



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

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## About Octavio Paz

Articles by Asiain, Krauze and Zaid

## Response and Reconciliation

A Poem by Octavio Paz

## An Inevitable Disaster Foretold

The 1846-1847 War with the United States


Josefina Zoraida Vázquez

## Silence and the Work of Ricardo Martínez

Rafael Ruiz Harrell





A large, empty auditorium with red seats and stage lights. The text "Because you are the main event" is overlaid in white.

# Because you are the main event



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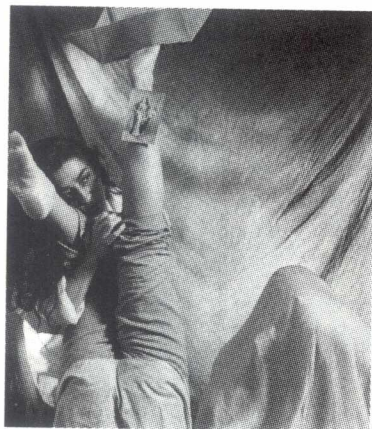
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**Cover:** Ricardo Martínez, *Great Venus*,  
2.10 x 1.75 cm, 1979 (oil on canvas).



# OUR VOICE

Mexico is heavyhearted. It has lost one of its most beloved and lucid voices. The vacuum can already be felt in the international literary community and will undoubtedly be difficult to fill. Mexican literature is wonderfully represented in the extensive works of Octavio Paz. Some voices are silenced and leave no echo, but the voice of Paz defines us, marks us, guides us, resonates within us. Unchallenged in literature, he was always controversial in political milieus, but even his opponents had to recognize his critical vocation, essentially honest and visionary. Somehow, even they had been marked by it.

With Paz, you are grateful to read a line of poetry. You stop, you read it again aloud, and slowly it touches the spirit. I am personally grateful to have had the opportunity of sharing a moment with Paz, at an unforgettable gathering where he read poetry to a small group, talked about which of the Machado, Manuel or Antonio, was a better poet, told fascinating stories about his youth and, in general, showed the exceptional ability to deliciously combine different skills. Undoubtedly Paz was able to do what we all want to do: to never die, to last, to remain.

*Voices of Mexico* could do no less than pay posthumous homage to a Mexican who transcended borders to become a universal citizen.

We include in this issue his last poem, translated by Eliot Weinberger, without a doubt the best interpreter of Paz' poetry in the United States. We also present three articles honoring him by important Paz scholars: Aurelio Asiain, Enrique Krauze and Gabriel Zaid, who, in addition to being well known figures in Mexican cultural circles, were close collaborators and friends of the great poet and thinker.



June 8 was a watershed for the international issue of drug trafficking. The stage of mutual accusations was finally left behind and, at United Nations headquarters, the countries of the world put themselves on the same side to confront their real common enemy. It finally seems feasible to formulate more successful strategies to face this extremely complex, overwhelming problem. If drug trafficking networks are international, the answer to them also must be worldwide. To overcome their differences, the governments must begin by building a common language and set of values on the issue to be able to move ahead in the creation of information networks that allow them to be one step ahead of the criminal syndicates. Of course, this is not easy: sharing information generates tactical vulnerability, putting agents at risk. The battle is not simple: with millions of dollars at stake, it is easy to open up new routes, find different allies, buy protection, blur the lines between the pursuers and the pursued. But with the children and adolescents of the world at risk, our differences must be forgotten, and we must put our best minds to work to design health, social, rehabilitation, sports, educational and punitive policies around this issue that are both



novel and revolutionary. Only in this way, attacking the multiple dimensions of the question within the context of globalization, will we be able to keep up our fighting spirit as we face such a grave challenge.

In today's process of redefinition of the three countries of North America, federalism is an issue of special interest. In Canada, the debate over jurisdiction and the federal and provincial governments dominates political discussion. In the United States today, a new kind of federalism comes into play as President Clinton's decision to return responsibility to the states for social policy restructures the welfare state. In the case of Mexico, the attributions of the federal executive and the state governors are also being redefined.

