

VOICESTM *of Mexico*

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Democratizing Mexico

Jorge I. Domínguez

James. A. McCann

The Maker of Gods

Eduardo Matos

In Search of Faith

Interview with Rafael Cauduro



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VOICES *of Mexico*

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EDITORIAL

Our Voice

Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla 4

POLITICS

Democratizing Mexico. Public Opinion and Electoral Choices

*Jorge I. Domínguez and
James A. McCann* 6

Mexico's New Revolution

Luis Rubio 10

Identity and Mobility. Toward a Definition Of Remigration

Axel Ramírez 15

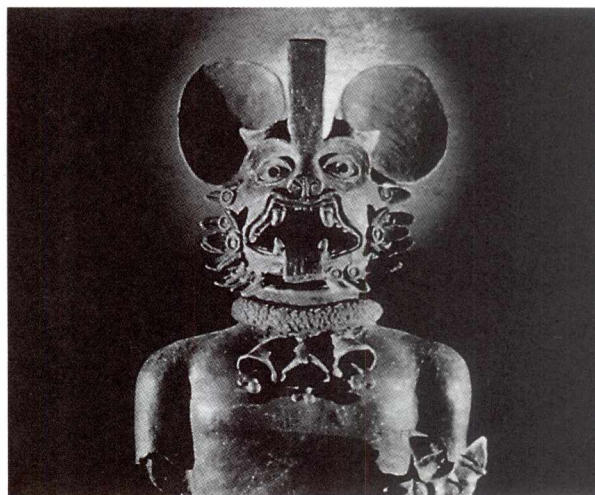
Seven Reasons for Mexican Economic Recovery

*Speech by President Zedillo at the World
Economic Forum, Davos, Switzerland* 21

SCIENCE, ART AND CULTURE

In Search of Faith.

An Interview with Rafael Cauduro 25



The Maker of Gods

Eduardo Matos Moctezuma 35

The Mystery of Mole From Puebla.

A Baroque Convent Delicacy
Paco Ignacio Taibo I 41

ECONOMIC ISSUES

NAFTA and Its Political Challenges Ahead.

A Perspective from Mexico
Remedios Gómez Arnau 44

A Review of NAFTA's Record On Its Second Anniversary

Jaime Zabudowsky 49

THE SPLENDOR OF MEXICO

The Islamic Influence in Mexican Architecture

Pedro Ramírez Vázquez 52

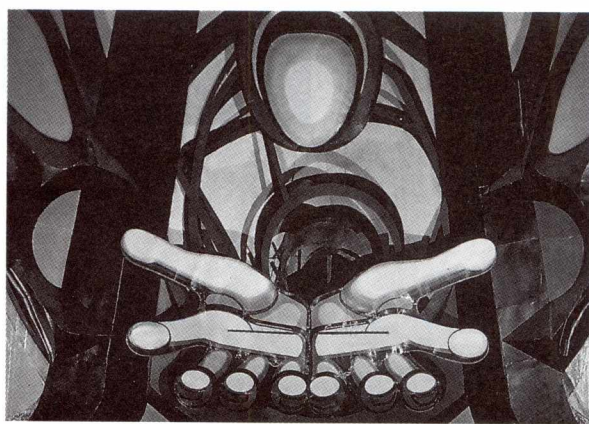
Pre-Hispanic Art in The Muralist Movement

Rita Eder 57



**The Old San Ildefonso College
And the Historic Center**

Dolores Béistegui and Jaime Abundis 64



**The Siqueiros Polyforum.
A Diamond of Steel,
Light and Color**

Elsie Montiel 85

LITERATURE

**Up with God!
Down with the Devil!**

Laura Esquivel 71

CANADIAN ISSUES

Canada, Starting Over

Jean François Prud'homme 73

IN MEMORIAM

Augusto H. Álvarez

A Classic of Architecture 76

Juan Vicente Melo

A Unique Writer 79

MUSEUMS

**Mexico City's
Modern Art Museum**

Jutta Rütz 81

SOCIETY

**Philanthropy in the
NAFTA Countries.
The Emergency of the
Third, Non-Profit Sector**

Diego I. Bugada Bernal 91

Women, Society and Companies

Ángeles Espinoza Iglesias 94

REVIEWS

A Conflictive Relationship

Diego I. Bugada Bernal 97

In the Light of Memory

María Luisa Puga 98

Bicultural Literature

Barbara Driscoll 100

Cover: Rafael Cauduro, *Two Angels*, oil on rust on canvas, 1994.
Photo by Antonio Berlanga.

Our Voice

We are on the verge of the twenty-first century and the bipolar world has disappeared. The United States has assumed a leading role in structuring a new world order. Yet it seems it needs its own restructuring first. They can still change the agenda, but unfortunately in their 1996 election, they seem to be guided more by petty interests and nationalist excesses than by the long-term goal of a better world order.

Economic globalization and the resulting restructuring has brought uncertainty. This is fertile soil for distrust and resentment. It is not just a matter of unemployment but of constantly changing jobs and lower wages. Two types of discourse can emerge from it: one of hate, closed markets and absurd nostalgia for something that perhaps never existed or a discourse of hope, open markets and a sense of positive transition that challenges all previous understanding.

It is true that progress, development and the market have not brought all the dreams that we had hoped for, but, to our benefit, some negative effects have been tempered and a sense of new possibilities has been reintroduced such as the ones provided by the rational part of the environmental movement.

Mexico is undergoing its own changes, politically as well as economically. Jorge Domínguez and James A. McCann, based on different electoral surveys, show that Mexicans are ready for political change and aspire to greater democracy. They also point out that—contrary to what most people might believe—authoritarianism is not distinctive of a single party, but that there have been democrats and authoritarians across the spectrum of Mexico's system of political parties. They mention party member-

ship or partisan identification as the most important variable to explain the vote since the 1988 elections.

Luis Rubio deals with what he calls "the small revolution" operating in Mexico. Political decentralization, the strengthening of institutions and the establishment of the rule of law are being attempted, while economic recovery, based on increased domestic savings and a lower debt is being sought. Striving for all these goals at the same time is not easy, and President Zedillo has a difficult task before him.

Axel Ramírez explains the dilemma of Mexican migrants: assimilating into the new Anglo-Saxon culture or keeping their Mexican culture in the hope that if they remigrate to their homeland they will be accepted back.

Mexico's achievements go beyond economics and politics. Contemporary as well as pre-Columbian art and culture are presented in this issue.

Beyond his great paintings is an enigmatic man. We are proud to present an interview with Rafael Cauduro, one of the greatest Mexican painters of our time. Discipline, imagination, spiritual enhancement and long hours of work come together to give us a special pictorial gift that enriches our world.

Then, we are taken back hundreds of years by Eduardo Matos' "The Maker of Gods," in which he explains how duality was a central theme of Mesoamerican mythology and puts the different images of indigenous deities into context, providing us with a fascinating picture of the relationship between pre-Hispanic man and his gods.

Paco Ignacio Taibo takes us back poetically to the origins of one of Mexico's most typical dishes: mole. A unique combination of Spanish and indigenous culinary art. He even gives us a special recipe for this delicacy.

Two years after its implementation, the free trade agreement's benefits and setbacks are being evaluated. Jaime Zabłudowsky tells us how despite Mexico's economic crisis, the benefits of this trade agreement can be felt in the three North American countries. NAFTA promotes cooperation among the United States, Canada and Mexico and establishes a framework to promote joint production ventures, job creation and world competitiveness.

Nevertheless, Remedios Gómez Arnau calls attention to the fact that Mexico is treated with prejudice, particularly by certain groups and individuals seeking to advance their own agenda. She maintains that the United States analyzes events in Mexico and Canada from different viewpoints and gives them differential treatment, which might affect the overall relationship among the three partners.

The eternal splendor of Mexico can be appreciated in its buildings. Architect Pedro Ramírez Vázquez delves into the mixture of Islamic, Spanish and indigenous culture found in Mexico's most beautiful constructions. This play of architectural elements enriches universal culture.

Rita Eder refers to the great spectrum of muralist painting with pre-Columbian elements, where the great muralists give shape to their different conceptions of the indigenous world.

Mexico City is known as "The City of Palaces." Dolores Béistegui and Jaime Abundis take us through the past of one of the Historic Center's most majestic buildings, Old San Ildefonso College. The construction is now a museum, housing splendid examples of Mexican art.

The results of the recent plebiscite held in Canada over the issue of the separation of Quebec were not at all definitive. In a very interesting essay, Jean François Prud'homme explains that the relationship between Quebec and the Canadian federation is still unresolved, at the same time

that he expresses admiration for the ability of Canadian institutions to deal with such a delicate situation.

With a sip of a tasty cup of chocolate, writer Laura Esquivel takes us back through history to the colonial period.

In *Memoriam* pays tribute to writer Juan Vicente Melo and architect Augusto Álvarez. Melo made a great contribution to Mexican literature, while Álvarez left us a rich cultural legacy of architecture.

Voices of Mexico visits two museums. First, Jutta Rütz takes us for a walk through the history, architecture and rooms of the Modern Art Museum, an exceptional space for art in the heart of Chapultepec.

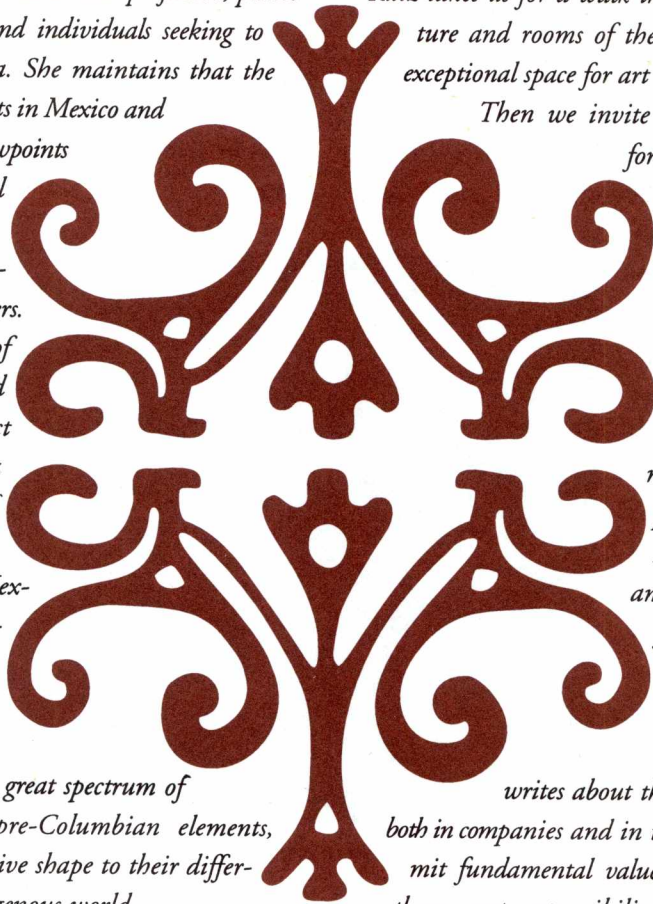
Then we invite you to the Siqueiros Polyforum where the majestic work of one of Mexico's greatest muralists, David Alfaro Siqueiros, can be admired.

The free trade agreement has brought unintended benefits and costs; one fruitful area is what we might call "cross-border social philanthropy," through which Mexico, the United States and Canada have worked jointly for the social welfare of the whole North American region.

Ángeles Espinoza Yglesias writes about the important place of women, both in companies and in the home, where they transmit fundamental values to their children to help them meet responsibility and acquire a favorable attitude toward excellence.

Finally, this issue includes three interesting reviews: *El Águila Bicéfala* (*The Two-Headed Eagle*), *Confesiones de Maclovia* (*Confessions of Maclovia*) and *Las formas de nuestras voces: Chicana and Mexicana Writers in Mexico* (*The Forms of Our Voices: Chicana and Mexican Writers in Mexico*).

Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla
Editorial Director



DEMOCRATIZING MEXICO

Public Opinion and Electoral Choices¹

Jorge I. Domínguez*

James A. McCann**

How do ordinary Mexicans think about politics and specifically about elections? Are Mexicans democrats? In the late 1950s, there was evidence that Mexican public

supported aspects of authoritarianism. Despite some residual indications of authoritarian beliefs, by the late 1980s Mexicans were more likely to be interested in politics, to be attentive to political campaigns and to discuss politics freely than they had been in the 1950s.

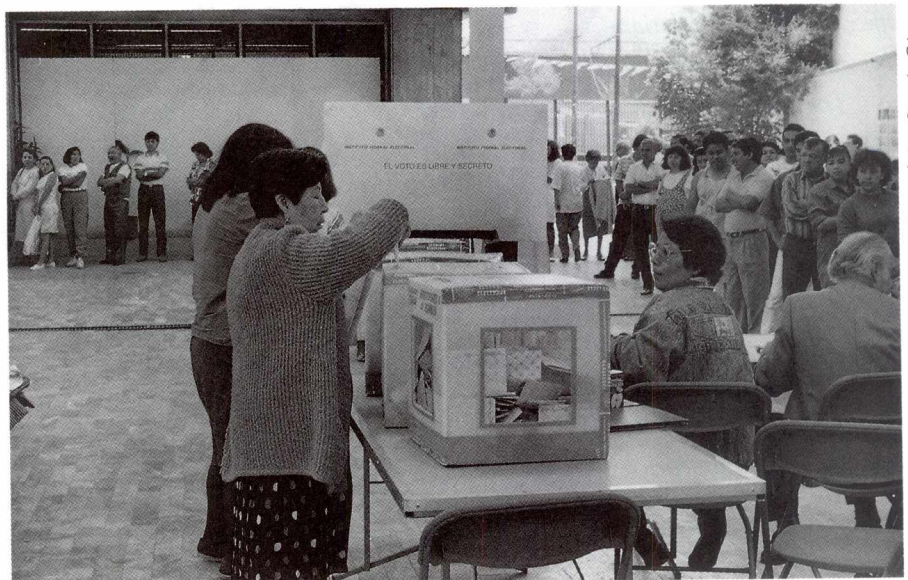
The Mexican electorate was just as politicized as the electorates of many democracies in Europe and the United States, as is clear from comparative survey data for about a dozen countries. The persistence of authoritarian practices in Mexico, therefore, was best explained in

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¹ This article is a summary, by the authors, of *Democratizing Mexico: Public Opinion and Electoral Choices* (Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996). The book is based on data from national public opinion surveys conducted in Mexico between the 1950s and the 1990s, especially for the 1988, 1991, and 1994 nationwide elections.

terms of existing state institutions, policies and leadership choices —not in terms of the preferences of Mexican citizens. Mexicans were ready for political change.



Public participation in federal elections has grown in recent years.

Imaginatina-Octavio Gómez

Moreover, in the late 1980s, differences in the adherence to democratic values did not distinguish between the social bases of support for the different political parties. Mexican public opinion did not divide between a party of democrats and a party of tyrant lovers. There were democrats and authoritarians across the Mexican political party spectrum. To put it more bluntly, yes, there were democrats in the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) and there were opposition supporters who had authoritarian values. That is why

attachment to democratic values did not explain voter preferences.

By the late 1980s, Mexicans were also polarized in their assessment of economic policies adopted by their government in response to the decade-long economic crisis. They also showed consistent attitudes across issues, e.g., in general, a supporter of freer trade was more likely to support foreign investment, while an opponent of the former was also more likely to oppose the latter. And yet, the level of issue consistency (a measure of ideology) was low.

Attitudes toward some issues, such as the privatization of state enterprises, for example, were not well related to other issues that are ordinarily considered part of the same economic package (e.g., freer trade, foreign investment). The level of economic issue consistency in Mexico on the eve of the crucial 1988 presidential election remained below the comparable level for the United States in the 1950s—a time in U.S. history marked by low ideological commitments in the public. The ideological thunderstorm of Mexico's 1988 election should not be attributed to public beliefs but to the deliberate campaign choices made by Mexican politicians.

On election day in 1988 or 1991, voter views on policy issues, consequently, had little impact on electoral choices. Supporters of freer trade, for example, could be found backing different political parties. Issue cleavages did not markedly overlap with candidate



PRI voters were likely to remain loyal to their party in election after election.

assessment of how the country's and their own economic circumstances had fared in the recent past and could reasonably be expected to fare in the foreseeable future. These general retrospective and prospective "rational" economic judgments were somewhat more helpful in explaining voter choices in the 1988 and 1991 national elections but still proved much less effective than other variables. The evidence concerning the electoral impact of these assessments is stronger for the 1994 national election; these variables may well become more important in future Mexican elections.

Demographic differences were not very important or consistent explanations for voter preferences in 1988, 1991 or 1994. While it is true that the model PRI voter is an older, little-educated woman from southern Mexico, none of these demographic criteria was statistically significant across elections. Take a long-standing assumption about Mex-

ican parties: that the National Action Party (PAN) is a confessional party of devoted Roman Catholics. In fact, there is no significant difference in the likelihood that practicing Roman Catholics will prefer the PAN over the PRI. On the other hand, the voters for Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas and the Party for the Democratic Revolution

*The Mexican electorate was just as politicized
as the electorates of many democracies
in Europe and the United States.*

preferences. Mexicans were deeply divided in their attitudes toward economic issues and in their preferences for parties and candidates, but these two divisions were for the most part unrelated to each other.

In much of Western Europe and North America, voters make decisions on election day based on their



Imaginatina-Octavio Gómez

According to opinion surveys many voters await the outcome of the PRD's reorganization.

were rather more likely to be religiously secular than the voters for other parties.

What, then, is the basis for the vote? Partisan, institutional and candidate assessments have been the foundations for voter preferences. PRI voters were likely to be loyal to their party in election after election, just as supporters of opposition parties were likely to be loyal to the opposition across elections. This is somewhat surprising because the PRI has at times been discussed as a "party without members." In the 1994 presidential election, for example, close to three-quarters of the voters supported the same party as they had in 1988.

Partisan expectations also mattered. Voters who believed that the PRI would get stronger and voters who believed that the economy would suffer or social peace be threatened if a party other than the PRI would win the election were much more likely to vote PRI in the upcoming elections. Also across these elections, the greater the approval for the incumbent president, the greater the likelihood of voting PRI. A core division existed between the PRI and the oppo-

sition parties. That was the principal basis for political controversy as Mexico lurched toward democratic politics.

Mexican elections have also been shaped by the relative capacity of parties to mobilize their own supporters and to forge strong and stable coalitions. In 1988, Cárdenas and his coalition failed to mobilize the previously unmobilized or to shift the underlying partisan allegiance of demographic or economic groups or sectors. The PAN, too, failed to expand its political base. In the 1991 nationwide congressional election, the main organizational story was the fragmentation of the Cardenista coalition. Opinion alignments had changed rather little since 1988; however, a large pool of Mexican voters still awaited the organizational reconstruction of cardenismo. It was in 1991, however, that the PAN began to expand its national base, a trend that continued in the 1994 presidential elections and especially since that time.

After decades of virtual single-party rule, Mexican citizens approached national elections by focusing on the fate of the party that had long governed

them. First and foremost they asked themselves, “Am I for or against the ‘party of the state’ and its leader?” Many voters asked themselves no other questions; they backed the PRI. Many Mexican voters were ready to vote for the opposition, however. These voters open to the possibility of being governed by a party other than the PRI asked themselves a second question: “Which opposition party?” The answer to this second question was strongly shaped by ideology, policy preferences and social cleavage attachments. There were important differences among the opposition parties. There was, therefore, a kind of “second election” between the opposition parties that competed for voters that had made the key decision to reject the PRI.

Among those Mexicans committed to defeating the PRI there were also many sophisticated strategic voters. A large minority of opposition voters wanted to defeat the government party so much that they suppressed their ideological preferences in order to back the party most likely to beat the PRI, even when such a party espoused policy views with which they disagreed. For example, in 1988 many voters with right-wing predispositions voted for Cárdenas while in 1991 many voters with left-wing predispositions voted for PAN candidates.

Scholars of Mexican elections must wonder about the distortions that fraud may introduce into the elections results. The data in our book is not suited to document the incidence of fraud but it does shed light on the effect of fraud in Mexican public opinion in anticipation of the 1991 elections. The greater the perception that electoral fraud would be widespread, the lower the likelihood of voting turnout. Fraud-

Mexican elections have been shaped by the relative capacity of parties to mobilize their own supporters.

fearing non-voters were disproportionately likely to support the opposition. Opposition campaigns against fraud, no matter how justified, backfired because many of their backers believed the allegations that there would be fraud and were more likely to stay away from the voting booth on election day.

The “geography” of fraud was also important. The PRI was most likely to commit fraud against the opposition —as evident from the 1991 exit poll— where it was strongest, typically in urban areas. Because opposition and other election observers were concentrated in such areas, this pattern of fraud also backfired on the PRI because it was more likely to be “seen”, increasing thereby the perception that fraud was even more widespread.

Ordinary Mexicans are ready for more open contested politics. They look for elections that truly serve to choose those who govern them. Our book documents their patterns of thought and behavior in the early years of this democratic opening. **W**



Imagenlatina-Octavio Gómez

Since 1991, the PAN has increased its number of voters nationally.

MEXICO'S NEW REVOLUTION

Luis Rubio*

When informed of the atom-bomb explosion, Einstein is quoted as having said, "Everything in the world has changed, except the way we look at things." Something similar is taking place in Mexico today. The sudden and abrupt devaluation of December 1994 led to a fundamental redefinition of the government's economic policy, in ways that are only now becoming apparent. By the same token, there has been a radical departure from the previously prevailing paradigm in the political arena. Thus, while in many ways surreptitious and as yet largely ungrasped by Mexicans and foreigners alike, Mexico is experiencing a small revolution.

* Director of the Center for Research for Development.

The country is going through two simultaneous processes of change and reform: one in the political arena and the other in the economy. Each of these follows its own dynamic, and often in contradiction with the other. Hence, the risk of a clash remains high. The thrust in the political arena is to decentralize, to strengthen institutions and to bring about the rule of law. In the economy, the government is fighting to attain economic recovery, to increase the levels of domestic savings and to do away with the debt overhang. While it needs latitude and peace to deal with the political challenge of restructuring an old, vitiated, corrupt and often authoritarian political system, the depth of the economic recession and the instability of the markets provide storms, rumors, ever more negative expecta-



Imagenlatina-Daniel Mendoza

Political reform has become a priority. The Federal Electoral Institute in session.

tions and political confrontation. By the same token, while the economic crisis demands strong and centralized leadership to deal with economic instability, the political process delivers uncertainty, endless legislative challenges to the executive, stronger state governments and, therefore, an ever weaker foundation for a strong federal government.

President Zedillo came into office having campaigned for a profound political and judicial reform. His first act as president, barely a week into his administration, was to introduce legislation that would revamp quite thoroughly the structure of the judiciary, bring about the possibility of contesting the constitutionality of laws and strengthen the independence of judges all the way to the Supreme Court. He then proceeded to call on all political parties and organizations to join in a common effort to define new rules of engagement for the political process at large and for elections in particular, in order to do away with the tradition of electoral fraud and stymied competition of the old political system, and, on that basis, bring about democracy. While pushing hard on both fronts, however, the administration stumbled with a bungled devaluation that appears to have thwarted its ability to act and deliver on its promise to bring about rapid economic growth while continuing to deepen and extend the transformation of the country's economy that was initiated in the mid-1980s. After the devaluation, the administration shifted the course of economic policy in an attempt to deal with the economic crisis.

For its part, the political system is experiencing a true convulsion. The old structure of Mexican politics is dying, while no new institutions have taken over the key functions that make a society function normally. This gap has produced the extraordinary events and violence that characterized Mexico during 1994. The political system has to transit from a



Imagenlatina-Octavio Gómez

The 1995 state and local elections were peaceful and uncontested.

closed and corrupt political system that benefited a few clusters of interests, but delivered decades of political stability, to an open system that is accountable and representative, and that, above all, reinstitutionalizes conflict and, thus, brings about a new era of peace and political stability. This process is so intrinsically complex that it is amazing how peaceful it has been, particularly if one compares it with nations undergoing similar transformations, such as the former Soviet Union and South Africa.

The process of political reform is taking place on three levels. First, it involves developing a set of political arrangements among the political parties that would settle all their differences related to elections, campaign and party financing and access to the media. All of these entail enforcing party discipline, abandoning radical politics and accepting the will of the people, something for which there is little or no history or culture. Second, the political reform entails a significant affront against the old interests within the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), for it is their privileges that will be thwarted as the process advances. Some will submit to the new rules,



The government is promoting changes in both the political and economic arenas.

but others might not. Restraining the latter and preventing new violent episodes from exploding will be a critical political job. Finally, the third level of political reform has to do with the rule of law: developing a proper legal framework, enforcing the law, respecting the independence of the judiciary, developing strong property and individual rights and making it possible for due process to be permanently and systematically respected. In other words, extraordinarily ambitious objectives, multiple constituencies, agencies and contradictory interests and, altogether, enormous complexity.

Despite the violence that took place throughout 1994 and the political vacuums that have been apparent every now and then, the administration remains clearly in control of all key functions of government. Nobody disputes the role of the government or its electoral legitimacy. The crucial political issue of Mexico today has to do with the consolidation of an institutional structure that would serve the three basic objectives of any political system: representation of the people in the political process, channeling of demands from the people and settling disputes among political actors. In all three areas, the government has done fairly well. While there have been

many ups and downs, the process of negotiation among the various political actors remains active and keeps moving. The government has shown a clear vision of what is needed and has been able to prod the parties to persevere. The result has been a fairly smooth process of transition in the political arena. The peaceful, undisputed and uncontested elections of November 1995, which involved several states where conflict had previously prevailed, were uneventful and all parties accepted the results outright.

In fact, the government has been keen on developing the political system and has not been interested in protecting the old vested interests as its predecessors did. In the past, the government's thrust was to protect the PRI and to change as little as possible to avoid endless conflict. The thrust today is to build an altogether new political system without regard to the particular interests of any of the parties. Hence, it has been gradually succeeding in bringing the various political parties and groupings into a series of arrangements and understandings that could become the foundation for a representative and effective political system for the future. Each political party and group has been attempting to extract an onerous price for participating in the process; and therefore, the government has had to be extraordinarily skillful to bring them all forward. Its success in doing so reveals not only a clear objective on the part of the administration, but its ability to drive a complex process through.

The overall picture of Mexico a year into the Zedillo administration is thus one of contrast and contradiction. On the one hand, it has advanced quite well to achieve the political goals it had proposed during its campaign. Given the complexity of the process and the risks naturally associated with it,

the amazing thing is precisely that it is still going on, and pretty well at that. The latter is evidenced not only by the uneventful recent elections, but by the fact that a new electoral law, agreed to by consensus among all political parties, is soon to be voted on in the Congress. On the other hand, however, the adminis-

The sudden and abrupt devaluation of December 1994 led to a fundamental redefinition of the government's economic policy.

tration was taken by surprise in the economic arena and has not proven to be particularly adept at managing the crisis. A mix of irresponsible decisions in the last few months of the previous administration, poor management in the present one and a drastic break in the policy objectives of the government with respect to the Salinas administration have deepened and expanded the recession caused by the devaluation itself. The government is now attempting to pursue the Salinas reforms essentially by increasing domestic savings, managing an undervalued currency and addressing the poor quality of education.

The government faces a clear-cut dilemma. It has to persevere in the political transformation that Mexico requires and cannot avoid, lest it sink into a vicious circle of endless political chaos and violence. It also has to address an economic crisis that was partly inevitable as a result of pre-existing conditions and is partly self-inflicted. Historians will decide which part was more important, but the government has had no choice

but to get the economy moving again. Once the crisis had taken over, the administration decided to go back to basics, thus abandoning the course that the Salinas administration had charted in the financial arena. Following a textbook approach to economic management, it has sought to build a strong balance of payments, as well as high levels of domestic savings. It is largely unconcerned about public expectations and does not care to cater to the financial markets. Rather, it is investing for the long term and firmly believes the markets will eventually recognize that it has taken the right course.

Where To?

The foundations of the old political system are not particularly sound for a new political order to emerge. Corruption has played a significant role in Mexican political history, for it was, to some degree, the glue



Imagenlatina-Octavio Gómez

All parties represented in Congress have to reach a consensus concerning a new electoral law.

that held together the whole apparatus. Lacking an effective representative political system, corruption served a very useful purpose but inevitably got out of hand. As bureaucratic meddling diminished through deregulation, many sources of corruption were undermined. Yet, as the current episode of corruption during the last administration shows, it remains a political institution in its own right. Access to power and money (i.e., graft) were exceptional mechanisms to develop and nurture alliances and coalitions. The moment the availability of money and the willingness to use it for that purpose diminished, particularly over the last decade, the whole system began to crumble. The economic reform that was launched in the mid-1980s has gradually eroded access to corruption, thus diminishing greatly politicians' incentive to remain loyal to the system. Inevitably, the political system has decomposed.

The plan charted by the Zedillo administration is not only an appropriate way to deal with the need to rebuild political institutions, but probably the only

one capable of reaching that objective. At the core of the government's program lies the strengthening of the judiciary, the attempt to bring about the rule of law, reinstitutionalization of the political system, as well as hard-headed prosecution of corruption. To be successful, however, the plan must go beyond negotiations and discussions among parties and political organizations; it must also enforce the agreements reached in those negotiations. That has been, so far, an Achilles heel of the administration. The government has proven to be far more adept at defining the problem and setting the goals to be reached than of acting upon how to get there. Good intentions and honesty are unusual assets in the present Mexican context, but no alternative to effective government. Hence, while there is little doubt that muddling through is a possibility, the real question is whether the small revolution that the administration has launched will succeed in truly transforming the nation and make it possible for Mexicans to significantly improve their lot. ❧

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IDENTITY AND MOBILITY

Toward a Definition of Remigration

Axel Ramírez*

The relationship between *class culture* and *class consciousness* is a focal point not only for the Chicano movement, but also for U.S. government policy with regard to ethnic minorities.

Mexican migrants in the United States share common interrelated

* Researcher at the Center for Foreign Students (CEPE), UNAM.

cultural norms which permit them to be differentiated from other groups. This is why “Mexicans from the other side [of the border]” constitute a particular ethnic unit, with all the complexity involved in defining an ethnic group.

This phenomenon can be looked at from two points of view: a) one ethnic group can be differentiated from others by its cultural traits and/or by the relative accu-

mulation of norms: social status, political power, etc. Therefore, it can be defined by language, religion or national origin,¹ without forgetting that the competition for resources produces a stratification

¹ See Axel Ramírez, *Conciencia política y autoconciencia: los chicanos en una sociedad cambiante*. Doctoral Dissertation, Mexico, School of Philosophy and Letters, UNAM, 1994, p.106.



Imaginatina-Marco Antonio Cruz

Mexico has lost a great many of its citizens to migration, both legal and illegal.

of the group within the society; b) self-identification and forced identification vis-a-vis other groups is the other method, which has contributed to a heightened interest in ethnicity or a sort of “shared feeling.”²

A particular characteristic of Mexican immigrants in the United

“no man’s land,” which is not his country of origin, much less the one which offers him work and residency. For this reason he is subject to work structures which are sufficiently paternalistic to confirm his situation.⁴ His way of life becomes a duality: his family and fellow countrymen are placed in a

two autonomous linguistic tools: his native tongue, useful fundamentally in his private life with family and friends, and a specialized administrative language of the country which offers him work, a language for him lacking in affection and which essentially plays a passive and public role. The consequence of this institutionalized separation of the *language of power* and the *language of affection* is a tendency to impose on the foreign worker a divide in his daily life between two unconnected universes: the universe of work and that of the cultural ghetto.⁵

At this point we must ask whether this “no man’s land” is reproduced in the country of origin of the immigrant: that is, when he migrates, does he lose his socio-cultural space? This leads us inexorably to the problem of reverse migration or remigration.

It was a Mexican writer, Agustín Yáñez, who in the chapter “Los norteros” (The Northerners) of his novel *Al filo del agua* (On the Edge of the Water) (1947) made abundantly clear the contempt with which immigrants are received when they go back where they came from:

...and where did you leave your way of speaking? It seems like you’ve forgotten the language your parents taught you.

⁵ *Idem.*



Imagenlatina-Herón Alemán

Mexicans being deported from the U.S.

States is what Cicourel sees as life in two cultures,³ with the tension resulting from a contradiction stemming from problems of identity, social ambivalence, alienation and rejection, etc.

The immigrant worker can be put into what Swetland calls

cultural context which reproduces the norms of his country of origin, and his work and public life exist in a culture unfamiliar to him.

This dichotomy or cultural diversity becomes most explicit in the immigrant’s gradual adoption of

² *Idem.*

³ See Aarón Cicourel, “Vivir entre dos culturas: el universo cotidiano de los trabajadores migrantes,” in *Vivir entre dos culturas*, Paris, UNESCO, 1983, pp. 32-92.

⁴ See Carolyn Swetland, “El ghetto del alma: factores socioculturales de los programas de formación lingüística para trabajadores migrantes en Noruega,” in *Vivir entre dos culturas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-151.

The long and short of it is that they're a bunch of traitors; I don't know if on purpose or because they're just plain stupid. Which-ever it is, they're point men for the gringos, who want to steal what's left of our land, what they couldn't steal the last time.⁶

What Yáñez actually gives us in his novel is a complete inventory of the open rejection expressed in their own country for those who have gone to work in the United States. That is why he says, "In their miserable condition, it is not clear which is worse: absence or return."⁷ This puts us on the track of a structural process in which the idea of "decasting" continues to be valid.

Since the last century, Mexico has lost, and continues to lose, a great many of its citizens through migration —legal and illegal. This is mainly due to the play of supply and demand in the receiving country(ies), basically the United States, which becomes a genuine dilemma.

There are hundreds of thousands of Mexicans abroad whom it is very difficult to draw back to the country. The government —much less the private sector— has not carried an open campaign to relocate all those immigrants who want to return; one reason for this, among others, is that Mex-

ican emigration continues to be the well-known "escape valve" for the country. Therefore it would be illogical from any point of view that such a campaign be carried out.

Asking a Mexican who resides abroad to come back to show his "love and patriotism" would be an anachronistic, worn-out discourse.

Acceptance or rejection of returning emigrants —despite what Yáñez has shown— depends on the social class they belong to. Those who leave with sufficient capital and a high social status rarely lose their space. In contrast, lower class people who attempt make a vertical move only achieve horizontal mobility which at the same time marginalizes them within their

Returning to the country of origin becomes another adventure, not at all easy to undertake, in large part because it is not simple to make a hurried decision and because the new life which awaits people in the place they left is full of uncertainties.

