighting chance. This double move would be the signature of a new democratic politics —paving the road as we move along it.

toward more services, usually not in trade at all. And even within internationalized relations of competition with profit-taking constraints, alternative strategies with very different social consequences are

waiting to happen among a series of groups that have, for the past 40 years or more, defined themselves as mutual antagonists.

Take the white-dominated labor movement. Because of its declining city membership it cannot protect itself against low-wage privatization and the destruction of regional labor market standards, let alone assure the public investments needed to support high-wage production and services, without the voting support of central city black and Latino populations. And those populations know that their economic devastation will not be reversed anytime soon through an increased welfare effort or expanded public sector. They need private sector investment and jobs within their communities —best provided by firms and individuals rooted in those communities themselves— and they need those jobs to pay a living wage —all things more likely to be achieved if they were allied with unions.

At the same time, environmentalists and those concerned about organization inside firms may find common ground on the supply-side of production. Just as unions have found that they can only defend member interests by invading what was once taken to be the inviolate “core of entrepreneurial control” —decisions about technology, product strategy, investment, work organization, work relocation and the like— environmentalists recognize that moving from pollution abatement to source-reduction requires a presence inside the firm.

Even inner-ring suburbs, now suffering from the same low-wage sprawl that helped destroy the cities, have common cause with the cities against which they have so long defined their politics.

“These changes make it harder to decide what the economic fight is all about, as they blur the boundaries between society and household— which institutions are responsible for what ”

Running the economy as if values, and place, mattered

A natural place to begin such movement is with the economy. The dominant experience of most Americans is that the economy is running their lives (down), and they have generally given up hope that the world could be any different. The conventional explanation is that the internationalization of product, capital, and even labor markets makes social control of the economy impossible. With everything in the economy slopping around or potentially slopping around and across international borders, political boundaries have lost their economic significance. Place doesn't matter. And because it does not, there is no way to make values matter —for people organized in some place to impose some social standards on the economy.

But this description of our economy and the possibilities of its social direction is deeply misleading. Internationalization, while important, has been vastly exaggerated: most U.S. manufacturers buy and sell overwhelmingly to themselves; most manufacturing sectors have exiguous international competition; and the long-run trend of the U.S. economy is

available. Choices between them can be shaped by factors clearly under our control. Even the diminished state retains a large share of employment and purchasing power, not to mention the ability to pass laws; it can use that power to establish standards on economic practice, to support some strategies of industrial restructuring over others, to limiting public supports to those adhering to public standards. And even a rootless capital relies, in its most advanced productive forms, on immobile public goods —decent school systems, transport systems, safe neighborhoods, clean environments —which if provided in places can help root investment there.

Even if such a project were available in theory, however, would it be available in practice? Is there any good reason to think that its potential beneficiaries could actually unite in its advance?

Yes there is. Consider, as a hard case, our nation's major metropolitan areas —where most people live, where the consequences of an economy untutored by social control are painfully evident, where those who would benefit from a more humane order are profoundly divided. Even there, a political alliance is

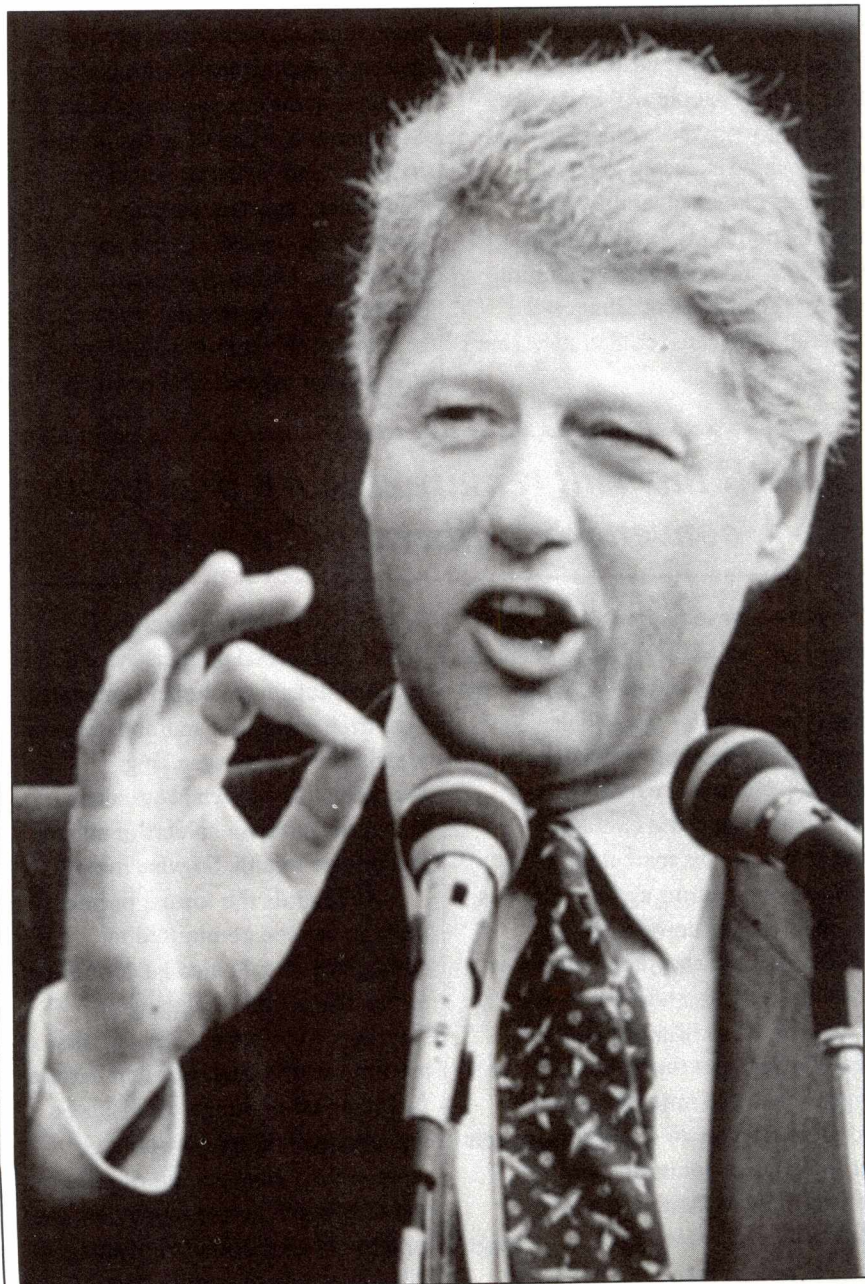
A new democratic politics, emerging at the local level and recognizing the heterogeneity of the new world, might first dedicate itself to bringing these people together on a high-wage, low-waste, metropolitan development strategy.

The core of this strategy is straightforward. Instead of using tax abatements and other giveaways to lure firms to our metropolitan cores, such incentives would be coupled with conditions on hiring, training and compensation. Those that invested and hired and trained in certain areas would be rewarded for that investment; those that did not would not. Instead of using public monies to subsidize low-wage firms—as is now generally the case in movements to privatize government services—we would have “living wage (and benefits)” standards that guided all government purchases and contracts. Instead of simply encouraging the young and dislocated workers to “get smart” with additional education and training, we would establish regional labor market boards, sectoral training and employment consortia, regional “hiring halls” and job location assistance to forge more organic links between training and employment opportunities.

Efforts of this kind would naturally be allied with efforts to diversify the ownership base of the local economy, with supports directed not to attracting rootless capital but developing firms attached to that economy. Business development assistance would be directed to those investing and employing *there*. Smaller and start-up firms would be the targets of modernization assistance—from advice on best technology applications to intensive assistance in

managerial skills, perhaps pooled across clusters of firms. And environmental costs, throughout, would be taken seriously both as a source of capital and employment opportunity. Projected energy savings (most cities still import most of their energy) from conservation and local sourcing programs could be used to capitalize the training and investment needed to realize them.

Of course places vary, and countless details of a regionally organized economic project would depend on location. But the common thread uniting the separate efforts would be a democratic economy, guided by constant discussion among citizens about the terms of their cooperation. The result would be regional economies with higher levels of advanced production, less



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pollution, more fairly distributed employment opportunities, better-paying jobs, and a revived tax base to reinvest in social and physical infrastructure. We would roll back urban devastation, while declaring democracy to be both an intrinsic good and a new force of production.

Rebuilding the civil infrastructure

Again, for any of this to happen people must be organized. When it comes to norms on business, the need for organizations is clear. A disorganized people will *always* be defeated by private business power, which can be expected to resist standards of accountability. But organization is also essential for economic and social administration and for the process of alliance-building and shared deliberation about social problems.

them. You just can't get occupational safety and health unless workers know how to spot problems inside firms; you can't get suitable intervention in industrial restructuring without the know-how of those involved; you can't get good education inside classrooms unless parents support what's going on in them; you can't get public safety without engaging the community, as well as the cops, in upholding standards of behavior. Sometimes organization is needed merely to supplement state capacity to monitor or enforce existing standards. Sometimes it's needed to define and help solve problems that everyone knows are important but that government cannot legislate away. Either way, citizen organization is a condition of effective governance.

The problem in America now is that popular organization is widely

it should certainly be possible to put forth a program of public funding for citizen action —ideally, perhaps, in the form of a universal citizen tax-credit or special voucher that enables citizens to subsidize their chosen candidates or parties. By permitting those with popular support but little money to mount credible candidacies, such a program would make office-holding more widely available and ensure greater equality of opportunity for political influence. And it would —combined perhaps with significant limits on campaign contributions— restore some measure of citizen confidence in government and electoral accountability.

With elections cleaned up in this way, moreover, the road would be cleared for other efforts to build democracy's social infrastructure. Moving beyond the "live free or die" choice between public hierarchies and private markets, democrats should be encouraging the state to convene and staff the private deliberations and deals needed to solve social problems. Instead of simply revving up environmental regulations or scaling back on their enforcement, local government might, for example, bring industry, environmental advocacy, and community and labor groups together, and say roughly "these are the general standards the voters have decided they want met; you figure out a way to meet them and get back to us with your proposal." Or radical labor law reform could facilitate worker formation of "unions" —not only the sorts of organizations that go by that name now but various kinds of independent worker organizations rooted in the economy. And those unions could be assigned a role in economic reconstruction

“All this will require a sharp break with conventional liberal politics”

For many social problems, the proper answer to the question "should we give this one to the state, or leave it to private markets" is a double negative; neither public hierarchy nor unregulated market exchange is sufficient to generate the right outcome. That the market fails to respect social norms again is obvious; given the opportunity, firms will pollute, pay their workers as little as possible, and otherwise run down social standards. But it should be equally clear that the "all thumbs, no fingers" state commonly lacks the political capacity to specify reasonable standards, the monitoring and enforcement capacities to make standards stick, or the local knowledge to find the best means for achieving

trashed and politically excluded. Within our formal political system, the power of organized money dominates organized groups. In addition, citizens are disabled from organizing themselves as workers, consumers, taxpayers and shareholders in public and private wealth. So what to do?

As regards the formal political system, anyone committed to democracy should also be committed to the democratic financing of elections. Of course, in a capitalist system such as ours, any democratic financing commitment needs to be realistic. No matter how much private money we get out of politics and how much public money we get in, those with economic advantages will find a way to exploit them. But

—say, through their assistance in organizing regional labor market boards, sectoral training consortia, or new hiring halls for youth and displaced workers. Throughout, state purchasing power as well as other means could be used to encourage associations and deliberative arenas that are democratic, sufficiently inclusive of affected interest, and technically informed.

Such developments would produce a government much more genuinely “of the people” and administration and definition of social problems infinitely more “by the people.” The state would certainly not disappear, but its appropriate function as the privileged arena of popular deliberation about social ends, and articulator of social standards, would be more prominent than its increasingly delegitimized role as administrator of problems it lacks the capacity to solve.

Who, then?

If the polls and common sense are to be believed, such a program could reach a huge political market. Still, it will need to be fought for. And that fight requires something that acts like a political party—an encompassing political organization that exists to articulate programs and to advance them by winning elections.

Is that the Democratic Party? At the national level, at least anytime soon, we seriously doubt it. National Democratic Party leadership is almost wholly business-dominated. And for most middle-class liberal Democratic supporters, the thought of turning power over to people is horrifying—a world of right-wing talk radio and regressive state initiatives. For both types of activists and controllers, a program like this would require a jump out of their skins.

In truth, however, we cannot hope to influence national leadership anytime soon, and don’t need to wait on it to get started. At the local level, it is possible to imagine political formations, operating both inside and outside the Democratic Party, that could arise almost overnight to do the necessary work. These would be value-centered organizations (parties) rather than candidate-centered ones. And they would operate first in the netherworld of non-partisan races and local partisan ones that do not draw the big money or where party label is less important or obscure. Building those organizations—as, for example, the New Party is now doing in several cities—is a natural project for progressives, postponing any final adjudication about relations with national Democrats.

Imagine, then, New Party or New Party-like formation that help catalyze efforts at comprehensive alternative economic development and radical democratic reform—paving the road as they move along it—and recruit average citizens to run for office (often non-partisan office) on the basis of their commitment to that program. Imagine that these separate efforts share intellectual and financial resources—for program development, training, media—and think of themselves as united; at least in their effort to bring this kind of alternative to the American people. Imagine this alternative working in major metropolitan areas, through a combustible mix of strange allies on a more moral economy, facilitated by state action, and changes in the rules of the game to assist both. Imagine this done in 10 states with major electoral populations—states in which capture of the major metropolitan areas would give powerful weight in state governments themselves. Let

your imagination go from there, or just imagine much better-run and democratic metropolitan regions and states. Either way it’s a win.

Possibility and necessity

This sort of strategy is available to us. Last November, as the Democrats were going down to defeat, citizen-led initiatives on radical campaign finance reform along the lines mentioned passed in Montana, Oregon and Missouri, and missed only narrowly in Colorado; in Massachusetts, the threat of such an initiative forced the legislature to its most radical campaign finance reform in history. Today, substantial efforts at comprehensive alternative economic development, also along the lines indicated, are underway in places as diverse as Brooklyn, Detroit, Milwaukee, Chicago, Oregon and San Jose—with real discussion across issues, real norms imposed on the regional economy, real deals being cut between former antagonists. And, running on a program of democratic reform and alternative development, over the past two years the heavily urban-based New Party has won 80 out of 100 sub-Congressional electoral races—electing candidates to school boards, administrative authorities, city councils, county boards and state legislatures.

Given the availability of this strategy, and the absence of anything more than a “let’s keep them from beating up on us too badly” response to Republican schemes, there is—not to put too fine a point on it—a good case for not standing by and watching. It is possible to imagine a path forward to a more democratic country, a path starting right where we are now. To move along it, though, ordinary citizens need to get up, greet others also rising, and... *start to walk together.* ✕

Mexico's position on the Non-Proliferation Treaty

*José Angel Gurriá**

1995 marks the end of the twenty-five-year period established in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in which the international community was to state its views on the treaty's accomplishments and insufficiencies, as well as the terms for its extension.

The close link between non-proliferation and disarmament has been the basis of Mexico's positions throughout the period of preparatory work, as it was at the time that the NPT was drawn up.

Since 1959, when the negotiation of an accord for the non-proliferation of nuclear arms was proposed by Ireland, Mexico supported that effort, as it does today. Mexico established three objectives for those negotiations:

1. That the treaty which would be agreed on, for the prevention of nuclear arms proliferation, is not an end in itself, but rather the means to facilitate the adoption of effective measures for genuine nuclear disarmament.
2. That the prohibition of nuclear arms proliferation be linked with measures for the promotion of the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy, in order to benefit developing countries, and lastly,
3. That the interim NPT not affect in any way the right of any group of states to coordinate regional treaties designed to assure the absolute prohibition of nuclear arms in their respective territories.

The position put forward by Mexico was set forth in Resolution 2028(XX), dated November 16, 1965, in which the Geneva disarmament committee was asked to resume its deliberations as quickly as possible, with the aim of creating a Non-Proliferation Treaty based on the following five general principles:

- The treaty should not permit the proliferation, whether direct or indirect, of nuclear arms;
- It should establish an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations for nuclear and non-nuclear states;
- It should be a step towards general and complete disarmament, and specifically nuclear disarmament;
- Measures to guarantee the Treaty's effectiveness should be included;
- It should not contain any stipulations which would restrict the right of any group of states to create regional treaties with the aim of guaranteeing the absence of nuclear arms in their respective territories.

These principles continue to guide our action in this conference. The main problem in evaluating the application of the NPT arises from the fact that the original treaty tended to perpetuate a situation which favored the nuclear powers as a group against the non-nuclear powers. It was therefore necessary to incorporate certain conditions which, in the opinion of the non-nuclear countries, should be fulfilled in order to justify their decision not to acquire nuclear arms.

In addition, we should point out that negotiations towards a treaty for the complete and definitive prohibition of nuclear testing—which, unfortunately, have not been carried out as speedily as we hoped—currently have excellent prospects as a result of the new international situation, in particular the qualitative change in the relations between the United States and the Russian Federation. This has led to bilateral agreements to reduce their respective nuclear arsenals. This reduction is due to the recognition, after years of overproduction, that there is a kind of nuclear saturation. But it also represents a healthy change in the way the nuclear powers view the role of these weapons, due to the end of the Cold War. We consider the steps taken by those two countries in the

Speech at the Conference on Extending the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, United Nations, New York, April 18, 1995.

* Mexico's Secretary of Foreign Relations.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty

1. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) was presented for signing on July 1, 1968—in Washington, Moscow and London simultaneously—and went into effect on March 5, 1970. Mexico signed it on July 26, 1968 and turned in its document of ratification on January 21, 1969.

2. While the NPT is generally viewed as an important document for international security, it wound up establishing a discriminatory system among the participating nations by allowing the five self-proclaimed nuclear powers to possess nuclear weapons while prohibiting other nations from doing so.

3. Starting during the period of preparation for the conference, the United States, together with other countries from the Western bloc, strongly promoted an unconditional and indefinite extension of the NPT. For its part, Mexico always called for the adoption of measures which would make it possible to move towards nuclear disarmament and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation system, as prerequisites for determining the best form of treaty extension.

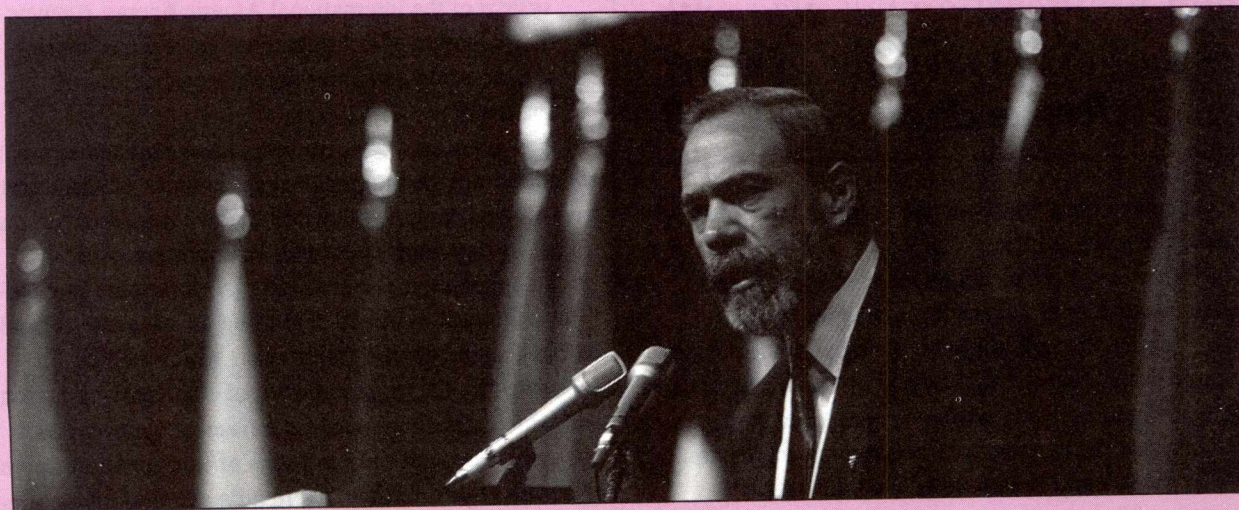
4. At the beginning, three projects were presented which approached NPT extension in different ways. The first was put forward by Canada, proposing the pure and simple indefinite extension of the treaty; despite support from the nuclear powers and co-sponsorship by a total of 108 countries, it did not achieve consensus. The second, sponsored by fourteen non-aligned countries, called for the treaty to be extended by automatically renewable 25-year periods (unless a majority of participating countries should eventually decide otherwise). Mexico did not join forces with either of these plans, instead presenting its own draft resolution.