Jorge Javier Romero delves into the issue in our "Politics" section. Romero proposes new ideas about a question that has always been polemical in a country with a long, solid centralist tradition. Federalism is not the same as administrative decentralization. Transferring real power to the states, says Romero, means not just giving them attributions, but also having an impact on the political culture of the political actors in the regions and, above all, restructuring fiscal policies and making public administration professional. Without a civil service system that appropriately distributes technical and political functions, and without fair distribution of government revenues, attempts at federalist reforms will be condemned to failure, as Mexico's recent past shows. Diverse regional development also requires differentiated solutions appropriate to each situation.

Jesús Silva Herzog Márquez contributes an article about Mexico's political party system, warning that the current one has not been able to fill the ideological vacuums and provide the political proposals a country in search of real pluralism should aspire to. Both the reason behind this and the solution are to be found, he suggests, inside the country's three most important political forces, the Institutional Revolutionary Party, the National Action Party and the Party of the Democratic Revolution, who should all self-critically reformulate their platforms, action programs and alliances. That is to say that even though the doubts about electoral transparency have been dispelled, as the July 6, 1997, balloting shows, the main parties still have a long way to go before they consolidate institutionally. If they do not move in that direction the system runs the risk of breaking down and losing credibility with the voters.

The painting of Ricardo Martínez will never cease to surprise us. As writer Rafael Ruiz Harrel points out, it forces the viewer to look at characters who seem to take on a life of their own beyond the canvas: brilliant colors are born of black; movements within immensity; giant but delicate figures; long and voluptuous features; colossal sensuality. The section "Science, Art and Culture" begins with Ruiz Harrell's article about Martínez, a painter who has made an unquestionable place for himself in the history of Mexican visual arts.

To celebrate the International Day of Dance, María Tarriba has presented us with a lively contribution about one of the most original contemporary dance groups in Mexico: Dance-Theater Utopia, which has achieved international recognition and success, particularly in the United States.

The dissemination of democratic political culture and civic education are two pillars of the consolidation of democracy in Mexico. All efforts directed at children, then, will in the long run result in the education of better citizens. Several Mexican institutions have recently visualized and put into practice an ambitious program to inform and create awareness in the public about children's rights. The first activity they implemented was the children's elections on July 6, 1997. José Luis Gutiérrez describes the objectives and strategies of this unprecedented endeavor.

Anamario Hernández is a promising young Mexican painter who has been invited to exhibit in the United States. We include in this section a short article on her work by Mexican writer Anamari Gomís.

The importance of thinking about and analyzing the phenomenon of economic globalization is beyond question. What is Mexico's role in this new international situation? How is it inserting itself into world markets and what can it expect? How does its proximity to the United States and its being part of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) affect it? All these questions are addressed in our "Economic Issues" section in an article by Carlos González which highlights the advantages and disadvantages of regionalization as a response to global-

ization, which has proven to be segmented and asymmetrical and has brought with it serious risks. Mexico must not forget this if it is to take better advantage of opportunities that present themselves.

We include in our "Society" section a contribution from Gabriel Estrella Valenzuela about projected demographic trends in northern Mexico through the first decade of the new millennium. The economic and political phenomena in the world's most complex border area have had a definitive impact on population dynamics in what is undoubtedly the socially most advanced region of Mexico. However, this economic and population growth has not been accompanied by a corresponding growth of infrastructure. We also present our readers with the thinking of researcher Virginia López Villegas about Mexican women scientists. Her aim is to analyze the gender-linked intersections and mutual impact of women's daily life and scientific activities.

The war of 1847 between the United States and Mexico, far from being a forgotten chapter in history, continues to concern historians and intellectuals from both countries. In her contribution to the "History" section, Josefina Zoraida Vázquez offers us a new reading of the events that 150 years ago definitively marked the destiny of both sides in the conflict.