In this sense, remigration can be defined as *the process of mobilization, displacement, etc., of an individual or group of persons to a particular region or country who return to their place of origin through migration and are rejected and/or accepted according to their social class.*

Whether in the United States, France, Germany, England or Japan, there is not the slightest doubt that cultural alienation, isolation and ambivalence permeate the

There is not the slightest doubt that cultural alienation, isolation and ambivalence permeate the migrant's daily life in his adopted country.

microcosmos, which is expanded to include an emerging middle class.

When an attempt was made to persuade Jamaicans to return to their homeland from the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom after the difficult Manley years, it was a failure. People had jobs and homes; their children were enrolled in schools; they had built a new life and what was more, they were not sure how they would be received in Jamaica.

migrant's daily life in his adopted country and his life led between two cultures and two social universes which are uneven and conflictive. This leads us to ask whether this "no man's land" of cultural hybridism induces the migrant to secularize his relations more and therefore depend less on others and assimilate more easily the local social structures, which would lead him irrevocably toward a process of assimilation, or to reproduce his

⁶ Agustín Yáñez, *Al filo del agua*, Mexico, Porrúa, 1995, p. 151.

⁷ *Idem.*

*Mexican immigrants felt
no great need to assimilate because they were
practically in their own country.*

cultural norms in the hope of returning to his country and be received with the same acceptance as when he left.

Migrants sell their labor abroad to support themselves, and they “are a ‘reserve and regulatory army of labor for industry’ thanks to domestic and international effects of monopoly capitalism and the international division of labor.”⁸ But, has anyone thought about the cost of reproducing the workforce in the capitalist system? As Ronald Parris points out:

For Cicourel, an important related question is the cost of reproducing the workforce in the capitalist system: the different costs that are borne by the countries of origin of temporary migrants compared to those borne by those workers in the countries where they work. For Swetland, the migrant worker has “zero exchange value” as a person even if capital values him for the surplus value that his work creates.⁹

Mexican workers imbedded themselves as part of the U.S. work-

ing class; the first organizing efforts derived from the ideological changes taking place in Mexico and the United States, political ideas having crossed the border with middle class Mexican immigrants.

Ethnicity, for some authors, is part of the U.S.’s manifest colonial oppression because the increase in the *race* and *class* dichotomy is motivated mainly by the historical exploitation of non-whites by whites in the United States.¹⁰ For Randall Collins, however, ethnic consciousness is created basically by the historic operation of three conditions: 1) the exclusion of the members of an ethnic group from the economic mainstream; 2) the control of political and economic institutions by the dominant majority; and 3) visible differences in skin color.¹¹

Researchers Tamotsu Shibutani and Kian Kwan approach the problem of ethnic consciousness in terms of the psychodynamics of the groups themselves, leaving

to one side completely the influence of economic and political surroundings.

According to Shibutani and Kwan, the emergence of ethnicity is due to three factors: 1) the degree to which the group maintains its own channels of communication (language, press, associations, etc.); 2) the degree of shared understanding (consensus) among the members of the group; and, 3) the extent to which the group is able to develop social structures related to its changing conditions of life.¹²

Many Mexicans who emigrated to the United States felt no great need to become culturally assimilated because they were practically in their own country. Proximity, then, accentuated ties and spurred immigration, which made for incomplete assimilation since the different waves of immigrants refused to be “purified,” perhaps under the impression that Mexicans’ success was due precisely to not being integrated into the culture and assimilated.

The United States actually receives more immigrants than any other country: in the fiscal year of 1991, the U.S. government authorized legal residency for 1,827,167 immigrants. In California, 69 percent were from

¹⁰ Axel Ramírez, *op. cit.*

¹¹ See Randall Collins, *Conflict Sociology: Towards an Explanatory Science*, New York, Academic Press, 1975, pp. 84-86. Also Richard Griswold del Castillo, *The Los Angeles Barrio, 1850-1890; A Social History*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1979.

⁸ See Ronald G. Parris, Preface to *Vivir entre dos culturas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 11-13.

⁹ *Idem.*

¹² See Tamotsu Shibutani and Kian W. Kwan, *Ethnic Stratification: A Comparative Approach*, New York, McMillan, 1952, pp. 572-578. Also Richard Griswold del Castillo, *op. cit.*

Mexico, 4 percent from the Philippines, 3 percent from El Salvador, 3 percent from Vietnam, 2 percent from China and 19 percent from other countries. In Arizona, 86 percent were from Mexico, 2 percent from Vietnam and 12 percent from other countries.¹³

Texas, which shares a 1,200-mile border with Mexico and where

the Philippines, 4 percent from the ex-Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and 24 percent from other countries.

In Florida, 30 percent were from Mexico, 21 percent from Haiti, 6 percent from Cuba, 4 percent from Jamaica, 4 percent from Colombia and 35 percent from other countries.¹⁵

from Colombia, 5 percent from Mexico, 5 percent from Peru and 68 percent from other places.¹⁷

Migration and identity continue to be the great dilemma of the United States. Immigration is now the source of one third of the population growth of the United States, and projections for the future indicate that we



Imaginatina-Herón Alemán

Border surveillance has increased in recent years.

380,000 undocumented immigrants were apprehended in the last year, receives 80 percent of its legal immigrants from Mexico, 4 percent from El Salvador, 2 percent from Vietnam and 14 percent from other countries.¹⁴

In Illinois, 54 percent were from Mexico, 9 percent from Poland, 5 percent from India, 4 percent from

New York, despite the fact that it closed its port of entry in 1952, receives 12 percent from the Dominican Republic, 10 percent from the ex-Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, 6 percent from Jamaica, 5 percent from China, 5 percent from India and 62 percent from other countries.¹⁶

In New Jersey, 9 percent come from India, 7 percent from the Dominican Republic, 6 percent

will reach a population of 383 million in the year 2050 and 436 million in the year 2090.

Despite the fact that 60 percent of U.S. citizens are against immigration, the country faces a dilemma: Will it continue to be a melting pot, or will definitive reforms be made? We are inclined to think that the United States government will opt for the former. ❧

¹³ See Bill Turque, Spencer Reis, Melinda Lou and Adam Wolberg, "America: Still a Melting Pot?" in *Newsweek*, August 9, 1993, pp. 16-25.

¹⁴ *Idem.*

¹⁵ *Idem.*

¹⁶ *Idem.*

¹⁷ *Idem.*

ofunam

Ronald Zollman, director artístico



Solistas:

Walter Despalj
violoncello

Chantal Juillet
violín

Anne-Lise Berntsen
soprano

Rudolf Rosen
bajo

Alberto Cruzprieto
piano

Mercedes Gómez
arpa

Lidia Tamayo
arpa

Encarnación Vázquez
soprano

Cuarteto
Latinoamericano
de Cuerdas

Radovan Vlatkovic
como

Pascal Rogé
piano

Mark Peskanov
violín

Antonio Meneses
violoncello

Emanuel Ax
piano



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Seven Reason for Mexican Economic Recovery*

I wish to thank Gro Harlem-Brundtland, Prime Minister of Norway, for her kind presentation, and the organizers for their generous invitation to address this distinguished audience. I also want to express my satisfaction for being in this session in the very good company of Jim Wolfensohn, Stan Fischer and Renato Ruggiero.

It is fitting and timely to review the recent Mexican experience in the broader context of the discussion to reform the Bretton Woods institutions.

The shock that the Mexican economy endured during 1995 was unprecedented.

We suddenly lost foreign financing in the equivalent of 8 percent of our GDP. Furthermore, we also lost a substantial part of the capital which arrived over a period of years and had financed a series of large current account deficits.

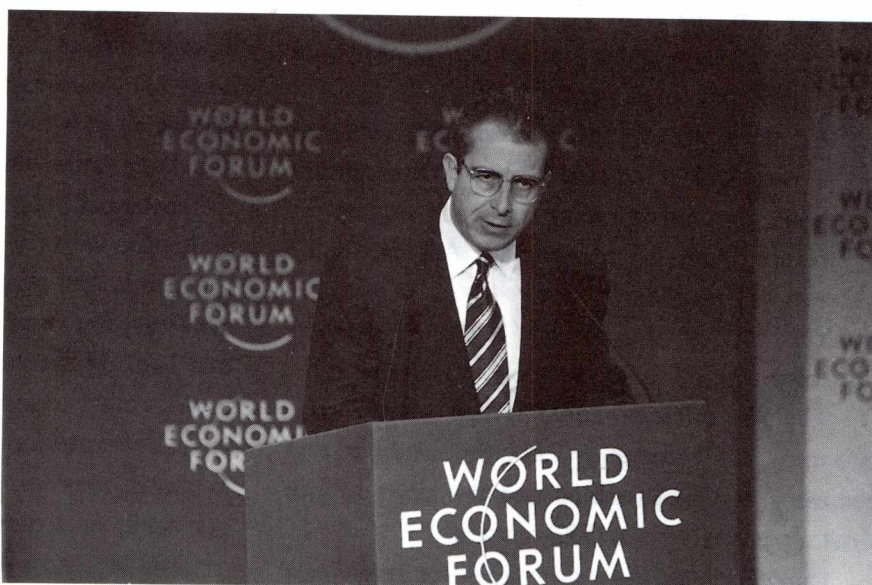
It is not an exaggeration to say that the 1995 shock was much more severe than the debt and the oil-price shocks Mexico confronted in the 1980's.

In the face of the crisis, the Mexican people and its government reacted responsibly, with resolve, and have stayed the course.

Strong fiscal and monetary adjustment —coupled with further market liberalization and structural reform— were at the heart of a policy that was not only designed to survive a difficult moment, but to prevent its recurrence and build stability for the future.

To support our own effort and to avoid conceivably serious spill-over effects throughout the international financial system, we counted on the swift action of the IMF, the World Bank, the IDB and our main trading partners, very especially the United States.

Unavoidably, the crisis imposed a very high cost on our country. In 1995, GDP fell dramatically; unemployment increased sharply; the deep devaluation of the peso fueled inflation and our banking system had to be firmly shored up against collapse.



President Zedillo speaking at the World Economic Forum.

* Speech by President Ernesto Zedillo at Davos, Switzerland, during his European visit early this year.

Yet today I can tell you with confidence that the short-run imbalances that triggered the crisis have been substantially corrected.

At the beginning of 1995, we were burdened by a 29-billion-dollar current account deficit incurred during the previous year, as well as by short-term dollar denominated liabilities that totaled more than 40 billion dollars.

But now, due to an improvement of 26 billion dollars in our trade balance, reached largely through an increase of more than 30 percent in our exports, we have adjusted our current account to equilibrium.

This year, short-term external debt is just one tenth of what it was 12 months ago and is proving to be readily refinanciable in voluntary markets. Furthermore, despite the fact that we used only a part of the available financial support package, our foreign exchange reserves are now four and a half times what they were a year ago.

The threat of insolvency and financial collapse has vanished.

The effort is starting to pay off. Our economic program for 1996 aims quite realistically at economic recovery with reduced inflation. In the context of continued monetary and fiscal discipline, GDP will start to grow again, fueled by sustained export expansion and a gradual revival of private investment and consumption.

We have already seen encouraging evidence of recovery in key indicators. The most significant has been the reduction in the open unemployment rate, from 7.6 percent last August, to 5.2 percent in December.

The money and foreign exchange markets have also started to evolve more positively.

The key question today is not whether our economy will recover in 1996, but whether that recovery can be sustained and transformed into dynamic growth from 1997 onward.

I am convinced the answer is yes, for seven main reasons.

“In the face of the crisis, the Mexican people and its government reacted responsibly, with resolve, and have stayed the course.”

First, we will apply at all times throughout my Government, rigorous fiscal and monetary policies aimed at achieving and maintaining stability and long-run certainty.

Sound short-run macroeconomic management is always needed, both in the bad and the good times.

Second, we will continue pursuing structural reforms with renewed impetus. Even in the midst of the difficult circumstances of 1995, we have promoted regulatory, legal and even constitutional changes to liberalize a broad spectrum of economic activities.

These changes have opened to private investment important economic sectors like railroads, ports, airports, and transportation and storage of natural gas. The State-owned petrochemical plants are being privatized. We are also promoting unprecedented investment and competition in telecommunications, and we have enhanced foreign ownership possibilities in domestic financial institutions.

The third reason I have for being confident that Mexico will attain sustained economic growth is that we will continue our unshakeable adherence to free trade. NAFTA passed very successfully its most difficult test during 1995. We will continue at full steam total implementation of NAFTA as well as all of other free trade agreements signed with Latin American nations. We also look forward to substantial, progressive and reciprocal trade liberalization with the European Union.

The fourth reason is that we are taking every necessary measure to protect the soundness of our banking system. New incentives to restore banks' reserves and capital base and a wide ranging debt restructuring program whose fiscal cost is explicitly considered in our budget will soon put our banks on a truly secure footing.

The fifth, and a very important reason to be optimistic about our economy's prospects, is that we have

already taken very important steps to foster domestic savings permanently. A low savings rate has been our Achilles's heel since the early 1970s.

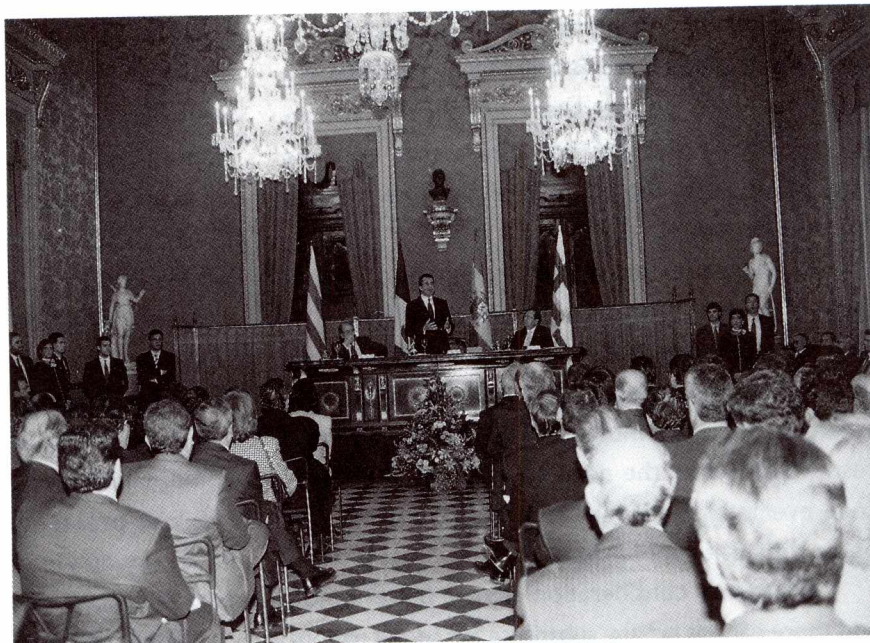
That is why in 1995 we sought and enacted a tax reform involving a 50 percent increase in the general VAT rate, which is the most important levy on consumption.

Of even greater significance is the sweeping reform of our national pension system, just approved by Congress. The new legislation mandates the transformation of our present "pay-as-you-go" system into one based on individual fully-funded capitalizing retirement accounts. These will be managed mainly by private investment funds. The new system will provide a source of long-term savings to finance investment, and it will also stimulate the development of Mexico's financial markets and institutions.

The sixth reason to expect sustained growth is that we are committed and will deliver an unprecedented effort in the education and training of our human resources. We will also enhance our human capital by fighting poverty through well focused, properly targeted and ambitious social programs.

The seventh reason for having sustained growth is that Mexico will enjoy political stability in the years to come, because we will complete the job of building democracy and will do everything necessary to guarantee the rule of law.

Through negotiation, tolerance, social policies and adherence to legality, we are clearly solving problems that have recently affected our stability.



The president explains his economic plan in Spain.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

International capital flows are so large in scope and so sensitive to real or perceived changes in the economic or political environment that their resulting impact on the performance of national economies is greater than anyone could have imagined just a few years ago.

It is now clear that the effective, timely response that followed the Mexican crisis was remarkable. However, as we look to the future, it is evident that support packages like the one put in place then are hardly repeatable. Therefore, the international community must be ready to prevent and master other contingencies that might occur.

The Mexican experience encourages me to make five considerations which address the main topic of this Plenary Session.

The first one is that global integration of financial markets and volatility of short-term capital should be viewed as a fact of life. Capital controls are in no way the answer to the risks posed by short-run volatility.

*“The future holds
much promise for our country and
for those who believe in it.”*

The second one is that better consultation and early warning mechanisms must be put in place. We must acknowledge that there are serious contingencies in the national economies that at some point may affect the stability of the international financial system.

Particular attention should be given to the soundness of pension systems in several countries.

The third one is that multilateral institutions must be strengthened. Their capital base must be enlarged, and they must be fully entitled to raise resources in case the need to respond to unforeseen events that warrant such a support without being subject to moral hazard.

The fourth consideration is that there is not, and there cannot be, any substitute for sound national policies. The best inoculation against financial crises are domestic economic policies that attain macroeconomic stability and provide for well-functioning markets. It is only in this context that an international support package can be effective.

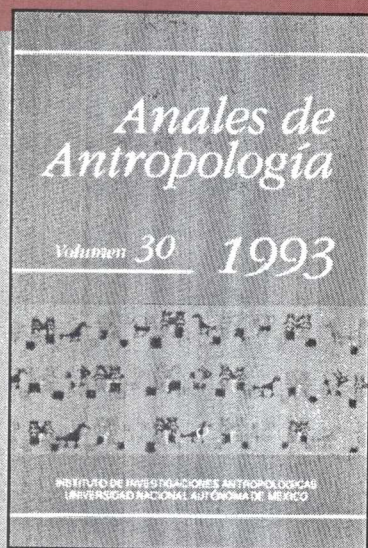
The fifth consideration is that although sound fiscal and monetary policies are necessary to achieve development, they are not sufficient. Promotion of domestic saving is the center piece of any successful economic growth.

For the reasons I have given you. I have the profound conviction that Mexico is headed in the right direction. We are making tough decisions but these are needed to open up new opportunities for the well-being of our people.

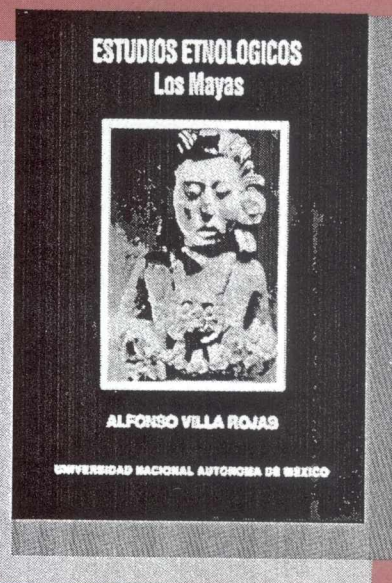
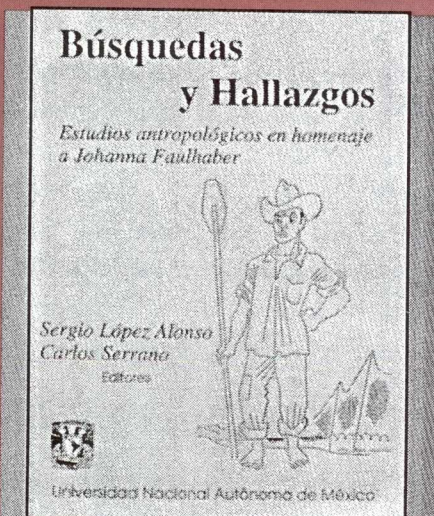
As we move ahead in the months and years to come, I invite you to play an important part in Mexico's present and future economy—to invest in our country, to manufacture and buy, to sell and engage in commerce and finance.

The future holds much promise for our country and for those who believe in it. We will continue to do what is necessary each day to be certain that the promise holds true for the benefit of all our people, and for the benefit of all our partners.

Thank you very much. 



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IN SEARCH OF FAITH

An Interview with Rafael Cauduro

Any work of art is a proposal which can either travel the roads of an already established artistic movement or transcend the aesthetic conventions of its time to situate itself in unexplored creative dimensions. In the former case, the work is valued on the basis of already known and sanctioned parameters; in the latter, a new language must be constructed to allow us to completely perceive its contributions. This is what Rafael Cauduro's painting has done, changed the known categories to present us with an unexplored view of reality.

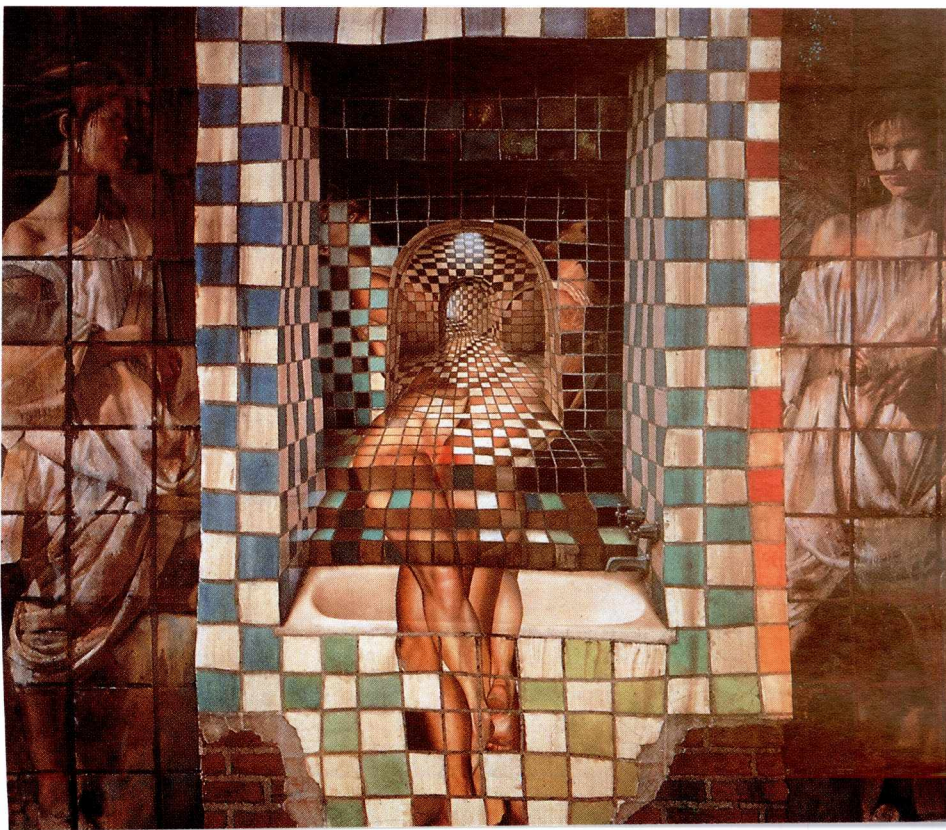
"To see a Cauduro," art critic Alfonso Ruiz Soto tells us, "is to doubt everything you see. His entire body of work proposes a reality born mortally wounded, contaminated with unreality, with an unreality which prevails on the strength of realism." When looking at his canvases, our senses inevitably doubt their perceptions when they face a reality unlike what he paints. "Reality stops being something given, consummate and definitive.... What is real becomes worthy of all suspicion: it

is what you *believe*, what you *make out* of it. A belief as much as a creation."

According to Ruiz Soto, this new proposal can be summarized in a precise formula: *Critical Illusionism = Illusionism of reality - Critical of what is real*. "This universe," he says, "is a unifying art in which different codes, perspectives and techniques come together in one unmistakable whole. It has both

the most extremely rigorous technique and the most extreme expressive freedom. In a single work we find —hypostatized— classical virtuosity and street graffiti; the pictorial-sculptural-scenery dimension; caustic social criticism and unrestrained eroticism; philosophical reflection and double entendres; muralism and miniaturism. A work of synthesis, Rafael Cauduro's production represents

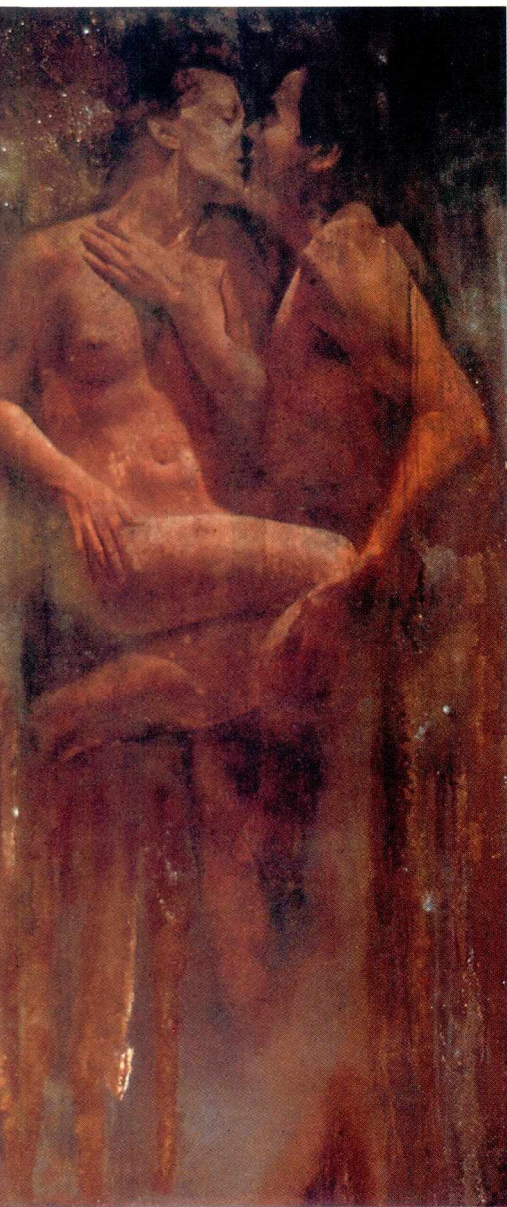
Angels of Conscience, 1995 (oil and acrylic on canvas).



Photos by Antonio Berlanga

“To see a Cauduro is to doubt everything you see.”

ALFONSO RUIZ SOTO



Rusted Couple, 1991 (oil and rust on metal).

like no other our moment in history: the Gordian knot where everything is possible. And where everything possible is visible.”

Rafael Cauduro was born in Mexico City in 1950. A self-taught painter, he studied industrial design at the Iberoamericana University; he never worked as a designer because he was convinced that his true vocation was painting. From 1976 on, he has participated in 33 collective exhibitions and has had 23 individual ones, both in Mexico and abroad.

His work, after 20 years of intensive labor, reflects his insatiable search for innovation and the perfection he has achieved in the use of all different types of materials. He has gone successively from flat painting to texture, to relief and, finally, to sculpture in painting. Cauduro has shown total virtuosity in all these techniques, in the management of his materials, which he measures out, shades and revolutionizes until he achieves the formal perfection which is one of the seals of his artistic execution. But his search is not only for technical perfection, he also tries to achieve spiritual improvement. In an era characterized by skepticism and disillusionment, Cauduro is still a seeker of faith, of illusions beyond reality that can unveil to us the magic of living.

In an interview granted to *Voices of Mexico*, Rafael Cauduro tells us about his beginnings as a painter, explains the motivations behind his most recent work and

expresses his opinion about the categories which define his view of the world in the 1990s.

Voices of Mexico: *Rafael, when did you discover your ability for painting?*

Rafael Cauduro: Ever since I can remember, I was the typical kid who drew well in kindergarten, in primary school. I spent the whole day sketching; every time a teacher asked who knew how to draw well, my fellow students said, “Cauduro.” In all other things I was like everyone else, but in this I was different; it set me apart from the others, and that made me feel very interesting and I was on my way to finding a vocation.

VM: *When did you decide to make it your way of life?*

RC: That was exactly in 1975. It was almost an epiphany, and I use the religious term intentionally because it was a magical event. I am absolutely convinced of that because it was from one day to the next. I had always painted; I never stopped painting or drawing, but I did other things—related to painting, of course. I earned my living as an illustrator and cartoonist. But one day I realized what I wanted to do, what would make me happy and what I would do well in: painting. I felt enormous faith and that day I decided to be a full-time painter. From that day on I did nothing but draw—stumbling occasionally if you will—, but from then on I was wholly dedicated to painting.

VM: *Did you study at an art school or are you self-taught?*

RC: I owe painting to school because it was so boring that I spent all day sketching. That was where I accumulated my first hours of flying time in drawing. All day long I sketched and played; I never lost my playfulness. I think that explains why I still have that sense of fun in the studio. I was actually never very good academically. The way I passed exams was to get right into a book by myself and study before exams. I was never able to pay attention to anything that didn't interest me directly. In academia they go around in a lot of circles before finally getting to the point. I've never been good at that. The way destiny took me to painting was clearly self-taught.

VM: *How did your family react when you made that decision?*

RC: It was quite difficult because of the milieu I was in, the school where I studied, the kind of family I had. There weren't really conditions to be able to dedicate yourself to art.

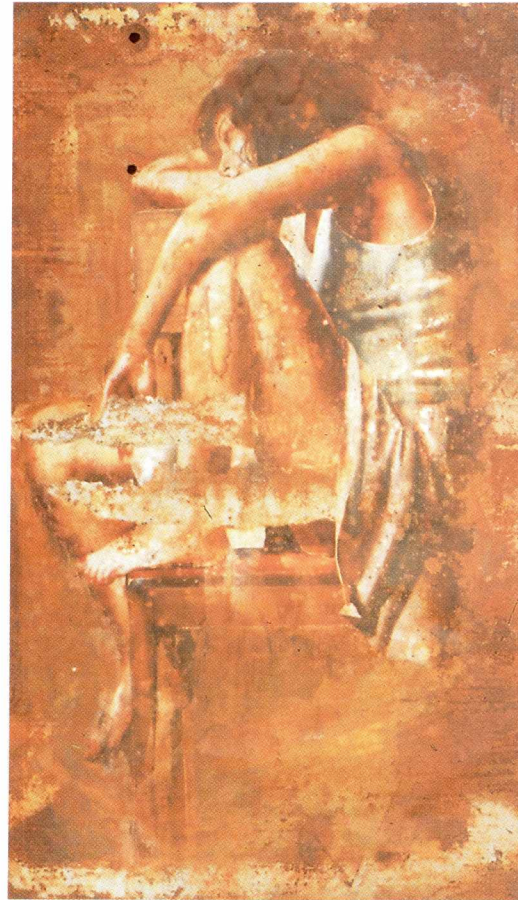
VM: *It was an alternative...*

RC: Not really. If you had a certain talent for the plastic arts, they suggested you go into architecture. In my family there were two architects who should have been painters. They were excellent sketchers and painters but they became architects. I was going to be the third victim of architecture when I realized I didn't want to be an architect. About that time the industrial design major was instituted at the Iberoamericana University as a relatively new option

that my brothers hadn't had. I studied industrial design, but not because I had a vocation for design. Actually, I was never a good student and I never did a piece of design work. The closest I ever got were illustrations, comic strips and caricatures, which had nothing whatsoever to do with design.

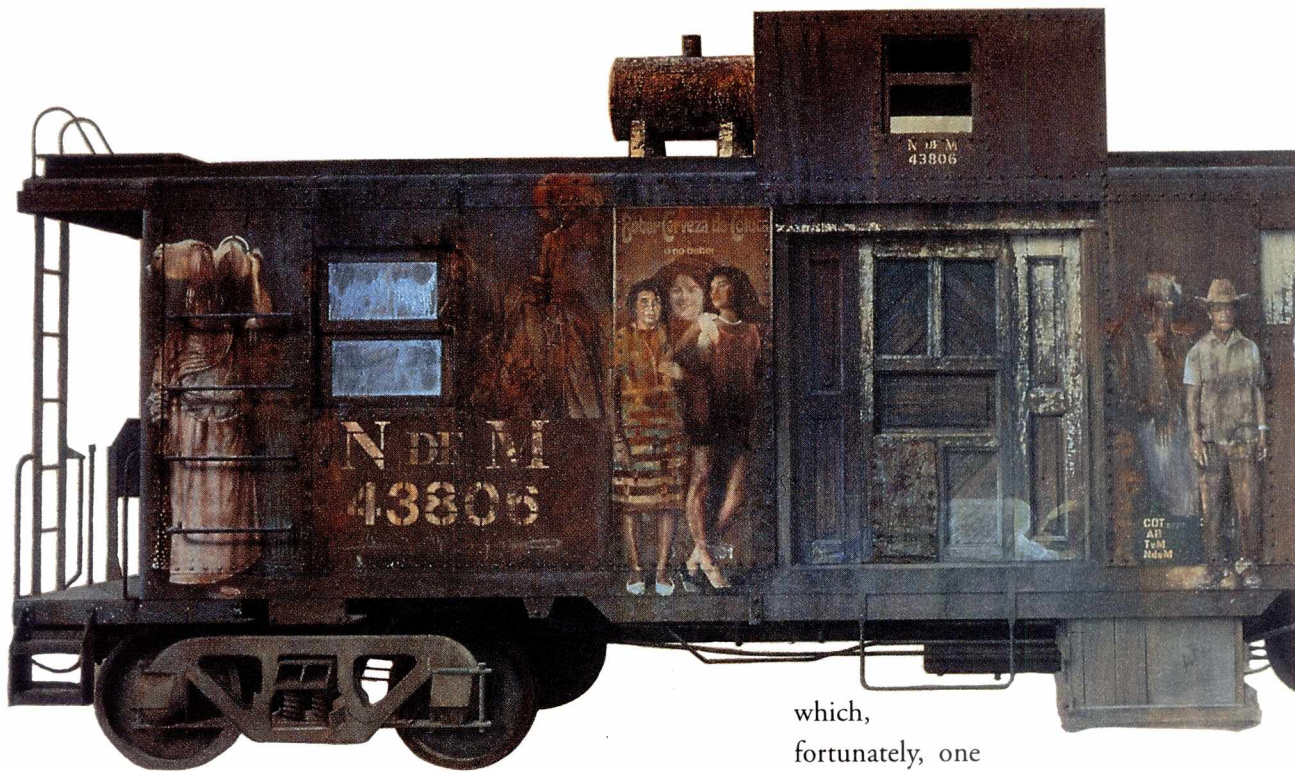
When you do an illustration it is judged by a graphic designer. I didn't even make the decisions like putting lettering on the designs because I didn't have a designer's sense; I never have. Though they might resemble each other a great deal, there is an enormous difference between a painter and a designer. Some designers may be painters or some painters may have the talents of a designer, but I didn't and I still don't.

There was a misconception at work. People thought that if you drew well you could be a good architect because an architect has to translate his things into a drawing. So does a designer, but the talents needed for one are unrelated to those needed for the other, like in my case. I first began my career with drawing, doing caricatures, publicity illustrations for book covers and comic books, all things apparently unre-



Seated Woman, 1994
(oil and rust on metal).