5. At the conference, Mexico—true to its traditional policies on the disarmament issue—achieved the objectives it set for itself in Secretary Gurría's April 18 speech. These can be summarized in the following points:

a) Mexico supported the treaty's extension but—emphatically—not without previously ensuring that an agenda would also be approved for negotiating clearly defined steps towards nuclear disarmament. The degree to which said objectives were concretized reflected the difficult negotiations required for ensuring firm commitments.

b) Additionally, from the beginning of the conference, Mexico insisted on the need for approval of a mechanism for periodic review with the aim of evaluating the fulfillment of treaty obligations; this objective was also completely achieved. Obviously, if one of the periodic evaluations reveals that the nuclear powers are not fulfilling their commitments, it will always be possible for us to denounce this non-fulfillment—an option established in Article X of the NPT.

c) Another achievement was the inclusion, in the declaration of principles and aims, of the idea for a program of action regarding nuclear disarmament; for years, Mexico has been pushing for this in Geneva.



START I and II Accords to be promising, and we hope not only that START II will remain fully in effect, but also that a future START III will bring additional reductions.

Mexico has provided solid proof of its commitment to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We have therefore also insisted on the need for countries which presently possess nuclear arms to make a concrete and precise commitment to the shared objective of eliminating them from the face of the earth.

Mexico practices what it preaches. More than sixty years ago we endorsed the Geneva Protocol on the use of chemical and biological weapons; we are part of the 1972 convention on bacteriological (biological) and toxic weapons; and we were the seventh country to ratify the 1992 convention on the elimination of chemical weapons.

We were also one of the first nations to adhere to the NPT, and before that had already worked out and signed the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We continue to stress that the Treaty of Tlatelolco is an example for the entire world, especially given that in its Second Additional Protocol the states which possess nuclear arms made the commitment, in an obligatory juridical instrument, not to use or threaten to use nuclear arms against states in this region. The same commitment was made by two of those countries in the Treaty of Rarotonga, which establishes a denuclearized zone in the South Pacific, an example which we believe should be followed through examining the assurances which the nuclear countries should

“Mexico seeks an adequate formula, not only in terms of non-proliferation but also with regard to the need for genuine and effective disarmament”

offer the non-nuclear nations in the context of the treaty we are examining at this time.

Mexico has also insisted on the need to slow and reverse the nuclear arms race through agreements to undertake concrete measures, beginning with the complete cessation of nuclear testing. The role of Mexico in this area was recognized last year, when we were given the honor of presiding over the beginning of negotiations on this issue.

The international community should take full advantage of the current opportunity to reach disarmament

agreements. Let us prevent polarization and take advantage of the unique opportunity which this conference offers to reach a consensus on the best way to consolidate the Non-Proliferation Treaty and assure its universal application in the coming century.

With this aim, the Mexican delegation has carried out a series of consultations and would like to state its views, from the beginning of this debate, regarding the basic criteria which will govern its actions during this conference.

We understand, on the one hand, the concerns of those who consider that limiting the Treaty's applicability may endanger the instrument which, although imperfect, continues to be the basis of the non-proliferation system. On the other hand, it is our obligation to struggle for nuclear disarmament, as we have done since this international instrument was formalized. The question is not simply one of extending the treaty. An extension is not an end in itself.

Consequently, Mexico believes that whatever decision arises from this conference must take into account the following interrelated elements:

- The NPT should be extended. The modalities of this extension will arise naturally from the agreements which are reached regarding the responsibilities of all the treaty's signatories;
- The adoption, within space of a year at most, of a treaty prohibiting all nuclear testing;
- The initiation, as soon as possible, of negotiations for an agreement which will prohibit production of fissionable materials for military purposes;
- The establishment, through linkage, of so-called “negative securities”;
- The necessity to reinforce the current safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency;
- The adoption of a strengthened review mechanism which would guarantee periodic evaluations of the treaty.

Few questions in recent years have attracted as much attention from the international community as this. Rarely have we had the kind of chance that we have today to reach significant agreements on such an important issue.

In conclusion, we are ready to participate in good-faith negotiations aimed at finding an adequate formula, before the end of this conference, which will be supported by the great majority of participating nations and which takes into account universal concerns on nuclear issues, not only in terms of non-proliferation but also with regard to the need to advance toward genuine and effective disarmament. ✕

Fleeting shadows: the painters of Jalisco in a melancholy light

*Alberto Ruy Sánchez**



Carlos Vargas Pons, *Untitled*, 1993.

What do the works of Dr. Atl, Roberto Montenegro, Juan Soriano, or, among the youngest, Roberto Rébora or Carlos Vargas Pons, have in common, beyond the fact that they were born in the same region of Mexico? The subject of regional character in art is most interesting but requires utmost care in its treatment. All-embracing judgments should not diminish the pleasure to be had from each individual work, but rather reveal or emphasize its features.

Can there be anything more absurd than turning a passport or a birth certificate into a measure of style? It has often been done. To avoid this, prior consideration must be given to the risks inherent in approaching any group of artists under a geographical or political sign. Generalizations about their work require clearly establishing the degree of subjectivity with which such classifications are undertaken. It is, to a great extent, arbitrary to believe that artists from the same region constitute a unit with more common characteristics than differences. It seems absurd to think that the land, be it forbidding or lush, its climate, or the rain, affect different painters in the same way, and that their works share an indelible label of origin.

When we think in this way, we do as the ancients who, with blind faith—which they took to be a form of science, a certitude—classified all human beings by the planet under which they were born. The stars seemed to determine the entire destiny of humankind. Perhaps, in a future as yet unimaginable, there will be people

to whom it will seem as strange to exhibit the works of painters from Jalisco, as it would to us now, to open a vast exhibit of works by painters born under Sagittarius.

The supposed modernity of this century and part of the previous one has pressed upon us faith in determinisms equivalent to that which medieval scholastics had in astrology. Progress, economics or history, politics, sociology, geography, biology, even pedagogy have been the new astrologies in the modern ingenuousness with which we have grown up. For it is exaggeratedly supposed that origin, social class, education, race, are all inescapable signs that clearly define humankind's destiny. A birth certificate is like a new star chart.

The problem of determinism increases when the subject is artists, who by nature escape or ought to escape the clichés of the aesthetic of their time and place. Every one of them under the same sun is a shadow fleeing from the wall that determines his or her shape.

Nevertheless, to say here and now, "the painters of Jalisco," or "the painters of Oaxaca," is to mention two very clearly differentiated groups of works. But it is one thing that each of these universes possesses its own coherence and is different from the other, and something very different to think that local geography and history determine the aesthetic characteristics of their painters. The same pitfall obliges us to think, for example, that the works of Oaxacan painters such as Tamayo and Toledo are determined to a greater extent by the indigenous past of their region than by the infinite variety of art of all ages they have seen. Is not the trace of Australian aboriginal art in the work of Toledo evident to all who recognize it? Is not the magic inheritance of Marc Chagall obvious in many of the Oaxacan

painters considered most purely indigenous, such as Rodolfo Morales or Maximino Javier?

It is also just as clear that no universal feature entirely determines an artist. Such a feature would in any event be no more than one of many leaves on his luxuriant tree. His trunk, his really central feature is the confluence of everything in an artist's life that he or she transforms into oeuvre, no matter where that life experience he or she converts into aesthetic experience for us may come from. But, given our mentality, we cannot help thinking that the leaf we have closest at hand, clearest to the eye, or most easily identified, is the dominant one. And we cover our eyes with it.

In Oaxaca, it is the indigenous element in regional ideology that is the supreme determinant dominating all others, preventing comprehension of the supposed regional character of an art. In Jalisco, it is important to note very different signs, the variety of which prevents any one of them to cloud all the other possibilities.

On the other hand, if art does have roots, they are aerial. An artist from Oaxaca and another from Jalisco may come from different ground but their roots take nourishment from the same air, which each of them transforms and appropriates in different ways.

Though we said that the artist, like a fleeting shadow, by nature escapes the sunlight that suddenly tries to make him the same, perhaps we ought to observe each of those flights. What the artists of Jalisco have in common may be those flights. A feature that is not negative but contrasting. Is it not the artist who contrasts, emerges from the ground that permeates him? The aesthetic flight from unification is a negative value only if taken as the narrow criterion by which regional unification

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* Editor of *Artes de México* magazine.



Ismael Vargas, *Textiles*, 1989.

José Clemente Orozco, *Prometheus*, 1944.



is attempted. From the point of view of art, it is a creative, positive value. "To seek a vanishing point," wrote Gilles Deleuze, "is to affirm that which is most authentic about a line, meaning that each of us, that is 'our potential to be in the world' (as Spinoza said), is a line or lines in motion, not anchored, rooted surface." Lines, like fleeting shadows. Let us attempt to follow some of them in their flight, trying to accept, though it may be difficult, that what to a great extent unites and brings them together is our scrutiny. Choice, not fate.

For myself, I seek in this selection of paintings from Jalisco, diverse shadows in flight from a common sun, and I find in that choice of light and shadows, works in which melancholy suddenly seems dominant.

In the painting by Jorge Enciso, *Iglesia y atrio*, light gradually bathes the austere facade of a village church. The highest parts are the brightest. Desiccated trees seem to emerge in the foreground, from the base where the shade is deepest. Twisted fingers of the night. The scene, emphatically impressionist (due to the unreality of an image that makes us live that moment of the day with greater reality), is loaded with a frankly melancholy feeling of twilight. The artist and his feelings are present in this painting in an unusual way. The light denounces a movement of the soul.

This does not occur in correct, even outstanding landscapes, like Pedro Galarza Duran's in which the equally austere and colonial walls of a monastery are not part of the painter's spiritual movement. Or, as in Mateo Saldaña's almost static landscape, as if brought forth from a frozen glance in a typical instant of that scene, its countryside and its inhabitants. If the dominant feeling in Enciso is an intense and burgeoning melancholy, scrutiny of Galarza and Saldaña's landscapes barely reveals tenuous, very timid nostalgia.

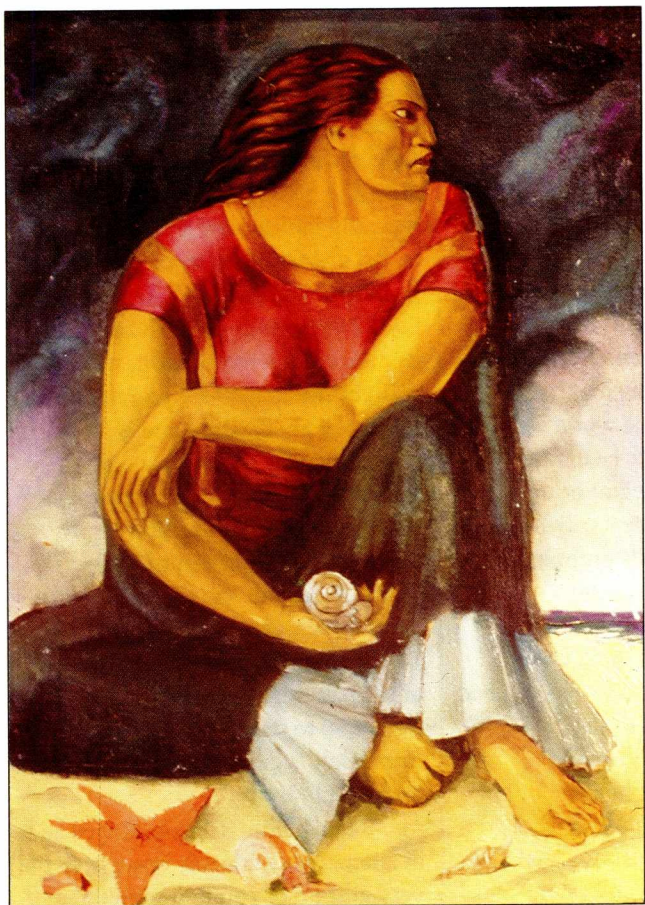
The difference between the latter two landscapes and those painted by Dr. Atl, Gerardo Murillo, is even greater than what differentiates them from Enciso's painting mentioned above. Feeling overflows from Dr. Atl's paintings. It is more force than spirit, or spirit as earthly force. The presence of the artist's drive in these paintings goes far beyond an impressionistic brush stroke, turning into a poetic: the forms of the landscape must be painted with formulas of composition and color that deliver that *something* that seems to rise from within him. It is no accident that his principal subject is volcanoes. Everything turns about them. The world itself is shaken by them, and out of their vibration, which becomes existential in the artist, emerge the world's new forms with their curvilinear horizons about to open and explode. Even the sun resembles a volcano exploding in the sky, the clouds, waves of lava. Rivers and waterfalls made of lava too. The painter's very point of view from which we see the painted scene is not the peaceful one of a man on earth, but that of a man in flight. A scrutiny of the world, not like a bird's eye view, but one that gives the impression of a parabolic launching of fire from a volcano toward the world.

Though Enciso's painting is also tinged with fire, it is a timid candle beside the sun that burns in Dr. Atl's. But this volcanic sun in paintings such as *Rayos de sol*, so impregnated with the earth from which it appears to emerge, or so clearly "explosively tearing apart the sky," reminds me of "the black sun of melancholy" that Nerval intoned in his poem "El desdichado." The paradoxical radiance of these suns, so full of light and shadows even in broad daylight, is somewhat related to Dürer's black sun. Are not the volcanoes themselves a kind of black sun, illuminating with their fire that which they themselves seem to have created?

While Enciso's melancholy is passive, Gerardo Murillo's is active. The former suffers the world as it is. The latter creates the world he suffers. It is no accident that Dr. Atl is not only painter, but an essayist, the creator of a utopian Atlantis. He is a creator of worlds, who wishes for a perfection that does not exist. He looks forth from the shadows he invents. In the Middle Ages this active melancholy was called *melancholia generosa*, because it is creative. It is born of the artist's dissatisfaction with the world and moves him to fulfill his cravings. In contrast, passive melancholy forced the artist to sink into inactivity and commit the sin of "languor," to sadly do nothing, very common in monasteries. Active melancholy forces the artist to pursue his longings without restraint, to burst out of himself and achieve that which he lacks, the lack of which makes him melancholy.

Passive melancholy was considered a malady, the active kind was more like a gift, a sign of creative temperament. Melancholy is characteristic of philosophers, scientists and artists in general. Such is the volcanic melancholy of Dr. Atl.

Another artist of paradoxical fire, of the black sun, is unquestionably José Clemente Orozco. In him, fury, mocking but deep seated laughter, and the most rending melancholy are all one. His art completely abandons the world of impression that Murillo had begun to leave, to fully enter the world of expression. Just as an odd aside, his *Naturaleza muerta*, includes echoes of melancholy paintings by De Chirico or his brother Savinio. But the melancholy that appears before us in most of Orozco's work is of another kind: neither contemplative nor reflexive, but epic. The *melancholia generosa* that forces the artist to seek the satisfaction of his craving for that which he lacks, assumes the dimensions of a heroic exploit and becomes the Great Quest.



Roberto Montenegro, *Tehuana on the Beach*.



José María Estrada, *Portrait of Lorenza Martínez Negrete*, 1839.



Gerardo Murillo (Dr. Atl), *Parícutín Landscape (Lateral Explosion)*, 1943.

Wherefore, History with its sequence of infernos, its villains or tyrants or demons, can become the central theme of an oeuvre like Orozco's, in which the artist seems always to be emerging from an inferno, a brothel-like underworld, a tyrant's cesspool, or from the apocalypse of the Conquest or the Revolution. Active melancholy again, heading for a beyond that outstrips mankind. Hence that mural manifesto of the *Hombre en llamas*, in Guadalajara's Hospicio Cabañas, self-portrait of a man emerging from himself, full of primordial strength that transcends everything. The melancholy search is of blood and fire in Orozco. It is of melancholy in the face of the world's chaotic end, painted from the point of view of the apocalypse.

Melancholia generosa continues to appear, transformed, throughout other works. Is there not an echo of Giorgio de Chirico's geometric melancholy also in Roberto Montenegro's still lifes and in the perspectives that make up the background of some of his portraits? In the painting *Tehuana llorando a su muerto* the very subject is melancholy, apart from the presence of the dead man in the foreground and the Tehuana's hard, distant expression, her gaze lost on the horizon. On the left of the composition appears a kind of globe, a sphere without a map, on two axes, like an echo of the astrolabe that frequently appears in classical illustrations of melancholy in centuries past. Curiously, in his *Autorretrato* the sphere resembles a mirror in which he portrays himself painting. One might think, not without a measure of exaggeration, that one of the allegorical objects of melancholy, the sphere, changes into the universe in which the artist is reflected: a reflection of reflections.

The link with Giorgio de Chirico, the quintessential melancholic, is present in Manuel González Serrano and, as a matter of fact, his painting *Aprendices de torero* was included in

the exhibition of Mexican painting tinged with "De Chirician metaphysics" held parallel to a recent De Chirico exposition at the Museo de Arte Moderno. The apprentices spread their red capes between light and shade before a very fleeting perspective, with the city in the background. The great bull ring is at the vertex to which everything leads and, at the right, perhaps a cemetery behind a wall over which only dry branches protrude. The world also flees beyond a still life he entitled *Equilibrio*. The vital equilibrium seems also to be momentarily on the point of breaking in his portraits and his remarkable *Autorretrato*.

The same relationship to De Chirico is present in Carlos Orozco Romero, particularly in *Sueño*, a scene in perspective typical of the "metaphysical genre," and in the geometrical emphasis of some of his portraits and still lifes. Melancholy becomes completely passive again in Guerrero Galván. His characters' gaze, some against typically melancholy perspectives, is again lost on the horizon, they are in repose, looking at what does not exist, or what might be within the things facing them. His girls and madonnas are primarily melancholy beings. Even in scenes in which there are more characters and some action, including a horse and rider, as in *Sueño de juventud*, lassitude, existential inactivity, the frozen instant, profound peace in sadness, are dominant.

Melancholy becomes intelligent, ironic, in the work of Juan Soriano. Even in his paintings of little dead girls, following "the ritual art of the child death," the burial of little angels, sadness is ironic, full of amusement. In *La mesa negra*, he presents contrasting objects that vary from a skull to a toy and children chasing each other. In *La playa*, the central figure—the author himself—is

crying and being consoled by two women—his sisters Martha and Rosa. A scene of angels and demons unfolds in the background. In the *Retrato de Lola Álvarez Bravo con Juan Soriano niño*, she photographs herself in a typically melancholy pose, one hand on her cheek, the other caressing the smiling child. The 1947 *Retrato de Lupe Marín*, with its large hands and its gaze lost on the horizon, with a twilight sky in the background, is no less melancholy. But there is something of almost imperceptible mischief in the way she caresses her necklace and holds her flowers. In Soriano's 1961 portrait of Lupe Marín, the game, the toy, the mischievous gesture, ceases to be subject and becomes the very matter of the painting, passing from the figurative to the abstract: the form itself is gentle mischief, melancholy irony.

Years before, Chucho Reyes had, in another way, already brought to the very gesture of painting something of the aspect of a religious carnival with which he saw the world. But the recovery of the popular element in his oeuvre blurred the artistic modernity of what he did. It was a return to that which is elementary in the artistic gesture which, if in Chucho Reyes was more traditional, in Soriano is both contemporaneity and simple ironic intelligence. Reyes seemed prey to nostalgia: even his most festive paintings, such as the cock fight, occur in the face of death, and this one, echoing the popular song, is entitled *Se me murió el que yo más quería*. Reyes' almost fauvist Christs, his baroque angels, his animals, seem to take part in that black Easter parade that appears to preside over his *Autorretrato con la muerte*. Black ritual and carnival.