In the "United States Affairs" section we offer an illustrative article by Elizabeth Gutiérrez on hemisphere-wide free trade. While President Clinton favors integration through a Free Trade Agreement for the Americas, this policy has not moved forward due to opposition from sectors of both the U.S. Congress and the public and the resultant non-authorization of the fast-track mechanism for its implementation. Many studies and research projects have been done on Mexicans and people of Mexican descent resident in the United States. Almost none, in contrast, have been done about U.S. residents in Mexico. Alejandro Mercado Celis has written a stimulating article for this same section, that proposes a research program to study this "other immigration," Americans moving south of the Rio Grande. His particular contribution deals with a case study of the U.S. artisan community in Mexico's state of Jalisco.

Elisa Dávalos presents in the "Canadian Issues" section a comparative analysis of two regional economic blocs that have adopted different "styles" of integration. NAFTA and Mercosur, both regional free trade efforts, have different limits and underlying conceptions. In this same section, we publish a very complete report by Abel Escartín on the development of the Mexico-Canada ministerial meetings, a mechanism for bilateral relations which over its long, fruitful existence, has consistently broadened out the issues, limits and objectives it deals with.

"The Splendor of Mexico" begins with a contribution by Miguel Angel Bahena and Luis Roberto Torres Escalona about the UNAM Central Library, explaining in detail the artistic, symbolic intentions underlying the wonderful murals by Juan O'Gorman that grace the building's four sides.

We have completed this section with a continuation of *Voices of Mexico's* tradition of disseminating the wonderful work of Mexican artisans among the English-speaking public. On this occasion, we include an article about Santa Clara del Cobre, a town in the state of Michoacán, famous for the undisputed beauty of its copper ware, made skillfully and with the singular aesthetic proposal of its local inhabitants.

The monarch butterfly's beauty and extraordinary coloring offer nature lovers a long-awaited spectacle every year in Michoacán and the State of Mexico. Joel Rodríguez Zúñiga and Carlos Hernández offer us articles about its biology and surroundings in the town of Anganguo in this issue's "Ecology" section.

"Museums" is dedicated to the UNAM's El Chopo Museum, the venue for innumerable exhibits and performances that reflect both university and community artistic sensibilities.

Paz Consuelo Márquez Padilla  
Director of CISAN



# Regimen Without a Name

## The Parties after the 1997 Elections

Jesús Silva-Herzog Márquez\*

We still have reason to celebrate the July 1997 elections. After so many senseless, faked, uneven elections, incapable of giving government officials unquestioned legitimacy, the last federal elections are undoubtedly an enormous leap forward. Organized by completely autonomous authorities, the fact that the outcome was anything but a foregone conclusion kept motivation high. Perhaps they were not the first truly authentic elections: there was no really serious controversy about either the 1994 or the 1991 federal races. But, the 1997 elections were the first that satisfied the protagonists. And that is, without a doubt, important.

The balloting changed the country's political map. The National Action Party (PAN) did not fulfill its expectations, but it won new executive responsibilities; the Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) considerably increased its presence nationally and won Mexico City's Federal District, the country's most important city government. The most striking outcome of the elections was that the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) lost the majority in the Chamber of Deputies, opening up a new era in national politics: a time of shared government, or, as they say in the United States, a divided government. With it, the president has lost the automatic support of the legislature and will be forced to patiently negotiate each piece of legislation he requires to promote his policies. With regard to what is most important to the current administra-

tion, economic policy, the 1997 balloting seriously hindered the executive branch. That is the dimension of the public's decision.