“Far from having a problem of what to paint, my problem is all the things I’m not painting.”



Story in the Caboose, 1993 (oil and acrylic on canvas).

lated to painting. In the long run it was not a waste of time because it came into my work years later.

VM: *What Mexican and foreign painters do you feel have influenced your painting?*

RC: I can remember the first influences very easily. Siqueiros, as a Mexican, in the 1960s. I admired his painting, his personality and his leadership ability. I met him personally; he was my hero. My first paintings are charged with Siqueiros's spirit. Also Michelangelo and Rubens; in fact, they all share an ethical sense that is very important for an adolescent. In that period you want to be very strong, very vital, very robust; those painters were all those things.

Now, obviously, I don't even see a trace of those painters. My work went other ways and later not only any work of art, but anything which deeply impressed me in life would become part of my painting. But I no longer identify them so clearly. I think there are hundreds of canvases, painters and experiences which have been added, but they are too brutally dissolved in the milieu for me to be able to say now that there was one that impressed me and this is the one.

VM: *What do you feel when you face an empty canvas?*

RC: Look, I don't have that problem that many painters or writers are always describing. I feel that my work has been a process in

which, fortunately, one painting leads to others, to a series of paintings which, sometimes, I haven't even been able to finish completely. At least 80 percent of my projects stay on my palette. Far from having a problem of what to paint, my problem is all the things I'm not painting. I would like to have much more time; my day is over very quickly.

VM: *What is your relationship with painting? How do you experience it? Is it something painful, something beautiful, an intersection of yourself? How does it make you feel?*

RC: It's a kind of negotiation. I will speak in the first person. What I do is imagine something and try to carry it out: "I'd like to see that; it doesn't exist and I wonder what it would look like." I'm a kind of voyeur with the poss-



ibility of actually carrying out his imaginings as long as he dedicates himself to it. Obviously, one thing is what I want and another is what the painting becomes. That's where negotiation comes in: you propose what you want to the canvas and the canvas, the material itself, begins to contribute its own ideas. The struggle begins between what you want and what the paint gives you; sometimes you win and sometimes the painting wins; you're negotiating. When the painting starts to express itself, you have to have enough sensitivity to accept that it's beating you and that that's good. You have to take advantage of the victory of the intuition that operates by itself and not fight it. Sometimes you

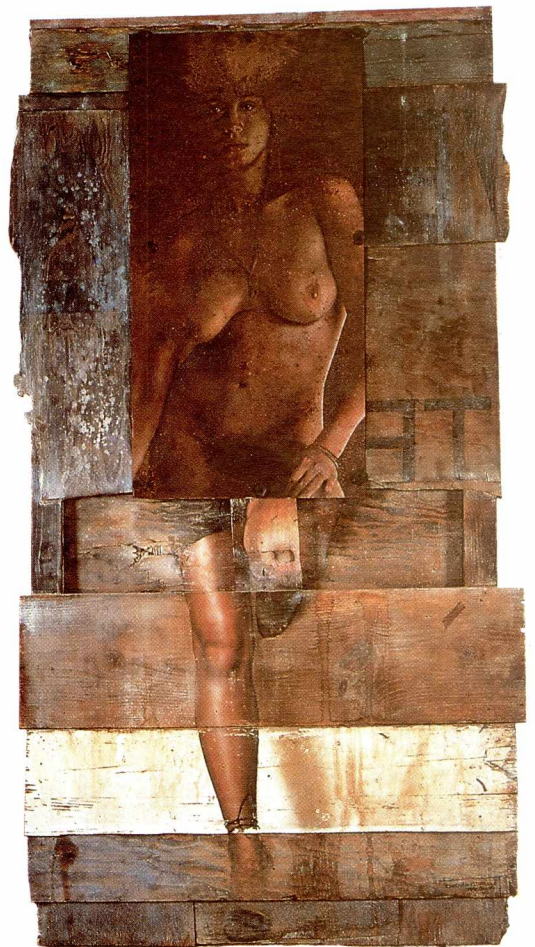
win and the painting has to give ground. It's finished when you come to a good agreement between what you want and what the canvas wants.

VM: *Your painting is characterized by your use of many different materials. Why did you choose this type of painting?*

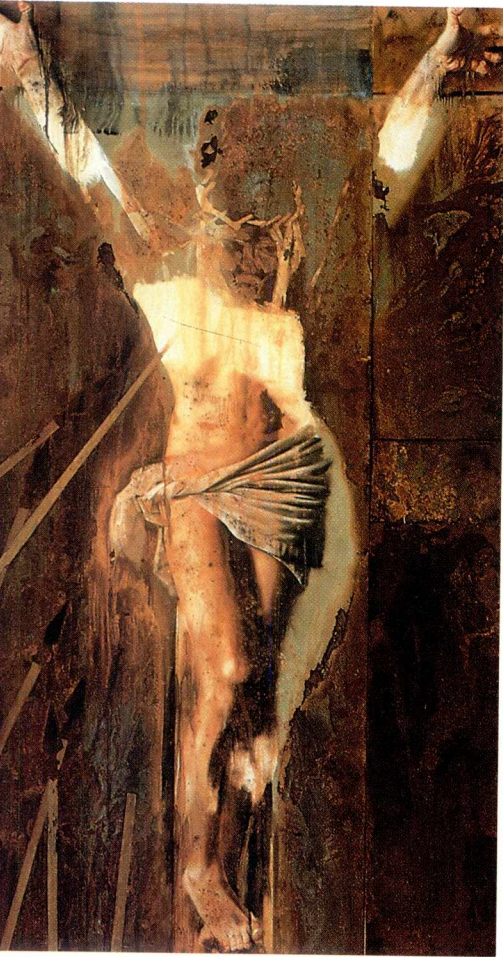
RC: This is related to the answer to the last question. The materials themselves create a kind of language of their own. The technique itself, the materials themselves, have a special procedure that produces special results. A technique has its own will and expressions, language and accidents. As a painter, you must respect them. At the moment in which you give all credit to the material, you're going to go further with the technique. The bad thing is when you always want to win the battle: "I want to do this, and it's going to be done with this technique."

If you try to paint an oil painting like an acrylic or an acrylic like oils, you can't. Oils have an oxidation period which makes them take a very long time to dry. Acrylic isn't the same. Acrylic paint dehydrates. It dries almost instantaneously; it doesn't give you the chance to mix on the canvas. You have to

"The struggle begins between what you want and what the paint gives you; sometimes you win and sometimes the painting wins."



Entering the Barracks, 1991 (oil and rust on metal and wood).



Recycled Christ (back part of a diptych), 1993 (oil and rust on metal).

apply a series of brush strokes of a single color or mix the colors on the palette. Since it will be dry within an hour after you brush it on the canvas, you have to apply the colors on top of each other, and obviously the results are going to be very different from the ones you get with oils. Besides that, acrylic gives you a whole range of colors, for example, from total matte to a bright, or very bright, paint. With oils you go from semi-bright to bright. They are different expressions and forms of application of the paint. Even if we could have the same brightness, the result would be very different. Each material has its own syntax and that lets you enrich your own language.

Each time I experiment with a new material or a new technique, I feel that it enormously enriches my whole pictorial language. It's an adventure I enjoy very much. It allows me to explore. It has opened up new horizons to me and I love it.

VM: *Why do you get interested in a topic? How do you pick it?*

RC: The topic is almost always a kind of excuse for trying to do something, an excuse that at the same time gives you something important: a concept. Though, in art, we have to recognize two major concepts. The intrinsic concept, how to paint, which doesn't mean so much the topic you have in mind, but rather how to do it. In the last analysis, this is the most important one.

At the same time, there's another concept you're also expressing. Art always says things; it is always talking about specific themes. I would call this concept secondary, even though it's far from insignificant. It has its own weight, and its importance lies in that it gives you a kind of pretext for doing something and how to do it. Let's take the theme of love as an example. If we judged it on the basis of the number of people who have expressed it, there would be nothing left to say. It has been pawed all over. The thing that's going to be different about this idea is how you're going to handle it. That's what's important, now, why you're choosing the theme of love is also relevant.

In my work, the themes have come by themselves. At one time I began painting a pre-Columbian death symbol, the *Tzompantli*; then, there were the Calvaries which were the experience of a European death symbol. Playing with both concepts at the same time nurtured my mixed essence as a Mexican much more than painting one or the other alone. Suddenly angels came into the picture, precisely because they are related to the topic of death; finally it was angels, calvaries, skulls and then a synthesis of all those themes.

In the series *José y otras calamidades* (Joseph and Other Calamities), there is a theme which remained to the end: that enormous disillusionment, that enormous sense of abandonment we are living with

now, which has filtered into my work. That is to say, it was not a theme I specifically thought up, but I did feel it. In the end, it is what brought together my latest exhibition that I recently presented at the Modern Art Museum.

To continue with the theme of the angels, when I was about to paint the angel that stops the hand of Abraham from sacrificing his own son, I read—I practically devoured it in one night—Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*. The book deals with Abraham from the point of view of a nineteenth century philosopher who believes in God. I studied with the Jesuits and I come from a very religious family. I was familiar with the topic but I realized that my vision of Abraham was no longer the same as the one I had as a young man. It was not Kierkegaard's vision either; so it had to be a third vision that was mine, in the 1990s, and which surely was similar to that of many others. However, the theme of faith does continue to be valid; perhaps not in the terms that Kierkegaard or Saint Paul spoke of—the faith in God—, but in terms of the relationship between faith and power.

Perhaps it is a more cynical vision of the meaning of the Bible itself, a more 1990s vision, more naked, but in the end, it continues to be faith. No longer is it purely in God, but faith in anything, in a total meaning, that acts as a paradigm. Some belief that binds us together, that unifies us so we can

go forward as a civilization, as a society. I think that is the great thirst, the great hunger we suffer from today. These paintings really



Fantasy in the Bath, 1992 (acrylic on canvas).

had a very critical feeling, a feeling imbued with crisis, very painful. Something you obviously breathed in the atmosphere in Mexico and in the world.

I think we are the first disillusioned generation. All the promises they made to us about progress from the eighteenth century on have been broken. As a generation, we have had to pay the bill for that idea of progress. We did progress, but at what cost and what is this thing called “progress”? We

“Each time I experiment with a new technique, I feel that it enormously enriches my whole pictorial language.”



Tzompantli, Masks and Angels, 1995 (oil and acrylic on canvas).

are talking about a society that breathes lead in the totally polluted air; there's not a clean river in the whole world. We are paying too high a price for this "progress". We're not the Jetsons; we're not going to fly from house to house in the year 2000. We are also not going to eradicate poverty and all be happy. I think that the future—entering into the twenty-first century—looks very different from what we imagined as children. That's the vision of my last exhibition.

We are living through a crisis of values; we don't know where to go nor whether we should value faith. And I'm not talking about faith in God, but that faith that I had on the day I wanted to be a painter. That epiphany, as it was called; that day I knew I decided to be a painter, that it would go well for me, that this was my road. It is the same faith of Saint Louis that I'm talking about now and that I want to give shape to in those paintings. So, going back to the beginning, the concept is the same: how to paint. The second concept, the secondary one, would be Abraham, and Abraham obviously as a great symbol of faith.

VM: *You once said that to do a new painting you have to commit suicide. What did you mean?*

RC: I was referring to moments when I have changed radically, when I have left behind a whole process and made a change that means risking a lot. Because you risk your work that is already going well and

you also risk your public. But you have no choice; you have to go ahead. You have to look for new ways of saying things. You have to find new roads, new techniques, new concepts, new ways of painting. When you make a change of this magnitude, it's a kind of suicide. That is, all this that is alive is thrown out and something new begins.

VM: *When talking about your work, people have said you are part of realism and also that you're the expression of an alternative reality or a critical illusionism. How do you see it?*

RC: Terms like "realism" and "hyperrealism" come from a very specific current at a very particular time—very American—with a very defined concept and way of painting, which, in my opinion, have nothing to do with my work. This current tries to separate out emotions with very cold images which express no feeling, so the pictorial surface is not con-



Tzompantli in the Medicine Chest, 1994 (acrylic on canvas)

“The future... looks very different from what we imagined as children. That’s the vision of my last exhibition.”

taminated with your own emotions. I dislike the very design of the words and I don't understand them. "Hyperrealism": beyond reality. It's excessively dead, hyper-dead. "Realism" is a word that confuses me. I've never been able to understand it. I've only been

“I think that reality is something that drips through our fingers like water, while fiction endures.”



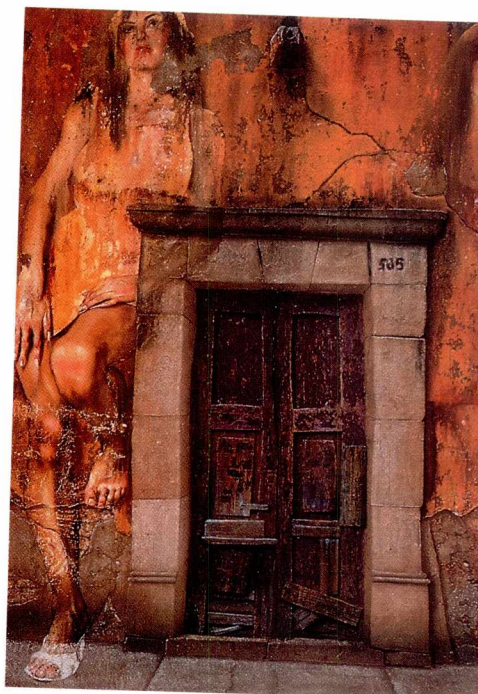
The artist.

able to capture its appearance, its epidermis.

However, I like the antonyms of the word more. “Illusion”, “fantasy”, “myth”, “magic” and “lie” are words that go with my work more. In fact, I think they are words that, in terms of all cultural production, are much more useful. Reality has never been of any use to us, much less truth. We have never even come to any agreement about their meaning. By contrast, in fiction we have found a place where we can understand better.

Culturally, we have never used facts as the foundation for a concept. We have always related more to fantasies, to myths. The Bible has been a source of impressive concepts, even though we cannot prove the existence of Abraham, much less Adam and Eve. Neither do we agree about who the real authors of many texts were, like the *Song of Songs* attributed to Solomon, although we know now that he didn't write it.

I think that reality is something that drips through our fingers like water, while fiction endures. If I'm to speak of my concept of faith and beliefs, the case of Abraham is very useful. But that would not be the case of a friend of mine or of a real person like, for example...I don't know, [Subcommander] Marcos or [ex-President] Salinas or [the painter] Rufino Tamayo. Because, what would happen? I make up a series of narrations and they can contradict me. They'll say,



Old Havana # 1, 1995 (acrylic on canvas).

“You're out of it. Things aren't like that.”

By contrast, if we talk about Abraham, whatever the Bible says is it. Abraham was afraid because of his wife's beauty, and he said she was his sister so they wouldn't kill her. If it had been a news item, they might have denied it because it would mean presenting him as a coward. Perhaps they would have written that Abraham was very brave. But the power of myth, of fiction, of fantasy, is culturally much greater, and it is much more intelligent to pay attention to them and understand them as symbols, as codes, where we can come to an agreement. In the last analysis, we all know in a lie that it is a lie; but in reality or in the truth, we don't. ❧

THE MAKER OF GODS...

Eduardo Matos Moctezuma*

Man has the power to create gods. He makes them with his virtues and defects, with his goodness and evil, with his life and with his death. Pre-Columbian Man lived and died in accordance with the will of the gods, who ruled all aspects of the universe, from the creation of other gods to the different levels of the structure of the universe—earth, sky and underworld—at the same time that they were the lords of time. They created the calendar, fire, the sun and the moon, and, in wondrous portent, they gave Man his place, the center of attention of the gods, paying him back this way for his act of creating them, declining in them the acts of

* Mexican archaeologist.



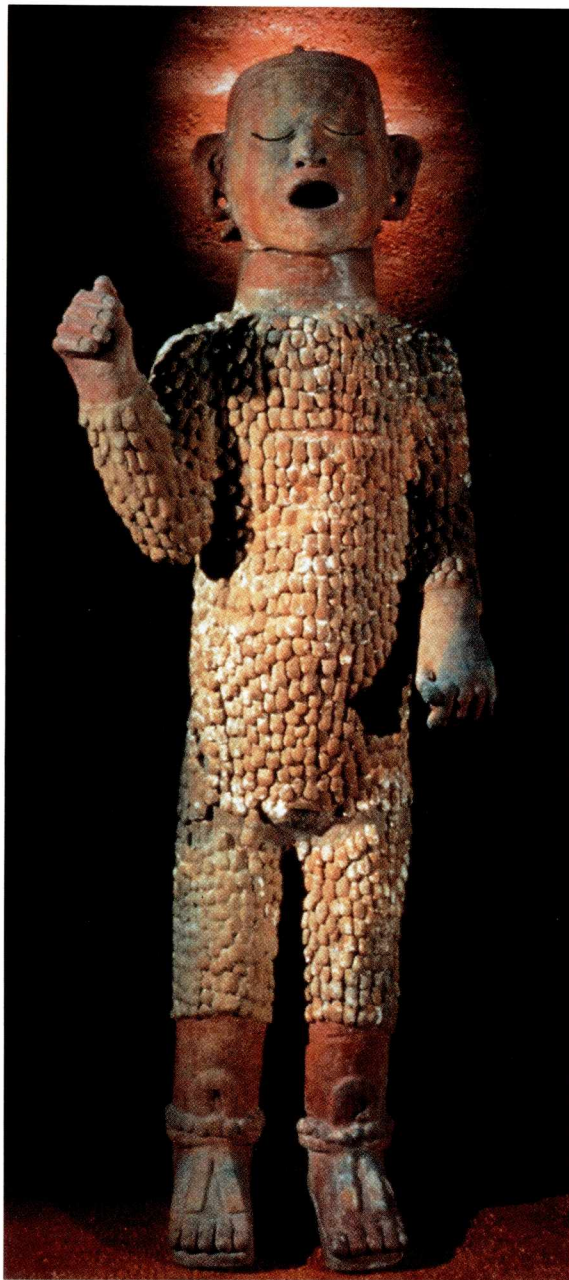
Photos by Rafael Domiz

Statue of a priest dedicated to the worship of Tlaloc, god of water. Gulf Coast.

creation which gain strength and reality through myth. *Historia de los mexicanos por sus pinturas* (The History of Mexicans Through Their Paintings) tells us how it was the gods' responsibility to carry out those acts of creation. The story says:

Six hundred years after the birth of the four brother gods, sons of Tonacatectli (Tonacatecuhtli), all four came together and said that it was good that they order what was to be done and the law that they should have; and they all committed themselves to Quetzalcóatl and Uchilobi (Huitzilopochtli), so that they two should order it, and these two, by the commission and countenance of the other two, then made fire and half the sun, which because it was not the entire sun did not illuminate much, but rather little. Then they made a man and a woman: the man they called Uxumuco, and her they called Cipastonal, and they ordered them to work the earth, and that she should spin and weave, and that from them would be born the *macehuales*, and that they not be lazy, but that they should always work, and to her the gods gave certain grains of corn with which she could heal, do riddles and cast spells, and even unto today

women do the same. Then they made the days and they divided them into months, giving each month 20 days and so they had 18, and 360 days in the year, as will be said further on. Then they made Mitlilatteclet (Mictlantecuhtli) and Michitecaciglat (Mictecacihuatl), husband and wife, and they were the gods of hell and they put them there; and then they created the heavens, beyond the thirteenth, and they made the water, and in it they raised a large fish,



Xipe-Tótec, god of spring and patron of goldsmiths. Mexica.

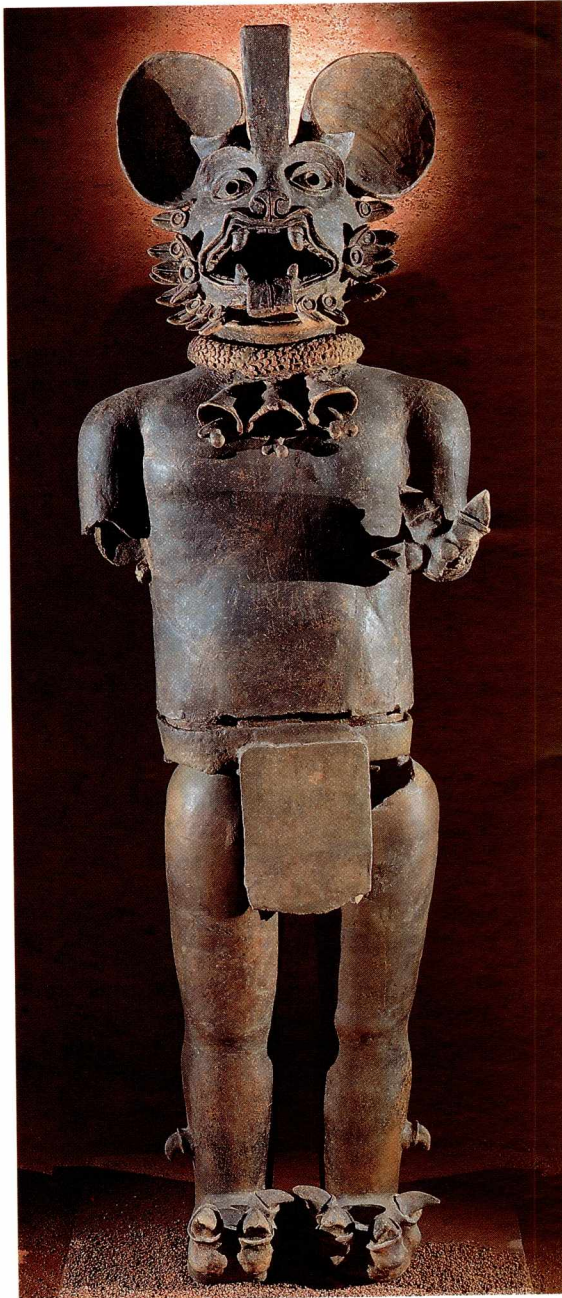
which is called *cipoa cuacli* (Cipactli), which is like an alligator, and from this fish they made the earth....” (*Historia...*, *op. cit.*, 1886.)

We can emphasize several things about this story. In the first place, duality is a basic element for creating other gods. This is present in the mention made of Tonacatecuhtli, lord of our sustenance, who includes within himself the first creating couple also named Ometecuhtli and Omećihuatl, the Lord and Lady of Duality. They live in the thirteenth heaven (the Ome-yocan or *Dos* [Two] place) as a dual principle also synthesized in Ometéotl. Two gods will assume the mission of the acts of creation: Quetzalcóatl and Huitzilopochtli, and two—a man and a woman—will also be those assigned daily labor. To this must be added the fact that, at the moment of creating the different levels of its universal conception, the creating couple situates two gods in the underworld

to balance Ometéotl. And still there are those who doubt that the essential principle of the pre-Columbian world was duality!

Where was the starting point of the duality principle? Manifested through poetry and myths, duality was present in nature. The need for water for plants to grow led the Mesoamerican peoples to constantly observe the cycles of rain and dry seasons; based on

that they developed a calendar in which the gods had a relationship with both conditions. The very structure of the universe was conceived as having three levels (we have already seen in the excerpt above how they were created) and four directions, ruled each by a god, a glyph, a color and a tree. But this structure is at the same time made up of counterparts: the North was the place of cold, death and dryness; the South was the place of humidity and fertility. Similarly with East and West, to the former corresponds the color red and the glyph for cane; this was the place where the Sun came out after having lit the world of the dead accompanied by the warriors killed in combat and sacrifice, assigned to go with the Sun from dawn to midday; therefore, this was the masculine direction of the universe. This was in contrast with the West, associated with everything feminine, since women who died in childbirth became *cihuateteo*, god-women, to whom fell the lot of accompanying the Sun from midday until dusk; this is why this direction is known as *cihuatlampa*, or direction of women. In this way, then, this world of dualities was significantly shaped in the conception of the universe, in the gods themselves and in the day-to-day activities of Mesoamerican Man.



Bat-Man. Bat worship is linked to the underworld.

Other peoples of Mesoamerica show similarities with this. In the *Popol-Vuh*, the Sacred Book of the Quichés, we can read how the duality Tepeu-Gucumatz creates the earth and separates it from the waters, but its main concern is the creation of Man: “There will be neither glory nor greatness in our creation and formation until the human creature exists, until Man is formed,” said the gods; and then they created the pair of elders, our grandparents called Ixpiyacoc and Ixmucané, the equivalents of Cipactonal and Oxomoco. And they said to them:

Enter into consultation, then, grandfather, grandmother, our grandmother, our grandfather, Ixpiyacoc, Ixmucané; make there be light, make it dawn, that we be invoked, that we be adored, that we be remembered by Man created, by Man formed, by mortal Man; make this be done. (*Popol-Vuh*.)

Finally, Man will be created from corn, the first plant, kept by the gods for men. Once again, duality is present in the old Mayan story when the youths Hunahpú and Ixbalanqué are created; these two must go to the world of the dead, Xibalbá, where after many misadventures on their travels to the underworld, they play the ball game and defeat the lords of Xibalbá.



Tlaloc, god of rain and fertility. Central Veracruz.

The similarities are surprising. We could well say that we are looking at a Mesoamerican religion with regional variations, each with its own particular seal of individuality. The needs of these peoples require similar answers, which Man delivers into the hands of the gods. Something important can be inferred from the words of the *Popol-Vuh* and the Nahuatl stories: Man is the central concern of the gods and he will be created to adore them and

remember them.... And ritual is born. It will be through ritual that men recreate the myths and give homage to the gods: the ball game, offerings, sacrifice, temples, sacred places, everything is for religion. Ceremonies are repeated recalling the acts of creation, the birth of a particular god, the struggle between night and day symbolized in the ball game.... Man, created through the penitence and the ritual death of the gods pays them back and more for having been created. In this way, man maintains the equilibrium of the universe through sacrifice, ritual, blood. It is here that Man becomes divine: he sacrifices himself to make an offering of the most precious thing he has, his life, his heart, since from that ritual death in which the man who represents the god is offered in sacrifice will arise and endure life, the rhythm of the universe, the succession of night and day. A creative act, from the sacrifice of a man and his ritual death will arise life anew, just as from the dry season, and in a constant cycle, is life born anew.

And this is the meaning we have given this presence of the gods. From the world view or universal structure with their levels and directions, to the ritual exemplification in the ball game and in everything that leads us to the adoration of the gods. From there on to the conception of time and the life-death duality which is present from very early times in Mesoamerica. Later into the sphere of the gods of life to end in the face of death.

All this is possible thanks to the creative power of Man. He created his gods by molding clay and carving stone. Just as Man was born of corn and the will of the gods, so were they born of stone, clay and the will of talented hands which knew how to make dead matter come alive.

The gods of Central Mexico and of other areas of Mesoamerica are present with all their ancestral weight and exemplify the fact that, in all eras and under all circumstances in Mesoamerican time and space, they were the work of men who one day decided to leave their power to create in the hands of the gods. ❧

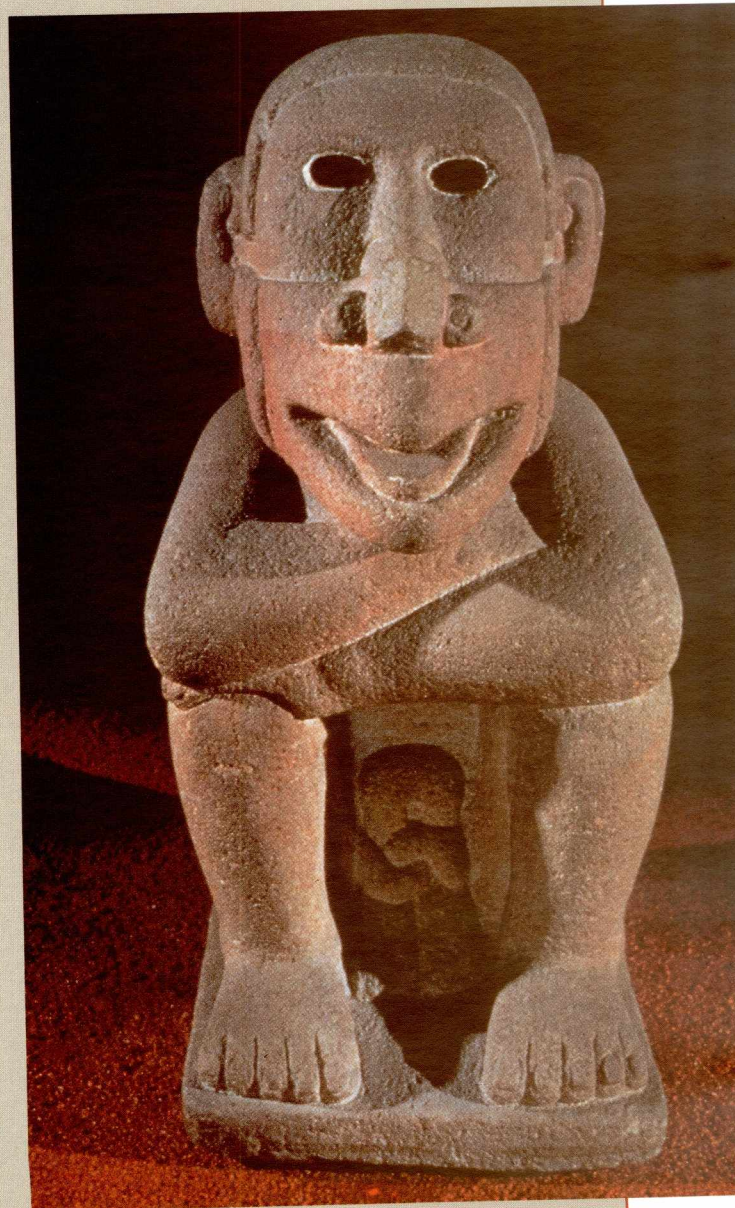
The Gods of Ancient Mexico in the Old San Ildefonso College

(December 9, 1995 - March 24, 1996.)

The archeological exhibit *The Gods of Ancient Mexico*, with 230 pre-Columbian sculptures of different sizes, aims to underline the importance of religion in the daily life and the world view of our ancestors. The exhibit, therefore, uses the pre-Columbian gods as its starting point to deal with their conception of the universe and of the gods, as well as the influence of both in the day-to-day existence of Mesoamerican Man.

Pre-Columbian Man lived and died according to the will of the gods, who ruled over all aspects of life, from the creation of other deities to the different levels of the universe: land, sky and underworld. They were the lords of time. Paradoxically, it was Man who created his gods, who gave them their virtues and defects, their goodness and evil. But he also gave them the power to create, which let them be both lords and masters of men's lives.

This exhibit is original, not only because of its unique topic, but also because it presents previously unknown pieces discovered in recent archeological excavations. The pieces are from the preclassical, classical and post-classical periods and are representative of the Olmec, Teotihuacan, Xochicalcan, Toltec, Aztec, Mixtec, Zapotec, Totonac, Huastec and Mayan cultures. ❧



Ehécatl seated, god of the wind. Mexica.

Gods of Life and Death in the Pre-Columbian World

Vestiges of the worship of the gods indicate the complex social structures of the Mesoamerican peoples and the relationships among them. Some particularly important pre-Columbian deities —Tláloc, Quetzalcóatl and Huehuetéotl, for example— are to be found in the different regions of Mesoamerica. However, from region to region their characteristics, adornments and attributes vary depending on the period in which they were represented and the specific culture they belonged to.

Tláloc: God of the rain and fertility. He is one of the most respected and frequently represented gods of the pre-Columbian world due to the Mesoamerican peoples' great dependence on agriculture. He also had his bad side: he ordained the crop-killing freezes.

Xipe-Tótec: God of spring. In his honor men were flayed in the rites of *Tlacaxipehualiztli*. The rite celebrated the Earth's changing its dead skin for a new, fresh one which would allow new plants to grow.

Huehuetéotl-Xiutecuhtli: The old god of fire, Lord of the year. He is represented as an bent, toothless, seated old man. This god occupies the center of the universe and represents the duality Ometéotl, the Dual Lord. He is thought to be one of the oldest deities of Mesoamerica.

Cihuateteo: Women who died in childbirth became goddesses and were allowed to accompany the Sun from midday until sunset and therefore inhabited the western region of the universe, called Cihuatlampa.

Coatlícue: Goddess of the earth and mother of the gods. She appears in some Mexica rites as the mother of Huitzilopochtli (god of the sun and of war), of Coyolxauhqui and of the 400 *huitznahuas* (linked to the night powers, the moon and the stars).

Tezcatlipoca: "The smoking mirror;" a common god opposed to other gods of the pre-Columbian world. Patron of warriors, princes and warlocks; god of the cold of the night sky; god of providence —invoked in the moments fraught with danger—, who had the gift of ubiquity. He and Quetzalcóatl are the creators of the dual world which ruled everything, representing darkness and evil (Tezcatlipoca) and light and goodness (Quetzalcóatl).

Quetzalcóatl: "The Plumed Serpent," his name indicates the profound duality of the unity of opposites: the sky, symbolized by the bird feathers, and the land, by the serpent. He is a creator and sustainer who presides over science and art. Quetzalcóatl is transfigured in several different forms: plumed serpent, Man-Tiger-Bird-Serpent, Venus (morning) and Xolótl (afternoon) and Ehécatl. When he left Tula, Quetzalcóatl promised to return in the year 2-Cane to avenge the betrayal of Tezcatlipoca and end the reign of his successors, the Aztecs. Since the predicted date coincided with the arrival of the Spaniards, the powerful Aztec king Moctezuma confused Hernán Cortés with the bearded man Quetzalcóatl and surrendered to him, submitting to a premature defeat.

Ehécatl: God of the wind. Represented by the wind which precedes the rain, cleansing and sweeping the plain, sometimes softly and others wildly, to open the way for the providers of the rain, the *tlaloques*. Ehécatl has a mask in the form of a bird's beak, which allows him to blow.

Chalchiuhtlicue: "The one who wears a jade skirt," this goddess of the water of rivers, lakes, lagoons and the sea is sister to Tláloc, god of rain. According to Aztec myth, she was created by the four gods Xipe, Tezcatlipoca, Quetzalcóatl and Huitzilopochtli, who were in turn created by Ometecuhtli, the supreme being.

Xochipilli: "Prince or Lord of the flowers," this god cared for the growth of flowers and was also the patron of the players of *patolli*, a game played with darts and seeds on a woven reed board.