The popular element in María Izquierdo is not a matter of nostalgia, or material to be worked on, but a



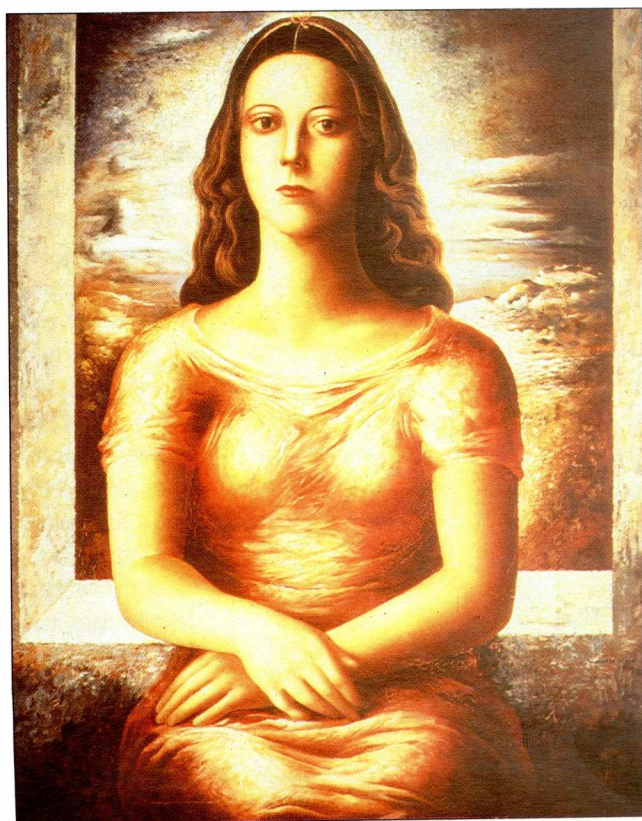
Manuel González Serrano, *Equilibrium*, 1940.

Chucho Reyes, *The One I Loved Most Died On Me*, ca. 1972.



María Izquierdo, *Still Life*, 1946.

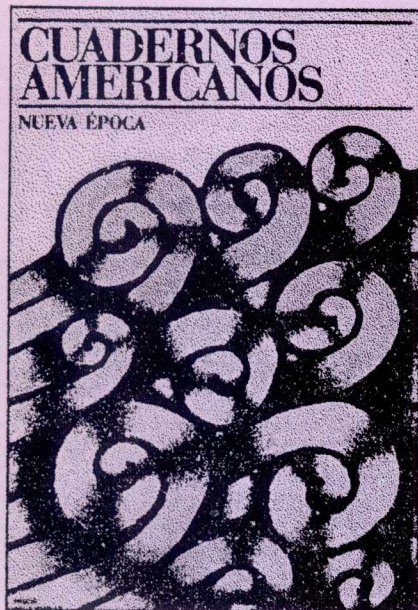
Jesús Guerrero Galván, *Portrait of María Asúnsolo*, 1934.



CUADERNOS AMERICANOS

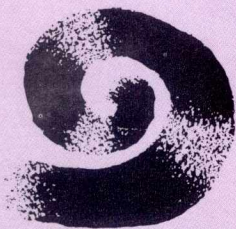
NUEVA ÉPOCA

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Al celebrar la aparición de los cincuenta primeros números de la Nueva Época de la revista *Cuadernos Americanos* estamos celebrando también su continuidad, y su afortunada trayectoria en tiempo y espacio. Estamos celebrando su carácter bimestral y su aparición ininterrumpida, así como su llegada a distintos países de América, Europa, Asia, África y Oceanía.

En una comunidad imaginaria integrada por autores, temas y lectores, *Cuadernos Americanos* ha logrado diseñar obstinadamente un mapa ideal de Nuestra América.



Voices of Mexico / July • September, 1995

remainder. Like the remains of a shipwreck. She is not nostalgic, but observes the decomposition and recomposition of the forms that surround her, with a calm gaze tinged with melancholy. Her still lifes do indeed resemble desertions. The sadness and almost innocent grace that touch her work go hand in hand. Unlike her, who says much wanting to say little, some of Jorge González Camarena's still lifes, such as *La ofrenda* or *La fuerza de la palabra*, want to say much and are yet hermetic, doors that are closed to us, or too eloquent and therefore obvious, like the *Exhumación del conquistador Cristóbal Romero*. The play of forms is more interesting in *Paisaje con flores*, or González Camarena's paintings for Cruz Azul, where an echo of art deco makes his compositions contemporary, whereas at the time they were seen perhaps as only promotional. It frequently happens that in time, what an artist considers most important in his oeuvre becomes complementary, and vice versa. Often what is accepted in his time for ideological reasons, for example in the case of many second rank muralists, may in time be seen as only commonplace, uniformity, *doxa*. Not the paradox essential to art. But the same occurs with formal modernity in recent years. Painters who want to be "modern" discover in time that that is what first goes out of fashion. And that the formal labels, the profoundest formulas of sixties, seventies and eighties art, last no more than a few decades.

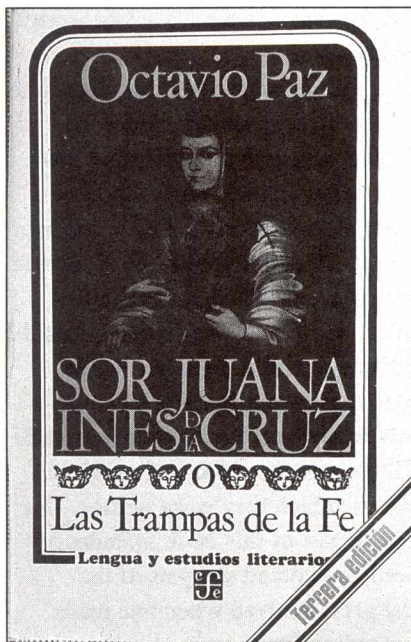
Time will tell how some of the painters that surround us escape determinism, not of their region but of their "modernity," a region of the soul. I see in several of them aspects of flight that interest me or suddenly attract my attention. In Javier Arévalo, the figurative fades toward the simplest play of forms —Paul Klee's beneficent

ghost— as in *Un hombre y una mujer*. In Luis Valsoto, who has also painted dead children, it is the close presence of corpses that elicits a new sensuality far from stereotypes of bodily beauty. In Jorge Alzaga, it is the least misty and most natural scenes, such as the melancholy woman in *El tedio*. In Alejandro Colunga, it is the carnival and in Ismael Vargas the vacuity of excess. In Enrique Guzmán, it is pain, as in his painting *Estigma*. Just as in many of Martha Pacheco's works, painting that borders on all frontiers: the borders of representation and of her figures. In Javier Campos Cabello it is the crumbling of human nature, its decomposition turned into the design of the painting. In Gabriel Macotela, it is the rich combination of languages, planes, volumes and lines. In Roberto Rébora, it is the search for the traditions of this century that is perceived as sharp and ravenous. In Rodal, it is his capacity for play. And in Carlos Vargas Pons, the dissolution of forms, of faces, of the very surface of the painting, is also melancholy and its search is very deep: having mastered the realistic gamut with paintings of figures heavy with sleep, inactivity, sadness, in his own way he brings to aesthetic expression itself the spiritual motion that might have formerly been within his static figures. The melancholy soul captures the form of the painting itself, thus accelerating its flight.

Shadows that flee a possible definition of the art of Jalisco, fleeing a light that would suffuse them with a sameness seeking to fix them in their place and time. The artists who here offer us their works appear to my selective scrutiny as differentiated versions of that *melancholia generosa* that moved them to make what had never been made, what they lack and what moves them. ❧

Translated by John Page

Reviews



Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o las trampas de la fe

(Sor Juana or The Traps of Faith)

Octavio Paz

Fondo de Cultura Económica,
Mexico City, 1982, 673 pp.

Sor Juana seen through the eyes of Octavio Paz

Octavio Paz's fascination for the figure of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was first expressed in writing in a brief 1950 essay which synthetically compressed ideas which decades later were expanded in a book of impressive proportions: *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz o las trampas de la fe* (Sor Juana or The Traps of Faith). Both the essay and the book manifest, for example, the conviction that the poetess' life and work can be understood only in the context of the enigma of her renunciation of

literature. Thus, we see how the final silence alludes to a space—that of the unspeakable—marked by the implicit rules which indicate a society's political, religious and moral foundations. Abjuration becomes a symbol which reveals—without naming them—the unavoidable consequences of transgressing those unquestionable norms.

Thus, this book presents Sor Juana's life and work in close connection with the history of the society in which she lived: the world of late 17th-century New Spain. Paz's aim is clearly articulated: his intention is not to reduce her life and work to the history of the society in which they unfolded, nor to read the literary works through the double text of a life and the fabric of society; but rather to study the interpenetrations and intersections of these three realities within what might be called a system of communicating vessels.

It is on this basis that the author makes use of several methodological models without subordinating himself to any one of them. This eclectic attitude, moving easily between psychoanalysis, stylistics, formalism and historically oriented contextualism, provides a rich interpretation deriving from the conjunction of a plurality of perspectives, each casting a partial and limited light upon different aspects of the three mysteries, without ever exhausting them. Far from a single methodological focus, this is a singular and untransferable example of eclecticism guided by a sensibility

unwilling to recognize any exclusive barrier between critical, analytical activity and the creative passion which seeks to discover, in the work of others, correspondences and rhymes with its own obsessions.

This interested and partisan posture—which can be seen in all of Paz's artistic and literary criticism—involves an unquestionable advantage: it updates the object of study. Thus, through Paz's writing, Sor Juana miraculously appears as our contemporary—or almost—while her life and work become loaded with resonances which persist through our own times. The corollary to this attitude is the risk of imperceptibly loosening the ties between Sor Juana and her world. One of the richest and most dangerous experiences for the reader of this book is to place him or herself within the fascinating oscillation between a contextualist vision and a transhistoric one linking Sor Juana to the modern intellectual and poet. Although not necessarily incompatible, a tension exists between the two impulses, and at times it seems on the point of exploding.

A synthesis and compendium of Paz's many personal obsessions, "The Traps of Faith" may be viewed as an expansion and prolongation of previous essays, such as *The Labyrinth of Solitude* (1950) and *The Arc and the Lyre* (1956). The former heralds the desire to decipher the nature of New Spain and study the characteristics of its cultural models and artistic expressions; the latter is a first attempt at clarifying the

paradoxical and marginal condition of the work of art, which appears simultaneously as a social product and a challenge to or negation of the social institution which give rise to it. The two lines come together in this book, where New Spain is seen in the first part as a patrimonial regime characterized by a series of balances and rivalries between the different powers: economic power, divided among Spaniards and *criollos* [people of Spanish descent born in the New World]; in the political sphere, the viceroy and Audience; ecclesiastic power, divided between the archbishop of Mexico City and his rival in Puebla and, as a third element with a certain degree of autonomy, the interests of the various religious orders. One consequence of this is that religious orthodoxy, so monolithic in appearance, did not exclude the elaboration of syncretic doctrines in which—above all in Jesuit versions—some notions and figures from the indigenous and pagan tradition were seen as prefigurations of Catholic doctrine. Various myths from this syncretist tendency would later be used as powerful arguments for legitimizing the *criollos'* separatist and nationalist aspirations.

The syncretism of the Jesuits had its origin—according to the author—in Renaissance hermeticism, a belated moment of an ancient tradition deriving from the *Corpus hermeticum* of Hermes Trismegistus, which influenced several Church fathers, flourished once again in the neo-Platonism of the Renaissance and reached all the way to the poetic thought of the Romantics, the Symbolists, and, in the 20th century, the Surrealists. The thread running through all these mutations can be summed up in the

magical notion of the universe as a complementary or harmonious system. Sor Juana's point of contact with this tradition—where science, magic, alchemy and religion come together—was the German Jesuit Athanasius Kircher (1601-1680), whose books were read in New Spain and who, surprising though it may seem, maintained an epistolary relationship with Alejandro Fabián, friend of the bishop of Puebla, Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, the "Sor Filotea" of Sor Juana's *Response*.

Religious syncretism had its equivalent in the Baroque aesthetic, which permitted the assimilation of particularities, singularities and irregularities within a universal harmony. Yet despite the pursuit of "complementariness" and the tendency to incorporate the other into an ingenious synthesis, artists and intellectuals always ran the risk of clashing with a rigid orthodoxy which placed limits on intellectual activity in everything touching on the ideological sphere.

This preliminary setting of the scene—which follows the author's ideas—is the prelude to the book's second section, dedicated to the life of Juana Ramírez before she entered the convent. Using available data, Paz imaginatively reconstructs the girl's early intellectual curiosity, pointing out the important figures of the father (absent), the stepfather (intrusive), the "earthly" reality of her mother and Juana's relation to her grandfather, interpreted as the sublimation of masculine sexuality in book learning. This psychoanalytically derived interpretation suggests that the library—and later the convent "cell"—functioned as a refuge from the world and as a regression to the sexual non-differentiation of the womb. The

desire to know is presented from the beginning as a transgression, and since the world of books is a masculine one, this interest assumes the disguise of virility. What later became the "neutralization of sex" in the convent finds a symbolic antecedent in the sublimation of sexuality in the world of books.

The years passed in the mundane luster of court society, under the protection of several viceroys, gave rise to Sor Juana's courtly poetry, which—according to Paz—consists mainly of rhetorical exercises, as one would expect from circumstantial verse. However, one finds a handful of lyric poems among her works—among them the sonnets to Laura—where personal intensity makes itself felt despite the rhetorical molds within which they were written. The fourth part of this book includes a well-considered analysis of the dangers involved when one reads, according to subsequent conventions (those of our own day), worldly love poetry that was written in accordance with the conventions of another time and another world. When we read erotic poems written by a nun and dedicated to another woman, our surprise is nuanced—but not erased—if we view them in the framework of the rhetoric of courtly love. Thus, it is a question of inverting traditional roles; or better, of the nun-poetess fulfilling the role of platonic lover. What is extraordinary in this case, argues Paz, is that some compositions succeed in expressing personal passion as something really lived—perhaps in the imagination; something which transcends the impersonal pattern of ingenious and artificial formulae.

The author coincides with several previous critics in seeing Juana's decision to take vows as the result not

of religious fervor but rather of “a rational calculation” (p. 542) with the objective of obtaining a tranquil space, free from domestic obligations, where the writer could follow her desire to study and learn. The passage from court to convent does not signify a break—at least for the nun—because from her cell Sor Juana continued to enjoy the benefit of viceregal protection. Moreover, given that convent rules were rather lax, the vow to cloister oneself did not stand in the way of nuns receiving frequent visits in the convent parlors. From within the convent, Sor Juana continued to participate in worldly life.

Undoubtedly the most brilliant pages in this book are those dedicated to Sor Juana’s poetry. Her mastery in questions of versification and her use of a rich variety of meters and poetic forms—which even include a *tocotín* in Náhuatl—are widely recognized. The extensive analysis of her most ambitious and complex poem, “First Dream,” merits special mention. Paz

emphasizes the profound originality of this intellectual poem, which, while indebted to Góngora’s model, is nevertheless unique. Starting with its subject (the soul’s voyage through the cosmic regions), the poem is a prolongation of prior traditions, but the real “theme” (the failure of the soul’s attempt to intuit the nature of the universe) inaugurates another thoroughly modern tradition: “the soul has been left alone; the supernatural intermediaries and celestial messengers who linked us to worlds beyond have vanished, dissolved by the power of analysis” (p. 482). For Paz, this confrontation between the solitary soul and the impenetrable universe is one of the major themes of modern Western poetry. Thus “First Dream” becomes a direct antecedent of certain long poems by Mallarmé, Valéry, Huidobro and Gorostiza (and here we may rightfully add the name of Paz himself).

The final part of the book deals with the last years of Sor Juana’s life

and the conflicts which would end in her giving up writing. In 1690 the nun wrote the *Carta atenagórica* (Athenagoric Letter), a theological criticism of some ideas expressed by the Portuguese Jesuit Antonio de Vieira, apparently written on behalf of Manuel Fernández de Santa Cruz, bishop of Puebla and rival of Mexico City’s redoubtable archbishop Aguiar y Seijas, who was Vieira’s friend. Sor Juana appears as a defenseless pawn drawn into battles between the strongest figures of ecclesiastical power. Theological battles are known to serve, at times, as covers for personal and ideological struggles. Seeing that Aguiar’s power remained unshaken, the bishop of Puebla abandoned Sor Juana, who then wrote her famous *Respuesta a Sor Filotea de la Cruz* (Response to Sor Filotea de la Cruz), a spiritual autobiography which is at the same time an intellectual self-defense justifying her desire for knowledge and love for literature both sacred and profane.

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But it is Sor Juana's confessor, the Jesuit Núñez de Miranda, who applied the pressure to obtain this woman's total renunciation and the humiliation which would definitively bury her intellectual pride. The final abjuration, the selling of her considerable library and collection of musical instruments, and above all the wholesale confession that she signed as a prelude to the mortifications of the flesh, are seen by Paz as sad antecedents to 20th-century show trials: a simulacrum of legality used against ideological dissidents who were made to confess to crimes invented by their accusers. The intolerance of orthodoxy—whether religious or political—demands not only punishment, but acts of contrition. The author emphatically rejects the idea of a final "conversion," seeing it as an invention of Christian hagiography, and he reiterates that the episode represents the terrible spectacle of an intellectual conscience forced to humiliate itself before the totalitarian intolerance of ecclesiastical power.

It is in this light that the document discovered in Monterrey in 1980, by Father Aureliano Tapia Méndez, is of particular importance. It is a letter from Sor Juana to her confessor, Núñez de Miranda. An appendix to the third edition (1983) of this book reproduces this *Letter*, preceded by a brief presentation by Paz. If we accept its authenticity—and there are good reasons to do so—the *Letter* seems to be an anticipation of the *Response* of 1691. But its importance lies in that, besides being a defense of her activities—as a poet, intellectual and woman—the document reveals for the first time that it was Sor Juana who broke relations with her confessor and not, as previously believed, the other way

around. This was an act of extraordinary courage and great audacity, considering that Núñez de Miranda was one of the most powerful figures in the religious hierarchy of the day. At the time of writing the *Letter* (either 1681 or '82, according to Paz) the nun enjoyed protection from the court, but this hardly explains the abundance of ironic and even sarcastic comments directed at the Jesuit. Consider these examples of the nun's questions: "Is literature an obstacle instead of an aid to salvation? Were Saint Augustine, Saint Ambrosius and the rest of the Holy Doctors not saved? And Your Reverence, loaded with learning as you are, do you not think you will be saved?" (p. 642 of third edition).

In light of this document, Paz's hypothesis gathers strength and drama, since the persecution and humiliation of Sor Juana seem more than ever to have been acts dictated by envy, vengeance and misogyny, motives joined by the institutionalized intolerance of orthodox religion.

The conclusion of the book is entitled "Essay of Restitution": a restitution of Sor Juana to her world, but also our own restitution to her world and, we may add, a paradoxical restitution of Sor Juana to our world. If the work of the Tenth Muse represents the culmination of Baroque art, the nun's intellectual conscience became the victim of a closed society condemned to paralysis. Throughout his text, Paz stresses the parallels between the viceregal world of the 17th century and the totalitarian bureaucracies of the 20th. Sor Juana attracts us, according to the author, because she is an example of dissidence, a free conscience clashing with the ideological, moral, political and religious norms of her time.

There is still one question, at least for this reader. Is Sor Juana really our contemporary? Were her conflicts with the powers of her time due to her disagreement with the ideological foundations of her society? Would it not be equally valid to say that the nun essentially shared the fundamentals of that universe and that her conflicts with the hierarchy were due mainly to the intolerance of two dominant figures? Is Sor Juana's contemporaneity not due above all to Paz's extraordinary reading, to the empathy and secret identification which the poet-intellectual of the 20th century has for the poet-intellectual of the 17th century? In *The Traps of Faith* the attentive reader may discover—projected onto Sor Juana—the keys to Paz's own intellectual autobiography.

But let us return to the issue which seems to be this multifaceted book's central hypothesis: the influence of the hermetic tradition on Sor Juana's thought. According to the author, this tradition illuminates several of the emblems, images, symbols and mythological figures which appear in "First Dream." It is difficult to evaluate this hypothesis, precisely because of the absence of historical studies in the Hispanic world regarding hermeticism's influence on Baroque literature. There are no books in Spanish comparable to those of Frances Yates regarding the influence of hermeticism on English literature and culture. With regard to Hispanic culture there is a clear need for fuller investigation into the complex relations between hermeticism and heresy. Paz's arguments are powerful, supported as they are by his enviable erudition, but now it is up to Sor Juana scholars to assess these conjectures.

The Traps of Faith is an impeccably written book, as one would expect from one of the greatest stylists of the Spanish language. The text seduces us not only with its accessible and enjoyable style but also with the breadth of perspectives offered and the sensitivity in its reading of Sor Juana's poetry. It is a passionate and exciting book. There are few studies of this magnitude in Hispanic culture written by one poet about the life and work of another. Recreating a world, reconstructing and updating a life, deciphering and critically analyzing a body of work, this book exemplifies two of the essential features which Paz encounters in the life and work of Sor Juana: rigorous passion for knowledge and obstinate intellectual independence.

Anthony Stanton

El Colegio de México.

Essay originally published in
Literatura Mexicana Vol. 1 (1990).

The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican

Helen Delpar

University of Alabama Press,
Tuscaloosa and London, 1992.
274 pp.