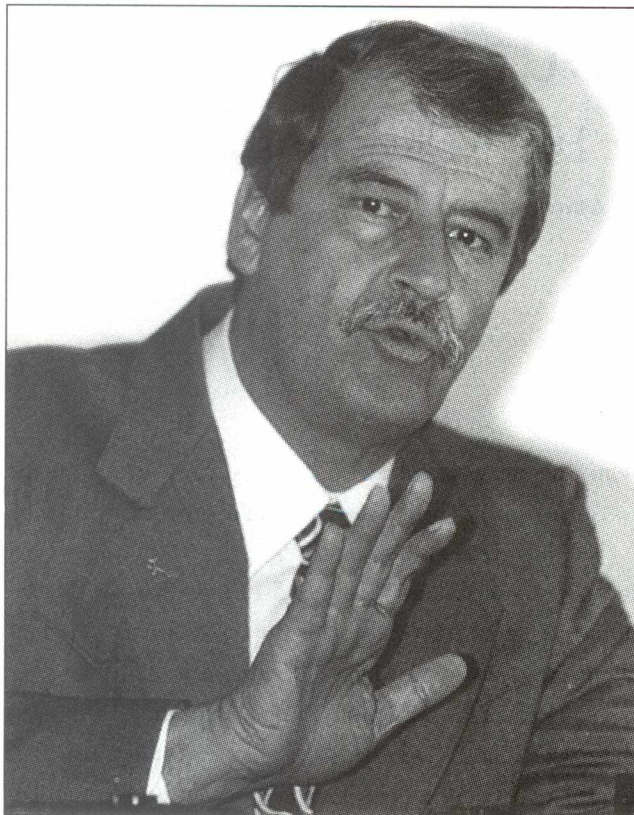
The July elections also finished digging the grave of what Italian political scientist Giovanni Sartori dubbed the "system of the hegemonic party." What Sartori characterized as a non-competitive system, in which different parties exist but alternating in office is unthinkable, did not end instantaneously as those who understand the Mexican transition in dramatic terms had hoped for. PRI hegemony was not broken suddenly; it dissolved, unraveled, little by little. The dissolution of the PRI has been a slow but constant process combining two factors: a drop in votes and the disappearance of the structures that maintained the prevalence of the government party. For at least the last 20 years, these two elements have coalesced: electoral strengthening of the alternatives and fortification of the institutions of impartiality.

If we wanted to put a name to what 1997 began in terms of the rearrangement of political parties, we could call it the *post-*

*hegemonic situation*. The vagueness of the prefix "post" is intentional. I know it is overused. "Neo," "post," "meta": all shortcuts that pompously dress up our ignorance. I think, though, that in this case it is admissible precisely because the new (dis)arrangement of the parties has no name. In effect, what we are certain of pertains to the regimen that is gone, the awareness that the arrangement that was, has stopped existing. But there is no clarity yet about the regimen replacing it because it has not yet been established.

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\* Professor of political science at the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM).



Tomas Bravo / Imagenlatina

Vicente Fox, one of the PAN hopefuls for the year 2000.



Gustavo Graf / Imagenlatina

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas (left) and Andrés Manuel López Obrador (right), two historic leaders of the PRD.

It is important to emphasize that despite  
all their differences,  
the three main parties all  
aim for the center.

We should also emphasize that what is posthegemonic is not a system, but a situation. A system of political parties worthy of the name has not yet been consolidated, that is, a stable, solid, institutionalized arrangement. I would like to make use here of the thinking Spanish political scientist Juan Linz did in the early 1970s about the Brazilian political situation. The Brazilian case, said Linz, was an authoritarian "situation" rather than an authoritarian "regime" in that it lacked the institutionalization required to be a regimen.<sup>1</sup>

As a situation more than a system, the unstable arrangement prevailing in our political parties' activities means that increasing electoral competition is accompanied by a process of de-institutionalization. A system of parties is composed of the relatively stable interplay among parties. The institutionalization of the system consists of the crystallization of those exchanges. Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, who recently published an important book about the party systems in Latin America, say stable electoral rules are essential for institutionalizing party systems.<sup>2</sup> With regard to this, we can point out that while the discussion about electoral norms has cooled down a bit and fundamental agreements have been reached on the orga-

nization of elections, it cannot be said that the cardinal rules of the representative system are either stable or permanent.

One of the central discussions in the second round of democratic reforms will be the possibility of the reelection of legislators. This amendment would strengthen the chain of representation, professionalize the Congress, lay the foundations for the autonomy of the legislative branch and firmly establish the ritual of accountability. It would by no means be a minor change. Quite to the contrary: the possibility of a real parliamentary career would significantly change the composition of legislatures, the political dynamic inside the parties, the meaning of their loyalties and the local or national thrust of political organizations.