Xochiquétzal: Also known as "the precious flower", "bird flower" or "plumed flower", she was the goddess of flowers, dances and the main defender of pregnant women, weavers, embroideresses and painters; she was companion to Xochipilli. Together with the other gods of vegetation, she personified new growth, and therefore youth and games.

Chicomecóatl: "7-Serpent," the most important goddess of vegetation, considered the Lady of maintenance. She was the main ruler of the growing of corn, the basic food in the Mesoamerican diet.

Tlaltecuhтли: "Lord of the Land," created by Ometecuhtli, the supreme being. Usually presented as a ferocious frog devouring everything. He is the guardian of human waste, but also the source of the plants it nourishes.

Mictlantecuhtli: Lord of the underworld, together with Mictecacíhuatl, Lady of the underworld. They resided in Mictlán, the deepest of the lower levels, reached by the dead only after innumerable vicissitudes. These deities were always represented as skeletons.

Coyolxauhqui: Goddess of the moon, sister to Huitzilopochtli (the Sun) and the stars of the south (the 400 *huitznahua*). The relationship between the two siblings symbolizes the Sun's daily struggle against the nocturnal powers. Huitzilopochtli is born daily to vanquish Coyolxauhqui and her 400 brothers.

The Mystery of *Mole* from Puebla

A Baroque Convent Delicacy

Paco Ignacio Taibo I*

Any attempt at discovering the origins of what is undisputedly Mexico's national dish will flounder in legend and invention, amidst characters from convents, imported viceroys and gilded, painted figures of saints.

The only thing that seems clear, even crystal clear, is that *mole* was born in a city given to miracles and surprises.

Puebla was created by a flock of angels who, gliding over a deserted valley, decided to land and take up the difficult trade of laying out streets and plazas. Having accepted this winged, white spectacle, the inhabitants decided to call the place Puebla de los Angeles (Puebla of the Angels).

It is not strange that in that period—sad for the indigenous people and elegant for the new inhabitants—a way of life based on the destruction of the old gods and the enthronement of the new God was established.

One day, in a convent—as yet unidentified despite historians' imaginings—a nun mixed the new products from across the sea with products native to Mexico and a delicacy as baroque as main altars or children's toys was born: *mole*.

Not even I, who have dedicated a whole book to the *mole* from Puebla,

dare to use my own theories as my starting point; I think that for an article for a university [publication], the best recourse is legend, setting aside the remnants of such uncertain history.

The viceroy stained his dress whites with the black sauce, the nuns wondered at their own discovery, and the whole city applauded the turkey in *mole* sauce.

Time would change settings, characters, names and dates; but no one could change what was really important.



Photo by Jorge Pablo de Aguinaco

Mole is one of the dishes that have made Mexican cuisine world-famous.

* Mexican novelist and writer.

Mole is the most refined expression of the Mexican Baroque, born just when Europe was announcing the advent of neoclassicism and professing its boredom with pilasters and the glories of Solomon. But the Baroque in Puebla triumphs upon entering the kitchen by bringing turkey in *mole* sauce to the forefront.

I think that thick, chocolaty sauce, slightly spicy and aromatic with seasonings, is a wondrous example of the culminating achievement of an art. It is also one of the world's three or four unprecedented dishes, born of their own time and of themselves. *Mole* is an expression which in and of itself defines both a cuisine and a spirit. It is a meeting of two hearths that produces a third so distant from both father and mother that it has neither paternity nor family.

Mole comes to the far reaches of the earth as though fallen from the skies and it is not at all strange that angels, nuns, viceroys and golden columns should be present at its birth. I have proposed abandoning all attempts at surrounding turkey in *mole* sauce with historical references. One of those impossible angels planning the city must have descended from the sky with a platter of *mole* in its hands. This is the *mole* that those angels ate when, tired of mapping out streets and plazas, they sat on the ground and stained their wings that they then had to carefully lick.

Therefore, it is best not to try to make news of the lack of news, but rather to go back to the beginning of the story. That is, back to the recipes for *mole* from Puebla, unique, but with as many variations as there are cooks. ❧

The Birth of Mole Poblano

If one place in Mexico could be considered the birthplace of Mexican cooking, it would be Puebla, a city founded by the Spanish in the sixteenth century as an important crossroads for travelers and armies coming and going between Veracruz and Mexico City. In the convent kitchens of Puebla, nuns created many of the dishes that still serve as the nucleus of Mexico's cuisine, *mole poblano* and *chiles en nogada* being the most famous.

Several popular legends tell of the birth of *mole poblano*, a festive dish that epitomizes the culinary marriage between the Spanish and Mexican worlds. While not as fanciful as the one that would have it created when a gust of wind blew just the right amount of spices and condiments into *cazuelas* of simmering turkeys, a more likely story is that it originated—in the seventeenth century—when the sister superior of the convent of Santa Rosa was faced with preparing a special meal for a visit from the archbishop and Spanish viceroy. Known for her culinary inventiveness, she probably took note of her helpers' stories about the Indian royal use of chocolate and with their help devised this superb dish, an adaptation of an earlier Mayan one. It is said that the original recipe included more than 100 ingredients. Today *mole* remains the classic dish for festive occasions such as weddings and baptisms.

Take from: Susana Palazuelos, *Mexico. The Beautiful Cookbook*, Collins Publishers, San Francisco, 1991.

Turkey with *Mole Poblano* Sauce

- 1 young turkey, about 8 lb (4 kg), cut into serving pieces
- 16 cups (128 fl oz/4 L) water
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1/2 onion
- 1 tablespoon salt

Sauce

- 1/2 cup (4 fl oz/125 mL) plus 2 tablespoons oil
- 7 oz (220 g) *chiles anchos*, seeds and membranes removed
- 3 oz (90 g) *chiles pasillas*, seeds and membranes removed
- 10 oz (315 g) *chiles mulatos*, seeds and membranes removed

- 4 *chiles chipotles*
- 1 1/2 lb (750 g) tomatoes
- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 10 cloves garlic
- 5 oz (155 g) blanched almonds
- 3 1/2 oz (105 g) shelled peanuts
- 8 whole cloves
- 4 black peppercorns
- 1-1 1/2-in (4 cm) sticks cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon aniseed
- 3 oz (90 g) raisins
- 3 oz (90 g) unsweetened (cooking) chocolate
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 tablespoon salt, or to taste
- 1/2 cup (2 oz/60 g) sesame seeds

- * Place the turkey, water, garlic, onion and salt in a large pot or Dutch oven, bring to a boil, cover and simmer over medium heat for one hour or until the turkey is tender. Drain, reserving the stock, and set aside.
- * To make the sauce, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a skillet, add the *chiles anchos*, *pasillas* and *mulatos* and sauté for 1-2 minutes. Transfer to a bowl, cover with hot water and soak for 30 minutes. Drain, transfer to a blender and purée. Set aside.
- * Toast the *chiles chipotles* and roast the tomatoes. Peel the tomatoes, transfer to a blender, add *chiles chipotles* and purée. Set aside.
- * In the same oil in which you sautéed the *chiles*, sauté the onion and garlic for 2-3 minutes. Transfer to a blender. In the same oil, sauté the almonds for 5 minutes. Add the peanuts, cloves, peppercorns, cinnamon and aniseed and sauté for 3 more minutes. Transfer to the blender, add the raisins and purée.
- * Heat the cup of oil in a large pot or Dutch oven. Stir all the purées together, add to the pot and boil for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add the chocolate and sugar, stirring constantly. When the mixture comes to a boil, add 4 cups (32 fl oz/1 L) of the turkey stock. Cover and cook over low heat for 20 minutes. Add the salt and correct the seasonings. If the sauce is too thick, add more stock.
- * Add the pieces of turkey, cover and cook over medium heat for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, toast the sesame seeds in a small skillet over medium heat until they are golden. Serve the turkey *mole* hot, sprinkled with the sesame seeds.

Note: It is better to prepare the sauce in advance, adding the turkey when it is reheated—not only because of the work involved in preparing the *mole* but because it tastes better when the various flavors have time to mingle and mellow. However, if you find this recipe too laborious you can always buy *mole* paste in supermarkets and street markets all over Mexico.

Taken from: Susana Palazuelos, Mexico. *The Beautiful Cookbook*, Collins Publishers, San Francisco, 1991.

NAFTA and the Political Challenges Ahead

A Perspective from Mexico

Remedios Gómez Arnau*

After two years of NAFTA, there are different evaluations about its results. In 1995, criticism could be heard in the United States Congress of American participation in the treaty because of the reversal in the benefits obtained

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with Mexico as a result of the economic crisis sparked by the December 1994 peso devaluation. Others claim promises made by those promoting NAFTA have not been fulfilled. Specifically, they say it was promised that, as a result of NAFTA, the United States would generate more jobs and Mexico would move ahead with democratic practices, clean

elections and more political pluralism. According to these critics' assessment, this has not been the case.¹ Consequently, some U.S.

¹ Examples of these criticisms are those expressed by the Congresswomen Marcy Kaptur and Bernie Sanders, who have been promoting the idea of the United States eventually pulling out of NAFTA. See *La Jornada*, September 14, 1995.



Imagenlatina-Marco Antonio Cruz

NAFTA has had a positive influence on the recovery of Mexican industry.

congressmen have proposed limiting American commitment to the agreement.

First of all, to evaluate such statements, we have to understand that, on the one hand, we have the simply commercial results of NAFTA that were the formal objectives in signing this trade instrument. On the other hand, we have the expectations that NAFTA created among the three countries of North America, expectations which are sometimes more political than economic, a situation now being denounced.

In many cases, both types of objectives are being evaluated without considering that some of the expectations fostered by NAFTA were not necessarily guaranteed by its implementation, nor could they truly be expected within the short term as suggested.

In the second place, when considering the attacks on NAFTA results, one must take into consideration that they do not necessarily stem from an objective evaluation of its implementation. Sometimes, they may even reflect political interests and the persistence of prejudices about Mexico still harbored by some analysts.

This can be clearly seen if we make a more complete analysis of the reactions in the U.S. Congress to the changes in Mexico, as compared with those that may be taking place in Canada, the other NAFTA partner.

Mexico and Canada, Different Partners

Throughout last year, when various U.S. congressmen and other politicians expressed their opposition to NAFTA, they pointed particularly to the economic crisis in Mexico, which has caused a reduction in U.S. exports south of its border. The resulting trade deficit as reflected in the U.S. balance of payments has drawn a lot of attention and has been the primary motive for requesting that the benefits of NAFTA be reconsidered.

The same question arises when we look at the attention given by the U.S. press and Congress to the political and social processes taking place inside Mexico, in comparison to that given to the possible separation of Quebec from Canada. Undoubtedly, the latter raised a whole series of concerns about the effects of such a separation on the economies of Quebec and the rest of Canada, and what is more, the potential effects on trade, financial relationships and economic, political and military commitments on the part of both Quebec

*The 1996 U.S. presidential elections
are aggravating the already existing differences
between the two societies.*

Surprisingly, however, if we look at statistics from July 1995, we find that the U.S. trade deficit with Mexico is less than that with Canada (\$1.28 billion in comparison to \$1.46 billion), and it is much less than the deficits with Japan (\$5.12 billion), China (\$3.33 billion) and even Germany (\$1.92 billion).² So, we must ask: What is really taking place here? Why are the attacks directed primarily against Mexico, when economic statistics would suggest other conclusions?

and Canada in relation to the rest of the world. Given the close relationship between the United States and Canada, such concerns deserved serious consideration by the U.S. media, but we did not see this to the degree one would expect.³

In contrast, domestic political events in Mexico have received much more attention, analysis and even speculation in U.S. legislative, political and financial circles. The reason for making this

² Statistics from the U.S. Trade Representative's Office reproduced in the Canadian newspaper *The Globe and Mail*, April 3, 1995.

³ The true nature of such concerns becomes clear if one examines the report prepared for the U.S. Congress by its Research Service, entitled "The Issue of Quebec's Sovereignty," dated November 16, 1994, in which these concerns are specifically mentioned.

comparison is not to diminish the importance of changes taking place in Mexico vis-a-vis those happening in Canada, but rather to call attention to the different treatment the two phenomena are receiving in the United States. This differential treatment can be translated into two distinct policies being promoted or adopted in relation to the two countries —policies which cannot necessarily be deduced from objective observations.

Mexico and the United States, Persistent Prejudices and Conflicts

So, if neither events nor objective data justify the differential consideration given to them in the U.S. relationships with Mexico and Canada, one can deduce that the difference must lie in more subjective considerations —specifically, in the world of images and conceptions of Mexico and Mexicans in the minds of some U.S. analysts.

The difference could be simply reduced to the existence of a preconceived confidence about what can be expected in processes of change in more developed countries and, in contrast, the lack of confidence prompted by transformations in less developed countries or emerging markets (as certain nations such as Mexico have been recently referred to). However, in the concrete case of Mexico the question that arises is whether, in light of the growing economic interrelationship between this coun-

try and the United States and with other countries, this lack of confidence and sense of unpredictability continue to be valid. In other words, given the structural eco-

issue for further analysis. It seems important that this be thoughtfully considered, given that preconceptions and prejudices about Mexico and in general about the



Imagenlatina-Herón Alemán

The maquila industry is among the most benefited by NAFTA.

conomic interrelationship being established between Mexico and other countries, is it reasonable to expect that any internal political change could modify such a reality?

The objective of this article is not to answer this question, but rather simply to propose it as an

so-called “emerging” countries affect possibilities for a better economic link to the rest of the world.

On the other hand, we encounter the traditional confrontational relationships between the societies and governments of Mexico and the United States. These

relationships have been modified recently only in terms of a stronger and friendlier link between the executive powers and between some business and cultural sectors of the two societies. But conflictive relationships between Mexican and U.S. sectors on other issues or themes have continued or worsened, as in the case of the migration of Mexican undocumented workers to the United States.

Also, the 1996 U.S. presidential elections are aggravating the already existing differences between the two societies. This is primarily because certain groups

monstrate that not all results have been negative, and not all the negative results have been solely in relation to Mexican society.

This brings us to the necessity of distinguishing between those factors truly influencing the implementation of NAFTA and those simply being used by interest groups to favor their own political objectives.

Thus, one major political challenge faced by NAFTA countries, and mainly Mexican and U.S. societies, is how to counteract the still existing prejudices about Mexico in the United States, as

One major political challenge faced by Mexican and U.S. societies is how to counteract the still existing prejudices about Mexico in the United States.

and individuals seek their own political benefit by taking advantage of prejudices and negative views about Mexico and Mexicans held by some people in the United States.

Finally, such criticisms are based in part on the political expectations (primarily with respect to Mexico) which were promoted —perhaps in an exaggerated way— by those who lobbied for NAFTA in the United States.

This combination of factors helps to explain why criticisms of NAFTA results focus primarily on Mexico, even though figures de-

well as the actions of those individuals and interest groups that profit from these prejudices. The political objectives they are pursuing must not distort the necessary objective evaluation of NAFTA's impact, nor influence the process of integration of North America.

The Three NAFTA Members: Societies in Transformation

It is true that NAFTA has been implemented in a Mexican society undergoing important political and economic changes. But Mexico is not the only member

country of NAFTA going through transformations. The United States and Canada are also experiencing processes of political change.

In Canada, for example, the control of the government had alternated for decades between the two major traditional political parties, the Liberal and the Progressive Conservative; this changed in October 1993, when Canadian voters virtually eliminated the latter and two recently-formed regional parties —the Quebecois Block, from the province of Quebec, and the Reform Party, based in the western provinces— became the second- and third-ranking political forces. The referendum held in Quebec on October 30, 1995, in which the decision that Quebec would continue to be part of Canada won by only a slim margin, showed that this is a country with internal differences that have not been fully resolved, and that currently are producing and will continue to produce changes in the political scene.

The November 1994 U.S. elections gave control of both congressional houses to the Republicans, something that had not happened for many years. This reveals that the winds of change are also affecting that country, and many say they can be explained by the growing support for the so-called neo-conservative policies being implemented there. Another factor which may represent a very significant change in the U.S. political system is the appearance of

a third party, promoted by millionaire Ross Perot, after the long dominance of the two traditional Democratic and the Republican Parties. In addition to these political changes, an old debate on the relationship between the white population and minorities is being revived in the United States. This has been provoked by two proposals for changing the welfare system which appear to affect primarily minority groups, as well as by immigration measures currently under consideration in the Congress which have significant implications for foreign residents and naturalized citizens in the country.

Mexican society, for its part, is also immersed in its own process

happened since 1928), and the murder of José Francisco Ruiz Massieu, a high official of the PRI, also in 1994. Other elements include Mexican ex-presidents' breaking their traditional silence in relation to the country's current political events, specifically the mutual public accusations between ex-Presidents Carlos Salinas and Luis Echeverría. These factors clearly reflect changes in the traditional rules which have governed the functioning of Mexico's political system and especially of the party that has retained power for more than 70 years.

Therefore, as we can observe, the three North American societies participating in NAFTA are all in processes of transformation

NAFTA on stand-by, holding back, in consequence, a faster extension of the agreement than was initially expected.

Conclusion

Criticisms directed exclusively at Mexico in some individuals' evaluation of NAFTA in the United States are clearly partial and unfair, if not the result of attempts to make political gains by manipulating the prejudices which persist about Mexico north of the border.

It is important, however, to state that not all the evaluations made in the United States about Mexico have been so distorted. There have also been voices —although few in number, but including some U.S. congressmen— which have attempted a more objective analysis of what is happening with NAFTA and Mexico's participation in the agreement.⁴

This demonstrates that it is possible to change old patterns and prejudices which are influencing the evaluation of NAFTA implementation in participating countries. Nevertheless, it is important that challenges be clearly acknowledged and that they be addressed directly to guarantee a further better integration of North America. *W*

Criticisms directed exclusively at Mexico in some evaluations of NAFTA in the United States are clearly partial and unfair.

of internal political change. First of all, since 1993 the opposition party known as the National Action Party has been winning state governorships from the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), the party in power. In addition, the PRI has been experiencing inner conflicts that previously had always been resolved inside the party before they could leak to the outside. In some cases, the conflicts have even led to public confrontations. Of special importance are the 1994 assassination of Luis Donaldo Colosio, the then-PRI presidential candidate (something that had not

which are affecting —particularly in the cases of Mexico and the United States— the expectations prompted by NAFTA. In Mexico, the internal political uncertainty perceived from abroad has prevented a larger growth of foreign investment, contrary to what was supposed to happen when the agreement was signed. In the United States, the different positions held by some congressmen and the Clinton Administration in relation, among other things, to the mode and pace of liberalization of U.S. foreign trade has kept the proposed inclusion of Chile in

⁴ As examples, we can mention Nancy Dunn's comments in the *Financial Times* on September 5, 1995, and the letter sent by Senator Richard Lugar to the *New York Times* on September 8, 1995.

A Review of NAFTA's Record On Its Second Anniversary

*Jaime Zabłudowsky**

The North American Free Trade Agreement is now two years old. And even though the 1994-1995 period was a difficult one for Mexico, a great deal has been accomplished since the historic trade agreement came into force on January 1, 1994.

For Mexico, NAFTA has been a central piece of its modernization strategy, which involves far-reaching free market and trade liberalization policies. It consolidates our trade relationship with the U.S., Mexico's largest export market, and provides incentives for a closer trading relationship with Canada.

NAFTA promotes greater economic integration and cooperation among the United States, Canada and Mexico, through the elimination of barriers to trade in goods and services and investment over a period of 15 years, and by establishing a clear and predictable framework that encourages increased business partnerships among North American firms.

The partnership forged through NAFTA is beneficial to all the countries and ensures that North America, as a region, remains a standard-bearer of international competitiveness. Trade and investment liberalization encourage coproduction schemes and other strategic alliances that have flourished and will continue to do so across North America. For North America as a whole, the development of these joint ventures fosters business growth and employment opportunities and promotes our worldwide competitiveness.

In 1995, NAFTA proved to be instrumental in facilitating Mexico's economic recovery. Secured access to the U.S. and Canadian markets stimulated Mexican exports, which along with the creation of strategic alliances and joint production ventures, cushioned the effects of the economic crisis and helped mitigate job losses during 1995.

While NAFTA is relatively new when compared to other free trade agreements—and its benefits will be fully realized in the long run—it has already yielded significant positive results in its first two years of implementation.

Mexico and NAFTA in 1994

NAFTA's first year was characterized by rapidly increasing trade flows; trade among the three NAFTA countries increased 17 percent, surpassing all expectations. This 50-billion-dollar expansion in trade among Mexico, the U.S. and Canada is equivalent to the GNP of a country like Ireland. In 1994, total trade among NAFTA members reached approximately 350 billion dollars.

Bilateral trade between Mexico and the U.S. grew at an even faster rate of 20.7 percent and surpassed 100 billion dollars for the first time. In 1994, trade flows were remarkably balanced: total U.S. exports to Mexico amounted to 54 billion dollars, while Mexican exports to the U.S. reached 51.6 billion dollars, 20.5 percent more than in 1993 and well above the growth rate of exports to the U.S. from the rest of the world.

Mexico became the United States' main supplier of products such as autos and auto parts, security glass

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Mexico-U.S. trade grew swiftly in the first two years of NAFTA.

windows, medical appliances and semimanufactured steel and iron goods. Other product areas in which Mexico was already a leading supplier were further enhanced by the NAFTA, including TV sets, electric and electronic equipment and agricultural products.

NAFTA has also increased trade between Canada and Mexico. Though the bilateral trade between these countries has been relatively small, in 1994 it increased by 18.2 percent. Mexican exports increased by 17.4 percent and imports from Canada increased by 22.1 percent. Mexico's main exports to Canada included autos, gasoline engines, auto parts and computers.

Mexico and NAFTA in 1995

Though 1995 was a difficult year for Mexico, we remained committed to free market policies and trade

liberalization. On January 1, as scheduled, Mexico and the other NAFTA partners implemented the second round of tariff reductions.

During 1995, Mexico's exports played a vital role in the strategy toward economic recovery. Total exports grew 31.2 percent, compared to 1994. This is reflected in a total trade surplus of 7.4 billion dollars and contrasts dramatically with the 18.5-billion-dollar deficit recorded in the previous year. The dynamic performance of Mexican exports cannot be solely attributed to the devaluation of the peso. During the last decade, Mexico has sought to develop its export capacity through the implementation of economic liberalization policies and integration into world markets.

In 1995, NAFTA played a critical role in mitigating the effects of the economic crisis. Mexico's exports to the U.S. for the January-October period increased 30.5 percent. Mexican manufacturing

exports to the U.S. currently account for 82 percent of our total exports to that country. These have grown 30.4 percent when compared to the same period last year. In this regard, it is important to highlight that non-maquiladora manufacturing exports grew at almost twice the rate of those from the maquiladora industry: while the latter increased 20.3 percent, non-maquiladora exports grew 47 percent.


Mexico's export performance and the competitiveness of its products are also reflected in the country's increased participation in the U.S. market. In 1993, Mexican exports accounted for 6.8 percent of total U.S. imports. During the first nine months of 1995, Mexico's share of total U.S. imports was registered at 8.3 percent. In this period, Mexican exports increased faster than those of countries like Japan, Canada, and newly industrialized countries (NICs) such as South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore.

In the context of NAFTA, it is important to note that despite the economic downturn Mexico's imports from the U.S. have remained steady, particularly when compared to the reduction in imports from the rest of the world; while those from the European Union, Japan and the NICs fell 23.8 percent, 20.5 percent and 21.3 percent, respectively, Mexico's imports from the U.S. only decreased 1.4 percent with respect to the same period last year. The surge in intra-industry trade and joint production schemes between Mexico and the U.S. offers an explanation. Mexico's dynamic export performance is inextricably linked to imports of intermediate and capital goods. In the first ten months of 1995, imports of intermediate goods from the U.S. grew 9.3 percent.

In 1995, U.S. exports to Mexico are still above pre-NAFTA levels (44.2 billion dollars versus 37.4 billion in 1993). Mexico remains the U.S.'s third largest trading partner, both in terms of imports and exports, and we continue to purchase more American goods than South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore or any European country.

NAFTA has also strengthened our trade relationship with Canada. Between January and October 1995, total trade flows reached 2.8 billion dollars, 11.5 percent more than in 1994.

As stated, a central element of Mexico's development strategy is tied to export performance and our ability to compete in international markets. NAFTA is a long-term instrument designed to provide a more predictable framework to encourage business partnerships and alliances among North American firms and to promote our export industry.

There is no doubt that NAFTA has accomplished a tremendous amount in its first two years. The agreement is fulfilling its promise of facilitating trade across North America. It has created growth opportunities for its partners, through increased exports and higher levels of productive investment. In sum, NAFTA provides a solid platform on which to stand and compete in an increasingly globalized economy. 



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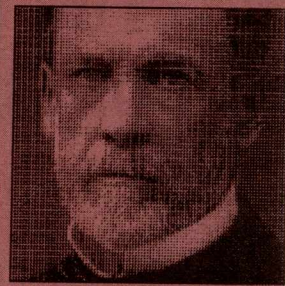
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These arched twin windows in Acámbaro, Michoacán, could well be found in the famous Alhambra in Córdoba, Spain.

THE ISLAMIC INFLUENCE ON MEXICAN ARCHITECTURE

*Pedro Ramírez Vázquez**

The Cultural Contribution of Islam to the World And the Americas

While the fall of the Roman Empire splintered medieval Europe,

the realm of Islam seemed to have no borders and spread to the most diverse and important points of the known world. The peoples who received the message and the revelation of Allah were glowing.

For centuries Muslim culture inspired many of the contribu-

tions and discoveries that fueled humanity's heritage. Arithmetic and geometry, astronomy and medicine were all enriched; different languages broadened their vocabularies and acquired new terminology for naming concepts and things.

The world's art incorporated several elements and topics which emphasized sensibility. Philosophy found new veins of thought and paths for reflection. In short, knowledge of all kinds reached new heights in a relatively short period and, at the same time, new and broader courses were plotted.

When Islam came to the Iberian Peninsula, no one imagined the influence it would have over the next eight centuries of domination and even after. The great cultural symbiosis of East and West took place there because of Spain's location at the western-most point of the territory conquered by Islam and thanks to the Arab domination of the Mediterranean. Within a short time, Córdoba became the Arab world's most important cultural center, and the most advanced city of Europe. The arts and sciences flourished and the development of architecture was unprecedented.

Spain was the channel through which, several centuries later, the peoples of the Americas would receive the Muslim heritage. Many forms of Islamic architecture were born there; the most prominent was the Mudéjar style, which in Mexico endured a surprisingly long

* Mexican architect.

time and attained unusual development.

The Spanish language and innumerable customs were enriched by the cultural development spawned by Islam. When they arrived in the Americas, language and customs were again subjected to a mixture of different cultural roots until they were refined into new ways of life in which the Muslim essence persisted.

It is common knowledge that the discovery of America coincided with the loss of Islam's last bastion in Spain. However, this very event signalled the beginning of a new era of influence of the creativity of the Islamic world. This can be seen in the cultural heritage that took root in the New World, transmitted through Spain, a pioneer in cultural assimilation in the Americas; the cultural assimilation both of the New World's indigenous peoples and of the Europeans themselves in previously unimagined circumstances.

The Spanish conquistadors sometimes described the buildings and customs of the peoples of Mesoamerica drawing the similarities with Muslim buildings and customs. Similarly, they applied analogous architectural solutions to build the first religious edifications, like open-air chapels, adjacent to the main church which in both form and function are similar to the ramparts or *sarias* noted by Torres Balbás.

Islamic Sensibility in Mexico

The Islamic sense of space in architecture produces intense feelings of surprise since, to a certain extent, it is a dynamic art which expresses movement and breaks visually with its own physical limits through the continuity of its surfaces and the dematerialization of the structure.

Islamic architecture is a powerful stimulus which speaks to the senses, a product of the particular organization of its architectural space.

We are dealing with a quantum space; the space advances by bounds and knows no escape, while eliminating the possibility of focusing on a point in the distance. Using a series of visual screens, it confounds the eye and any sense of continuity in the use of the axes of composition, thus producing by contrast a perception of multiplicity and change in a single place; it is a space which appears like a magic and bewildering sensation that evokes being enveloped by a grotto. It is, in sum, a space marked by a persistent architectural rhythm which, in the end, dazzles.

Many technical and aesthetic principles of Islamic architecture took shape in Spain and the Maghreb expressed in different elements: work inlaid with arabesque tiles, plasterwork, wooden friezes, pilasters, lattices, screens, porticos and minarets. The idea was to achieve spacial multiplicity in small places,

*For centuries
Muslim culture
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and discoveries that
fueled humanity's
heritage.*



The tower of the Actopan convent is much like Seville's Giralda.

The Islamic cultural heritage that the Spaniards brought to Mexico was assimilated and enriched in a way which yielded new expressions.



The door of the church in San Francisco Acatepec is a good example of tile in Mexican architecture.

using a whole gamut of ornaments charged with significance to cause pleasure and surprise.

It was an attempt to create a permanent message in which time and space are linked in succession with tempo: a rhythmic tempo. Volumes denote the spacial concept of "inside" spilling into "outside." It is a clear example of the expressiveness which springs from the internal life and is manifested in external forms.

After the discovery of America the great task of conquest of the New World began. New ways of life, a new language and a new religion had to be imposed on far-away, unknown peoples. Spain arrived in Mexico on the wave of modernity, with the intention of introducing its idea of civilization, based to a great extent on the heritage of Arab domination.

To substitute for the prolific aboriginal ornamentation and its impressive architecture, recourse was given to the exquisiteness of the Mudéjar and the Italian and Spanish Renaissance, which much later would become Spanish Baroque and its particular version developed in the Americas. Thus, the destruction of the great indigenous constructions was followed by the erection of crenelated churches and convents which also reached prodigious heights of architectural creation.

From the foundations, which were sometimes the very same foundations of the demolished Mexican constructions, the new edifications were built using indigenous tech-

niques and labor. The knowledge and skills of these men put their particular seal on the architecture. Their sensibility and culture impregnated not only the structures themselves, but also the ornamentation and character of the new spacial creations.

Thus, the Islamic cultural heritage that the Spaniards brought was assimilated and enriched in a way which yielded new expressions. Architecture dressed up in its own forms, colors and signifiers, specific to the Western Hemisphere, which became styles like Plateresque and Churrigueresque. In this way, the presence of Islam can be felt in lands as far away from its origins as Mexico.¹

In Mexican architecture, Islam is reflected intensely in the Mudéjar, a style spread throughout the country. It can be seen in some open-air, walled chapels strongly reminiscent of Spanish-Arab mosques; for example, the Royal Chapel of Cholula. There is continuity between the minaret of the mosque of Kairouan in Tunis, the minaret of the Qarawiyyin of Fez, the Giralda, in Seville, and the prismatic tower with small windows of the Mexican church in Actopan, in the state of Hidalgo.

Moorish arch panels are to be found all over Mexico, in the open-air, walled chapels like the one in San Juan Atzolcintla and at the con-

¹ This presence was not limited to architecture, but could also be felt in fields like language, the arts and sciences, clothing and furniture.

vent in Tlaxcala. They sometimes predominate in the composition—also quantum—where everything is filled with reliefs and color, now mostly lost in Angahuán,

ufactured in Puebla and decorated such splendid baroque facades as the Hacienda de Cristo near Atlixco, or San Francisco Ecatepec, near the city of Puebla.

be forgotten: it is formed by short spans with shelves between them on which small fountains spray a tiny jet of water. The sides have channels along the top, drains made



The columns in the Royal Chapel in Cholula are reminiscent of the inside of a mosque.

Michoacán. Mudéjar architectural elements also constantly appear in constructions done in other styles: vaults held up by crossed arches, bright polychromatic reliefs, eight-sided pillars, Eastern arches, arched windows with a pillar in the center (twin-windows), carved ceilings and lucanars (coffered ceilings) and ornamented central pieces or anchors.

Islamic decorations were used extensively throughout the country. Tiles, for example, were man-

Mudéjar also influenced Mexican painting and relief carving. In the minor arts, its impact can be seen in the use of eight-pointed stars in window lattices, in shaped baluster grilles and wooden furniture with bone or tortoise-shell inlays.

The appreciation of Islamic peoples for the use of plants and water in architecture is well-known. The wise use of form, sound and aroma in their gardens is notable. How could the fountain of the new terrace of the Generalife

In Mexican architecture, Islam is reflected intensely in the Mudéjar, a style spread throughout the country.

of Arab clay, where the water flows and, as it falls, it turns the stairway into a delightful cascade.

In Mexico there was also creative use of water, like in the 16th century fountain in Chiapa de Corzo, in the state of Chiapas, which supplied water to the townspeople. In modern times, it was used in the design of the National Museum of Anthropology, where a great cascade falls from a gigantic roof with a single support, thus creating a vestibule that shades a large patio; opposite, a pre-Columbian-snail-shaped pond refreshes the area.

While the Mudéjar style died out in the 15th century in Spain, in the Western Hemisphere it was used as late as the 19th century.



The fountain in Chiapa de Corzo, Chiapas, is one of Mexico's best examples of the Mudéjar style.

Mexico was the country where the styles and arts derived from the Muslim influence were cultivated the longest. Incorporated into the rich indigenous tradition

and mixed with elements of Spanish culture, the combination gave rise to constructions which still surprise and delight strangers and natives alike. *Vivi*



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Human Sacrifice, José Clemente Orozco.

PRE-HISPANIC ART IN THE MURALIST MOVEMENT

Rita Eder*

The vastness of its production and the large number of artists who participated makes it difficult to describe the Mexican muralist movement precisely. Generalities are insufficient for describing its content and style, outlining the scope of its originality or determining whether it had a single underlying ideology. Rivera, Siqueiros and Orozco,

though quite different from each other, represent Mexican art's specific outlook.

The muralist movement involved a new way of painting history and became an area for reflection and representation of Mexico's history and principal ethnic and cultural components. As part of this process, the painted walls bore witness to the value of the pre-Columbian world, at the same time that they created a myth about that world, a myth that each of the painters depicted differently. We will seek here to describe and interpret some aspects and problems of

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**The muralist movement
became an area for reflection
and representation of
Mexico's history.**



Carnival, Rufino Tamayo.

the pre-Hispanic presence in the muralist movement. This is extremely complicated, especially in light of the critical reappraisal of the Indigenous Nationalism of Mexican archeologist Manuel Gamio,

who spearheaded the effort to uphold the value of the pre-Columbian past. Gamio delved into the situation of the indigenous population of his time. In his well-known text *Forjando patria* (Forging a Homeland), he referred to the small, fragmented homelands

the Indian groups built which were prejudicial to the dream that his country would become a great, unified nation. His hopes for the progress and modernization of Mexico were invested in that idea.