The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican: Cultural Relations between the United States and Mexico, 1920-1935 reads like a lively biographical dictionary of Mexican and American intellectuals and artists who crossed the U.S.-Mexico border in their endeavors. Helen Delpar has produced a well-structured book that looks at many aspects of cultural relations between Mexico and the United States. She proceeds chronologically, covering the 1920s and picking up some of the same people in a chapter on the '30s. Anthropologists and archaeologists are dealt with in a separate chapter, as are exchanges in literature, music and the performing arts.

Structure and patterns

Delpar begins each chapter with a brief sketch of the cultural and political history of each of the two countries. She sketches major events and trends, providing a framework for individuals and their creative work.

The background is followed with statistics presented in clear tables, which substantiate her hypotheses. We learn about the number of students enrolled in Spanish classes in the United States; those enrolled in summer school in Mexico; the number of Mexicans who emigrate to or return from the United States in a given period; the number of films with Mexican subjects; works of fiction about Mexico, and other facts.

Once the stage is set the author proceeds with a complex narration of people, their work, their friends, their opinions, and often citations from their work. When the material has to do with specific plays, movies and books, Delpar also quotes a selection of critical reviews.

Although she does not include her own opinions, selective quotes allow the reader to glimpse her views on the political positions of people such as Carleton Beals, Ernest Gruening, Frank Tannenbaum, Bertram and Ella Wolfe and others she describes as "left."

Overwhelming wealth of information

It is difficult to describe the amount of information included in this book. Delpar covers a plethora of well-known, lesser-known and downright obscure intellectuals active in the U.S. and Mexico. Yet the section on Mexican muralists' influence in the United States regrettably omits Lucienne Bloch Dimitroff, a woman who worked with Diego Rivera in New York and Detroit and went on to create many of her own fresco murals.

We are treated to anecdotes illuminating relationships among the intellectuals, their activities during a given period of time, their past and

what lay ahead for them. This includes considerable detail on peoples' comings and goings: there are Americans who settle in Mexico, such as William Spratling; others such as John Dos Passos only visit; Ernest Gruening stays for a while to research his book, while others, such as Katherine Anne Porter, go back and forth. Detailed information is given on those who receive Guggenheim grants, among them Hart Crane.

Similar descriptions are given of Mexicans who travel north, among them Salvador Novo, Miguel Covarrubias (who lived in New York for extended periods of time and became a part of that city's intellectual community), José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, Rufino Tamayo and Carlos Chávez.

Then there are those who are simply impossible to classify. One of them is Anita Brenner, who was born in Mexico, left during the Revolution of 1910, subsequently returned to Mexico City and later went to New York to do her doctorate at Columbia University under Franz Boas, before returning to Mexico once more in 1943. She was both a Mexican and an American.

Brenner was a member of the multinational group that the artist Jean Charlot describes as a "family" of intellectuals and artists in Mexico City. Rather than a "link among the various Americans and their Mexican friends" (as Delpar calls her on p. 40), she became a bridge between countries whose writing focused on making Mexico understood in the United States.

Social scientists: anthropologists and archaeologists

Delpar also provides an in-depth chapter on the relationship between Mexican and American anthropologists and archaeologists, presenting a detailed history of excavations and those who led them. She does an excellent job of describing the complex links between

anthropologists, which often go back to work at the same institutions. U.S. scholars' respect for Mexico's post-revolutionary education policies for adults and efforts to integrate indigenous peoples into the mainstream is duly noted. Manuel Gamio is credited as a pioneering cultural anthropologist who focused on those denied the benefits of

education under the Porfirio Díaz regime.

Delpar traces Gamio's entry to Columbia University to Zelia Nuttall, an American archaeologist who settled in Mexico and participated in several digs, including the still controversial identification of the site of Cuauhtémoc's tomb. Although the relationship between Gamio and Franz

Boas is mentioned, regrettably Boas' work in Mexico is not included.

The book also presents a chronology of excavations in the Yucatan, and the subsequent broadening of work there from archaeology to ethnology, identifying Robert Redfield's early work with Alfonso Villa Rojas.¹

Resource for students and scholars

The information gathered in *The Enormous Vogue of Things Mexican* provides students and scholars with an impressive volume of notes and bibliographical references. The author has provided a starting point, a thread for researchers on U.S.-Mexico relations, cultural links or the humanities in general. There are few exceptions to this volume's high standard of scholarship. One is the inclusion of Anita Brenner in the list of people who received the Aztec Eagle Award for foreigners from the Mexican Government, omitting the fact that Anita Brenner refused the award on the grounds that she was a Mexican, not a foreigner.

Delpar's position is readily identifiable as that of a U.S. scholar who covers an overwhelming amount of accessible documentation. Bicultural and Mexican souls will bristle at some of the quotes which subtly take stabs at Mexico. Those unfamiliar with the work of the intellectuals and artists included will not recognize the omissions and slants.

The author is to be commended for producing an excellent resource that will be a reference for students in an increasingly popular field, which in recent years has witnessed a veritable "vogue of the 1920s and '30s in Mexico."

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¹ See *Voices of Mexico* 30, p. 89.

Funeral oration

Octavio Paz*

On the 17th of April 1695, at four o'clock in the morning, in one of these very same cells, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz died. She was 46 years and 5 months old. According to Juan Ignacio Castorena y Ursúa, who was her friend and to whom we owe the publication in 1700 of the third and last volume of her works, Don Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora wrote a funeral oration in memory of our poetess, which has been lost. Now, Carmen Beatriz López Portillo, director of the Cloister of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, as well as the president of the National Council for Culture and the Arts, have asked me to give a brief speech, not as a substitute for what has been lost, which is irreplaceable, but rather to allow a voice from the 20th century to join those of the 17th century who praised her memory. I accept this assignment with gratitude as well as fear. The funeral oration is a genre in which the Baroque Age excelled, but I am not Bossuet. I will attempt to remedy my lack of eloquence with enthusiasm.

No one has ever seen the funeral oration which Castorena spoke of, but there is no reason to doubt his word: Sigüenza y Góngora knew and admired Sor Juana, although there were some disagreements between them. What seems impossible to me is that he would have read this text publicly. Sor Juana died in an epidemic which decimated her convent. Calleja relates that nine out of ten nuns lost their lives. Even if this were an exaggeration—that century loved hyperbole—what is certain is that the poetess had no public funeral rites to honor her memory. In an epidemic the survivors make haste to bury the dead. The only ceremonies which could be carried out in those cases, according to the spirit of that epoch, were acts of atonement and expiation: divine justice had to be placated. Thus, it is not rash to believe that the lost funeral oration was never pronounced.

This episode corroborates the fact that the figure of Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz always invited controversy and debate. She was a contradictory person: a natural [i.e., illegitimate] daughter, taken in by relatives as a young girl; lady in

waiting to one viceroy's wife and intimate friend of another; a beautiful young woman well-versed in courtly gallantries and a learned nun in perpetual communication with the world, so much so as to convert her convent's parlor into a literary circle; the wonder of New and Old Spain; a spirit avid for knowledge and curious about news and ideas who suddenly renounced science and human letters; a character riven by contradictory impulses, chiaroscuro throughout, sudden illuminations followed by shadows, at one and the same time laughing and melancholy; clear intelligence accompanied by an independent, proud will which, with the same vehemence, humiliated and martyred its flesh with a hair shirt. Which of all these images is the truth? I answer: all of them. We men are double and triple. Gide says it is simple-minded to believe that there are simple feelings.

Our perplexity grows because of the lack of letters, manuscripts and other testimony. In 1929, Dorothy Schons wrote: "The biography of Sor Juana is still to be written." Today, seventy years later, the situation is unchanged. In 1950, almost half a century ago, Alfonso Méndez Plancarte lamented: "Up to the present, no one has searched Madrid for an epistolary or manuscripts of the first two volumes of Sor Juana; much less in Seville and its surroundings...." Sor Juana Inés wrote hundreds of letters, which today are scattered to the four cardinal winds. Doubtless many are now dust, victims of insects and human negligence.

A deplorable loss, particularly the correspondence with the Countess of Paredes and Father Diego Calleja. In my 1982 study on the poetess, I asked our institutes of culture and our government to support researchers in their quest to find those papers and manuscripts in El Escorial and Madrid, among the living descendants of the Countess of Paredes, the files of the Society of Jesus and in Seville, instead of building monuments of dubious taste and publishing expensive reprints of her works. Today I renew my request.

The absence of documents has contributed to the extraordinary oscillations the figure of this writer has gone through over the course of these three centuries. Periods of light and periods of darkness, years of glory and years of condemnation, two centuries of oblivion and the

Text read by the poet, on the night of April 17, in the Cloister of Sor Juana, on the 300th anniversary of the poetess's death.

* Nobel Prize-winner in Literature.

resurrection of the 20th century, first within a small circle of poets and scholars and later through transformation into a popular symbol, a symbol of feminism and national glory whose effigy is printed on national currency. Throughout those images the real Sor Juana escapes us. The public images are deceiving; they are simplifications which give but a stereotype supplanting the real person, always complex and diverse. The mask immobilizes the living and changing face. How can we rescue a great writer from that eternity of smoke which is fame? The real truth of the poetess and prose writer is in her work. Yes, we need to find out about Sor Juana's correspondence and manuscripts, but above all, we need to read her works with the care they deserve. We must learn to decipher her truth "between the lines of damage."

Although she was above all a poetess, Sor Juana has left us prose writings that are worthy of remembrance. One of these is her letter to the Bishop of Puebla, called *Answer to Sor Filotea de la Cruz*, an important text in the history of Hispanic literature and the annals of women's liberation. An intellectual autobiography, it relates her apprenticeship, disillusionments and discoveries. There is nothing like it in Hispanic literature in her century or those that followed. An account of adventures in solitary thinking, in search of understanding and in dialogue with itself, is a theme little frequented by writers of our language. The interest in this text grows and intensifies as soon as it is noted that a woman wrote it. Neither Louise Labé nor Madame de Sevigné in the past, nor, in the 19th century, George Sand or the Brontë sisters have left us a history of their intellectual life. Neither have those poetesses like Emily Dickinson, Mariene Moore, Gabriela Mistral or Elizabeth Bishop of the modern age and of our hemisphere. In Sor Juana there is an unusual and triple conjunction: the intellectual, the poet and the woman. In our century she would have been a great essayist, because of the fusion of two qualities which are almost always counterposed: reason and feeling.

Poetess abundant and varied, she cultivated the theater both sacred and profane, poetry both lyrical and metaphysical; that is, that poetry whose protagonists are the human spirit and the world that surrounds us. Her mastery of nearly all forms and meters is surprising. If verse is the art of count and proportion, Sor Juana was a great versifier, comparable to Góngora and Lope de Vega in the 17th century and Darío and Lugones in our own. She was outstanding in a theater genre which has now disappeared: the eucharistic play. While her teacher was Calderón, *The Divine Narcissus* is the work not of a disciple but of a rival.

A well designed and crafted piece, *The Divine Narcissus* interweaves echoes of Ovid, neo-Platonist hermeticism and the Bible. A slender tower made of shimmering syllables, thoughtful syllables that invite us to think. Facing the complex aerial architecture of *The Divine Narcissus* is the musical treasure chest of its carols and songs for sacred festivals, which do not disdain popular speech nor the rhythm of castanets and clapping hands. Poems with winged shoes.

Sor Juana is outstanding for the expression of amorous feelings and its critical moments: meetings, farewells, jealousy, tears, laughter, solitude. Poetry not of divine love but of human love, which can be compared only to Lope de Vega and Quevedo. It is not a torrent like that of the former, nor an abyss like that of the latter: it is a pool of water in which the lover is simultaneously mirrored and erased. In the poetry of our tradition, with its tendency to go to extremes, Sor Juana represents lucidity and melancholy, a reflective gaze and nostalgia.

Poetry of love and poetry of thought. She believed her most polished and perfect work was "a small work called *The Dream*," better known by the name given by its publisher: *First Dream*. She was not wrong; within its century that poem stands like a tall and solitary tower. It has been said and repeated that *First Dream* is an imitation of Góngora. I have already demonstrated that the differences between *Solitudes* by the poet from Córdoba and Sor Juana's poem are more pronounced and profound than the similarities. The latter reflect the reigning style of the time, influenced by Góngora; the former result from two different visions of the world. Góngora delights in what he sees, and he recreates it; Sor Juana wants to go beyond that and penetrate the secret mechanism which moves the hinges of the cosmos. Not the poetry of seeing but rather that of knowing. In one case, a world of colored images in which a girl's complexion is "snowy purple"; in the other, one made of shadows and clarity, a geometry of pyramids and obelisks built by thoughts in an abstract landscape. The mind contemplates the nocturnal universe, inhabited by stars which are ideas, but never succeeds in understanding what it sees. The soul, freed from the prison of the body, has a revelation which in the end resolves itself into a non-revelation. Wonder when confronted by the cosmos follows the failure of understanding, which cannot grasp it as a whole or in its diversity.

A truly great poet not only expresses his or her time but goes beyond it. For a vision similar to that of *First Dream* to arise, over two centuries had to go by: in 1897 Mallarmé presented his poem *A Throw of the Dice Will*

Never Abolish Fate, which also relates the pilgrimage of the human spirit in the starry heavens. Its final chords seem to echo and answer the poem by Sor Juana, whom he never read: the constellations sketch a sign in the night, which is neither that of the absolute nor that of fate, but of a Perhaps which absorbs them into a question mark. For her lyrical poetry, Sor Juana is one of the great poets of our language; with *First Dream* she reaches universality.

The last years of her life were dramatic. In late November of 1690, her criticism of a sermon by the famous Portuguese Jesuit Antonio de Vieira was made public. It is a theological piece which would not interest the modern reader if it were not also an intelligent defense of freedom. The greatest favor God can do for us, says Sor Juana, is a negative one: to do us no favors. Thus would our free will grow. The idea scandalized many. The Bishop of Puebla reprimanded her; Sor Juana replied, as I said; and her reply unleashed a bitter debate which she describes for us with passion and irony. A challenge that ended in defeat: in 1693 she gave up

writing. Were her belated acts of contrition and obedience to the misogynist prelates who attacked her genuine apologies? They seem to suggest the contrary: the fears of a isolated and fenced-in woman. She died less than two years after her renunciation.

For her defense of liberty and women's right to knowledge, Sor Juana has bequeathed us something no less precious than her work: her example. Thinking of her end, I remember that of Hipatia, the mathematician, beautiful and wise like her, and whom she cited in her *Answer*. In a poem Palladas of Alexandria compares her to the constellation of Virgo; following his example I have composed these four verses:

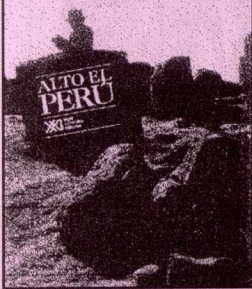
*Juana Inés de la Cruz, when I ponder
the pure lights up above,
not words but stars do I spell out:
your works are clauses of fire. ✕*

Translated from *La Jornada*, April 19, 1995.



siglo veintiuno editores

JULIO CORTÁZAR
MANJA OFFERHAUS



Artes (La voz de la luz)

ALTO EL PERÚ

Julio
CORTÁZAR/
Manja
OFFERHAUS

Una fotógrata hace una serie de fotografías conmovedoras de la vida de los indios peruanos y Cortázar escribe a su lado unas páginas deslumbradoras. "Las palabras no son un comentario: las fotos no son una ilustración", dice Cortázar. No es un reportaje ni una encuesta ni una entrevista. Y, sin embargo, la síntesis estética se logra de manera admirable y producen un libro entrañable: "sonata para dos instrumentos", concluye el gran autor argentino.

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Benita Galeana: incorruptible fighter for social justice

Benita, all heart and modesty, is suddenly gone. Symbol of an epoch; autodidact of revolution... a woman up in arms....

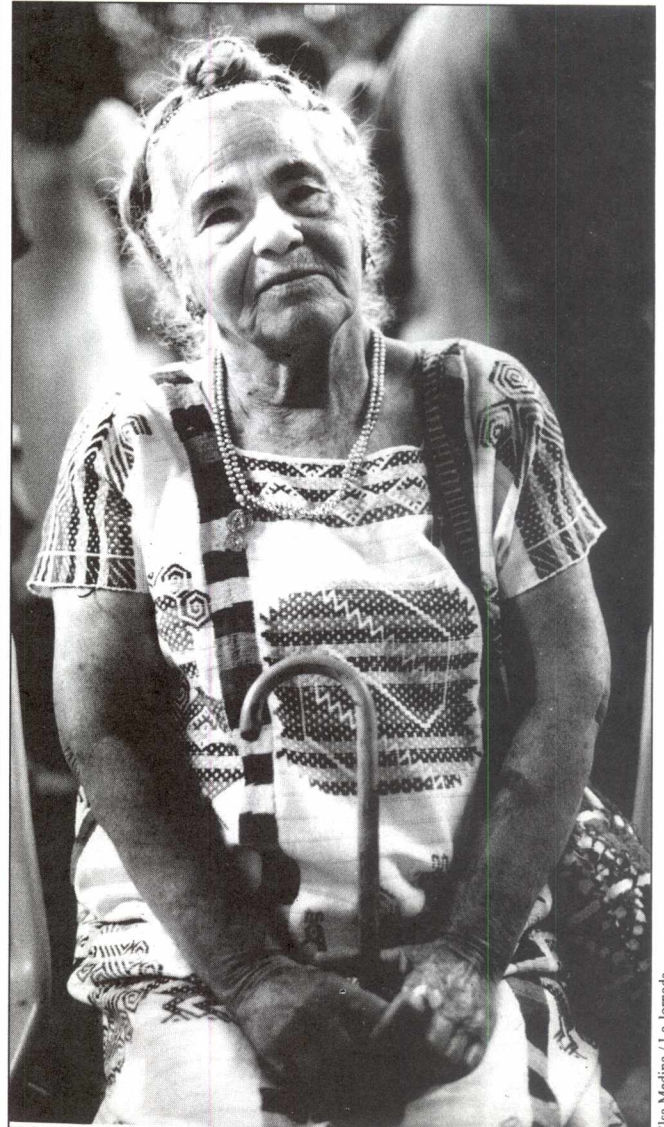
Carlos Fazio

Benita Galeana, a grass-roots fighter and life-long Communist who was considered one of the most important Mexican women of the 20th century, died in Mexico City on April 17 —the same day which commemorates the death of a great woman of the 17th century: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Benita was born in San Jerónimo de Juárez, Guerrero, in 1907. Orphaned at the age of two, she came under the care of her older sister, Camila, who put her to work at an early age and never allowed her to attend public school. In her autobiography, Benita recalls that time of her life as being filled with hardships, beatings and disappointments. But instead of breaking her, the hardships made her stronger and taught her to fight for her ideals.

When she was still an adolescent she fulfilled her dream of going to Mexico City. By that time she was already a mother and had to leave her daughter, Lilia, with the child's paternal grandmother for a time, since her situation did not allow her to take the little girl along.

She arrived in Mexico City in the 1920's, a young woman, tall and beautiful, with her hair arranged in long braids—a style she would maintain her whole life. Her first job was as a hat-check girl in the *El Viejo Jalisco* cabaret; later, she worked for the Postal Service and Social Security. A well-known anecdote from those years tells how the PCM (Mexican Communist Party)—in an act of inexplicable prudery—expelled Benita from their ranks twenty years later, after it became publicly known that she



Elsa Medina / La Jornada

had helped many of her party comrades with the income she earned at the cabaret.

She became a Communist before she turned twenty-five years old, in an incidental way. Her companion, Manuel Rodríguez, a member of the Mexican Communist Party, had been imprisoned for distributing anti-government propaganda. Benita participated in a rally demanding his freedom, but as she was about to speak the police arrived and arrested her for disturbing the peace. At that time—in the late 1920's—the Mexican Communist Party operated in clandestinity; its members and supporters were persecuted and frequently imprisoned.

During her brief stay in prison, Benita reflected on the meaning of the workers' struggle and the Communist cause, as she said in her autobiography: "I began to take an interest and would ask the Party comrades to explain things I didn't understand: what was imperialism, what about Japan, China...and all the rest" (*Benita*, Lince Editores, 1990, p. 76).

From that time on, her participation was indispensable at lightning meetings, protest events, graffiti-painting, the distribution of Party propaganda, and sales of *El Machete*, the PCM's newspaper, whose distribution had been prohibited by the authorities. "Without knowing how to read, along the way, by asking questions and listening to her party's orators Benita educated herself in political struggle and in the PCM's ideological line. During those years she became an orator with an enormous ability to win a following and to organize" (Sara Lovera, *La Jornada*, April 18). The police got to know her very well, so when meetings were held, she was one of the first to go to jail. The cry "Grab Benita!" became commonplace during confrontations with the cops. It is said that she was arrested on 58 occasions and beaten dozens of times.