An analysis of pre-Columbian elements in muralism is difficult to conceive of without two components: reverence for the past and the existence of survivors from that glorious past and their real current situation. It should be added that Gamio's position is consistent with recognition of non-Western cultures and their values, a subject which was being debated at that time in Europe, and is stimulated by the need to construct a national culture after the 1910 Revolution.

First Steps

Muralism, as a collective movement, actually began in 1922 when José Vasconcelos, then Secretary of Public Education under the administration of General Obregón, commissioned a series of murals for the large patio of the National Preparatory School. The first to begin painting there were Ramón Alva de la Canal, Emilio García Cahero, Jean Charlot, Fernando Leal and Fermín Revueltas. All these painters came from the "open air

schools," a kind of Mexican Barbizon under the direction of Alfredo Ramos Martínez, who had collaborated with Vasconcelos since the beginning of his cultural program. Ramos Martínez's writings expressed ideas similar to those of the Secretary of Public Education, a great promoter of mural painting who considered

getting close to nature the source of a new kind of art. This gave rise to a certain picturesque quality in the murals at the National Preparatory School; yet it was there that change was generated.

Alva de la Canal's mural *The Arrival of the Cross in New Spain* reflects Vasconcelos' ideas about history and national culture. De la Canal painted a historic religious theme showing the arrival of the Spaniards to New Spain and the dissemination of the Catholic religion. The figures are monumental, solid and Classical, and the Spaniards are peacefully and positively depicted as providers of religion.

In the scene painted by Fermín Revueltas, *Allegory of the Virgin of Guadalupe*, the artist introduces something new: he makes use of popular imagery by employing an iconographic figure, making the Virgin the central element.

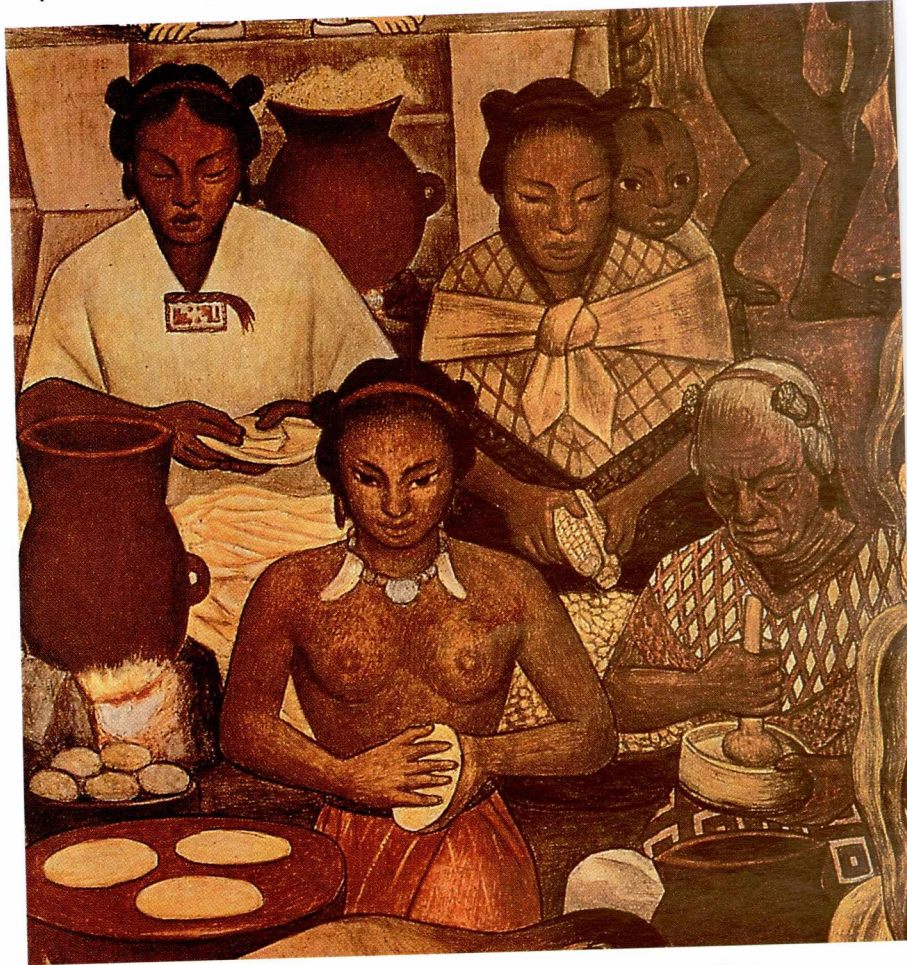
In *The Conquest of Tenochtitlan*, Jean Charlot made the first attempt to counterpose the Indian culture to that of the Spaniards on an equal footing. Charlot's mural shows the massacre of the Aztecs at the Templo Mayor. His sympathy for the pre-Hispanic world grew out of his European training and the acceptance, in Paris, of primitive cultures as basic sources for art.

Until 1922, that which was Indian was not part of the spiritual nationalism of Vasconcelos and his generation. The members of the Athenaeum,¹ immersed in European philosophical idealism, could only conceive of art as the expression of European culture and, as such, as belonging to the sphere of Classicism. The real appreciation of pre-Hispanic culture and of the Indian population as bearers of culture came from another source, Mexican anthropology and archeology, together with the determining influence of the European discovery of primitive art.

¹ Mexican association of modernist writers, essayists and philosophers founded in 1907. [Translator's note.]

The Manifesto

In the 1923 *Manifesto of Workers, Technicians, Painters and Sculptors*, the bases for this movement were put forward with, as can be appreciated in the following excerpt, an exaltation of indigenous culture:



Huastecan Civilization (detail), 1950, Diego Rivera. (National Palace, Mexico City.)

We repudiate easel painting and all ultra-intellectual, drawing-room art as aristocratic, and we uphold the manifestations of monumental art because of its public usefulness.

We proclaim that all aesthetic manifestations alien or contrary to the feeling of the people are bourgeois and that they should disappear because they contribute to perverting the tastes of our race, which has already been almost completely perverted in the cities....

Not only everything which is noble work, but everything which is virtue is a gift of our people (in particular of our Indians), but also the smallest manifestation of the physical and spiritual existence of our race as an ethnic force springs from it, as well as its admirable and extraordinarily unique ability to create beauty: the art of the people of Mexico is the greatest and healthiest spiritual manifestation in the world and its indigenous tradition is the finest of all.

In Mexico the desire was to return to the painting of walls, as practiced by the artists of the Late Middle

*In Mexico the desire was to return to the painting
of walls, as practiced by the artists of the Late
Middle Ages and the Renaissance.*

Ages and the Renaissance. The theoretical bases were not the same as those of the *cinquecento*; the Mexican Renaissance needed to recover all that had been buried by artistic humanism from the fifteenth century through the middle of the eighteenth; for example, a return to the so-called minor arts (handicrafts and folk art) and the nation's own pre-Hispanic past.

Diego Rivera and the Pre-Columbian World

In November 1921, Diego Rivera, recently returned to Mexico after 14 years in Europe, accompanied Vasconcelos on a trip to the Yucatán and Campeche. Rivera was dazzled by the tropics, by Mayan sculpture and women's clothing. At the end of that year he began work at the National Preparatory School's Bolívar Amphitheater. It was there that he painted a mural —*Creation*— which, far from showing the impact that the daily life of the Indians in southeast Mexico made on him, showed his own identification with the ideas of the Secretary of Public Education.

The theme of *Creation* focuses on the idea of the unity between humanity and the creative principle of the universe through art and religion, in a vision similar to

that put forward by Vasconcelos in his *Monismo estético* (Aesthetic Monism). When *Creation* was unveiled, Antonio Caso spoke of it as the first "Americanist" mural. Molina Enríquez said that Rivera had laid a cornerstone for the future of American art: "This is the art that Vasconcelos with prophetic vision predicted for the Americas."

Pre-Columbian elements appear in Rivera's work starting in 1923, when, at the Secretariat of Public Education, he painted *Xochipilli*, set in a tropical landscape amidst an imaginary jungle, similar in foliage and abstract design to the Arcadia invented by the customs official Rousseau. Rivera presented this deity—which, in Aztecs aesthetics, seeks to transmit youth and the realization of beauty through its idealized features—as an inexpressive idol. Rivera situates the pagan god in the painting in the manner of

Gauguin, the inventor of Romantic Primitivism, who rather than adopt the formal principles of primitive cultures makes only an anecdotal visual reference to the native gods. The German Expressionists placed African figurines in their paintings in the same way; they were only interested in showing that they were inspired by lifestyles which they believed to be immersed in social harmony, the product of a simple life and a Paradise-like landscape. The *Bath at Tehuantepec*, in the same building, does nothing more than confirm this notion of a paradise of beautiful brown bodies, whose serene rhythm accentuates a timeless existence.

It was only some years later that Rivera would become interested in the lineal and flat values of the codices, the bright colors of the garments, etc. Around 1930, at the Palace of Cortés, Rivera took on the task of painting the history of Cuernavaca from the Conquest in 1521 through Emiliano Zapata's agrarian revolution in 1911. A careful study by the U.S. scholar Stanton Catlin has shown the various iconographic sources of the central panel, which shows the battle between the Aztecs and the Spaniards. Catlin refers to three different sources: a) the pre-Hispanic codices, in particular *La Matricula de Tributos* (The



Great Tenochtitlan (detail), 1945, Diego Rivera. (National Palace, Mexico.)

Register of Tributes); b) post-Conquest codices, Sahagún, the *Lienzo de Tlaxcala* (Tlaxcala Canvas) and others; c) in addition, Catlin analyzed pre-Hispanic pieces that Rivera could have seen in the Museum of Anthropology and the ways they might have been incorporated into the mural.

Catlin establishes convincing relationships, which allow us to deduce that Rivera had to study the codices and become a real historiographic painter, in the same way that other painters from the Renaissance onward had to be familiar with the Bible and Greek mythology in order to derive lessons on the human condition. This would make Rivera the inventor of Classical Indigenism. It differentiated him from, and at a certain

point brought him nearer to, neo-Classical painting of the 19th century, which sought to introduce the historical Indian as an exemplary presence. On the other hand, the differences are obvious: different sources, a distinct style and conception of history and support for a public ignored in the previous century.

There is a third moment in Rivera's work which highlights the pre-Hispanic past. After *The Battle of Cuernavaca*, the painter went on to depict all the pre-Columbian peoples, their myths and legends, temples and palaces, culture and conflicts, arts and trades, on the walls of the National Palace.

This work was done in two stages; the first began in 1929 and lasted until 1935. During this period



The Battle of Cuernavaca (detail), 1929-1930, Diego Rivera.
(Palace of Cortés, Cuernavaca, Morelos.)

the stairway triptych was painted, with an overall history including the Conquest, Independence, the Reform and the Porfirio Díaz regime. The historical journey begins with the myth of Quetzalcóatl in his triple role as star, god and cultural hero. Ten years later, in 1945, Rivera painted a representation of the ancient world of Mexico on the second floor of the same building. With his architecturally evocative style, bringing to mind Ignacio Marquina's beautiful maps and the inventories of the first classifiers of species, Rivera sought to depict daily life in ancient Mexico. The formal techniques, stylization and idealization are the same, but the bright colors, the obsession for detail and the skewed proportions give a distorted vision of what was meant to be a portrayal of the grandeur of Mexico.

The harshest contradiction with regard to the pre-Hispanic is, of course, the complete blotting out of a sense of space. The atmosphere in these murals becomes stifling; there are no punctuation marks to make it pos-

sible to differentiate syntax from form. It was in the same vein that he presented the image of the women of Tlatilco in part of the mural at the Insurgentes Theater, or the Tlazoltéotl in the mural at the Hospital de la Raza, which appears not with the impressive ferocity that should characterize it but as a kind of subdued caricature.

The miles and miles of walls painted by the indefatigable Rivera resemble the creation of a natural history in which the artist attempts, as if through the lens of a microscope, to document the entire universe within the space of his canvas. Empirical data became Rivera's obsession, as he tried to present us with the whole history of Mexico in all its rich diversity. Taken together, Rivera's murals put forward the idea of a harmonious social whole, with inequality beginning only in the Porfirio Díaz era. The painter's relation with the pre-Hispanic past appears to lie in the paradigm of what Luis Villoro, in *Los grandes momentos del indigenismo* (The Great Moments of Indigenism), called "the second moment of indigenism," when the pre-Hispanic past was put forward as a distant, positive vision.

Other Facets

José Clemente Orozco: The Skeptical View

As mentioned at the beginning of this article, the various members of this artistic movement held different viewpoints. For Orozco the pre-Hispanic existed to the degree that it had been transformed by the Conquest. At the Preparatory School, the Indian is a subhuman rescued by the missionary's piety, or Malinche dominated by a stony Cortés, who accentuates his role as conquistador by trampling on the Indian in a gesture of annihilation.

In the Dartmouth College murals, the pre-Hispanic appears as a world ruled by magic, stars and sacrifice; crushed by the Spanish war machine, the Indian suc-

cumbs to modernization and emergent capitalism. Orozco offers the other face of Rivera's idyllic world: the face of war and human sacrifice. It was the Western view that this world was mythic and primitive, rather than civilized, that characterized Orozco's vision of the pre-Columbian past.

David Alfaro Siqueiros: Futurist Visionary

Of the so-called Big Three, it was Siqueiros who best understood certain formal values of pre-Hispanic art, specifically Aztec sculpture, such as the use of compact masses, the capacity for synthesis and the feeling of the images in stone. This can be seen clearly in some easel paintings, for example *Proletarian Mother* and *Peasant Mother*, as well as the Preparatory School mural entitled *Burial of the Sacrificial Worker*. But in the end, of these three, it is Siqueiros who was most interested in imagining the future and who drew away from the distant past.

Rufino Tamayo: The Legacy of Color

Although he was marginal to the muralist movement, Tamayo was undoubtedly key in relation to pre-Hispanic art. In the 1920s, Tamayo and his generation brought forth a vigorous, large-scale painting, a kind of "dark-skinned post-Cubism." Tamayo's links with the pre-Hispanic begin in the 1940s. Curiously, despite his early contact with pre-Hispanic pieces, he came to understand the principles of pre-Columbian art through his admiration of Picasso's primitivism. From his standpoint as universal Mexican, Tamayo was implacable towards the vision of the Indian that arose from the Mexican muralist school; in his own words, this was the viewpoint of a foreigner (by which he meant Rivera above all). At bottom, Rufino felt that being an Indian gave him greater freedom to interpret the pre-Hispanic legacy. More than a question of form, Tamayo conceived of this cultural inheritance as color and texture on the basis of his observation of folk

art. Thus, he harmonized the past and the appreciation of its formal values with the artistic work of the present.

Today the pre-Hispanic legacy continues to be a theme in Mexican art; painters —like historians— read history and society in their own way.

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Proletarian Mother, David Alfaro Siqueiros.

THE OLD SAN ILDEFONSO COLLEGE AND THE HISTORIC CENTER

*Dolores Béistegui**
*Jaime Abundis***

When the first stone of what was to become the illustrious San Ildefonso College was laid, around 1588, there was no “Historic Center” of Mexico City. What did exist, however, was a vigorous city growing according to a clear, harmonious plan: well-drawn streets gave access to religious and public buildings; canals, an integral part of the city, facili-

tated transportation; and the natural surroundings caused wonder in natives and foreigners alike.

The San Ildefonso College has witnessed the transformation of a colonial city into a modern one and has itself been subject to great changes made as part of the efforts made to save the historic downtown area.

Photos by Gabriel Figueroa



Magnificent arches surround the three San Ildefonso's patios.

Heterogeneous and stratified, full of life because of its relative youth, society in Mexico City was avid for education and knowledge at the end of the sixteenth century. The arrival of the Society of Jesus in 1572 alleviated the city's educational needs. The Jesuits had two clear objectives: the evangelization of the infidels and the education of the ruling classes of New Spain. Soon, their first educational center was established in the city. On lands donated by Don Alonso de Villaseca, the Jesuits erected the San Pedro and San Pablo College which would spawn twenty-odd great colleges throughout New Spain.

More students came than were expected. Pressed by the demand, the Jesuits soon opened other seminary colleges: San Gregorio, San Miguel and San Bernardo were all opened before 1577. For some reason, these three schools were

* Mexican Art Historian, Director of the San Ildefonso College Museum.

** Mexican Architect.

merged into one, San Bernardo, in 1583, and relocated at a new site around 1588. And so was born the San Ildefonso College.

Initially, this college served as the residence for students who took classes elsewhere; within a short time, however, San Ildefonso began giving its own courses, which increased in number until it became a school in its own right. By 1592 it had 150 students from all over New Spain and a building with two patios, one of which had side corridors adorned with beautiful paintings.

Both the temporary merging of the San Pedro and San Pablo Colleges and the San Ildefonso College in 1611 and the many large floods which plagued the city at the end of the sixteenth and the first third of the seventeenth century were the most likely reasons for the construction of a new building for the school. San Ildefonso went through a splendid period in its new building at the same time that other colleges proliferated in cities like Puebla, Querétaro, Zacatecas, San Luis Potosí and Guanajuato. The Jesuits also carried out the enormous task of preaching the gospel and cultural assimilation in northwestern New Spain: indelible traces of the passage of the Society of Jesus are to be found in Sonora, Sinaloa and Baja California.

The eighteenth century bonanza was felt in the college. In the second decade, it was again decided that ampler housing was needed and the walls of the old building gave way to the new. The churrigueresque baroque style made its presence felt in the Jesuit college, with the characteristics of the eighteenth century city. A series of magnificent arches surrounding three great patios organized the internal space of the college: classrooms, dormitories, refectories, a chapel, vestry and service areas. The decoration was in the new style, particularly the great panels, pilasters and cornices of grey *chiluca* and red



Patios are a central feature of Colonial architecture.

**The San Ildefonso College
has witnessed the transformation
of a colonial city
into a modern one.**



The San Ildefonso facade exemplifies the eighteenth-century churrigueresque style.

*tezontle*¹ which framed the two carved stone facades and windows. The Society of Jesus, however, enjoyed its new, handsome building, completed in 1749, for only a few years: the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Spanish territories in 1767 marked the beginning of a new stage in the life of the college.

After the departure of the Society of Jesus, the college had different uses, but it functioned mainly as an educational center until it became the home of the National Preparatory School in 1867. In 1910 this institution became the basis for a reopened National University, which set up its offices in the college. The Preparatory School continued functioning until 1978, when it moved to another location. Finally, in 1992, the San Ildefonso College was selected as one of the most appropriate sites for international exhibits in Mexico City,

to which end the old eighteenth century building was restored.

In 1992,
the San Ildefonso College
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in Mexico City.

The College and Its Urban Surroundings

In the second half of the twentieth century, Mexico City grew immoderately, first toward the west and the northwest and then to the south. The new city abandoned its traditional places. Financial centers and government offices moved to modern buildings in search of efficient solutions to the problems posed by a growing metropolis.

¹ A porous volcanic rock, used in construction by the Aztecs. [Editor's Note.]

The victim of a paradox, the “City of Palaces” became something foreign to the metropolitan area. It stopped being the nerve center of the city and stagnated dangerously. The protagonists of that prestigious city —palaces, convents, hospitals and colleges—, witnesses to three centuries of history, lost their vocation, and, like a ship without a captain, sailed aimlessly.

For centuries, buildings had been constructed to fulfill either public or private needs. With migration, many of the downtown area’s vital functions went to different points of the city and these venerable monuments lost their identity. The state, responsible for their conservation, has had to confront the difficult task of giving them a new identity and a new vocation to keep them alive.

The invention of the concept of a “historic center” responded to the double need of recognizing an exceptional patrimony and of creating legislation that could protect and defend it. In April 1980, the historic center of the old colonial city was declared a zone of historical monuments. In 1988 the UNESCO declared this group of buildings, streets and plazas World Heritage Treasure.

The project which converted the San Ildefonso College into the Old San Ildefonso College illustrates this process of revitalization of the historical downtown area very well.

In May 1992 the National University of Mexico (UNAM), the National Council for Culture and the Arts (CNCA) and the Mexico City government (DDF) signed an agree-

ment to restore the San Ildefonso College, until then closed to the public and being used by different UNAM offices, and present the exhibition “Mexico, Splendors of Thirty Centuries.” The formidable response from the public —800,000 visitors— confirmed the need of having a space for temporary exhibits. The project was made permanent March 14, 1994, with the creation of a commission involving the same three bodies, the UNAM, the CNCA and the DDF.

The San Ildefonso College has always been a place of academic excellence. By becoming a place for art and culture, it follows naturally in that tradition of excellence.

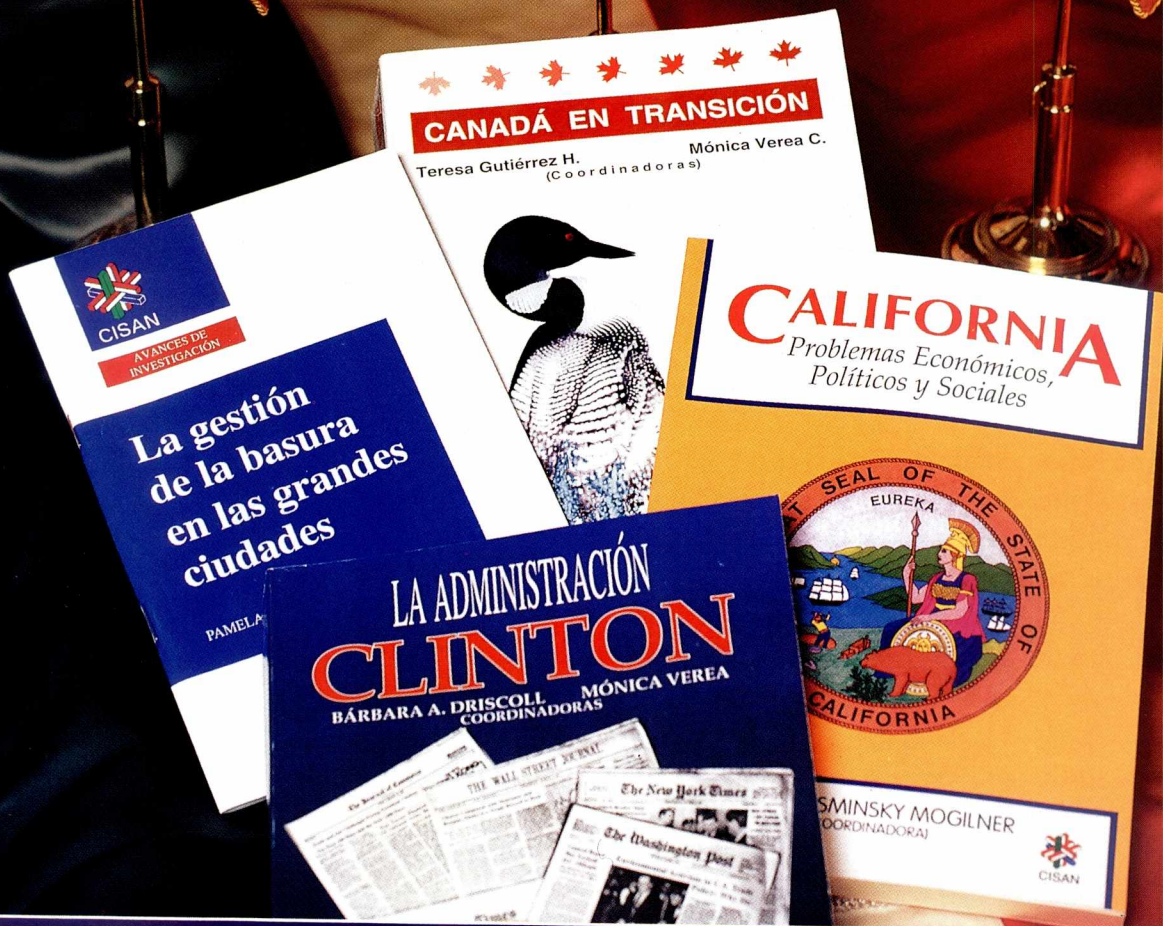
Since the summer of 1992, almost two million people have visited the building, despite sometimes difficult access and heavy traffic in the area. The widely varied program of exhibits and the great diversity of its artistic programming, both for children and for adults,

has attracted a large and heterogeneous public to San Ildefonso and to the Historic Center.

The growing interest of the residents of this great metropolis in getting to know and love their colonial city, as well as the numerous programs through which institutions seek to give new uses and functions to these monuments allow us to think that a new stage has begun, both for the Historic Center and for the Old San Ildefonso College. Hopefully we are not witnessing a simple truce, but the beginning of a long period of peace and prosperity. ❧



Students walked these halls from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries.



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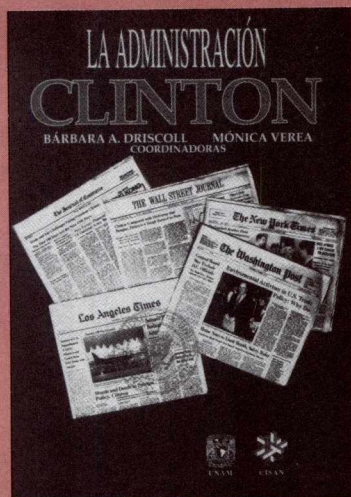
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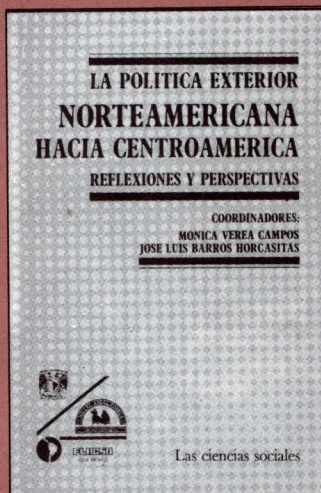
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An analysis of the beginnings of the Clinton administration. A basic sourcebook to explain the transition to a Democratic administration and to evaluate current political events.



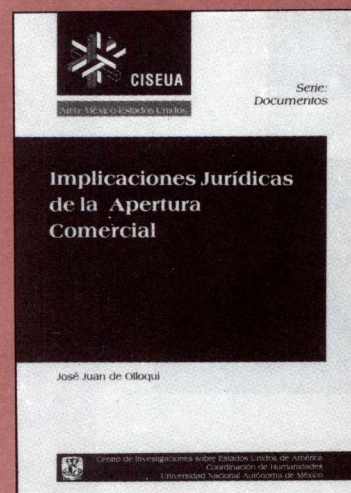
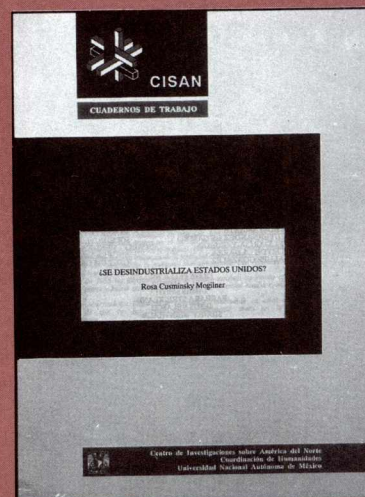
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¿Se desindustrializa Estados Unidos?

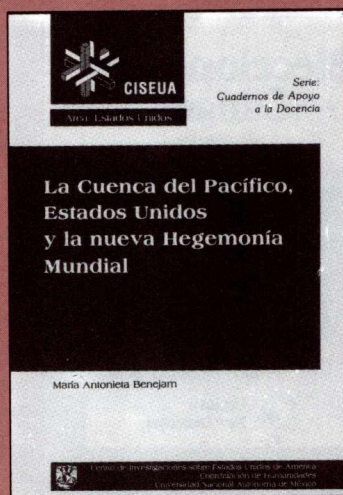
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This book summarizes current debates on whether U.S. industry has ceased to be competitive.



Implicaciones jurídicas de la apertura comercial

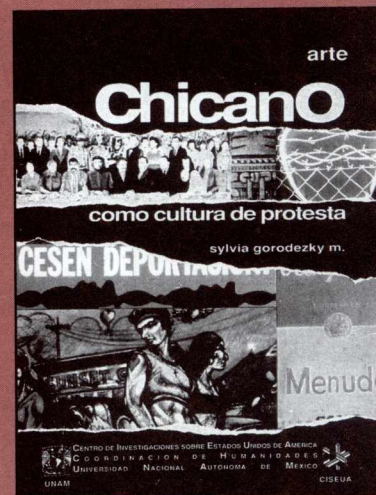
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La Cuenca del Pacífico, Estados Unidos y la nueva hegemonía mundial

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.



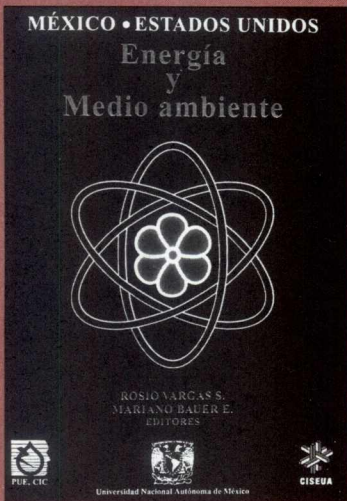
Arte chicano como cultura de protesta

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.

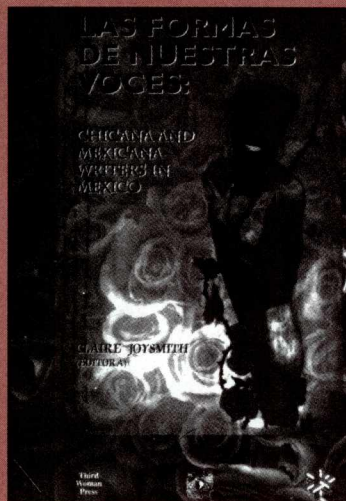
An overview of Mexican and American environmental legislation as well as its social, political and economic implications in the context of NAFTA. Also analyzes the relation between energy policy and environment in both countries.



Las formas de nuestras voces: Chicana and Mexicana Writers in Mexico

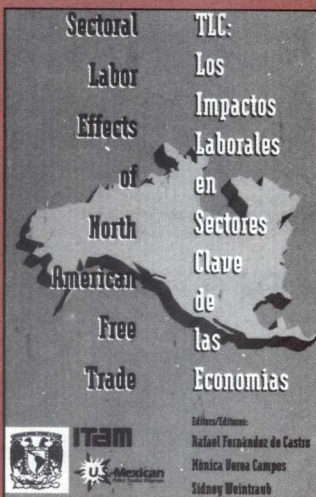
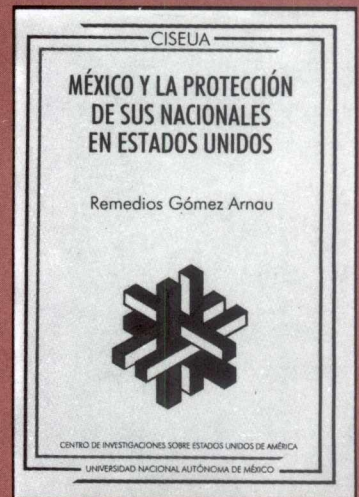
Claire Joysmith (ed.) 1995, 350 pp.

The many commonalities and divergencies among the different discourses and literary positions of Chicana and Mexicana writers are examined. This book also takes a look at the cultural and linguistic bridges' possibilities for texts, aesthetics and theory.



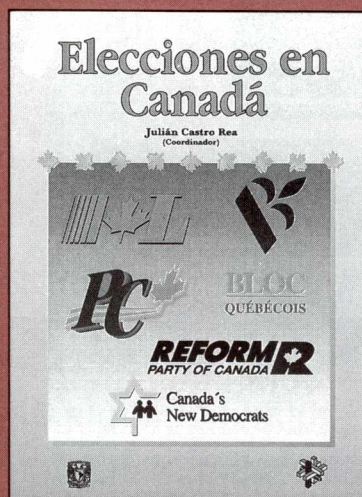
México y la protección de sus nacionales en Estados Unidos

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.



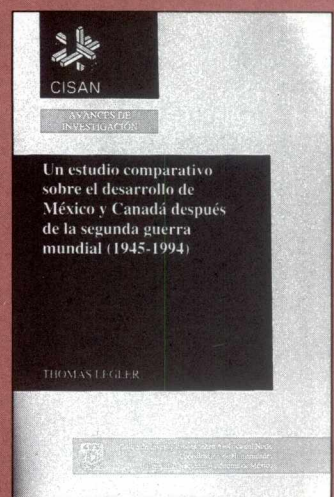
Sectoral labor effects of North American Free Trade/TLC: Los impactos laborales en sectores clave de las economías
Rafael Fernández de Castro, Mónica Vera Campos and Sydney Weintraub (eds.), 1993, 368 pp.

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.



Un estudio comparativo sobre el desarrollo de México y Canadá después de la segunda guerra mundial (1945-1994)

Thomas Legler, 1995, 80 pp. (42 pages in spanish and 38 in english). Comparison of the evolution of Mexico and Canada postwar economic and political models in the international capitalist context.

Up With God! Down With the Devil!

Laura Esquivel*



Everything below is as it is above.” From the time I heard these words fall from the lips of Don Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora, my convent chaplain, the natural balance of my mind was altered. I felt that they entered my brain, painfully and violently, as though they were a tearing girdle of bristles incrusting themselves between the delicate membranes in perpetuity. This constant violation of my peace of mind became unspeakable torment; at every attempt to cast the idea from my thoughts, it penetrated deeper, torturous and tormenting, as though advancing through quicksand, quicksand that killed the hope that one day it would leave me, stop afflicting me, clouding my mind.

No matter how hard Don Carlos tried to explain to me that “Everything above is as it is below” refers to a law of the universe which establishes that the same conditions and phenomena seen in this world are simultaneously reproduced in the other —superior— plane, I still did not understand. If everything on the Earth has its equal in Heaven, then logically, everything under the Earth is the same as what is above, on the Earth, and therefore, in Heaven. This seemed absolutely monstrous, since it meant that Hell was the same as Heaven and that Indians were the same as Spaniards; and that simply could not be.

Indians are plebeian, ugly, sacrilegious, vile sinners, dark-skinned dirty heretics. When they die, therefore, they fully deserve the kingdom of Satan. They are the complete opposite of ourselves: high-caste Spaniards,

white, Catholic, virtuous and well bred. What had I, the daughter of one of the finest families in New Spain, to do with the Indian pagans buried under my house? What had my beautiful convent of La Concepción —which proudly opened this year in the city the first dome built without a drum and boasting half-moon shaped windows— to do with the cruel, bloody architecture of Tenochtitlan? And what did the stately home of my parents have to do with the remnants of the temple underneath it and the savage, wanton rites that the Indians used to perform there? Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

God made us Spaniards in his image. The Indians were made in the horrible image of Satan. But a terrible doubt actually began to make me ill: What if those cunning Indian devils really wanted to put themselves on the same level with us, and used their good offices with Lucifer to try with his evil aid to make us lose our ineffable gift of grace by tempting us in the most appetizing way with the food grown in this land that they covered with iniquity by staining it with their blood? In Eden, sinister Beelzebub had already tempted the father of humanity once with an apple, and he could very well try a repetition of his feat.

I began to be obsessed with the idea that all the food grown in this malignant land was bedeviled and that all those who ate it entered into communion with the world of horror and darkness, condemning their souls to Hell. I began to refuse everything originating in Mexico, from the most beautiful flower to the most succulent fruit. I would only partake of food that was 100 percent Spanish and under no circumstances would I admit of a gastronomical mix. This decision was not easy to sustain

* Mexican writer. Author of the novels *Como agua para chocolate* and *La ley del amor*.

for someone with as fickle an appetite as mine. Fully aware of my weaknesses, when I went by the canal along the palace and the central plaza where the Indian canoes glided heaped with fruit, legumes, grain and flowers, I endeavored not to look or smell—or even to imagine—the corn, beans, *chía*, tomatoes, squash, pineapple, anona and papaya; the *capulines*, avocado, mammee, sapodilla; the *chicozapote* and guava; the *jocotes*, crab apples and prickly pears; the *chayotes*, bottle gourds and plums. In general I was able to avoid them without difficulty, just as I avoided the stands where they sold frogs, ducks, *chichicuilotes*, *acoziles* and fly eggs. But, how could I not smell the cacao? How could I return to the cold humid convent without drinking a frothy cup of chocolate? How could I, overnight, leave behind that delicious vice? I had already subjugated my will and flagellated my stomach for a whole month, touching nothing forbidden. A month without tasting *atole*,¹ tamales, *tortillas*, fruit preserves and, above all, without enjoying the marvel of chocolate! So, without regard for the consequences, I drank a large tasty cup in one continuous gulp and then, overwhelmed by repentance, readied myself to go back into my retreat.

Attempting to put my guilt behind me, I went through the merchants portal where they sold boots, shoes, dresses, shirts, daggers, swords, silks, large china jars from Castile, all the things that I would never be able to buy or have for my personal use. But not being able to have them was no impediment to always dreaming of wearing a beautiful Manila shawl and even occasionally imagining myself attired like a gentleman with cape and sword. But that day my imagination was distorted by the chocolate foam which rose from my stomach up to my head flooding my eyes, making them hallucinate thousands of circles shot through with chocolate coloring.

In one of those tiny circles, I could see myself leaving the belly of the city, from the middle of the central plaza, from inside an interminable throng of ragged Indians and a procession of monks and nuns, with my hair hanging loose, moving my hips lasciviously, dressed

in a skirt of common, transparent cloth like the mulatto girls wear. Before me was the main temple of Tenochtitlan, and on its steep steps, Spanish nuns and priests ascended to the 13 celestial levels. I tried to go up just like them, but the Indians did not let me. They tore my dress off in handfuls, leaving me naked and bewildered by the incessant sound of criers, the deafening noise of the bells and the tumultuous clatter of the Viceroy's carriage on its way to the palace. And I ran through a dark tunnel, descending little by little toward Mictlán,² to the deepest part of the underworld. But Our Blessed Lord, as always benign and merciful, did not want to withdraw all his succor amid the chaos of my mind; He illuminated my conscience with a ray of his light so it might rule my destiny and I might turn toward his Truth. I was able then to run toward the entrance of the cathedral, where I flung myself face down on the flagstones and licked them; and I licked them as I advanced toward the central portal until my tongue was dry and scraped, retaining neither saliva nor traces of the accursed chocolate.

I asked forgiveness a thousand times while I destroyed and threw down the images of the saints covering the church's central nave. The Supreme Being heard me and gave me absolution because He knows the whole Truth and knows that, in truth, Indians and Spaniards are the same; the priests of the Holy Inquisition are the very Aztec priests sacrificing lives to venerate Him. He knows that, in truth, each of the Aztec idols is the same as each of the saints' images and that, in truth, Lucifer was also made in his image; that, in truth, just as the Aztec priests drank the blood and devoured the body of their sacrifices, the Spanish priests drank the blood and ate the body of Christ; that, in truth, by drinking chocolate you enter into communion with Mictlán, but at the same time and for that very reason, also with the highest spheres of Heaven, since "Everything below is as it is above."

Now, the only thing I must do is convince the inquisitors of the Holy Office tribunal of all this when they come to judge me tomorrow. ❧

¹ A flavored beverage made from cornstarch and drunk warm. [Translator's Note.]

² The Aztec underworld. [Translator's note.]

CANADA

Starting Over

Jean-François Prud'homme*

Last October 30, 94 percent of people of voting age in the province of Quebec participated in a plebiscite about its future in the Canadian Federation. Quebec's autonomist government's proposal was defeated at the polls by only a narrow margin of 50.6 percent to 49.4 percent. It was the second time in 15 years that the residents of this majority (82 percent) French-speaking population was called upon to vote about political sovereignty.

At the beginning of the plebiscite campaign, both partisans of a yes-vote and partisans of a no-vote predicted that this would be the last referendum of its kind. No matter which position won, the consultation was to put an end to years of interminable constitutional discussions in Canada and to uncertainty about whether Quebec residents wanted to be an autonomous national entity or not. The almost even outcome of

the referendum produced exactly the opposite effect: we can predict that there will be more constitutional discussions in Canada and that, if their outcome does not satisfy the expectations of the majority of Quebecois, there will be another consultation about the political future of the province.

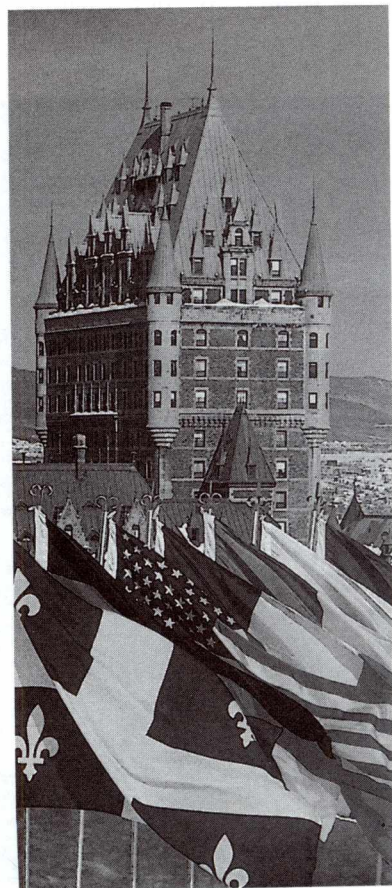
The Canadian situation may be succinctly explained by answering two questions: What is Canada's problem? and What does Quebec want?

I

For anyone living in a country like Mexico where the nation state was born when political sovereignty was achieved, with everything that this implies in terms of national symbols, the Canadian case may seem curious.

Canada becomes a country in the mid-nineteenth century with a law voted in the British parliament, although developed by the future Canadians. Canada did not achieve complete sovereignty then. When the British offered the

return of all governmental powers to the "white dominions" in 1931, the Canadians preferred to leave the power of amending their basic legislation in the hands of London, among other things, to avoid having to discuss the formula for amending the constitution. It is not until 1982, after the failure of several attempts at agreement between the federal government and the provinces, that the central government proceeded with —to use that curious piece of Canadian political jargon— "unilateral repatriation of the constitution," without the approval of the Quebec government. The two attempts at



Chateau Frontenac, a Quebec landmark.

Photos: General Delegation of the Government of Quebec in Mexico

* Political scientist and researcher at CIDE (Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económica).

First published at *Nexos* 215, december 1995, pp. 22-23.

remedying this situation in the last few years have failed. Despite all this, the institutions work and the law is upheld.

Canada is also a federation built with the gradual addition of different provinces over a period of 80 years. Its enormous territory and scant population favored the development of strong provincial governments and a very particular logic of negotiation. It is not exaggerated to say that federal-provincial relations tend to occupy the center of the national political agenda: at stake are formal powers, programs and appropriations. Understanding Canadian politics means also understanding the abstruse technicalities of federalism.

Because of the almost even outcome of the referendum we can predict that there will be more constitutional discussions in Canada.

II

Closely linked to the curious process of Canadian national construction, the latent constitutional problem and the centripetal dynamic of an active federalism, Quebec's vigorous nationalism was consolidated centered on cultural and linguistic distinctions. In its inception, it was the defense mechanism of a clerical society, turned in on itself, with a marked tendency toward supporting the wrong causes internationally. Today, in contrast with

the image some of its adversaries would like to project, it is a secular movement, open to the outside world, inclusive and tolerant insofar as its nationalism permits. Essentially, its demand is based on the recognition of a collective identity.

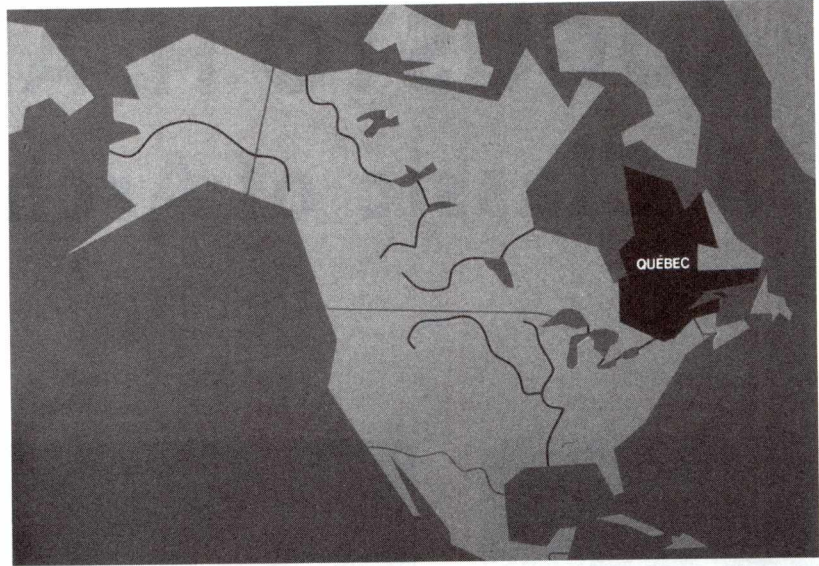
It has different political manifestations, often at odds with each other. On the one hand, there are those who support total political sovereignty for Quebec, combined with some form of economic association with Canada. They voted "yes" in the plebiscite. On



The Parliament building, seat of the Quebec National Assembly.

the other hand, there are those who support the recognition of some different kind of status for Quebec within the Canadian federation. Some of these people voted “yes”, and many others voted “no.” The majority of Quebec’s French-speaking federalists are aware of the need to preserve the specificity of Quebecois culture: this is a constant demand in the negotiations between federal and provincial governments.

The outcome of the campaigns around the plebiscite was decided in the two weeks preceding the vote, with a fight for the undecided vote and for the soft underbelly of both options: the “sovereignists” who would be satisfied with a rearrangement of Canada’s constitution and the federalists who think that Quebec society should be awarded longer-lasting guarantees. The leaderships of both the “yes” and the “no” camps had to readjust their campaigns to win over the majority of Quebecois in the center of the political spectrum. Even now, after an almost perfectly divided vote, it is that same majority which will end up deciding the future of Quebec in Canada, provided that the English-speaking provinces and the federal government present it with an attractive constitutional offer.



III

Last October’s plebiscite threw into relief one of the paradoxes of the Canadian political system: even on the brink of disintegration, it is able to make its main actors, both in Quebec and in the rest of Canada, stick to shared values and procedures. At a moment in which the affirmation of nationalisms awakens uncontrollable instincts, Quebec’s referendum was an example of democracy and of the institutional ability to process conflicts. This is one of the keys to the survival of Canada as a country: it is a very reasonable marriage of convenience.

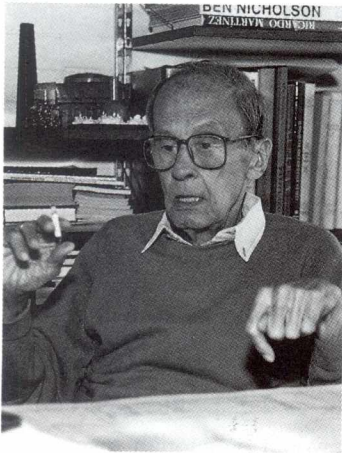
Now the ball is in the court of the federal government and the English-speaking provinces. The con-

stitutional recognition of Quebec as a different society with a right to veto in cultural questions, with some powers that would allow it to retain its specificity and guarantees in the area of political representation would be enough for an important majority of Quebecois to express their preference for the Canadian federation. It is a proposal which has been discussed before and achieved almost unanimous approval in Canada’s provinces. It is not strictly orthodox in terms of federalist theory, which presupposes the association of equal partners in everything, who delegate powers to a superior body of government; but, it is the price that Canada must pay to keep being a country. Sometimes Canadians forget that the construction of a country involves costs. If they are not ready to pay them, very probably after the next Quebec provincial election, there will be another referendum which will produce a solid majority in favor of Quebec sovereignty. ❖

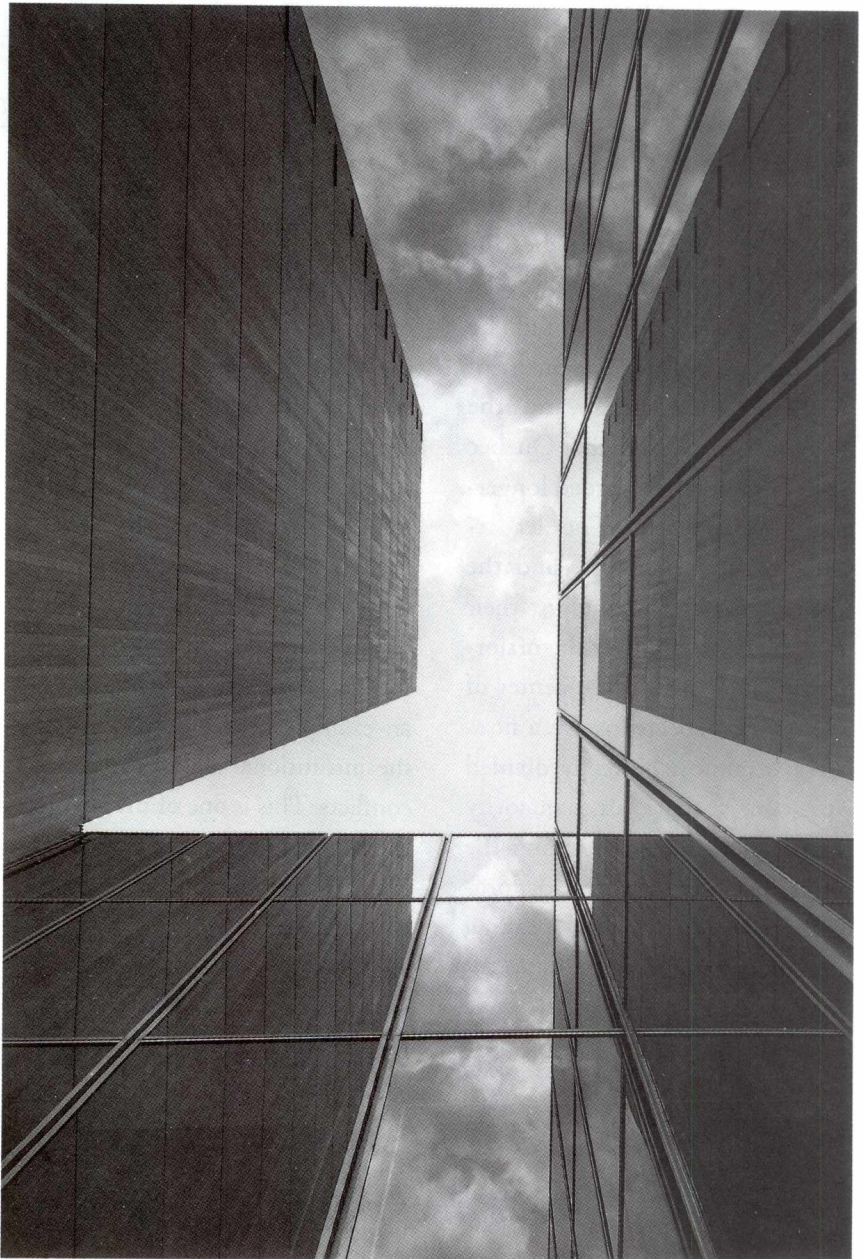
*Now the ball is in
the court of the federal government
and the English-speaking provinces.*

AUGUSTO H. ÁLVAREZ

A Classic of Architecture

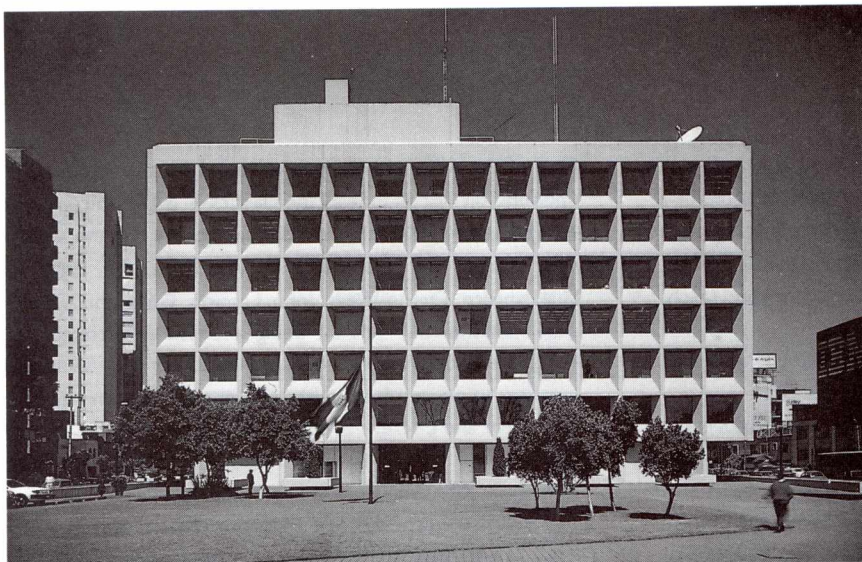


“Being a classic in architecture is being able to throw the user of a building into the abyss of creation...”



Photos: Augusto H. Álvarez

Jaysour Real Estate Company building.



IBM of Mexico building.

Álvarez always said that to be an architect “a great vocation for service is needed.”

“Being a classic in architecture is being able to throw the user of a building into the abyss of creation and deposit him, unharmed, in an unknown paradise.” This ability, according to Manuel Larrosa, was one of the main characteristics of the work of architect Augusto H. Álvarez, who died in Mexico City last November 29.

Born in Mérida, Yucatán, December 24, 1914, Álvarez always said that to be an architect “a great vocation for service is needed.” This conviction can be seen not only in what he built, but also in his teachings during the 40 years he was a professor of architecture.

Álvarez studied at the National School of Architecture of the UNAM (1933-1937). He began work on his own in 1940, combining it with his work as an academic. Between 1942 and 1970, he was a full-time professor of composition at UNAM’s National School of Architecture, a professor and director of the School of Architecture of the Israeli School and the founding director and professor of the School of Architecture of the Iberoamericana University in Mexico City. As a teacher, his main interest was the overall education of the student; he believed that projected spaces had to be conceived as a whole into which the architect integrated all the elements at his disposal, without losing sight of

the ends and uses for which those spaces were being created.

As a professional, he participated in projects and the construction of buildings for public use, like hotels, hospitals, schools, banks, office buildings, etc. Regardless of the material used—cement, steel, aluminum or glass—, his work always showed a reverence for order and cleanliness—a reflection of his own personality—as well as a clear mastery of geometry.

He earned innumerable prizes and distinctions both domestically and internationally. Among them are an Honorable Mention at the Sao Paulo, Brazil, Biennial (1961), the National Prize for Architecture (1983), Honorable Mention at the First Biennial of Mexican Architecture (1990) and First Place in the Mathías Göeritz Prize (1995). He also collaborated with distinguished Mexican and foreign architects in carrying out different projects and was both full and honorary member of several Mexican and Latin American societies of architects.

Álvarez was a good friend, partner and teacher to all who knew him, an example of openheartedness, elegance and solid thinking, true in word and deed. *Voices of Mexico* includes in this issue the eulogies of Don Augusto H. Álvarez by two outstanding Mexicans. With them, we join in the homage paid him by his colleagues. ❧

History of an Irresistible Vocation

Augusto H. Álvarez —architect, friend and teacher— leaves all those who were blessed to know him the great example of a fruitful and creative life. We are also left with the memory of a simple life, true to itself, led by an incomparable human being.

Many of us received as a divine gift his guidance and teachings about how to be true Mexicans.

Augusto was, on principle, ordered and measured in all things, particularly in his central vocation in life: architecture.

There are innumerable examples of his work throughout the country. Dedication, effort and affection were always the centerpieces of any work he was commissioned to do.

It was not, however, only his work as an architect which distinguished him, but also his work in teaching and administration, as well as the friendship he offered everyone, starting with his schoolmates, all the way through his young disciples and collaborators until the end of his life.

He taught composition in the National School of Architecture and later founded the School of Architecture of the Iberoamericana University, where he was influential in orienting the learning process toward a global education for architects.

Álvarez's teachings and work were always consistent and his vocation clear; he always conceived of projected spaces as a whole in which the architect could conceive of and integrate all the elements which make up architecture, using the spaces for the ends for which they were created without exhibitionism and always upholding, with great elegance, quality of thought, in word and deed.

But above all, his truth, values, openheartedness and great friendship captivated all of us who had the good fortune to know and deal with this teacher and friend in the workshop, in his office and in any sort of professional collaboration on a day-to-day basis, which he did with so many architects from Mexico and abroad.

No one should doubt that among all these virtues there was any lack of spontaneous joy in his pleasant, often funny, remarks, charged with healthy irony, particularly when he was criticizing himself.

Augusto's full life could be seen in the meticulous care he took in preparing trips all over the world to capture the real sense of human life. He always made these trips in the company of friends who shared his ability to analyze and observe, and of course, always carrying a camera, a small notebook and a well-sharpened pencil poised to express his fertile imagination.

All this made him the true representative of our School of Architecture which has borne many fruits for our country. I am sure I speak for all those he distinguished with his friendship, teachings and affection.

José Adolfo Wiechers Escandón
January 1996.

A Maturing Voice

One of the most courageous voices of Mexico —which will undoubtedly last as long as the classics— is the voice recorded by Augusto H. Álvarez in his buildings. He had the ability to communicate the emotions that Aeschylus, the *Popol Vuh*, Shakespeare, Orson Wells, John Lennon, Goya and so many other classics have left us. Being a classic in architecture is being able to throw the user of a construction into the abyss of creation to deposit him, unharmed, in an unknown paradise.

Silent and discrete, almost timid, the voice of this architect is, however, stronger and more powerful than the clamor of all today's self-advertisers in this field.

Just like with birds, any stridency chases away classicism from a space. Augusto (as he was frequently called to combine his name with the adjective denoting respect and veneration due to how imposing and majestic his work was)¹ was never strident, either in his behavior or his work. It is clear that the elimination of stridency in his work is another factor in Álvarez's classicism.

When a certain kind of rigorousness also possesses propriety and precision, intentionality and vehemence, it does not exclude pleasure. This is the kind of rigorousness that Augusto H. Álvarez employs in his spaces, through modular geometry, in honor of apotheosis, to the benefit both of users and observers of his buildings.

Without the voice of this architect, transformed into inhabitable space, Mexico would not be what it is; it would not have seen its territory covered with constructive rationality melded with beauty that this artist spread through his work and the teaching of generations of students. In his work and thought, reason has been witness to the efficiency of the emotions.

The National University of Mexico has collected the oral history of Mexico's great creators in the very valuable collection *Voz Viva de México* (The Live Voice of Mexico). The live voice of Augusto H. Álvarez, heard in his architecture, does not need to be preserved aurally: it is preserved in the cement, steel, glass and wood which delimit the space he created, as well as in the values of his disciples.

Manuel Larrosa
January 1996.

¹ "Augusto" in Spanish is not only a name, but the adjective "august," meaning "inspiring reverence." [Translator's Note.]

JUAN VICENTE MELO

A Unique Writer

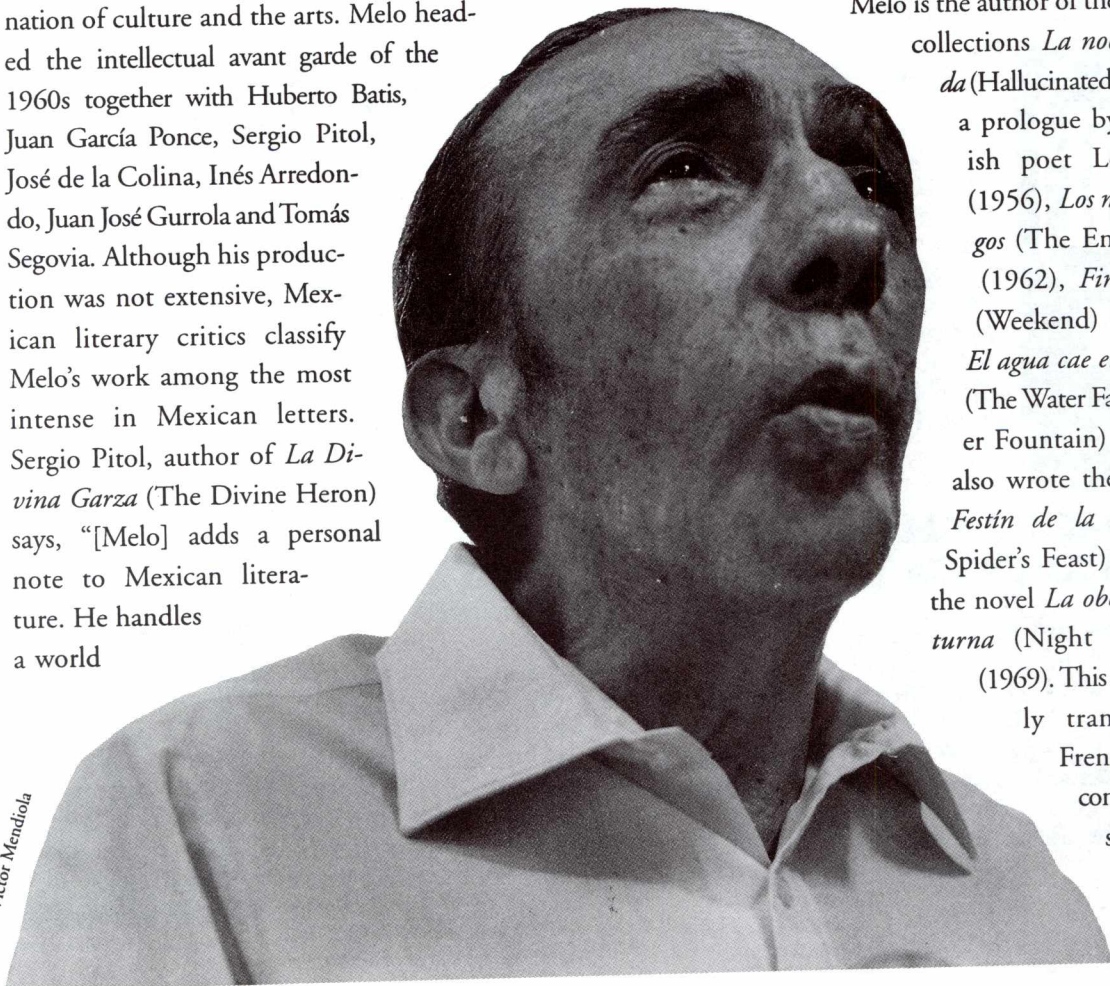
The writer and music critic Juan Vicente Melo Ripoll, considered one of the most original Mexican authors of the second half of the twentieth century, died in the city of Veracruz on February 11.

Born March 1, 1932, Melo graduated as a surgeon from the UNAM but abandoned medicine to devote himself to letters, music criticism and the dissemination of culture and the arts. Melo headed the intellectual avant garde of the 1960s together with Huberto Batis, Juan García Ponce, Sergio Pitol, José de la Colina, Inés Arredondo, Juan José Gurrola and Tomás Segovia. Although his production was not extensive, Mexican literary critics classify Melo's work among the most intense in Mexican letters. Sergio Pitol, author of *La Divina Garza* (The Divine Heron) says, "[Melo] adds a personal note to Mexican literature. He handles a world

exclusively his own, a world we might call rational delirium; a mixture of dream and reality, reason and unreason. His characters find themselves in ambiguous—very dreamlike—situations with language charged with individuality, the most appropriate, of course, for validating that dark world he traversed between reason and a run-away imagination."

Melo is the author of the short story collections *La noche alucinada* (Hallucinated Night) with a prologue by the Spanish poet León Felipe (1956), *Los muros enemigos* (The Enemy Walls) (1962), *Fin de semana* (Weekend) (1964) and *El agua cae en otra fuente* (The Water Falls in Another Fountain) (1985). He also wrote the long story *Festín de la araña* (The Spider's Feast) (1966) and the novel *La obediencia nocturna* (Night Obedience) (1969). This novel, recently translated into French, has been considered a classic of contemporary Mexican narrative.

La Jornada-Victor Mendiola

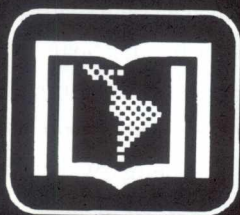


Mexican literary critics classify Melo's work among the most intense in Mexican letters.

He was also an outstanding cultural promoter. He founded *La Semana Cultural* (The Week in Culture), a supplement of the Veracruz newspaper *El Dictamen de Veracruz*; he was the editor of the magazine *La palabra y el hombre* (The Word and Man), published by the University of Veracruz; and was the director of the UNAM's cultural center Casa del Lago (The House on the Lake). He contributed to different magazines and cultural supplements like *Revista*

Mexicana de Literatura (Mexican Magazine of Literature), *Revista de la Universidad* (University Magazine) (UNAM), *La revista de Bellas Artes* (The Fine Arts Magazine), *Cuadernos del viento* (Notebooks of the Wind) and *Juglar* (The Juggler). Melo is also considered the precursor of music criticism in Mexico.

His book *La rueca de Onfalia* (Onfalia's Distaff), a novel he worked on for 25 years and had for some time resisted publishing because he felt that its ending was very abrupt, was at the printer when he died. Published by the University of Veracruz, many authors think that its appearance will be one of the literary events of 1996. **W**



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OPCIONES DE POSTGRADO EN AMÉRICA LATINA

COLECCION UDUAL
5

La Unión de Universidades de América Latina (**UDUAL**) editó hace algunos años la primera versión de Opciones de Postgrado en América Latina. Debido a la creciente interrelación del mundo universitario, es necesario que se publiquen todos los programas de este nivel de estudios. Por ello, el Departamento de Informática y de Intercambio Académico ofrecen una edición actualizada que contiene alrededor de 4,000 programas de postgrado, información que forma parte del banco de datos llamado Sistema de Información de Educación Superior de América Latina y el Caribe (**SIESALC**) en su módulo de postgrado.

LOS DESAFÍOS DEL POSTGRADO EN AMÉRICA LATINA

COLECCION UDUAL
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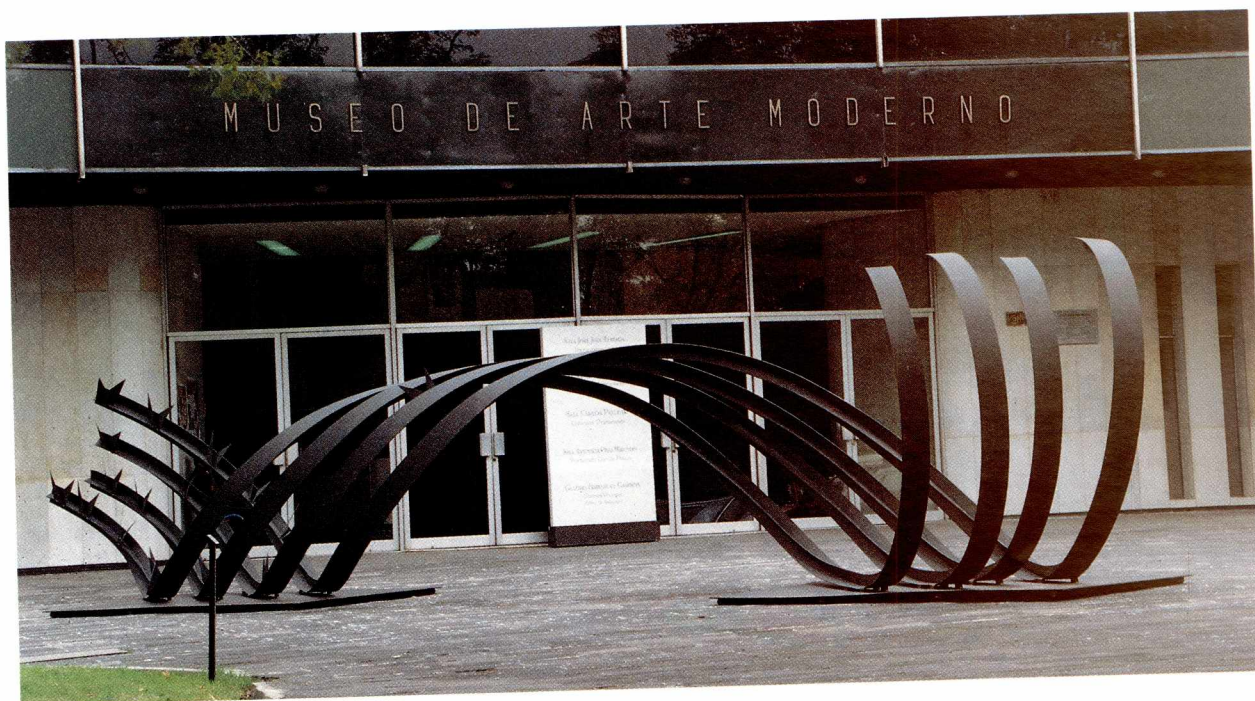
En los Desafíos del Postgrado en América Latina se plasma el resultado de varios años de investigación y reflexión que se ha realizado en la Secretaría General de la Unión de Universidades de América Latina (**UDUAL**), acerca de la problemática que afecta a este nivel de estudios en Latinoamérica. La investigación tiene como base fundamental la ardua y perseverante recopilación de información realizada por nuestro Departamento de Informática, y que conforma el Sistema de Información de Educación Superior de América Latina y el Caribe (**SIESALC**).