Benita defended the right to free speech and to carry out political activity during an era in which prejudices against women were still predominant and there was a clear

double standard which permitted certain kinds of behavior for men and rejected the same behavior in women. "During the '30s women still couldn't vote or be elected and, of course, they had no right to make decisions in the halls of government" (Amalia García, "Doble Jornada," *La Jornada*, May 8).

Benita soon got involved in battles for a bill of juridical protection for workers, for family social security, respect for the right to strike, trade unionism, the emancipation of women in the factories, and against rising prices for staple goods. Her work was always that of a rank-and-filer, since she never occupied a post in the Party. In the mid-'30s, during the administration of President Lázaro Cárdenas, the PCM obtained its legal registration and Benita could freely carry out her activities in favor of all the causes of the downtrodden.

When she was more than thirty years old she learned to read on her own and, with the aid of a typewriter, wrote her autobiography, *Benita* (1940), which has gone through a series of editions. She also published a book of stories, *Peso mocho* (1985) and left the second part of her biography, *Actos vividos* in galleys.

Always happy and optimistic, she had a number of amorous experiences; but the only one she considered really satisfying was her 37 years of marriage to writer and reporter Mario Gill. Benita retired from public life for several years after his death. Her daughter Lilia had died at the age of twenty-four from heart disease, but Benita and Mario Gill adopted six girls, about whom little or nothing is currently known.

She knew and lived alongside important Mexican literary and historical figures such as Juan de la Cabada, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, Germán Lizt Arzubide, Leopoldo Méndez, Mirta Aguirre and especially José Revueltas, whom she helped join the Party when he was an adolescent. However, she

Grab Benita!

Marcelo González Bustos, historian and friend of Benita Galeana, remembers one of the many incidents in which the fighter for social justice risked her physical safety to defend her comrades-in-struggle. This one occurred in 1952:

"The car was entering Military Camp No. 1 when Benita threw herself on the trunk to try to stop it. Taking advantage of the car's open window, she stuck her hand in and grabbed then-President Miguel Alemán's tie, shook him and said: 'Are you going to give me the prisoners? Yes or no!' She watched as his Adam's apple went up and down under the pressure she was applying to his neck.

"The president asked for their names and a few days later Benita's friends, who were members of the grass-roots organization Squadron 201, were freed from jail" (*Reforma*, April 19).

distrusted those people she considered “stuck up.” In an interview with the writer Elena Poniatowska, she confessed her antipathy for Frida Kahlo: “That annoying Frida always rubbed me the wrong way.... We would see each other at demonstrations, but she was with the artists, and they never, even by mistake, joined with us front-line soldiers” (*Benita*, p. XII).

She visited the Soviet Union in the era when — according to her — “nobody was unemployed.” In 1988, she fulfilled her dream to visit Cuba and personally meet Fidel Castro, whom she greatly admired. She also visited Manuel Noriega’s Panama.

Her last seven years were filled with intense activity; she fought for democracy, respect for the popular vote, freedom to demonstrate and civil rights. Last year she even went to San Cristóbal de las Casas, Chiapas, to support the movement for peace in that state. In March she attended a rally for the freedom of seven women prisoners accused of being Zapatistas, and just a few days before her death she participated in a Mexico City protest against tax increases.

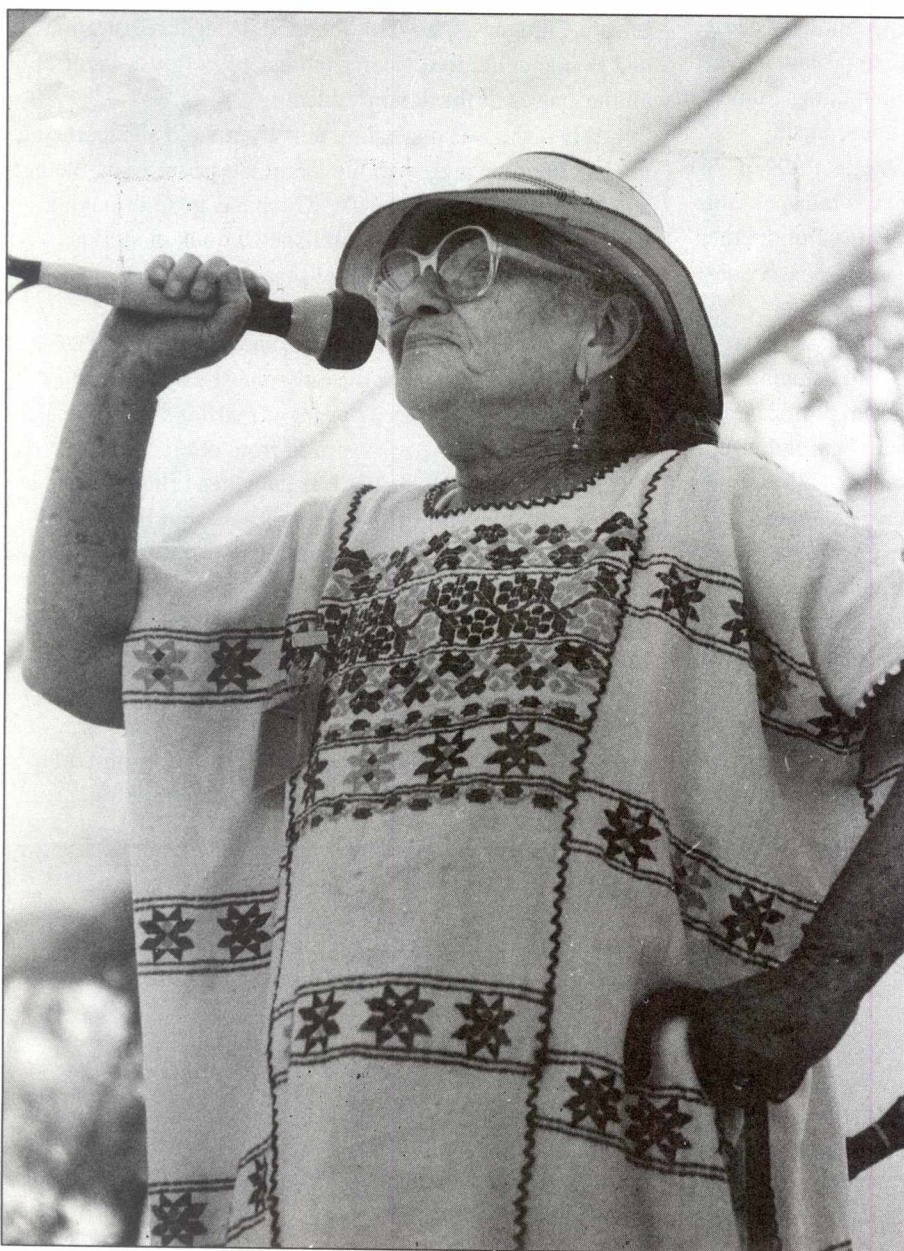
Benita was the recipient of numerous awards and tributes during her life. Several women’s groups that participate in pro-democracy struggles named their umbrella organization the Benita Galeana Women’s

Coordinating Committee; a ballad was written about her; Guerrero State Radio and Television produced a biographical radio novel on her, now being retransmitted by Radio Educación; Mexico City’s Channel 11 transmitted a video with photographs of this fighter for social justice, and a movie about her life is to be produced. The day after her death, the Chamber of Deputies held a minute of silence in her memory.

The house where she lived for forty years is a testament to seven decades of struggle for her ideals. With more than 2,000 books, many photographs and paintings, it has been converted into the Women’s Study Center, which is what she wanted.

Comparing Benita’s life with that of Sor Juana, Horacio Labastida states: “Sor Juana and Benita were different and yet the same. The former did not know that the source of her agony was an unjust political establishment; the latter, illiterate, understood this immediately. But both coincided in giving priority to human freedom over any attempt to destroy it” (*La Jornada*, April 21). ❧

Elsie Montiel
Assistant Editor.



Frida Hartz / La Jornada.

Chapultepec, a sacred place

Cinacalco was a very pleasant and restful place, where men lived forever, without dying. It was the place of clear, crystalline waters, of great fertility, of every kind of victual and the freshness of roses and flowers.

Fray Diego Durán.

Cinacalco was the name of the place the first Toltecs sought to settle in. They were looking for a place with caves where they could take refuge and feel protected, as in the maternal womb, with springs and trees which would provide them with food. So when they found Chapultepec they believed it was the Eden they were seeking. From that time on Chapultepec was regarded as sacred by all the pre-Hispanic tribes that lived there.

Chapultepec, Chapoltepec or Chapultepeque are variations on the Náhuatl term derived from the roots *chapul(in)*—grasshopper— and *tepe(tl)*—hill or mountain. Thus the woods with their little hill are still known by the first name it was given: “on the hill of the grasshopper.”

Tall *ahuehuete* trees with an abundance of leaves provided shade in some of the wooded areas, giving them the air of an enchanted forest according to descriptions in the ancient codices. Lakes extended throughout the woods, feeding the thirsty *ahuehuetes*; to cleanse themselves of sins and illnesses, local inhabitants would bathe in the springs that arose from the depths of the earth.

Fray Bernardino de Sahagún wrote that these springs (known in

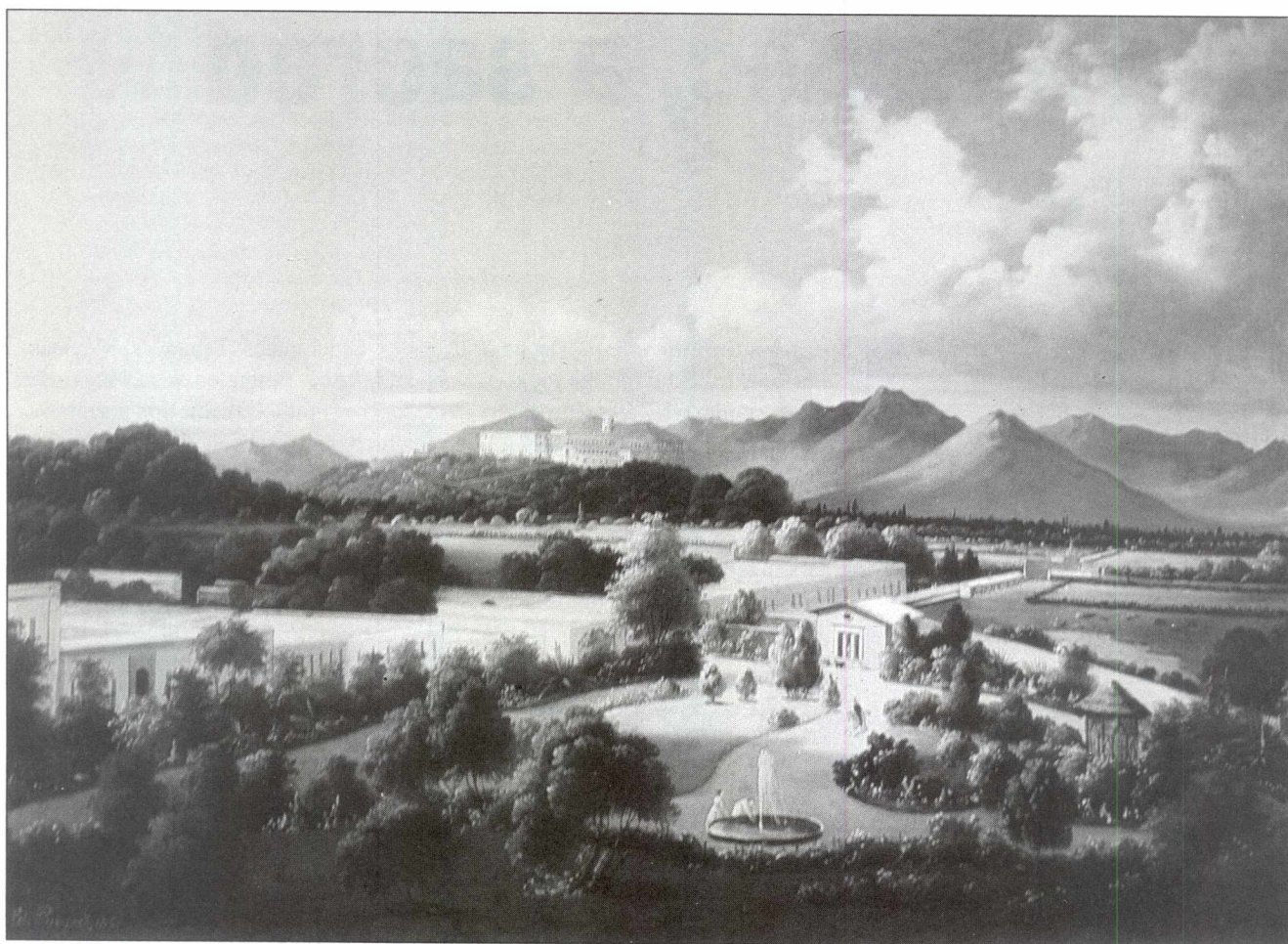
Spanish as *ojos de agua*—“eyes of water”) were related to the local peoples’ gods, who were appeased by offerings and sacrifices. All this beauty was complemented by the stony hill which could be seen from a distance, and which served the area’s inhabitants as a perfect look-out for defending their home from possible invasions.

Chichimecs, Tepanecs, Mexicas and Aztecs struggled at various times for the right to inhabit this region, which was also rich in a variety of edible fauna, such as rabbits and hares, deer and grasshoppers.¹

¹ Grasshoppers (*chapulines*), often served with chile and lime, are still a delicacy in many parts of Mexico. (Editor’s note.)



Western façade of Chapultepec Castle.



Eduardo Pingret, *San Miguel Chapultepec*, 1851.

With the arrival of the Mexicas, the forest reached its apogee in the pre-Hispanic period. They carried out the first known construction project in that area: the *teocalli*, a temple which crowned the top of Chapultepec hill. It fulfilled the functions of both shrine and fortress.

In addition to the *teocalli* there was an observatory or solar meridian on top of the hill. Antonio de León y Gamo discovered some ruins which could still be found in the late 18th century. The most lasting and “practical” constructions were the pools and aqueducts built by the Mexicas after they went to live in the floating city in the middle of the lake.

It was from Chapultepec that Emperor Moctezuma governed the great city of Tenochtitlán. For Hernán

Cortés, the wooded zone summed up his personal desire to take over property to which Indians laid claim. When the United States army invaded Mexico in 1847, it chose to seize Chapultepec Castle, which represented the key to Mexico, rather than the National Palace. For the Hapsburg Emperor Maximilian, the forest and its castle were a heartening replacement for his abandoned Castle of Miramar in Trieste, and they may have been the first things that induced him and his wife Carlota to live in the New World.

The Castle

In order to reach Chapultepec Castle, visitors climb a curved road. At the beginning of this road is the fabulous grotto which gave rise to innumerable legends, the best-known of which is

that it was the sign the first Toltecs sought for identifying their place of origin. For some time this was the location of an elevator that rose to the Castle.

Reaching the peak of this peculiar hill—the vantage point from which Huitzilihuitl, Netzahualcóyotl and Moctezuma admired Tenochtitlán as well as the Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl volcanoes—one encounters the Castle. Today visitors look out on the panorama of the planet’s most populated city.

The Castle’s majestic salons, bedrooms and marble staircases, walls and pillars, together with decorations brought from around the world, bear witness to Mexico’s history. Looking back at that history today, we see this edifice as the result

of the plans, desires, envies and dreams of kings, viceroys, revolutionaries and presidents.

Hernán Cortés ordered the construction of a grand terrace as well as a gunpowder warehouse, the only way he saw to use this area given the Spanish crown's refusal to grant it to him as a place of residence; he also ordered that both the hill and the surrounding woods continue to be a place for public recreation.

With the arrival of the various viceroys in New Spain (as Mexico was then known), Chapultepec forest became an exclusive area for the diversion of the new settlers, who turned it into a European-style park.

During that period a small *casa de descanso* (weekend or leisure-time residence) was built, in which soirées of such magnitude were held that the Spanish crown forbade them during

the viceroyalty of Luis de Velasco, given their excessive cost; this led to the park being closed for a long time.

When Don Matías de Gálvez arrived in Mexico to take over the post of viceroy, one of his biggest dreams was to build a *casa de descanso*, but he died before he could see it constructed. His son, Don Bernardo, continued the project.

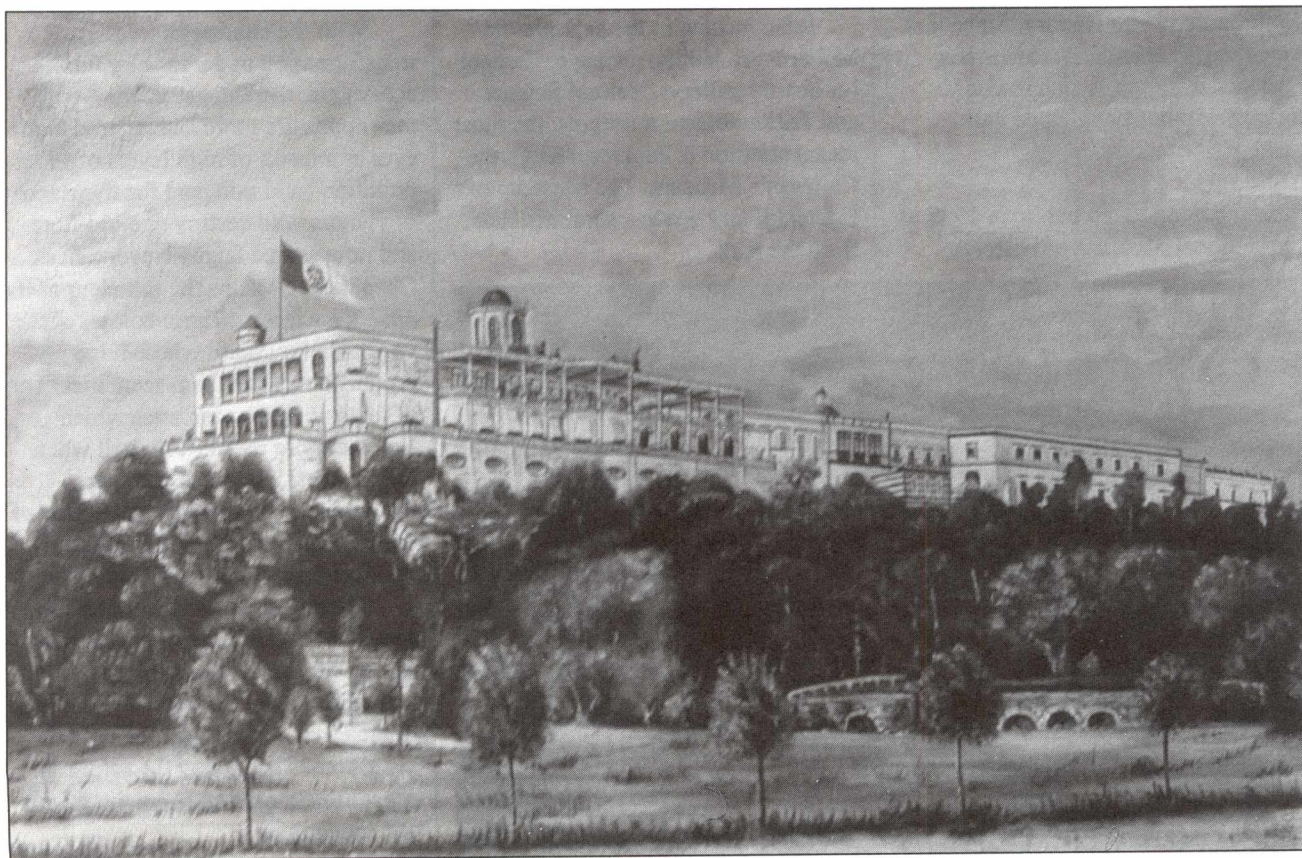
Master architects Don Josef Joachim García de Torres and Don Francisco Antonio Guerrero y Torres made the original plans, and with the death of Viceroy Gálvez Don Manuel Agustín Mascaró drew up new ones. The work lasted two years, two months and eight days, from August 16, 1785 to October 24, 1787, but the younger Gálvez was also unable to witness the conclusion of what already began to be called the Castle: he died a year before its completion.