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MEXICO CITY'S MODERN ART MUSEUM

*Jutta Rütz**

Mexico City's Modern Art Museum (MAM) is in Chapultepec Forest, near the Monument to the Child Heroes, with its main entrance facing the intersection of Paseo de la Reforma and Gandhi streets. The design of the museum, by architects Pedro Ramírez Vázquez and Rafael Mijares, is an example of 1960s functionalism. The museum has two buildings; the main one has four exhibition halls,

* Ph.D. in philosophy and art historian.

while the other holds the gallery. The steel construction allowed for the creation of large spaces and simple forms. The transparent fiberglass and polyester resin domes in the middle of each building surprise the visitor with both their visual and acoustic effects. The materials —marble, quarried stone and rock—contrast with the transparency of the glass which permit a view of the sculpture garden and make illumination of the exhibition rooms a mixture of natural and artificial light.

The Modern Art Museum is a public museum, inaugurated September 20, 1964, under the administration of Adolfo López Mateos, president from 1958 to 1964. A forerunner of the MAM was the National Museum of Modern Art, located in the Fine Arts Palace between 1957 and 1960, when Miguel Salas Anzures was the head of the Visual Arts Department. The museum's collection comes from the national collection of the National Museum of Visual Arts, while the international collection was formed by dona-

Since its inauguration the museum has had 548 exhibitions.

tions. It includes modern and contemporary painting, graphics, sculpture and photography.

The Xavier Villarrutia and Carlos Pellicer rooms house the permanent collection. Arranged chronologically, the first room offers the viewer a look at work from the so-called Mexican School of Painting

and Sculpture. Paintings by the major figures of Mexican muralism¹ predominate: for example, *El diablo en la iglesia* (The Devil in the Church) (1947), by Chihuahua-born David Alfaro Siqueiros (1896-1974); *Culto a Huichilobos* (Cult to Huichilobos) (1949), by the Jalisco-born José Clemente Orozco; and *Retrato de Lupe Marín* (Portrait of Lupe Marín) (1938), by Guanajuato-born Diego Rivera.

Work by other artists from the same period who were not part of the current which came out of the Mexican School is also shown as part of the permanent collection. Among them are Manuel González Serrano (1917-1960), Antonio Ruiz (*El Corzo*) (1895-1964) and Agustín Lazo (1896-1971). From among the second and third generation muralists, there are works of José Chávez Morado (b.1909), Jorge González Camarena (1908-1980) and Juan O’Gorman (1905-1982). Examples of Realism, Surrealism and Fantastic Art include *Maternidad* (Maternity) (1943), by María Izquierdo (1902-1955); the famous *Las dos Fridas* (The Two Fridas) (1939) by Frida Kahlo (1907-1954); and *La huida* (The Flight) (1961), by Remedios Varo (1908-1963).



Photos: Museo de Arte Moderno. Reproduction authorized by the National Institute for the Fine Arts and Literature (INRA).

The Flight (1961), Remedios Varo.

¹ An artistic movement from 1922 to 1940. Muralism “attempted to validate pre-Columbian and folk art, and spread socialist ideas and nationalist ideals, which would later resist Americanization.” Juan Acha, “Perfil Socio-cultural del Museo de Arte Moderno en México,” in *Museo de Arte Moderno. 25 años. 1964-1989*, Mexico, Prisma Editorial, 1989, p. 24.

The work of Rufino Tamayo (1899-1991) stands out in the Carlos Pellicer room, which shows paintings of his from different periods, among them *Las músicas dormidas* (The Sleeping Women Musicians) (1950), *Olga, retrato dinámico* (Olga, a Dynamic Portrait) (1958) and *Hombre a la puerta* (A Man at the Door) (1980). This room shows paintings and sculptures which take in the so-called “generation of the break,” with its beginnings in the 1960s.² Represented are Ricardo Martínez (b.1918), with *El brujo* (The Warlock) (1971); Francisco Corzas (1936-1983), with *La empaquetada* (The Packed Woman) (1966); and Vicente Rojo (b.1932), with *La gran señal* (The Great Signal) (1966). From the tendency of fantasy-art, dating from after 1960, the museum has such important works as *Lagarto* (*Animal fantástico*) (Lizard [Fantastic Animal]) or *La función del mago* (The Magician’s Performance) (1972), by Oaxaca-born Francisco Toledo (b.1940), among others.

Temporary exhibits are usually housed in the José Juan Tablada and Antonieta Rivas Mercado rooms

² Rita Eder describes the “movement of the break” as a questioning of the ideas of muralism and other aspects of the Mexican School of Painting. The artists of this trend called for “subjective expression free from content, as opposed to the social and political character of muralism.” Rita Eder, “La ruptura con el muralismo y la pintura mexicana en los años cincuenta,” in *Historia del arte mexicano. Arte contemporáneo III*, Mexico, Salvat Mexicana de Ediciones, S.A. de C.V., 1982, p. 2201.

and the Fernando Gamboa gallery. Since its inauguration, the museum has had 548 exhibitions which reflect the focus and personality of its nine directors. The showings organized by Fernando Gamboa, the museum’s second director (the first was Carmen Barrera) from 1972 to 1981, who emphasized international exhibits, usually of groups, deserve mention.³ Gamboa argued for this type of showing by pointing to the inability of both Mexican artists and the general public to travel.⁴

³ He organized more than 49 group exhibits (more than 60 percent of which were from abroad) and 168 individual showings (65 percent of which were of Mexican artists). See Acha, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

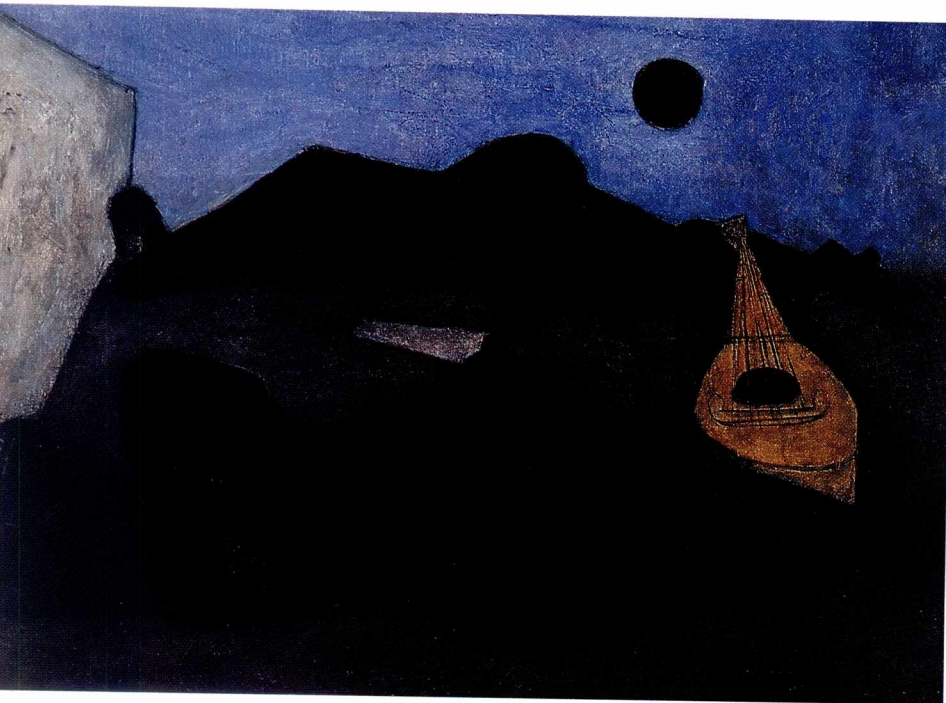
⁴ See Mariana Frenk-Westheim, “La colección de arte de Fernando Gamboa,” in *Recordando a Fernando Gamboa* (catalogue), Mexico, INBA, p. 11.



Portrait of Lupe Marín (1938),
Diego Rivera.



Cult to Huichilobos (1949), José Clemente Orozco.



The Sleeping Women Musicians (1950), Rufino Tamayo.

The museum's collection includes modern and contemporary painting, graphics, sculpture and photography.

Among the most spectacular international exhibitions that Gamboa organized are *The Horses of San Marcos, Venice* (1980), *Henri Cartier Bresson* (1982) and *Henry Moore* (1983). Under the tutelage of Helen Escobedo, head of the museum from 1982 to 1984, special circumstances meant that group showings, retrospectives of living artists and individual showings of dead artists set the tone.⁵ As director of the MAM from 1990 on, Teresa del Conde has been able to bring world-class exhibits from abroad like *Giacomo Manzú* (1991-1992) and *Giorgio de Chirico* (1993-1994).

One of her main goals is publicizing the work of new generations of artists, for whom she periodically organizes collective showings like *Encuentros. De la historia*

⁵ See Juan Acha, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

del arte en el arte contemporáneo mexicano (Encounters. On the History of Art in Contemporary Mexican Art) (1992). Of all the exhibitions, homages and retrospectives, particularly outstanding were *Manuel Álvarez Bravo. Los años decisivos, 1925-1945* (Manuel Álvarez Bravo. The Decisive Years) (1992) and *Remedios Varo* (1994). From among contemporary Mexican artists, the individual showings *Irma Palacios. Espejismo mineral* (Irma Palacios. Mineral Mirage) (1993) and *Arturo Rivera. Bodas del cielo y del infierno* (Arturo Rivera. Weddings of Heaven and Hell) (1995) have been especially stimulating.

The museum has book, photo and slide libraries as well as a reading-room for internal use open to the public upon presentation of valid identification. The ground floor of the main building has a bookstore which sells exhibit catalogues, art books and other items. MAM also offers services like lectures, round table discussions, book presentations, courses, workshops and special events. The Educational Services Department offers regular guided tours. **Wi**

The museum is open Tuesday to Sunday, from 10 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. For more information, call (52 5) 553-6233 or 211-8729. Fax (52 5) 553-6211.

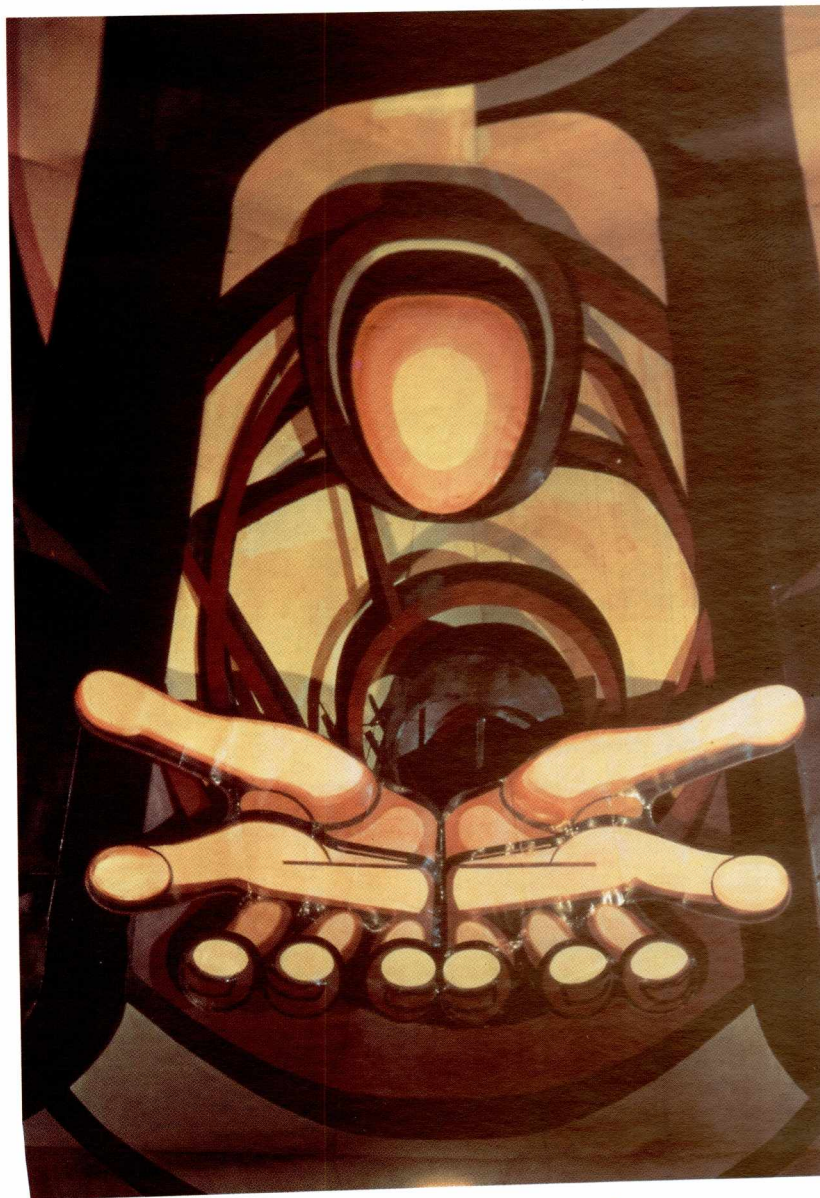
THE SIQUEIROS POLYFORUM

A Diamond of Steel, Light and Color

Photos: Polyforum Siqueiros

The March of Humanity is not on a single plane, but a march upward, to the left, to the right, downward, in every direction, always moving. This is the biggest virtue of human beings: moving, going everywhere, not stopping for anything.... It is the total march for the possibilities of today throughout history.

DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS



Woman's hands seeking peace and harmony, from *The March of Humanity*.

The structure of the Polyforum suggests a diamond mounted on a steel setting. Since its founding 25 years ago, it has been both a meeting place and landmark for inhabitants of Mexico's capital and a magnificent example of the country's visual arts vanguard. This center of culture is unmistakable because of its architecture, the murals that cover the twelve sides of its outer walls and the fact that it contains the world's largest sculpted mural, *The March of Humanity on Earth and Toward the Cosmos* by renowned Mexican muralist David Alfaro Siqueiros.

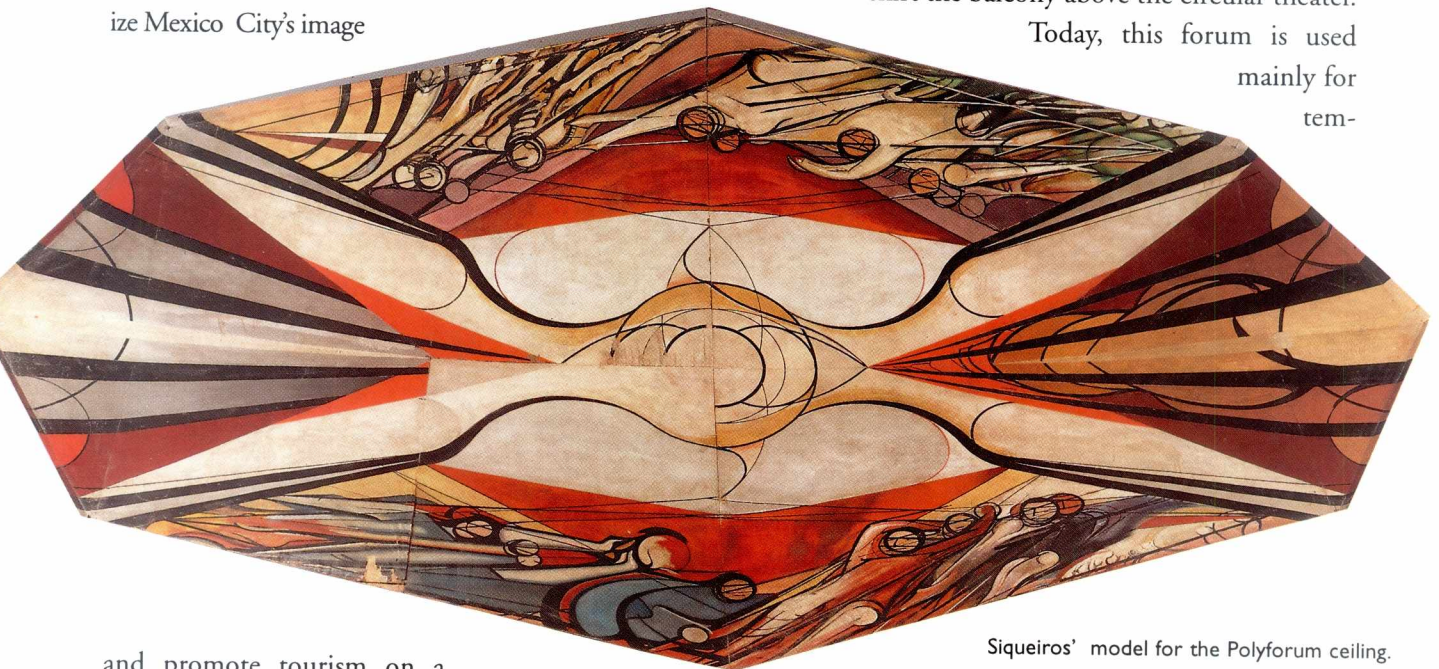
The building became part of one of the most ambitious urban projects at the end of the 1960s, Mexico 2000, intended to modernize Mexico City's image

Its architecture is unique: a double geometric structure, 12-sided on the outside and octagonal on the inside. Viewed from any angle, this octagon looks like an ellipse, an illusion created by the original perspective conceived by Siqueiros for his interior mural.

Another of its unique characteristics is its four different interior levels, which make the utilization of space very versatile. The first level is multi-purpose and houses the offices. The second level contains a circular theater which seats 600 and can be used for lectures, seminars, small concerts and other cultural events.

On the third level is what is called the National Forum: two galleries for temporary exhibits which skirt the balcony above the circular theater.

Today, this forum is used mainly for temporary



Siqueiros' model for the Polyforum ceiling.

and promote tourism on a large scale combining art, architectural beauty and maximum efficiency in all its services.

A Unique Place

The Polyforum was begun with the organization of a workshop and the establishment of a team of painters, sculptors, architects, chemists, photographers, workers and artists invited from different parts of the world. After six years of uninterrupted work, it was inaugurated in 1971 by then-President Luis Echeverría Álvarez.

porary exhibitions of the work of different contemporary artists.

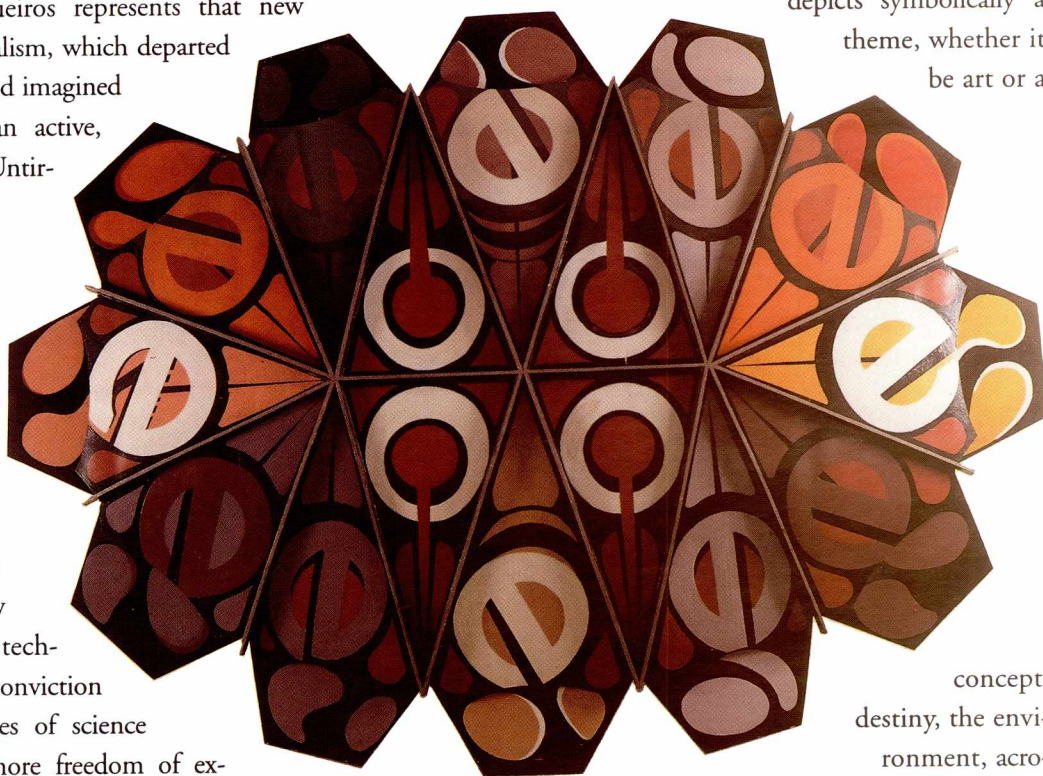
On the fourth level is the Universal Forum, the walls and dome of which are completely covered by the world's largest mural. Under the dome there is a rotating platform which can hold 1,000 people, thus allowing the audience to "march" together with humanity through its history and toward the cosmos. It had a light and sound system which described the different stages of *The March of Humanity* just as Siqueiros himself conceived them. The Forum's current management plans to revive this light and sound show.

A Splendid Example of Artistic Integration

With more than 8,000 square meters of space to unleash his creative capabilities upon, with no major restrictions and accompanied by an excellent team of more than 40 people, Siqueiros encountered in the Polyforum the best opportunity in his life as an artist.

From the start, the main goal of both the artist and his team was to achieve a total integration of architecture, sculpture and painting. This was the time when muralism was searching for a new pictorial language, which would receive a great innovative impetus thanks to its merger with modern architecture and contemporary art. Siqueiros represents that new thinking in muralism, which departed from flat walls and imagined all surfaces as an active, dynamic space. Untir-

Siqueiros' model for the Polyforum roof.



ingly experimental, the artist incorporated new materials and techniques with the conviction that the advances of science would permit more freedom of expression. The result is a work of art which encompasses architecture, painting, sculpture and relief.

Siqueiros also shaped his personal vision of the historic moment that humanity was living through toward the end of the 1960s, when Man had one foot on the Moon. "Realizing that today we are a tiny point within a tiny point in space seems to me to change the

whole poetic, musical and visual sense of human creation.... Today, everything needs size the way it never did before. Now we know that we can march in incredible ways.... We are the happiest [beings] of all human history because we are no longer stuck exclusively on the Earth: we can fly; we can travel the universe."

The Murals of Siqueiros

The exterior of the Polyforum is actually an enormous easel with 12 masterpieces on it. Each one consists of 160 square meters of sculpted painting and depicts symbolically a theme, whether it be art or a

concept: destiny, the environment, acrobatics, the masses, the Decalogue, Christ, that which is native, dance, mythology, mixed blood, music and the atom.

Untiringly experimental, Siqueiros incorporated new materials and techniques with the conviction that the advances of science would permit more freedom of expression.

The very size of the interior mural, known as *The March of Humanity*—more than 2,400 square meters—is a surprise, as is the richness of its form and color, and above all the extraordinary way the painter manages to communicate his conception of a permanent struggle by Man to overcome all negative forces.

The mural depicts the opening of a dome on one side and its closing at nightfall on the other. At opposite ends, two gigantic pairs of hands symbolize Man—in his desire to dominate and create—and Woman—in her search for peace and harmony.

The march begins with the sudden clash of Man with a violent and hostile world. Violence—the power of Man to inflict terrible suffering on his fellows—is the leitmotif of the history which runs through the entire mural. But the other recurring theme is Man's perpetual struggle for freedom and survival which will give birth to a new spirit, representative of the initial stage of the Revolution.

The second part of the mural describes the march of humanity toward the future revolution. Science and technology will be used to build a new

world where peace and culture reign. The elements become more and more positive; hope and rebirth become the main theme. The circular faces of the new, positive leaders represent the dawning of a new day. Races and nations mix to become a single race and nation. Opposite symbols—the eagle of capitalism and the star of communism—appear side by side. The sky offers a new sensation of power, movement and space. Cosmic Man emerges in space like the promise of a new consciousness.

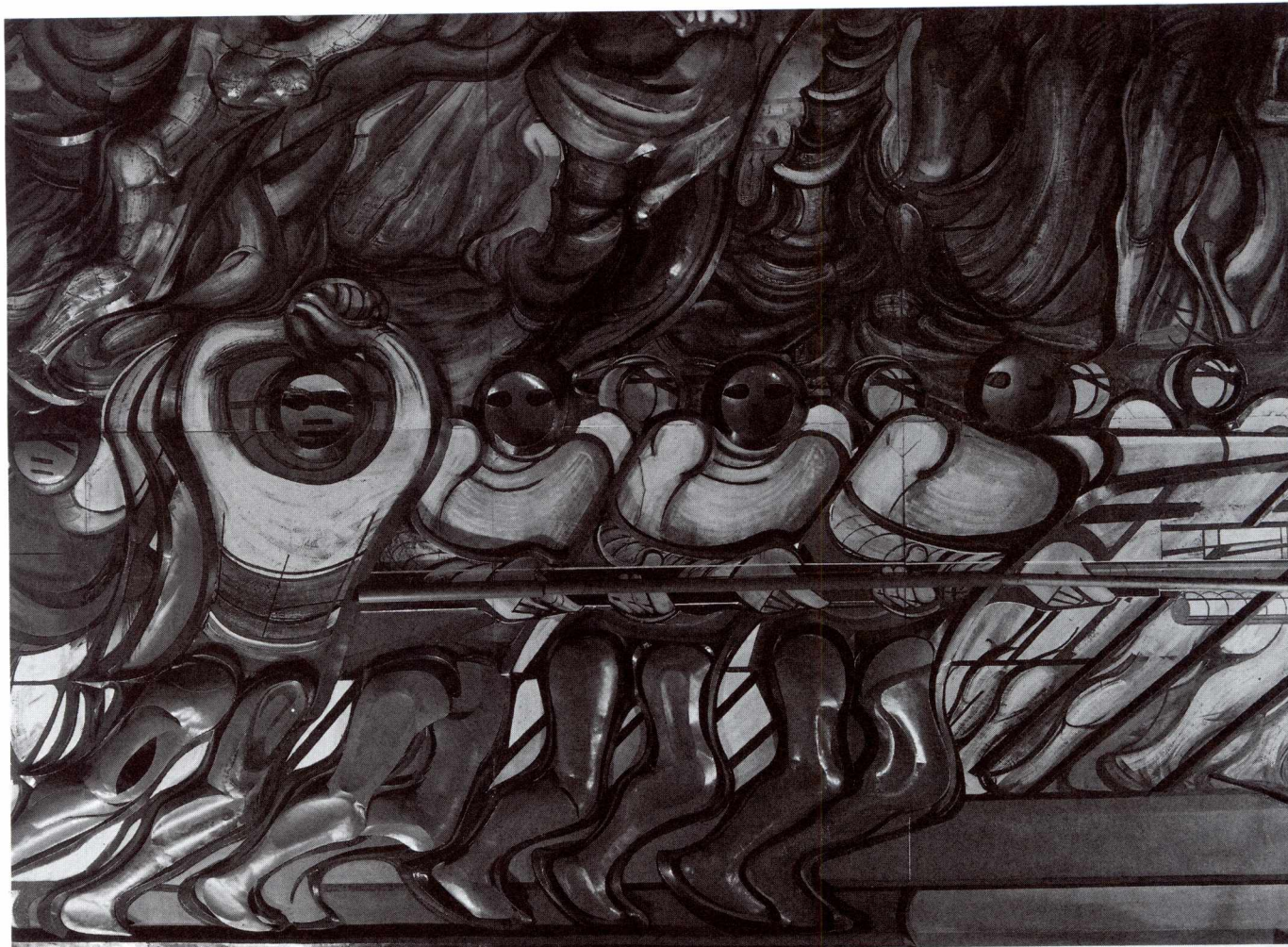
But the march of humanity has not ended. The mural transmits the desire to go even further, to continue building a future separate from violence and repression, to go toward immortality and freedom.

The March of Humanity was Siqueiros' last great work: he died only two years after its completion. It would seem, however, that his spirit decided to stay on and inhabit this place; no visitor has been able to escape the strength and energy transmitted by this work. ❧

Elsie Montiel
Assistant Editor.



March of Humanity Toward the Future Revolution.



The March of Humanity Toward Democracy (detail).

The Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Polyforum Siqueiros

This year the Polyforum has a lot to celebrate: its own twenty-fifth birthday and the centennial of the birth of the two figures most important in its creation, Don Manuel Suárez y Suárez and David Alfaro Siqueiros. The publication of a book, several events —like the Masked Ball— and the establishment of a non-profit institution for the Polyforum are some of the activities underway to celebrate these anniversaries with the best possible goal: raising funds to restore the Polyforum's installations and murals. The book is a history of the Polyforum, its origins, its architecture, the wealth of the murals which envelop it and the artist who created it.

The Masked Ball —to be held this year for the second time— brings together different artists who express their creativity in mask-making. Their work is auctioned among the guests at a dinner-dance held in the Universal Forum. A competition on new values in experimental art is also planned for next November.

The non-profit institution, founded January 10, has the goal of raising funds to continue the restoration begun a few years ago. Five exterior murals have already been restored, but there is still much to be done to return the Polyforum to its splendor of a quarter of a century ago when it first opened its doors.

David Alfaro Siqueiros, A Brief Biography

Born December 29, 1896, in Chihuahua, Siqueiros was one of the three founders of the modern school of Mexican mural painting (along with Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco).

A political activist from his youth, he studied at the San Carlos Academy of Fine Arts, Mexico City, before leaving in 1913 to fight in the army of Venustiano Carranza during the Mexican Revolution. Later

he continued his art studies in Europe. In 1922, after returning to Mexico, he helped paint the frescoes on the walls of the National Preparatory School and also began organizing and leading unions of artists and workmen. During the Spanish Civil War (1936-39), he commanded several brigades for the Republicans. Over four decades, his labor union work and his communist political activities led to numerous jailings and periods of exile.

His murals are characterized by great dynamism and compositional movement, vigour, a sculptural treatment of forms and a limited color range that is subordinated to dramatic effects of light and shadow. He commonly used synthetic lacquer colors sprayed from paint guns in order to speed up the process of decorating large public buildings. David Alfaro Siqueiros died in Cuernavaca, on January 6, 1974. ^W



Siqueiros at work.

Photo: Héctor García

Taken from: *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Volume 10, 15th Edition, 1993.

Philanthropy in the NAFTA Countries

The Emergence of the Third, Non-Profit Sector

To give or to receive, to be or to have are and have been for centuries ethical alternatives which have occupied both the thinking and activity of philosophers and politicians, businessmen and ordinary citizens.

At the end of the twentieth century, when all rational systems aspiring to a social utopia have proven their limitations, when the great social and religious paradigms which promised more or less infallible roads to collective and individual happiness have failed, society is forced to seek more practical, more human solutions to the very grave problems it faces.

This is the intention of "philanthropy," a movement which has existed in human history for centuries, but has only recently become strong and meaningful. More than a movement, it is actually an attitude on the part of the more privileged sectors of society. Philanthropy consists of building a culture of civic participation which recognizes the social responsibility of companies and of their individual leaders and managers. It is an attitude which includes, as the etymology of the word itself suggests, love of Man, but not in the abstract. It implies, rather, love for concrete human beings who due to circumstances beyond their control suffer poverty, hunger, disease and generally unacceptable living standards and conditions for personal growth. Philanthropy is, then, the art of giving disinterestedly, but with concrete, tangible goals. Or, as the Mexican Center for Philanthropy defines it, "It is an attitude of respect for, interest in and commitment to the development of human beings, nature and life. It is manifested in all cultures through

attitudes, activities and institutions which, in a disinterested way, seek a better quality of life for all members of the community."

Throughout the twentieth century, but with more impetus in the last three decades, a great many foundations and organizations dedicated to obtaining financial, human and political resources for philanthropic ends have emerged in the three countries party to the North American Free Trade Agreement. Their activity is based on what the social Christians call "subsidizing", whereby sectors of the population with more economic resources and knowledge, education and access to advanced technology, offer part of their benefits to those lacking them. In this way, one of the fundamental principles of philanthropy consists of creating a culture of societal collaboration which takes on board the idea that it is not enough for companies and individuals to donate money to solve problems like hunger, marginalization and ignorance. What is needed is that they commit even more important resources: their time, knowledge and talents. In his welcoming speech to the participants in the First Trilateral Forum on Social Investment, Manuel Arango Arias, president of the Mexican Center for Philanthropy, said that its essence is "...time, talent and work voluntarily given for human welfare and the protection and restoration of [our] surroundings."

This forum, held in Mexico City in January 1995, was a fundamental effort to establish contact among the representatives of the three countries' main philanthropic institutions. Conceptions, strategies and plans of action for continuing trilateral philanthropic

work were discussed. Concrete case histories of successful projects carried out by philanthropic foundations of the three countries were also presented.

The most outstanding general agreements and conclusions include the following: establish and foster a new culture of civic participation, making a priority of creating awareness about the corporate social responsibility; create a new social pact among government, businessmen and the non-profit sector of society; make companies aware of their responsibility to invest in society by donating time, talent or funds; overcome the social assistance idea of “the donation culture” in order to move forward toward “the culture of social investment”; relate philanthropy to a business strategy and the world of the economy to the world of social development; create a non-profit-friendly legal framework which would stimulate the flow of donations; open the philanthropic culture up to the world of the mass media and the exchange of ideas; intensify the search for solutions conducive to social development and an improved quality of life in our communities, with deep-rooted projects and long-range programs; establish forms of cooperation and exchange of information among philanthropic institutions in Mexico, the United States and Canada; and organize and systematize the results of forums and meetings of the different philanthropic associations of the three countries.

A series of interesting facts came out of the forum workshops:

—In Mexico, more than 500 institutions and companies are affiliated to the Mexican Center for Philanthropy;

—126 billion dollars were collected both from companies and individuals in the United States in 1994 for social assistance;

—U.S. citizens did 19.5 million hours of volunteer work which, if paid, would come to almost 190 million dollars in donations;

—U.S. companies gave donations equal to almost 1.5 percent of their pre-tax earnings;

—There are initiatives in Canada to legalize social development contributions as a moral and legal oblig-

ation of companies; one of these initiatives would make it obligatory for all companies to put at least one percent of pre-tax profits into social assistance projects, etc. (The Mexican initiative MIRA Program, Look Out for Others,¹ is an outstanding example of this kind.)

Among the many participants in the meeting were foundations and associations from the three countries with long experience in the area: from Mexico, among the best known are the Mexican Foundation for Social Development, the Mexican Foundation for Health, the Foundation of Support for Children with Cancer, the UNAM Foundation, the Miguel Alemán Foundation and the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation. Outstanding participants from the United States include the Rockefeller, Ford and Kellogg Foundations, as well as the Synergos Institute. Finally, from Canada the Centre for Business and the Community of the Royal Bank of Canada and the Business Council on National Issues were among those present.

Philanthropy covers an enormous number of activities and fields, not only support to communities with concrete needs, but also financial aid and support with human resources to overall projects which benefit society as a whole. Resources are channeled into the fight against poverty, the construction of decent accessible housing and educational and job-training programs, as well as to foster medical and biological research—for example in AIDS research— projects of environmental clean-up and preservation, like the Canadian projects to deal with the problem of climatic change, or to institutions dedicated to sustainable development. Many important associations are also dedicated to fostering culture and the arts.

Philanthropy has spurred the emergence of a third sector—the non-profit sector—in addition to the other two traditional sectors: the public sector, represented mainly by the government, and the private sector, which includes companies competing on the market. This is a third sector which constitutes a needed

¹ The Spanish word “mira” means “look.” [Translator’s Note.]

link between economy and society, representing the increasing participation of civil society in matters of its concern. Philanthropic institutions join in the efforts of a society which organizes itself outside the sphere of political power to build a better and more just world.

As Peter Drucker said in his book *Post-Capitalist Societies*, "Economic performance is a company's first responsibility, but not its only one. A company is fully responsible for its impact on the community and society." Philanthropy conceived as an investment in society is not only a moral imperative for businessmen, but it can also be very beneficial for the companies themselves. As Brian Davis, vice president of the Royal Bank of Canada says, it can also be "good business." In effect, if companies help to better educational research and community systems, people can have a better standard of living, which in turn will mean more and better customers for goods and services.

However, the essential intention of philanthropy is, as David Rockefeller said, "to establish an

acceptable balance of the clear benefits of a democratic market economy and its ability to ensure maximum economic efficiency, sustained development and a system which provides for a fair distribution of income, better employment levels and good education and medical care for all." To this end, the third, or voluntary, sector, has to establish solid, long-term goals which aim not only to temporarily alleviate some of the many deprivations suffered by vulnerable sectors of society, but also seek to have a more permanent impact in bettering their overall quality of life. The idea is to use the knowledge and access to the increasingly sophisticated technology at the disposal of businessmen, intellectuals and professionals in the manner of the old Asian saying: To help a man, it is better to teach him to fish than to give him a fish. ❧

Diego I. Bugada Bernal
Assistant Director

Mission and Objectives Of the Mexican Center for Philanthropy

Mission

Foster and facilitate a philanthropic culture of social responsibility to strengthen the organization and active participation of society in solving community problems.

Objectives

- * Support organized civil society in contributing altruistically to social development and well-being.
- * Generate and disseminate information about institutions, groups and individuals involved in philanthropic activity.
- * Establish efficient communication among philanthropic associations and transform individual experience into shared knowledge.
- * Professionalize the organization and work of philanthropic institutions.
- * Put modern financial mechanisms in place to maximize resources for philanthropic projects.
- * Propitiate the most appropriate legal and fiscal framework for this sector.
- * Foster close relations with philanthropic organizations internationally to create a culture which crosses all borders.

Women, Society and Companies

Ángeles Espinoza Iglesias*

Strictly speaking, a society without families and without a concrete economic structure is inconceivable, and the presence of women is basic to both.

Women's role in the economy, understood as society's way of organizing itself to satisfy its need for supplies, has grown along with their access to education.

Their role is not only important in the economy. It is also basic in religion, politics and language. In primitive religions the Earth and Nature are deified and tribute is paid to fertility. The majority of cults include several feminine deities. It is sufficient to remember Coatlicue, the mother of all the gods among pre-Columbian peoples, and Minerva, who represented the essence of humanity, wisdom, in the classic Western world.

Politically, not a few peoples have lived under a matriarchy. Even today, the Western world's best known monarchy, Britain's, is headed by a woman and, curiously enough, that country's government was also run by a woman: the renowned Margaret Thatcher.

In Mexico, several women have played a central role in politics: Josefa Ortiz de Domínguez in the movement for Independence and Carmen Serdán in the 1910 Revolution are clear examples. In 1953, under the administration of President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, Mexican women's right to vote was recognized. From then on, little by little women have ventured into areas previously reserved for men.

In language, another vital social structure, it is not by chance that the first words an infant learns are

to identify its mother. This influence is so strong that the language an individual first uses to relate to others is called the "mother tongue."

Lastly, in the home, women are businesswomen. They manage common goods to satisfy day-to-day needs and to plan for tomorrow. Very often, their planning makes it possible to subsist in difficult times.

It is in the domestic sphere, women's domain, where a basic cultural principle is learned: the meaning of work. This is so important that it is possible to say that a cultural change can be made when man's attitude toward work changes. Seen as a curse from which one should liberate oneself, its effect is socially negative; if seen as a means for self-realization, similar to the exercise of freedom, it would make for a society with a work culture that would lead to success, even if it is collective, not individual, success. Lastly, seen as a means to satisfy family and individual needs, it would result in conformism. For these reasons, women's role is basic for changing this attitude, giving it richer goals not limited to simply fulfilling the most immediate material needs but including the improvement of the quality of life of those dearest to them.

Women's essence includes the attitude of sharing; men's includes competition. Among the things women share are life, food, language, religion, values and an attitude about work. They transmit their appreciation for life according to how they perceive themselves. Social improvement depends on their personal improvement, which rests on three principles:

1. that they appreciate their families;
2. that they have a profession or trade; and

* Director of the Amparo Museum.

3. that they seek the well-being of society.

With respect to the first principle, the appreciation of the family, in Mexico this value is preserved and carries great cultural weight. However, we must be alert to the influence of more developed countries which might lessen this concern for those closest to us.

With regard to the second principle, we are facing a great challenge. Educational levels are low, particularly in the poorer sectors of society. Productivity depends to a great extent on this. But, while schooling is necessary, perhaps even more important is the spirit of improvement. Someone with

a low educational level but a great desire to improve him/herself will be able to acquire the knowledge he/she will need to perform better in his/her profession or trade.

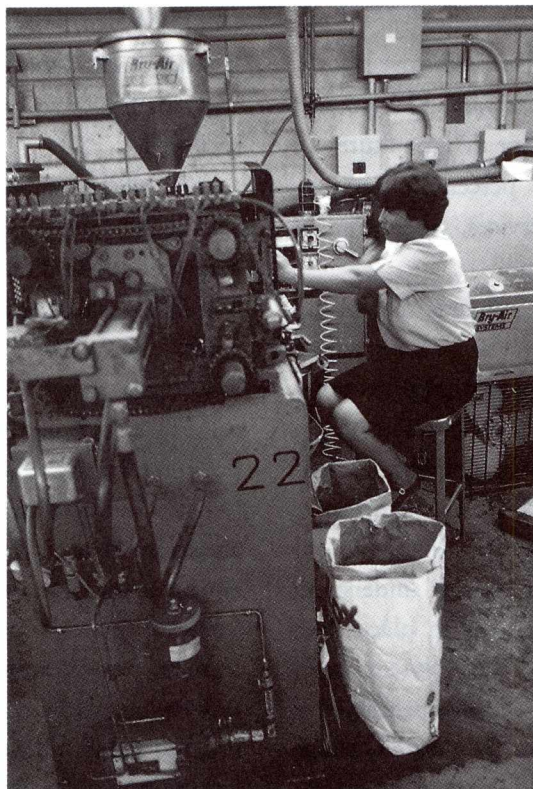
With regard to the third principle, we have to say that social well-being depends to a great extent on family well-being, which today is practically a woman's responsibility.

Until now we have mainly discussed women's role in the home, but it is important to emphasize that in the working world, women participate in ever increasing numbers.

According to the last census (1990), of Mexico's 81,249,645 inhabitants, 50.9 percent are women. Interestingly enough, there are more females in the age groups over 14 years old and more males in the younger age groups.

This distribution of the population is not strange if we consider that the unfortunate export of Mexico's workforce is generally male.

This also explains why the number of women heads of household has increased. According to specialists at the Colegio de México, 2.23 million house-



Women participate increasingly in Mexico's workforce.

holds in Mexico are headed by women.

On the other hand, according to the *Anuario Estadístico de América Latina y El Caribe* (The Latin American and Caribbean Statistical Yearbook) for 1994, published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), Mexico's economically active population ten years of age and over is 72.9 percent of the total population in that age group, as compared with 40.4 percent in 1970.

Of that number, statistics indicate that in 1970, 15.2 percent were women,

while in 1995 the figure had risen to 30.9 percent. Proportionally women are entering the work force at an increasing rate, to the point that, some firms prefer female personal to male because they are more responsible, they are absent less and they work harder. These characteristics correspond mainly to women with a low educational level who work as factory operators.

By contrast, in industries which require a high educational level, like the computer industry, for example, only 17 percent of personnel is female. In managerial posts, women are the exception in Mexico.

Participation of women in the workforce differs according to age groups: only 6.2 percent of girls between 10 and 14 years old work. This proportion rises to 35.2 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 19 and 53.4 percent of women between 20 and 29 years old. Women join the workforce in the third decade of life, between the ages of 20 and 30, which is the same period in which they establish their own families. The most viable conclusion we can come to is that this is producing a transformation in the family and the world of work in Mexico: women, who previously

worked only in the home, today combine their tasks in the home with a job in the world of productive labor.

In the different economic sectors, 32.7 percent of Mexican women workers labor in agriculture, 14 percent in industry and 53.3 percent in services. Clearly, the majority are in services, where human relations are of major importance.

All these figures lead us to conclude that we are experiencing a cultural change. The positive nature of this change depends to a great extent on companies, since every day their influence is greater on the men and women of the economically active population, the productive motor force of this country.

This change will also be positive if the general population, including men, is able to understand how women cannot be substituted in places like companies. If women share with those close to them the spirit of improvement which is indispensable for bettering all aspects of their lives, the cultural change toward quality and excellence will stop being a mere discourse and will become a reality.

In addition to the spirit of improvement, another important characteristic for achieving the cultural transformation of our country is the ability to work as a team. Women's importance in this is also fundamental, given that due to their natural inclination to cooperate instead of compete, they are more prone and able to do teamwork.

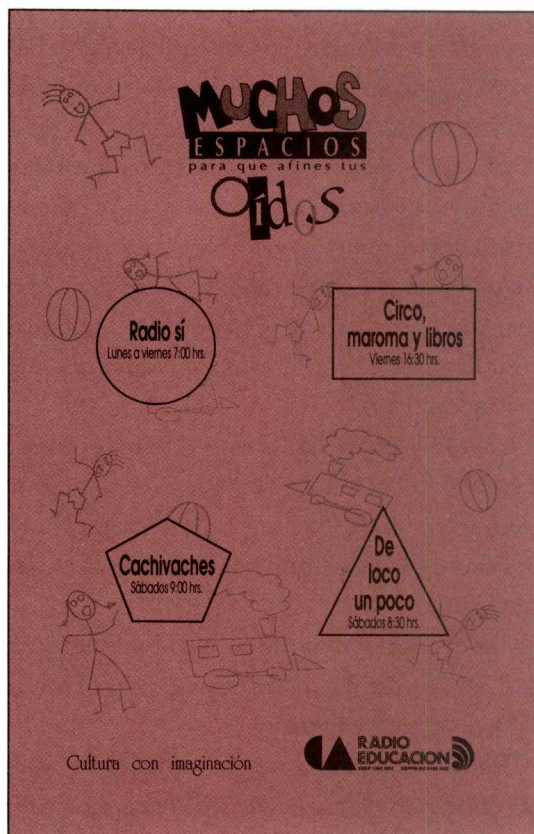
Another important facet of women's overcoming obstacles is training. It is the company's duty to organize training courses emphasizing the value of individual responsibility, particularly in a country like ours where responsibility has been diluted in the collective by the negative influence of decades of paternalistic unionism. To carry out this difficult but necessary task, women's capabilities should not be underestimated.

I will cite one example of women's capabilities of meeting challenges. In New York, in the last five years the number of women business owners has increased 255.2 percent; in Washington, D.C., this growth was extraordinary: 473.3 percent. In both cases, training programs have given optimum results. It is estimated that by the year 2000, 50 percent of businesses in the United States will be owned by women.

In Mexico, women's ability to meet challenges has still not reached this level. However, their role as protagonists has taken on real weight in all facets of our society.

For all these reasons, it is no longer possible to put off the full utilization of women's characteristics for ameliorating the difficulties of the domestic economy. The family is the most important value for the majority of Mexicans. That is where—to a great extent thanks to women's strength—it is possible to lead Mexicans to value their work more, collaborate more with the company and share its objectives.

It is not by chance that our countrymen working abroad travel more on Mother's Day (May 10), than on any other day of the year. This date is a measure of the influence of women on workers. If we take this into account, we will achieve better results in the difficult task companies face in sharing out collective tasks in order to satisfy individual needs of both the men and women who make up the society we live in. *W*



Reviews



El águila bicéfala.

Las relaciones México-Estados Unidos a través de la experiencia diplomática

(The Two-Headed Eagle.

Mexico-U.S. Relations Through Diplomacy)

Walter Astié-Burgos

Ariel Divulgación, Mexico City, 1995, 425 pp.

A CONFLICTIVE RELATIONSHIP

The relations between Mexico and the United States have often been close and unconditional and sometimes distant and distrustful. A love-hate relationship that goes beyond economics, politics and history, inserting itself into

the hidden corners of the collective unconscious of both peoples.

One of the undeniable merits of Astié-Burgos' book is precisely that it explores the most conflictive aspects of this bilateral relationship dealing with its difficulties critically and—as the direct player he is because of his role as a diplomat—proposing overall, long-term solutions to productive cooperation between both countries.

The author's starting point is the hypothesis that the links between the United States and Mexico have been forged from having "a sort of single physical body," which implies a great many unbreakable ties: geography, history, economics, population, culture, etc. But simultaneously, he recognizes the existence of forces that have prevented lasting harmony between the two nations. Hence the book's title, which refers to that mythical bird which "although it has one body, has two different heads staring in opposite directions, apparently attempting to avoid or reject total unity."

Profuse in data and generous in interpretations and proposals, *El águila bicéfala* is written on two methodological levels. On one level, it exhaustively reviews the 200-

year history of Mexico-U.S. relations with the idea that the present can only be explained if we understand the past. The author explains the complexity of a relationship affected by both the interventionist leanings of our neighbor based on the famous Monroe Doctrine and the Manifest Destiny and by Mexico's resistance to losing its sovereignty and assimilation by the superpower.

The second methodological level is a critical look at the relationship with the aim of building what could be called a general theory of Mexico-U.S. relations on the basis of the idea of "interdependence." The author maintains that in a world which tends to globalization and the formation of regional economic blocs, it is impossible to remain isolated. Therefore, Mexico's foreign policy must take this on board and, for basically geopolitical reasons, seek the best integration possible into North America. In this sense, the transformation of the traditional principles of our foreign policy—sovereignty and self-determination—cannot be put off. The idea is not to renounce them, but to understand that "they stem basically from the need to defend the country's territorial sovereignty from foreign ambitions." In our time, this is no longer necessary, but we still have to be alert to new, more sophisticated and subtle ways of violating our sovereignty and self-determination.

The change, then, would retain the defense of these basic principles with the awareness that sometimes—as an exercise in our own self-determination, never as a result of external pressure—it is necessary to transfer part of our sovereignty to be able to participate in the global economic tendencies of today's world.

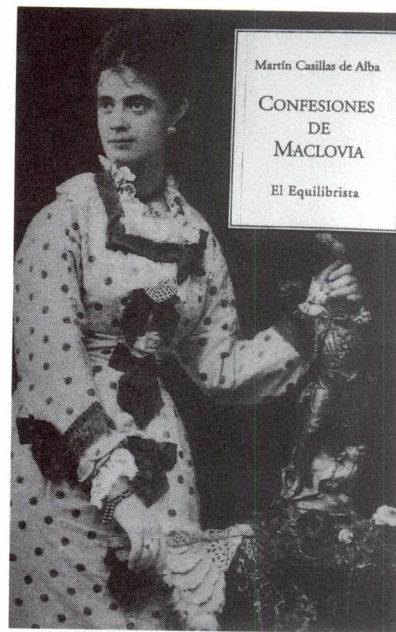
Astíé-Burgos dedicates the last chapter of his book to analyzing the origins of the North American Free Trade Agreement and its advantages and disadvantages for the signer countries. His balance sheet is positive: he says NAFTA is the recognition by the Mexican people and government that a harmonious and fruitful relationship with our inevitable main partner is preferable to aspiring to isolated survival in a globalized world. However, he does warn that it is also essential to set up agreements and similar links with other regions to which we are tied for reasons of geography, history and culture: he emphasizes the European Union, the countries of the Pacific Basin and, above all, Latin America.

Relations with the United States are condemned to complexity. According to Astíé-Burgos, "Perhaps the very nature of such a close relationship implies difficult, conflictive relations" (p. 414). However, the determination does exist, in part due to the efforts of Mexican diplomacy, to build an atmosphere of productive collaboration. Problems like illegal migra-

tion, drug trafficking, the border, etc., must be looked at from a different point of view, not of mutual recrimination, but of joint collaboration. This will only be possible if mutual respect is cultivated and old, uninformed, often ambiguous, attitudes about each other—not at all representative of the general feelings of either people—are modified in both countries.

This study is important reading because it is well documented and broadens out the vision of the historian. The author's grounding in diplomatic circles—concretely his work as general director for North America of the Foreign Relations Secretariat and alternate Mexican ambassador to the United States—provides the reader with more than an erudite study; it gives us a fresh, first-hand look at the difficult relationship between Mexico and the United States. This is neither the work of a historian nor of a diplomat. It is a synthesis that incorporates both dimensions and achieves a full vision of the past, present and future of our relations with our powerful neighbor. This is a book that will join the ranks of other classic works on the topic like those by Jorge Castañeda, Isidro Favela, Robert A. Pastor, Alan Riding, Lorenzo Meyer and Josefina Zoraida Vázquez.

Diego Ignacio Bugeda Bernal
Assistant Director.



Confesiones de Maclovia

(Confessions of Maclovia)

Martín Casillas de Alba

Ediciones del Equilibrista,
 Mexico City, 1995, 429 pp.

IN THE LIGHT OF MEMORY

"I went to Chapala because that is where Grandmother Maclovia lived before she died." This is how Martín Casillas de Alba opens his novel *Confesiones de Maclovia* (Confessions of Maclovia), and it is from that phrase that the light of memory—which is invented and intuited, which recreates and investigates—is cast upon us. In the book's "Overture," Martín puts us in a mood appropriate for the journey through the novel's 435 pages: tranquility. A slightly melancholic tranquility. A tranquility of withdrawal and recollection. A re-examination of what has been lived, desired and dreamed.

The first thing one notices is the versatility of the light. Its constant movement, the way in which it moves our emotions, as if they were clouds on a windy day. That revealing light will not abandon us. It will penetrate our own memory and will cause us to lose a feeling of reality, of our own reality, because the show is about to begin. In the Overture's present-day Chapala, the noise of our modern world disappears, giving way to a silence populated by other sounds, other ways of passing the time and space of what was the nineteenth century. The landscape comes upon us overflowing with health and color. Rumors arise from the lagoon, and from the people as well. Not everything from the past was better. The novel does not evade the political turmoil, the violence, the asphyxiation, above all, of the beliefs and traditions which were fought with life itself, with solitude and often with humiliation. No, it is not that the world of before was ideal; but it is not in the present that the novel will unfold. It is in the past, in the passage of a specific past which is moving toward its future. It is in the present of that past which had the same conflicts and the same hopes as this one.

In that present the dominant forces are love, the struggle for freedom, art, death. The story of Maclovia revolves around these themes and the atmosphere of the writing is that of falling in love: the intensity of perception felt by a person in love.

The atmosphere of the writing is not only the story being told, the language of the storyteller, the epoch in which the events occurred. It is the attitude of the writer. It is with that attitude that Don Juan Bautista listens to the confessions of Maclovia, a woman much older than he, a woman who in her youth was a startling beauty, an intelligent beauty. The chronicler —apocryphal or not, but undeniably a character in his own right— is just as seduced by the idea of writing about this woman as Martín is by writing the story of his grandmother.

Being in love with the idea, with what one writes with love —this must lead to falling in love with what we read.

In her own voice, Maclovia narrates her youth. The chronicler's voice provides the narrative of the older woman. The magic of the novelist succeeds in encompassing a life which is coming to an end. But since it is being told by the old woman, the novel's atmosphere has an evocative power so intense that only Chapala can hold it. Only Chapala, because that is what the author calls it. It could be anywhere in the world. It is just that Casillas takes us to Chapala and thus, we are Chapala. We know its changes in mood and temperature as though we had never left.

While reading this book, it occurred to me several times that perhaps the first real decentraliza-

tion to occur in our culture is that of literature. That of the novel, which recreates other, profound identities —such as being from Chihuahua, Baja California, Zacatecas, Durango or Michoacán. Being part of the nature, climate, tastes and smells of a certain place. I am not talking about social classes, cultures or ideologies. I am speaking of flesh that understood the world where it received its first ray of sunlight; of stomachs that received their first nourishment, of languages that defined a first identity: you are a *tapatio* [a person from Guadalajara].

Then I heard the *tapatio* things and that made me want to touch them: the streets, the buildings, the roads. To feel the distances. To smell. To taste.

How strange it was for me to know that the novel was by Martín Casillas [de Alba], whom I had always considered a hard-core *chilango* [someone from Mexico City], who could just as well have been from New York, London, or at least Madrid. A *chilango* like those who...already know everything. They know it all. They are extremely well-informed. They are a desire to be. They are a photocopy of what they would like to be and invariably make the point that they are from somewhere else, but always from the central part of the country.

Well, Martín was able to remove his novel from that way of looking at things. And, I asked myself while reading his book,

how was he able to do this, to conquer this other *tempo*, which is definitely not that of the nation's center?

A narrative peace. A space in which to exercise literary memory.

Cova taught him, I soon discovered. Cova taught him to listen to the passage of time and above all she taught him to understand old age (which I see as one of the novel's most notable characteristics).

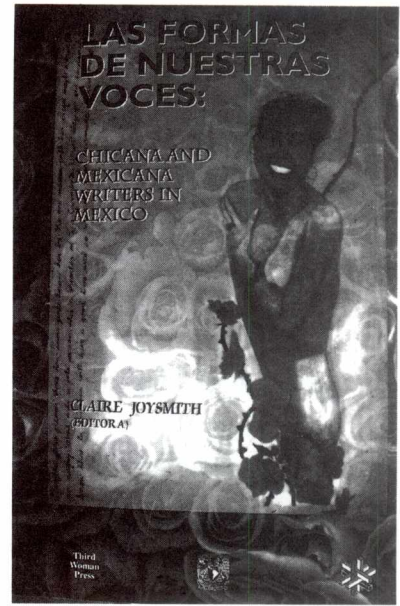
The woman seated on her bed, looking out the window. Leaning on a cane, walking toward the plaza, letting Juan Bautista attend to her, raising her hand to fix her hair, parades the tranquility of a person who has lived and is now awaiting death, the quietness of someone who has thought a thousand times about things that have happened. Someone who is capable of perceiving the distances between one's identity at 20, at 40, at 60... This woman who speaks to a man still young, who looks at her, seeing her then and now, melding these selves into a single whole as he comes to understand her.

A book can sometimes become a place. Reading this book was like entering a comfortable and well-kept room, where I could let myself be and see myself surrounded, not by objects, histories or voices, but by sensations, elusive discoveries between the leaves of my own trees, my own lake, my own history. It was there that I heard, ever so softly, Cova's

brushstrokes in a space, and the agitated breathing of the chronicler in another. I passed through pages and felt the breeze, the rain, night-time in the city....

For quite some time I have been obsessed with the attempt to define what happens to a person's perceptions when he is told a story through the cinema and when he is told a story through literature. I think that what happened to me with this book is the closest approximation to a definition: the story told by a novel places one face to face with the story, inside the story and nowhere else. One dissolves, becoming the very air of the novel. The room which the book turned into each time I read it was empty, and at the same time I became the room where things happened. What things? Not a story I was finding out about. Not a love that I was witnessing, but rather a quality of the world. A way of remembering. A way of being blind, water, rain. I believe that in a film things don't happen that way. Identification is inevitable; letting yourself be invaded by the image, remaining at the very center of the story. It is not that I consider one thing at all better than the other, but simply that in literature we use the memory of what has been lived. An intuitive memory. A flesh memory.

María Luisa Puga
Mexican writer.



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

(The Forms of Our Voices:
Chicana and Mexican Writers in
Mexico)

Claire Joysmith (Editor)

Third Woman Press, CISAN, UNAM
Mexico City, 1995, 350 pp.

BICULTURAL LITERATURE

If literature unveils a mirror to the soul, then this well-edited anthology of writings about and by Chicana and Mexicana authors lays bare an exciting and provocative bicultural literary landscape known by only a privileged few. Based loosely on a conference-encounter of Chicana and Mexicana writers held in Mexico City in June 1993, and organized by the editor, the study encompasses not only the original presentations but selective interviews with some of the participants, additional comments, biographi-

cal notes, an analytical introduction and an extensive bibliography. Moreover, the participants from both countries represent the finest and most accomplished of the literary traditions from which they come. Names such as Elena Poniatowska, Sandra Cisneros, Guadalupe Loaeza and Ana Castillo should ring familiar to many.

Indeed, the dynamics of the interaction among the Chicana and Mexicana participants quickly transcended the original intention of the conference and demonstrated the potential of using Chicana literature as a vehicle to challenge and discuss. The

understanding Chicanas within United States literary history, bilingualism and biculturalism, Mexican literature, as well as society and ethnic groups in the United States. The internationally acclaimed writer Elena Poniatowska suggests, for example, that Chicana writers oblige their Mexican audience to confront the most ancient and primitive of Mexican beliefs through their very different exploration of Mexican culture. Aralia López G., a feminist pioneer in Mexico, embarks on a comparison of Mexicana and Chicana literature, concluding that while the two

*Chicana literature has really emerged
in the last generation, amidst an intense
feminist dialectic.*

conference had been conceived as an effort to create physical and cultural spaces for Mexicana and Chicana writers to interact and explore Chicana literature, but the dialogues among them and with the public quickly established the need of all to explore *mexicanidad* especially in the context of feminism, with all its complexities. *Nuestras voces* successfully and correctly transmits this sense of promise, and lays down some avenues of inquiry.

The volume begins with a series of chapters independent of the conference outlining some broad considerations useful in

genres share many of the same cultural codes, they each find themselves at different points of development. Chicana literature has really emerged in the last generation, amidst an intense feminist dialectic, while its counterpart in Mexico has evolved in a much more traditional environment.

However, Chicana Norma Alarcón confronts uncomfortable areas of divergence between Chicana and Mexicana writers that can function as obstacles, but that can also serve as points of future discussion. Using the tools of a Chicana critic, Alarcón posits herself in the

“interstice between nation-states,” exploring the particular difficulties and challenges she faces as an observer-critic in the United States, and as a Mexican-origin individual in dialogue with Mexican writers with varying degrees of awareness of *mexicanidad* abroad. Yet, as Chicana Ana Castillo notes, the most important task of a woman writer, regardless of nationality or ethnic identification, is to give form to connections among women, with men, or by extension, in this case, between Mexicana and Chicana writers.

The book continues with several articles that analyze individual Chicana authors, successfully balancing the aforementioned essays. Sandra Cisneros, Ana Castillo, Gloria Anzaldúa and Mary Helen Ponce all receive detailed and informative analyses of individual works that illustrate the diversity and richness of Chicana literature. After all, it is only through exploring concrete examples of their work that we can fully appreciate their written creativity.

However, Joysmith rounds out the study with a series of interviews conducted with the participants after the encounter, not just to offer perspectives on what transpired but ironically to analyze the silences also generated by the event. All the participants openly acknowledge that Chicana and Mexicana writers have not had as much contact as they would have liked with each

other, for many reasons. While the physical and cultural spaces created by the colloquium obviously encouraged real communication among the participants, the longstanding contradictions and resentments between Chicanos and Mexican society mostly remained unarticulated and silent. To her credit, Joysmith openly acknowledges the silences and probes their parameters through her inquiries.

The participants identified problems of access to the published literature of both countries, different class and ethnic identification and questions surrounding sexuality. Lack of familiarity with the colonized status of the Chicano community in the context of the United States meant that Mexicans found it difficult to comprehend the reality of being Chicana. Ironically, only by giving form and substance to those silences can critics and writers from both countries fill them and transcend the limitations they impose. Its forthrightness and content make this section of the book provocative, and it clearly shows that a productive transnational cultural and literary inquiry is just beginning.

In any event, the potential for dialogue among Chicana and Mexicana writers is enormous. Once the barriers of national political boundaries and lack of contact are acknowledged, writers and critics from both sides of the United States-Mexican border

can approach a creative deconstruction and reconstruction of *mexicanidad* in a broad multicultural and binational context. *Las formas de nuestras voces* provides a

significant point of departure for such an endeavor.

Barbara Driscoll
 Researcher at CISAN.

REVISTA MEXICANA DE SOCIOLOGÍA

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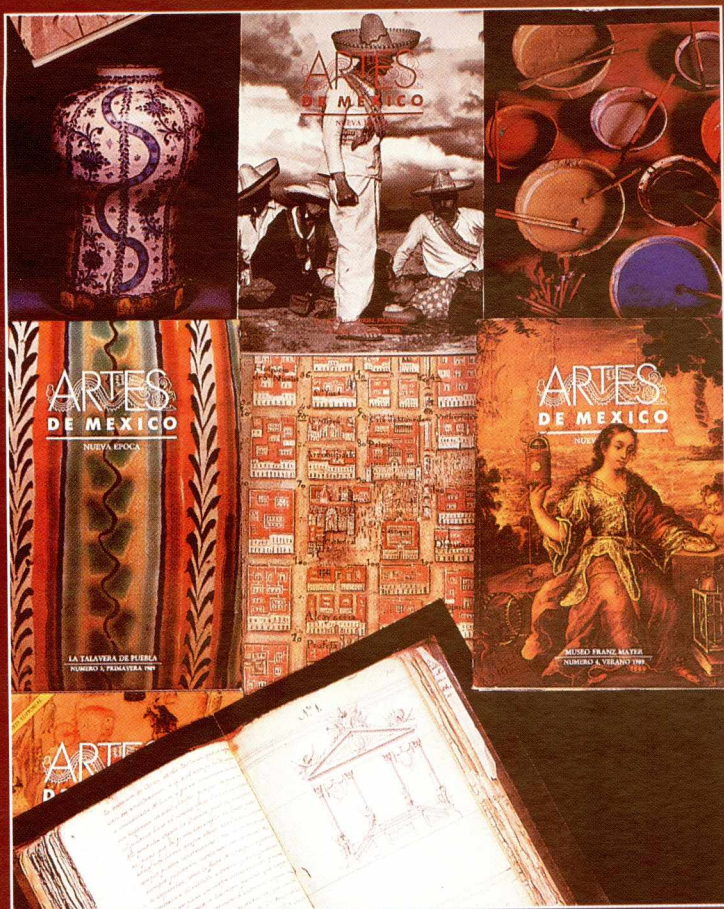
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A silkscreen by Joel Rendón

Hacia un Nuevo Humanismo



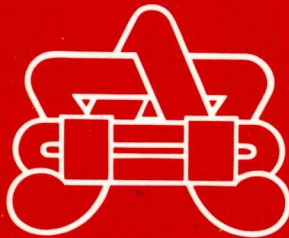
El mural **Hacia un nuevo humanismo** puede ser apreciado en el vestíbulo del **Museo Amparo** y es un ejemplo de la manera en que pueden integrarse los artistas contemporáneos para dar apoyo a la museografía de un centro cultural con colecciones prehispánicas y virreinales de primer orden. Su autor, Pedro Diego Alvarado —nieto del famoso muralista mexicano Diego Rivera— combina elementos prehispánicos, coloniales y contemporáneos que dan forma a la cultura mexicana de nuestros días.

En el mural pueden ser apreciadas recreaciones de ciertas obras de arte que forman parte de las colecciones del **Museo Amparo**. Por ejemplo, en la parte inferior se reproducen una serie de elementos plásticos que ofrecen una idea original de las raíces que han dado vida a nuestra cultura y a nuestra historia. Este segmento del mural fue coronado por su autor con una imagen de Tláloc, deidad de las aguas y la agricultura.

En ambos extremos del mural el visitante del **Museo Amparo** puede ver el surgimiento de dos columnas, una teotihuacana y otra huejotzinga. Estas columnas simbolizan el mestizaje cultural de la sociedad mexicana —la parte indígena; la parte española— y es el marco que da pie a la representación de las dos formas de cultivo que

abastecieron a la sociedad mexicana hasta principios del siglo XX: la coa indígena y el arado.

En el extremo derecho del mural podemos ver cómo emergen las cúpulas múltiples de la Capilla Real de los Indios de Cholula y la pirámide sobre cuya cúspide fue construida



MUSEO AMPARO

Encuentro con Nuestras Raíces

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Horario: 10:00 a 18:00 hrs.

la Iglesia de los Remedios. Esto simboliza el proceso de sincretismo, en este caso religioso y arquitectónico, en el que se fundó la sociedad mestiza. Por otra parte, en el centro de la obra fue recreada la leyenda que atribuye a los ángeles el trazo de la ciudad de Puebla.

Como punto central del mural —y sobre la representación de la sierra cubierta por las nieves— podemos ver una representación simbólica del sol, con sobreposiciones del Calendario Azteca —o Piedra del Sol— y una imagen de la Virgen de Guadalupe. Esta mezcla de elementos prehispánicos y virreinales representa una vez más nuestro sincretismo religioso y cultural.

Por último, en la parte superior de la obra el autor representó estrellas, galaxias y constelaciones —tal y como pueden ser vistas mediante los sofisticados telescopios de nuestros días— utilizando, simultáneamente, la simbología precolombina: la intención de esta parte del mural es mostrar los notables avances astronómicos que alcanzaron los sabios de diversas culturas mesoamericanas y que plasmaron en sus códices, pinturas y esculturas. **Hacia un nuevo humanismo** es un mural que constituye un adelanto de aquello que el visitante encontrará en las diversas salas del **Museo Amparo**, realizado por un artista contemporáneo.