After then, up to the Insurgency war, the Chapultepec Castle "remained abandoned like an eagle's nest on a mountain peak. People said that the spirit of Count Gálvez lived there on the heights."²

The Castle was completed in 1842 and made into the headquarters of the Military College. In 1847 it suffered the second of two explosions: the first had occurred at the end of the 18th century when the gunpowder warehouse blew up, and the second resulted from bombardment by U.S. army troops.

The building that bore the greatest resemblance to today's edifice was the product of reconstruction and remodeling of the abandoned Castle,

² Miguel Angel Fernández, *Chapultepec, historia y presencia* (Past and Present of Chapultepec). Mexico City, private edition published by Smurfit Cartón y Papel de México, 1988, p. 70.



Chapultepec, oil painting by unknown author, ca. 1900.

as well as the beautification of the woods, ordered with great enthusiasm by Emperor Maximilian, who under the reign of Napoleon III arrived to rule Mexico in 1862.

Maximilian decreed the construction of Emperor Road, uniting Chapultepec with the city center, so he could travel to the National Palace each day; this road followed the trail that had been blazed back in the days of Tenochtitlán. Under the regime of Porfirio Díaz it became the present-day Paseo de la Reforma. When Maximilian's empire was overthrown by Benito Juárez, the Castle was once again left in oblivion.

The lands of Chapultepec reached their greatest splendor during the "Belle Époque" of Don Porfirio. But in 1939, by decree of General Lázaro Cárdenas, the building whose construction had been ordered by Count Gálvez came under the jurisdiction of the National Institute of Anthropology and History. Since that time the presidential residence has been at Los Pinos, which is also located within Chapultepec Park.

Museums

Since opening to the public in 1939 as the National Museum of History,

Chapultepec Castle has become one of the locations with the largest number of visitors in Mexico. In the meantime other important museums have been built in the park, covering themes related to history, nature, science, technology and several fields of art.

There are seven in all, including the National Museum of Anthropology, which features the world's most complete exhibition on pre-Hispanic Mexican culture—from the traces of the first inhabitants through the maces and shields used against the Spanish conquerors. On its upper level and in its storerooms, the museum also houses an impressive ethnographic collection. It is home to the image of the Aztec goddess Coatlicue, symbol of the earth as creation and destruction, mother of women and men, as well as the Sun Stone, better known as the Aztec Calendar. An interesting sidelight is that several of the pieces were discovered nearby, in the pools of Chapultepec.

Also located in the park are the Modern Art, Rufino Tamayo, Caracol (or history gallery), Natural Science and Technological museums; the most recent addition is Papalote (Kite), the Children's Museum. The Museum of Contemporary Art is a short distance from the park.

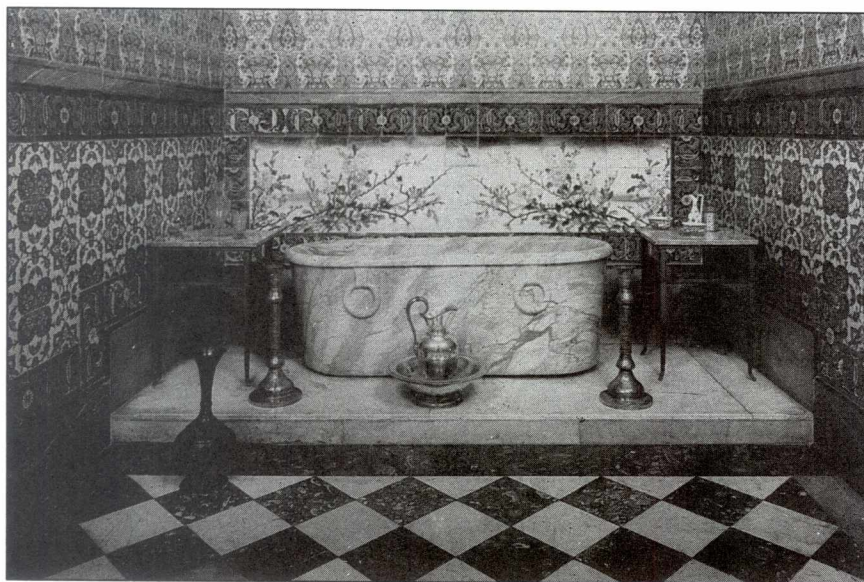


Malachite room.

Chapultepec Park offers visitors a wide variety of activities, in the realm not only of culture but of recreation as well. Among its features are the Zoo, recently remodeled to provide greater freedom and comfort for the animals, and the National Auditorium, which is considered the second best show center in the world.

With the enormous transformation undergone by this ecosystem, the "lungs" of the metropolis are more endangered than ever as a result of high levels of pollution, acid rain, and the thousands of visitors who destroy age-old flora and now-scarce fauna. Nevertheless, Chapultepec retains the grandeur of its *ahuehuate* trees, "Those colossi of the vegetable kingdom, whose huge proportions make them seem creations of fantasy; these aged ones which become more melancholy still when their leaves, like green tears, are contemplated in the thick reflection of the swamps" (in the words of the 19th-century writer Paul Duplessis).

Their mystery is still revered by some, such as the chess players who loyally arrive for afternoons of relaxation in the park, or those who go rowing in the lake when the crowds are absent. They enjoy the refuge and peacefulness offered us by the woods of Chapultepec. ✧



Bathroom with marble tub which belonged to the Empress Carlota.

The persistence of Mexico

Mary Schneider Enriquez*

“Often, in times of crisis, the arts produce more,” says Gerardo Suter, one of Mexico’s leading contemporary photographers. “In the last economic crisis, artists, filmmakers, writers and photographers continued producing, and with more energy and vitality than before.”

Amid the after-effects of a major currency devaluation and the resulting instability of the Mexican economy, the Mexican art world is taking a collective breath as it awaits the decline of government and private-sector arts support. “At the end of each presidential administration, everything comes to a halt as funding and leadership changes alter arts institutions and planned projects,” says Pilar García, an art historian and member of the Mexico City arts think tank CURARE. “But this time, after six years of more projects, more scholarships, and more private-sector and government arts initiatives than ever before, the harsh economic reality suggests that the next year for the arts will stand in bleak contrast to the preceding ones.”

Nonetheless, artists, dealers and curators alike judge the situation as temporary, and believe that past

First published in *ARTnews*, April, 1995.

momentum will continue to propel upcoming exhibitions and projects. Armando Colina, director of Arvil Gallery in Mexico City, which shows modern masters such as Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and José Clemente Orozco, is celebrating the gallery’s 25th anniversary with a

series of ten historical exhibitions. “Here in Mexico we have lived through these crises before and things continue,” says Colina. “There is a dynamic in the art world that you cannot stop; you must continue creating, organizing, and presenting, regardless.”



Gerardo Suter, *Tlaloc*, 1991.

* *ARTnews*' Mexico correspondent.

This tone pervades the Mexican art community. New museums have opened in the last year, such as the widely hailed Centro de la Imagen photography museum and the Dolores Olmedo Museum, housing Olmedo's impressive collection of Rivera and Kahlo works; and others are being proposed, such as a center for contemporary art in Guadalajara, currently undergoing a feasibility study.

Rafael Tovar y de Teresa, the president of the National Council for Culture and Arts, stated last January that cultural priorities and objectives would be redefined without severely diminishing the budget. According to the Mexico City daily *La Jornada*, Tovar y de Teresa pledged continued support for artists' scholarships, arts projects, the Centro de la Imagen, and the National Center for the Arts, inaugurated by President Salinas in November 1994, which includes the schools of visual arts, dance, theater and film.

Realistically, though, the art community anticipates cutbacks. Funds for culture cannot continue at the levels prior to the devaluation. Teresa del Conde, director of the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City, explains the steps she has taken to assure the continuity of her programs. "We established a Friends Society, which

Adolfo Patiño, *Santa Frida*, 1988.

runs our bookstore. The revenues earned from this store are used to support, for example, the museum's education programs, ranging from youth studio courses to advanced theory programs in which students can earn their diploma." Regarding exhibitions, Del Conde continues: "American Express has funded some, namely the Giorgio de Chirico and Remedios Varo exhibitions,



Sergio Hernández, *Untitled*, 1989.

and we are now organizing an exhibition of Mexican artist Laura Anderson, scheduled for March, with their support. Now more than ever we have to find business sponsors to fund exhibitions."

Even private museums such as the Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporáneo, funded by the international telecommunications giant Televisa, feel the effects of the weak economy. "Due to the devaluation, we have had to cancel all but two of the international exhibitions planned for 1995 — 'Vestiges of the Holy Land: Selections from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem' and 'Ikko Tanaka: Art of the Japanese Poster,' " according to a curator at the museum. "But we have scheduled a beautiful exhibition of Rufino Tamayo's paintings from 1920 to '50 and a wonderful exhibition of Mexican exvotos, both of which will draw large audiences and generate national pride."

On a different note, Magda Carranza —another curator at the museum— adds: "Although it is a difficult economic moment, it provides a great opportunity for foreigners to import art and artists from Mexico." Given the peso's devaluation, Mexican art is now inexpensive in foreign markets and provides an extraordinary opportunity for willing buyers.

From the gallery side, dealers concur and are looking to foreign markets and collectors for salvation. As Monterrey's dynamic gallery owner Ramis Barquet explains: "Since the peso fell, I began changing my life. Now is the time for Mexican dealers to go international and export Mexican artists. Like any other business, we have to look for markets in dollars in other countries. I plan to attend five international art fairs this year —Miami, Madrid, Barcelona, Caracas and Chicago. Fortunately, there are collectors buying now in Colombia, Peru, Costa Rica, Panama, and the U.S." Barquet does not seem daunted by the search for new collectors. "I'm about to open a new gallery space, and will show Ray Smith and Julian Schnabel."

Other dealers, such as Cuban-born Nina Menocal of Galería Nina Menocal

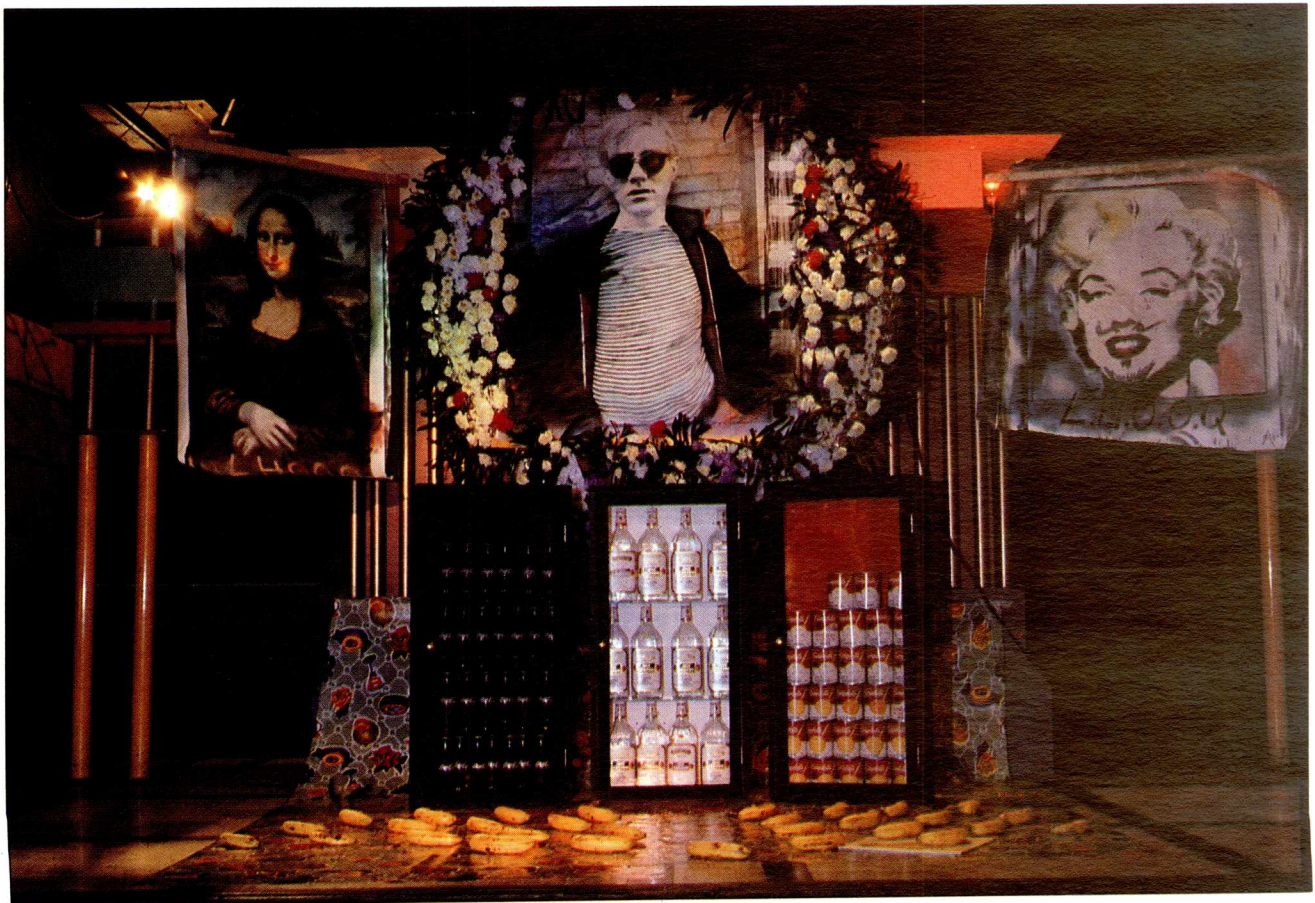
in Mexico City, count on sales to foreign clients. "I love contemporary art," Menocal says. "My problem is to stay loyal to my mission, to present really contemporary art and not follow the market. We have to be careful with prices. People are scared, so perhaps we won't sell for six months. In the meantime I have clients outside Mexico."

Outside is where art will be sold for the next few months, agrees Rafael Matos, director of the Rafael Matos Moctezuma Auction House in Mexico City. In his experience, the majority of people buying Mexican art in the United States and abroad are still Mexicans. "People who want to sell Mexican masters will do so in New York, and wealthy Mexicans with their money in United States banks will be

the ones to buy. The effect will be to segment the market. The rich will still buy, and the middle class will not."

One Mexico City curator remarked confidentially to *ARTnews*: "I received two offers from people selling a Diego Rivera and a Leonora Carrington, within two weeks after the devaluation. These are pieces never before available on the market. We're going to see great works of art for sale by people who need money." As Matos concludes, "Art always has a market. Even Nicaragua sold art during their civil war. Art is noble and can be defended during the worst of times."

Jaime Riestra, codirector of the contemporary art gallery OMR in Mexico City, has gone ahead and planned a provocative exhibition schedule for 1995 featuring two new



Adolfo Patiño, *Offering to Andy Warhol*, 1987.



Leonora Carrington, *At Eo, Quod*, 1956.

artists. "In addition to going to ARCO in February," he says, "we have programmed some great exhibitions: Arturo Elizondo, a Mexican who lives in New York and sells a lot in Europe; Guillermo Pérez Villalta, a Spaniard who has a big European following; and an emerging artist, Ishai Jusidman, who will present objects and installations."

As far as Mexican artists themselves are concerned, the

economy seems to have had little immediate effect on them. Although some receive government scholarships or have patrons, most do not earn steady incomes, anyway. But they will eventually feel the pain if the economy continues on its present course, since they have to sell to make a living.

Government scholarships are an integral part of an artist's development. If they are eliminated, one likely effect is the politicization of

art. CURARE's curator and director, Olivier Debroise, says, "Many criticize the government's artist-scholarship system, but I believe that, at the risk of creating an official art, it is a good structure. Each person receives his piece of the pie and cannot win it again, so the awards are spread among many artists."

Adolfo Patino, a Mexican artist who works with emerging talents, says, "At this moment there isn't political art precisely because the state is paying artists not to protest. The same was true in the 1920s when the government paid artists to paint public murals rather than anti-government images." Remove official support in a climate of economic and social uncertainty, and Mexican artists may very well create a politically volatile art.

Some of the most independent artists in Mexico formed artist-run alternative spaces in the early '90s, such as ZONA and Temístocles 44. Both places have struggled, with the latter ultimately disbanding. Fortunately, a surprisingly large number of government-run and private art institutions exist, providing a backbone and outlet for contemporary art. They range from the richly appointed, like the beautiful Museum of Contemporary Art in Monterrey, to the bare-bones spaces where artists must paint the walls and change light bulbs.

In Mexico City, six institutions offer exhibition space to contemporary artists. The Siqueiros Poliforum, for example, is a private cultural center directed by María Teresa Márquez. "I receive support from the Government Arts Council, CONACULTA, and have to raise the rest," she says. "To this end, I planned a February 14 'Love of Art' dance, where masks painted by Mexican masters such as

Vicente Rojo and José Luis Cuevas were auctioned to raise money.”

The Rufino Tamayo Museum and the Museum of Modern Art, across from each other in Chapultepec Park, exhibit established contemporary artists. The Tamayo specializes in international contemporary art, and the Museum of Modern Art combines international and Mexican art, but neither museum is readily available for solo exhibitions by most contemporary artists. As collector Sergio Autrey says, “An artist must pass through many stages, beginning with the Casa de Cultura of San Angel or any of the other *casas de cultura* in the country, then the Museo Carrillo Gil, next the Museum of Modern Art, before he reaches the National Museum of Art.”

Three government museums show the work of very contemporary artists. The Museo Carrillo Gil mounts exhibitions of installations, sculptures, objects and paintings by such young talents as Diego Toledo, Nestor Quinones, and Silvia Gruner. The museum’s “Encuentro Nacional de Arte Joven,” combining paintings, graphic art, photography and objects, is a type of salon for emerging talents and, after 14 years, an important fixture in the contemporary art scene. Although much of the art presented is painfully weak, the forum and experience it provides are invaluable.

The Museo del Chopo, part of the National University system in Mexico City, is another lively center for contemporary art. It is described as both a university and an alternative museum for those lacking access to exhibition space. The not-always-cogent but provocative exhibitions mounted there include the annual group show “Cultural Fight Against AIDS.”

Finally, the X’Teresa Alternative Art Center is an unusual space in the Old Temple of Saint Teresa located in the heart of Mexico City. Although this awe-inspiring, vaulted space has seen some interesting avant-garde exhibitions and events—such as the Mexican/U.S. Latino Artists’ performance exchange and the International Forum of Contemporary Art Theory with the director of the 1997 Documenta, Catherine David—the administration of X’Teresa has alienated much of the Mexican arts community. Artists, curators, and art historians alike, who requested that their names be withheld, have complained that this potentially vital space for contemporary art is underutilized due to friction within the administration.

Besides these established structures, there are so-called art promoters, supported by private enterprise, such as La Vaca Independiente [The Independent Cow], which was founded in 1991 by Claudia Madrazo. She describes the purpose of La Vaca Independiente as threefold: “One is to promote education for children—interactive children’s books and programs for schools. Two, to promote emerging, young Mexican artists and Mexican design. Our third priority is to provide consulting services for organizing exhibitions.” La Vaca Independiente’s next big project is to copublish with Harry N. Abrams in New York *The Diary of Frida Kahlo: An Intimate Self-Portrait*, scheduled for release in September 1995.

Each exhibition and project Madrazo’s group produces requires private funding, which, she admits, will be harder to come by. Nonetheless, she remains determined. “The great talent and energies of Mexico can work to do many things,”

she says. “We need to think beyond the next six to eight months.”

Despite the unease generated by economic uncertainty, the Mexican art world is taking the situation in stride, remaining stoically optimistic and confident that a year from now more exhibitions will be arranged internationally, more art will sell, and more funding will exist for scholarships and projects. In the meantime, Mexico will reexamine and celebrate its rich artistic heritage as well as the contemporary visions of its many artists.

Gerardo Suter echoes the thoughts of many of the country’s artists when he says, “It’s going to be difficult without government and private support. But we have to try harder to create. The economic problems both burden and behoove us to produce more.”

Sergio Hernández: dragon lizards and dancing skeletons

“One paints for a sense of magic, of fear,” explains Sergio Hernández, the 37-year-old artist from Oaxaca. The southern Mexican state that many consider Mexico’s cultural capital was also the birthplace of Rufino Tamayo. Hernández is known for his richly colored and textured semi-abstract paintings and sculptures of mythical creatures—hybrids born of Zapotecan Indian legends and Egyptian and European voyages. He was one of the few contemporary artists included in the 1991 Metropolitan Museum of Art block-buster exhibition “Thirty Centuries of Mexican Art,” and his work figures in most public and private collections in Mexico, such as the Centro Cultural de Arte Contemporáneo and the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City.

Hernández’s images—ranging from primitive dragon lizards to

dancing skeletons— are provocative, technically interesting, and at once personal and universal. He attributes his esthetic sensibility to his native Oaxaca: “It is a culture full of images, of figures that arouse fear and respect in people. There are countless ephemeral events using dance, music, textiles, and art that celebrate and preserve our culture. One example is the annual radish carving on November 23. Large, pinkish radishes are carved into fantastic figures and spread on tables in the city square. Each day these creatures, somehow imbued with magic, evolve as the vegetables dry. It is a Oaxacan custom, a ritual transformation. Lately I’ve been trying to capture it on canvas.”

Hernández’s father, an artisan who made furniture, transplanted his six children to Mexico City when Hernández was about 13, so that they

would receive an education. “My father placed me as an apprentice with the master wood carver hired by Diego Rivera,” Hernández recalls. “As a teenager from the provinces living in the city, my life was intense. Daily I was influenced by the murals by Rivera’s students I saw in the market across the street.” After two years of apprenticeship, he went to the government arts academies, first San Carlos and later the Esmeralda, where he studied drawing and painting with Mexican masters like Luis Nichizawa and Gilberto Aceves Navarro and tried to read the required art historical and philosophical texts. “But I had been barely educated until age 12 in Oaxaca, and I could not read or write. I didn’t understand a word.”

In the early 1980s, Hernández won a series of scholarships from the Mexican government, which placed his

work in the National Collection. This allowed him to travel to New York and, in 1986, to Paris, where he lived for a year and presented an exhibition at the Mexican Cultural Center in Paris. “It was a difficult year. I was assaulted by terrorists during a bank heist, hospitalized, and worked little. The following year I returned to Oaxaca.”

Ironically, Hernández’s return to his roots prompted his move into other media and exposure to outside influences. “I always wanted to work in ceramics, and in Oaxaca I can and have since my return. I use the ovens used by Oaxacan artisans, identical to those excavated near Monte Albán dating from 200 B.C.,” he exclaims. He also enjoyed exposure to international artists. “Oaxaca attracts people from everywhere—cinematographers, Mexican masters such as Armando Morales, and, two years ago, Anselm Kiefer, who is a sensitive, down-to-earth person. During a visit to my studio he remarked that my casual sketches on clay pots were more direct and convincing than many images on canvas I had planned and reworked time and again.”

Represented by the Galeria Quetzalli in Oaxaca City, Hernández has not had a solo exhibition for three years, nor is one planned. “Fortunately I have no problem selling. What is most important to me is to create without responsibility. I won’t have a solo exhibition until I find an idea uniting my images.”

Dressed in a tweed sports coat and linen shirt, but possessing a soulful quality decidedly detached from urban chaos, Hernández is of his own world but of our world, too. He says defiantly, “I dislike the term ‘Latin American.’ It assigns a place to an art. Above all a painting is by a man, not a Latin American or an Egyptian, and it is an expression for men everywhere.” **M**



Sergio Hernández, *Toy Horses*, 1993.

The monarch butterfly in the paintings of Carmen Parra





The monarch butterfly

The monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus* L.) originated 220 million years ago, when Africa and South America were still united in a single tropical continent.

The area which continental drift transformed into South America included many tropical species of plants and animals, among them the monarch butterfly.

The monarch butterfly is the only migratory species of butterfly in the world with the survival strategy of forming colonies for passing the winter in the same place every year. In a spectacular 3,000-mile flight, the species travels yearly from Canada to Mexico.

The life cycle of the butterfly begins when an adult female deposits hundreds of eggs on the leaves of the milkweed plant. Over the course of twenty days their size increases a thousand-fold, becoming white larvae with yellow and black stripes. The larva shed its skin five times during this growth period, finally forming the chrysalis and, through metamorphosis, turning into a butterfly, the insect's adult stage.

The miracle of the butterfly's migration consists of the entire monarch population from southern Canada and the northern United States, to the east of the Rocky Mountains, concentrating itself in a

few acres of evergreen and pine forests located on the border of the states of Mexico and Michoacán.

These islands of green are surrounded by areas vulnerable to agriculture and erosion, which together with massive tree felling, threaten the survival of the forests where the monarch butterfly winters and where the water tables are located that supply the local human population.

Since 1977, the Mexican government has been carrying out work aimed at preserving, for the next 1,000 years, the forests that provide a winter home to over 100 million monarchs.



The butterfly can take care of itself, but its survival requires forests with dense foliage and healthy shrubs.

Because the monarch sanctuaries are found on *ejido* [collective farm] territories, working relations have been established with the *ejido* farmers to promote economic activities to generate jobs and alternative income sources, in order to prevent the felling of pines and other evergreens, assuring the protection of both the forest and the butterflies' migratory pattern.

Thus the monarch, which is a very ancient species, has been able to overcome the greatest crises of nature,

and remains with us today. But given the magnitude of humans' impact on the forest, the monarch needs our help to survive.

With great passion, Carmen Parra—with her artistic work and boundless love of nature—has contributed, in the deepest sense, to the rescue of one of the most marvelous phenomena of life on this planet.

Fernando Ortiz Monasterio

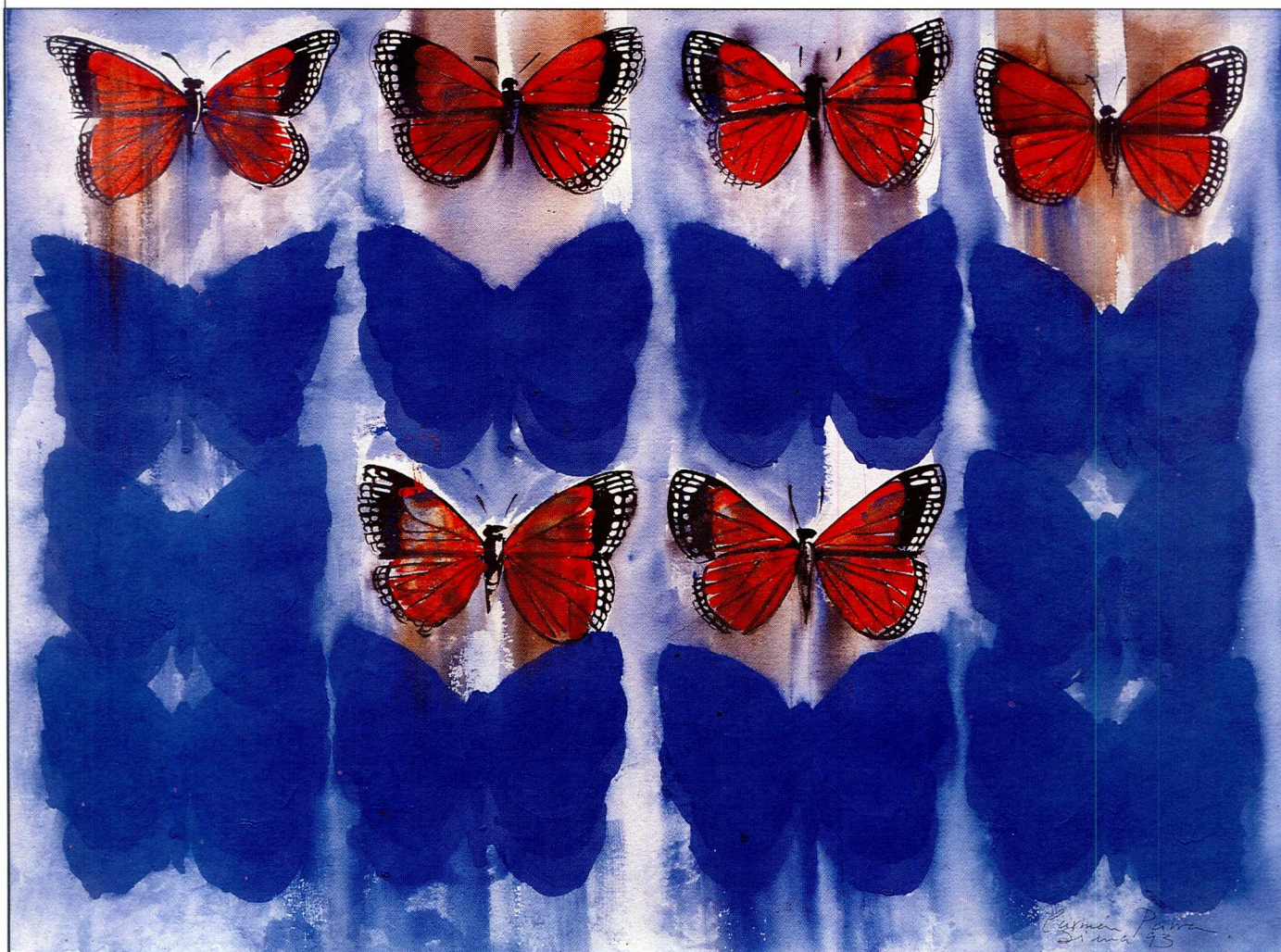
Monarca A.C.

The obsidian butterfly

Butterflies have always had great importance in the pre-Hispanic

world of Mexico...and in today's world. We see them with multicolored wings in the murals of Teotihuacán, carved in stone or painted in ancient codices. Many different myths refer to them. Their importance was so great that they were even deified. Such is the case of Izapálotl, the obsidian butterfly, the female eagle that died during childbirth and became a goddess. She inspired soldiers in combat, who frequently wore an image of the butterfly on their chests, representing Izapálotl.

It was perhaps because of this ancient cult, in which the butterfly's



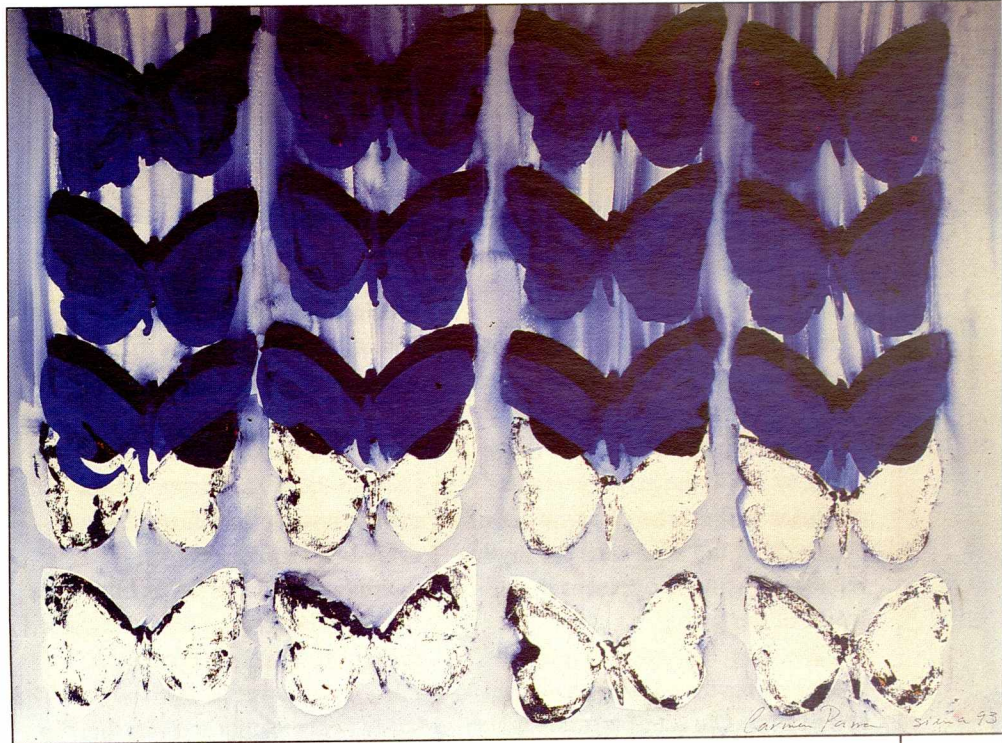




image was painted on walls, or fashioned out of clay and stone, that the butterfly decided to stay forever. And so, year after year, it returns from the underworld, located in the north, to fulfill the promise made centuries before when it came out of the world of the dead—as the myth relates—so as to be present in the world of the living.

Yet it became necessary once again to seize the butterfly's image, and paint it. The act of creation which

accompanies its comings and goings should be captured anew in painting. To do this, it was important that creatively powerful hands give them eternal life through color itself...and Carmen Parra gave herself to the extraordinary effort through which every brushstroke gave life, multiplying infinitely. The butterflies flew and the creative hands continued giving life, which stopped time....

...And so passed many a year. The hands kept creating and one fine day

the long-awaited metamorphosis occurred. Through her creative power, Carmen had unknowingly acquired the same characteristics as the butterfly...and then she learned how to fly and was captured on canvas forever....

...Since then, the colors, the butterfly and Carmen herself have come together in a single being transcending time.... ✕

Eduardo Matos Moctezuma

Murder and Marxism in Mexico City: the Leon Trotsky Museum

*John Mitchell**

On a balmy summer evening in August 1940, a young man gained admittance to the study of Leon Trotsky's heavily guarded house near Mexico

City. He asked Trotsky to read something he had written and, while the exiled revolutionary was poring over his article, the visitor removed an alpine climbing axe from his overcoat and sank it into the great thinker's skull.

The assassin, who called himself Jacson Mornard, was travelling with a forged Canadian passport and claimed to be in Mexico on business. In reality, he was a Stalinist agent posing as the boyfriend of Trotsky's

* Canadian writer and photographer.



Leon Trotsky gathering cacti in San Angel, 1940.

A. Buchanan.

personal secretary in order to carry out his mission.

Joseph Stalin had expelled Trotsky from Russia in 1929 for relentless criticism of his dictatorial regime and its corruption of Marxist ideals. For almost a decade, Trotsky was doomed to wander from country to country—Turkey, France and Norway—under constant pressure from Stalinist elements. However, he continued speaking out in letters, essays and books, including his *Diary in Exile* and his monumental three-volume *History of the Russian Revolution*.

Finally, Trotsky was granted asylum in Mexico and in 1937 settled in Coyoacán on the outskirts of Mexico City. At the time, Mexico had a strong Communist Party, but it too

was divided into volatile Stalinist and anti-Stalinist factions. In the middle of this political hotbed, the aging revolutionary and his wife of many years, Natalia Sedova, established their first real home since leaving the Soviet Union.

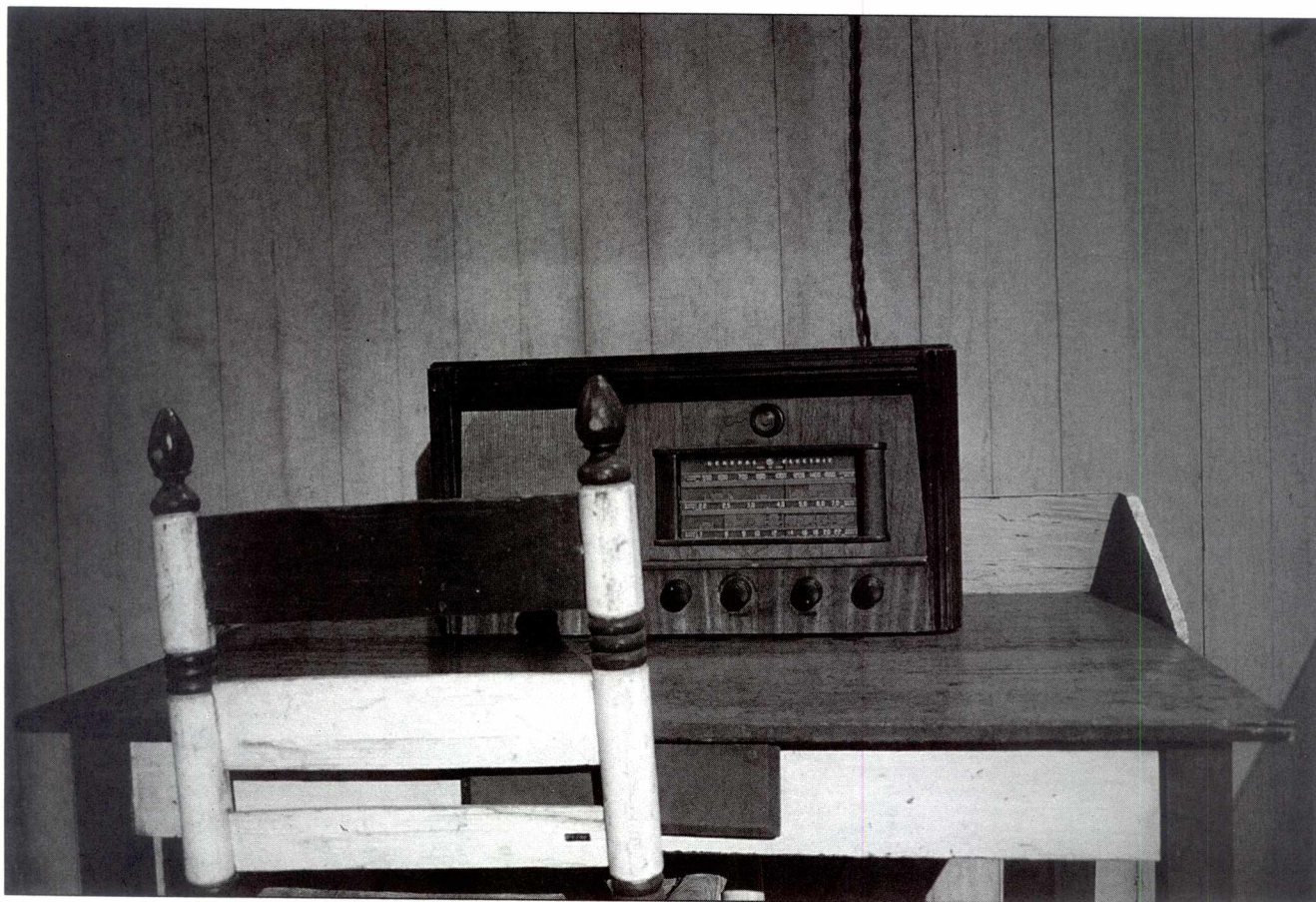
The house in which they spent most of their life together in Mexico still stands on a peaceful, tree-lined street a few blocks from Coyoacán's main plaza, and is now a museum maintained by the non-profit Institute of the Right of Asylum and Public Freedoms. Behind its high stone walls and steel shutters, an intriguing slice of 20th-century history has been preserved for all to see.

Elegant Coyoacán has always attracted Mexico's artistic and intellectual elite. In the 1930's, it was

a provincial town surrounded by small farms and adobe hovels. Since then Coyoacán has been devoured by sprawling Mexico City, but its graceful plazas, colonial churches, and quiet cobblestone streets remain.

"The little fortress," as Trotsky's house is often called, has seen its share of violence. Bullet holes left over from an assassination attempt in May 1940 still scar the walls and thick front door.

Mexican painter David Alfaro Siqueiros and his gang of Stalinist thugs, disguised as police officers, overpowered guards and set up machine guns in the house's inner courtyard, then proceeded to riddle its rooms with bullets. The Trotskys somehow managed to find a corner in their bedroom not in the line of fire.



Short-wave radio which brought the exile news from the other side of the world.



The revolutionary's desk, with dictaphone tubes used for recording much of his work.

Their grandson, Seva, was wounded in the barrage, but miraculously no one was killed.

Sheldon Harte, a young American who had been on guard duty when Siqueiros' men attacked, disappeared during the raid. His body was discovered a month later in a rundown farmhouse outside of town. The police tried to convince Trotsky that Harte

was a traitor, but he would hear none of it. Instead, he had a commemorative plaque put on the courtyard wall stating that Sheldon Harte had been "murdered by Stalin."

These days, the tranquil courtyard brims with tropical flowers and plants, including rare cacti which Trotsky enjoyed collecting on his excursions into the Mexican countryside. Vacant

rabbit hutches and chicken coops border the walls, and a stone monument engraved with a hammer and sickle marks the spot where Trotsky's ashes are interred. The red Soviet flag hangs from a pole above his tomb.

The interior of the house is austere and somewhat gloomy, as befits a fortress. However, great care has been taken to keep things the way they were during Trotsky's time. In the narrow bedrooms, clothing and shoes are neatly arranged beside chaste beds, tattered Mexican rugs lie on the floors, and bullet holes pockmark the walls. Sunlight pours through open metal shutters into Trotsky's study, bathing the desk at which he sat when struck down.

His trademark wire-rimmed eyeglasses, which must have fallen off during the struggle, still rest on the desk top, along with papers, pens, inkpots and a magnifying glass. An ancient-looking dictaphone sits nearby, and a faded map of Mexico hangs on the wall. Well-worn books on philosophy, history and political theory cram bookcases scattered about the room.

In what were once guest quarters at the end of the garden hang dozens of black and white photos of Trotsky and Natalia accompanied by celebrated friends, such as the revolutionary Mexican muralist Diego Rivera and his artist wife Frida Kahlo.

Rivera, a founder of the Mexican Communist Party, used his influence to help Trotsky gain asylum in Mexico. The two remained comrades until 1938 when they split over ideological differences which were accompanied by rumors of an affair between Trotsky and Kahlo.

There are also pictures of a contented Trotsky tending his rabbits



The tombstone was designed by Mexican artist Juan O'Gorman.

Trotsky spent part of his free time raising rabbits in these hutches.





Trotsky's calendar showing the date he was struck down by the assassin Mercader.

and picnicking in the stark Mexican hills. One ominous snapshot shows him foraging for cacti with a pickaxe slung over his shoulder.

A new wing adjacent to the original house displays more photographs, newspaper clippings and personal effects. Some of Trotsky's archives are here as well, along with a souvenir stand and a gallery featuring works by Latin American artists. In spite of these modern additions, the house retains an air of authenticity. It is easy to imagine Trotsky's ghost still haunting its lonely compound and somber halls.

Upon receiving the fatal axe blow, the Russian revolutionary leader did not topple over, but stood up straight and bristling like one of his stubborn cacti. He let out a piercing

scream and then pelted his attacker with everything in sight, including his dictaphone, refusing to let him continue the assault.

Mornard was soon overcome by security guards, and when Natalia came running to her husband's side, Trotsky turned his bloody face toward her and said calmly, "Now it is done." The tension had finally been broken. Years of waiting for the inevitable were over.

An ambulance rushed Trotsky to the hospital, where he remained lucid while nurses prepared him for the operating table. After his operation, he fell into a coma and died peacefully the next night (August 21, 1940) with Natalia by his bedside.

The police arrested and interrogated "Jacson Mornard." He

insisted his name was Jacques Mornard Vandendrechd and claimed to be the son of a Belgian ambassador. However, his true identity was later established as Ramón Mercader, a Spanish Communist. The courts convicted him of premeditated murder and he served 20 years in Mexican jails. Upon his release in 1960, Mercader reportedly fled to Prague and then Moscow where he was awarded the Order of Lenin. According to some reports, he eventually died of cancer in Havana.

Trotsky once wrote, "It is certainly victims that move humanity forward." His house in Coyoacán endures as a monument both to the irony of this self-fulfilling prophecy and to the role of the tragic hero, an archetype which ensures Leon Trotsky a prominent place in history. **M**

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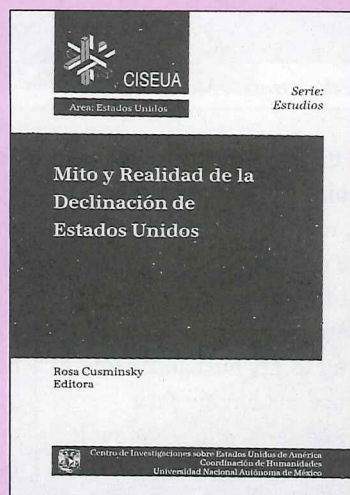
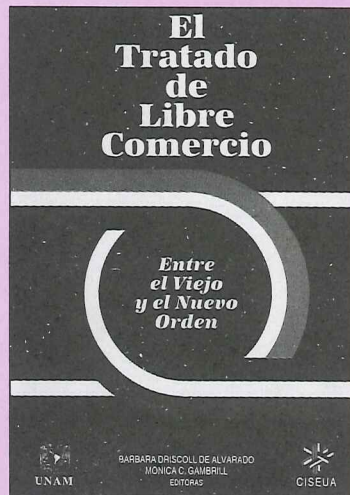
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El Tratado de Libre Comercio. Entre el viejo y el nuevo orden

Mónica C. Gambrill y Bárbara Driscoll de Alvarado (eds.), 1992, 283 pp.

This book analyzes the likely impact of NAFTA on: the energy industry, agriculture, geographical regions, in-bond industry; labor rights, immigration to the U.S., social classes, democracy, diplomatic relations, telecommunications and higher education. NAFTA is considered in light of other trade agreements, U.S. economic requirements and political processes.



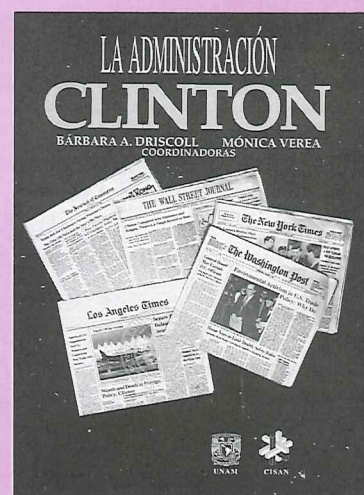
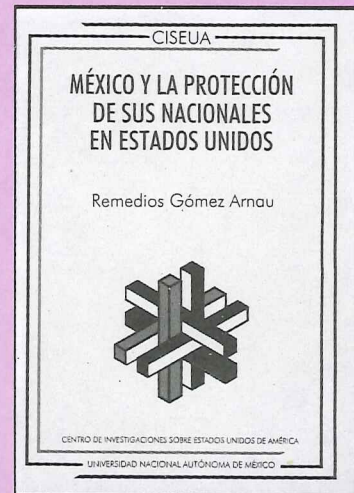
Mito y realidad de la declinación de los Estados Unidos

Rosa Cusminsky Mogilner (ed.), Serie: Estudios, 1992, 180 pp.

This book contains the contributions of lecturers from various countries who participated in the seminar "The Myth and Reality of the Decline of the United States of America," on the present academic debate about the crisis of the United States' hegemony.

México y la protección de sus nacionales en Estados Unidos

Remedios Gómez Arnau, 1990, 245 pp. A chronicle of the Mexican government's efforts to protect the rights of Mexican migrant workers in the United States. An impressive study that sheds new light on the issue. Recommended for experts and non-experts in U.S.- Mexican relations and human rights.



La administración Clinton

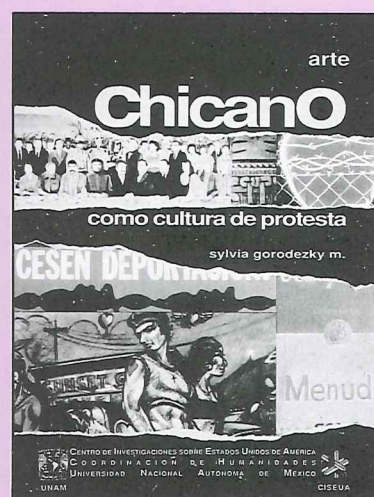
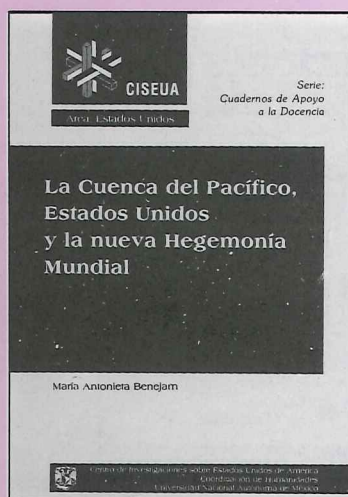
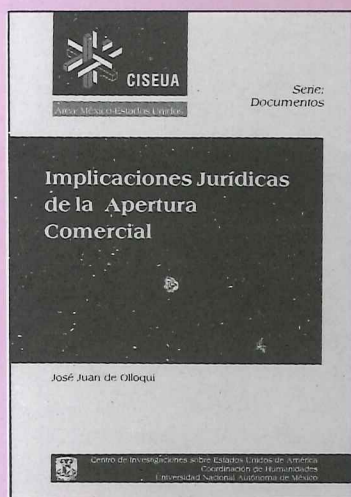
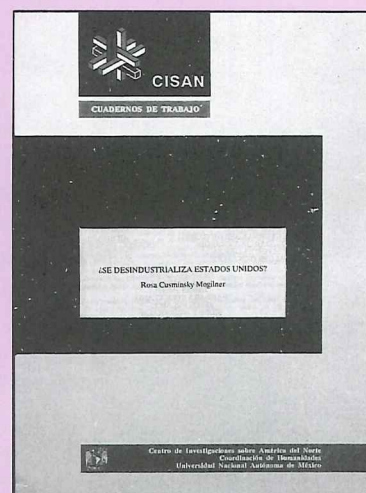
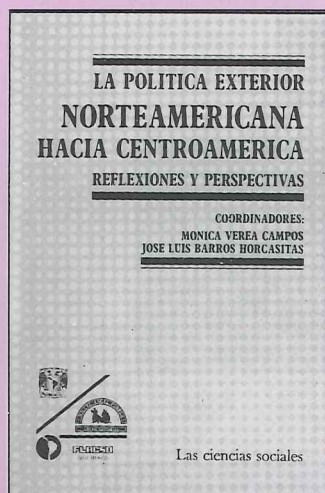
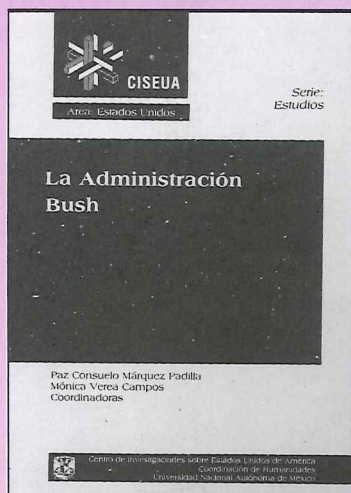
Bárbara A. Driscoll, Mónica Vereá (coords.), 1995, 405 pp.

Given the need for an interpretation of the transition between a Republican administration and a Democratic one, this publication provides a range of perspectives on the Clinton administration. It will serve as a basic source for evaluating current political events.

La administración Bush
 Mónica Vereá Campos, Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla (coords.), Serie: Estudios, 1991, 210 pp.
 Fifteen Mexican and U.S. specialists examine the main events of the first year of the Bush administration. This includes studies on minorities, arms control, the war on drugs, the economic crisis, foreign policy, and the North American Free Trade Agreement.

La política exterior norteamericana hacia Centroamérica: reflexiones y perspectivas
 Mónica Vereá Campos y José Luis Barros Horcasitas, FLACSO, CISEUA-UNAM, Editorial Miguel Angel Porrúa, Serie: Las Ciencias Sociales, 1991, 442 pp.
 This book contains various articles written by North American and Central American specialists regarding the role of the United States in Central America's recent history.

¿Se desindustrializa Estados Unidos?
 Rosa Cusminsky Mogilner, Serie: Cuadernos de Trabajo, 1993, 139 pp.
 Fears relating to the industrial decline of the United States are associated with questions about the ability of the U.S. to maintain its position of influence and world leadership.
 This book summarizes current debates on whether U.S. industry has ceased to be competitive.



Implicaciones jurídicas de la apertura comercial
 José J. de Ollóqui, Serie: Documentos, 1991, 42 pp.
 An in-depth analysis of legal issues concerning free trade. Ollóqui examines trade and legal developments under President Salinas' administration, within the framework of the Mexican Constitution, trade in Mexico, the internationalization of the financial system and other topics of interest.

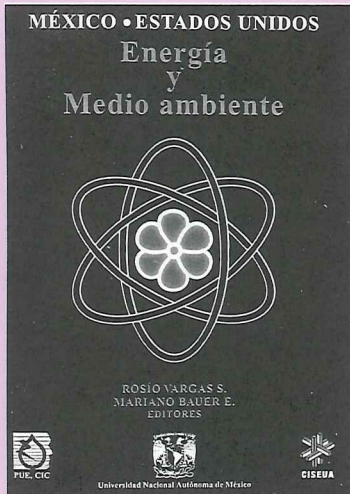
La Cuenca del Pacífico, Estados Unidos y la nueva hegemonía mundial
 Ma. Antonieta Benejam, Serie: Cuadernos de Apoyo a la Docencia, 1991, 106 pp.
 A book on the leading role played by the United States in the geopolitical processes of the Pacific Rim countries, a region of decisive importance to the future World Order.

Arte chicano como cultura de protesta
 Sylvia Gorodezky, 1993, 169 pp.
 An incisive analysis of how Chicanos give artistic expression to the effects of the social and political oppression they experience within "mainstream" society. Includes photographs of key murals, sculptures and other works of art.

México-Estados Unidos. Energía y medio ambiente

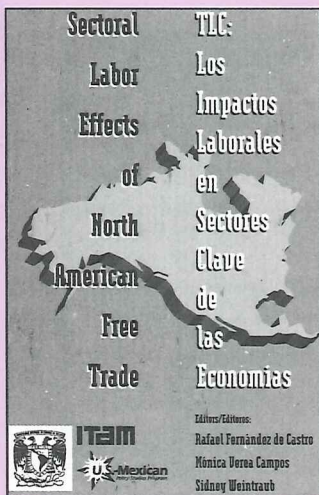
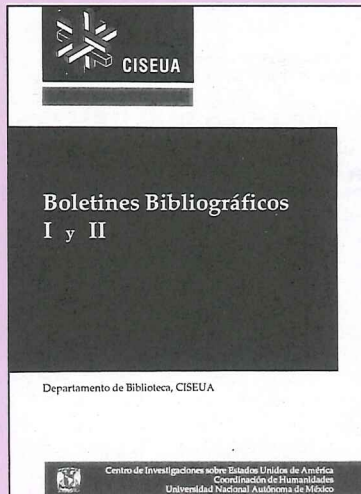
Rosío Vargas and Mariano Bauer (eds.), 1993, 259 pp.

An overview of Mexican and American environmental legislation as well as its social, political and economic implications in the context of NAFTA. Also analyzes the relation between energy policy and environment in both countries.



Boletines bibliográficos I y II
 Centro de Investigaciones sobre Estados Unidos de América-Coordinación de Humanidades,
 1991-92 edition, 212 pp.

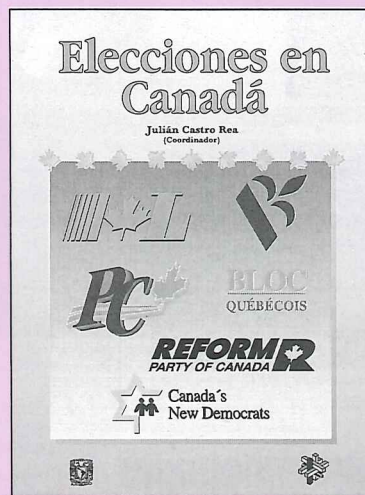
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Sectoral labor effects of North American Free Trade/TLC: Los impactos laborales en sectores clave de las economías

Rafael Fernández de Castro, Mónica Verea Campos and Sidney Weintraub (eds.), 1993, 368 pp.

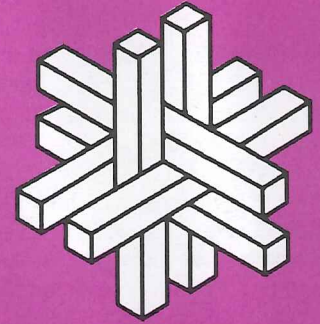
This book examines possible effects on the labor force of the countries involved in NAFTA, particularly in such industrial sectors as autos and textile as well as in agriculture and the *maquiladoras*. Some of NAFTA's legal implications are also reviewed.



Elecciones en Canadá

Julián Castro Rea (coord.), 1995, 152 pp.

On November 4, 1993, 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 one of the few works in Spanish on Canadian politics and repercussions for Mexico.



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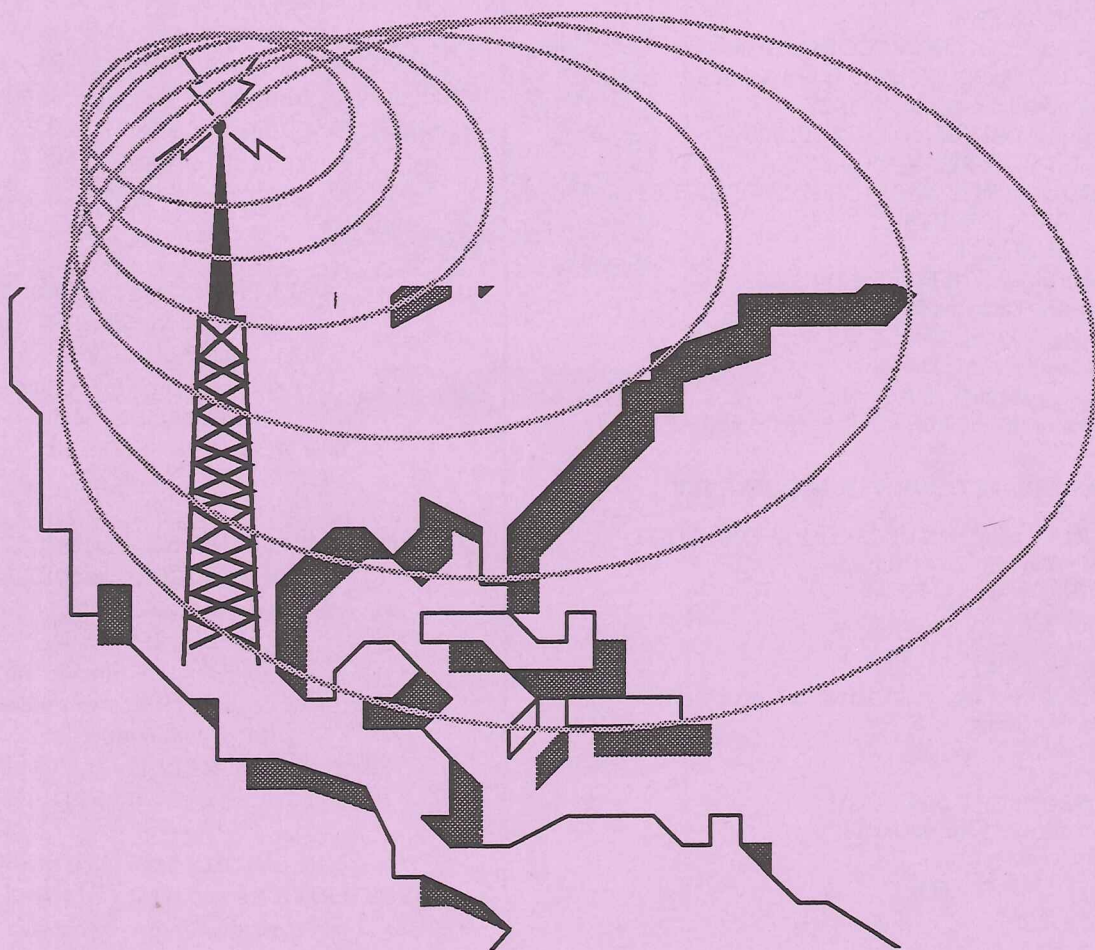
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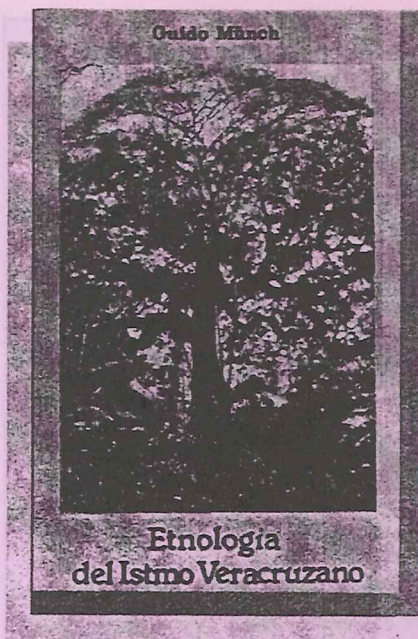
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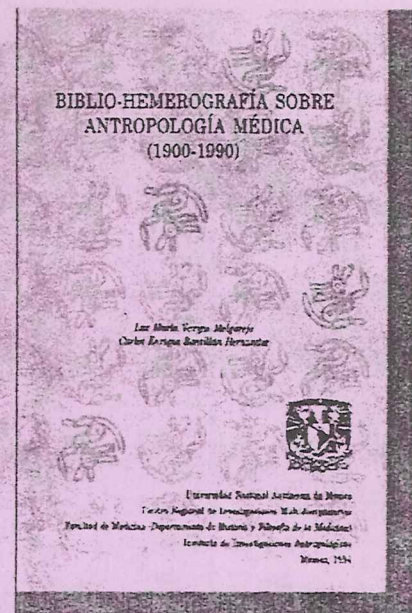
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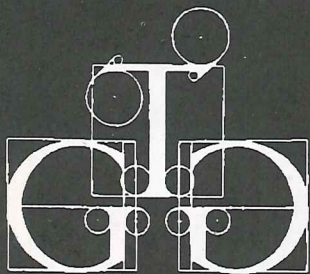
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