The norms defining the framework of the party system are still unstable. But the most important de-institutionalizing factor is uncertainty about the future of the party that used to be the axis of the system. The question mark hanging over the cohesion and electoral chances of the PRI have a definitive impact on the instability of the overall party arrangement. The PRI, still the party with the most votes nationwide, is the most unstable organization of the three main parties. Its crisis could not be more severe: I think we can now say that it is a party



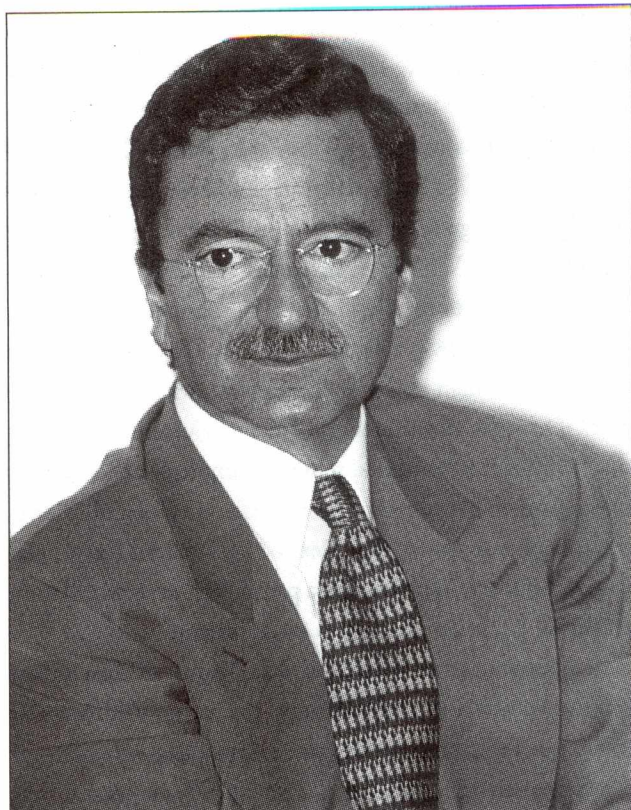


A PRI campaign rally in the race for the governorship of the state of Veracruz, next August 2.

The PRI, still the party with the most votes nationwide, is the most unstable organization of the three main parties.

fighting for survival. The ties that kept it united have been severed. First of all, the guarantee of victory has disappeared. Party discipline was linked to the certainty of victory, to the lack of alternatives. Today, perseverance no longer guarantees access to power at all. The second strand that maintained unity that has been broken is ideological. The PRI can no longer make the government discourse its own, and it seeks programmatic refuge in the past, in the "revolutionary nationalism" that it has once again taken up as a banner in its documents of doctrine. Finally, the last broken tie is arbitration. The presidency—which during the entire existence of the PRI has been the cement holding the party together—is today its main source of discord.

The PRI's future is unclear. It is not even clear that it has a future. What in my judgment is unquestionable is that the heterogeneous mix of interests that came together inside the PRI will only with great difficulty be able to survive intact in the new environment of competition and uncertainty. The absence of strong reformist leaderships in the PRI make it difficult, perhaps impossible, to build a modern, cohesive party. This is seemingly the PRI's last chance for maintaining cohesion at a moment when, for the first time, it is the country's largest minority and



PRI national leader Mariano Palacios Alcocer.

it is also beginning the battle around the presidential nomination. Whatever the outcome, it is clear that the PRI's future will be the determining factor in the recomposition of the Mexican party system.

The sources of uncertainty are many: its ability to manage institutionally, let alone democratically, the internal process of candidate selection for the presidency when Mexico's president has sent his party such mixed signals; the possibility of maintaining internal cohesion when the traditional *priista* program is now what the PRD—a kind of refounded PRI—is offering; the repercussions of a defeat in the presidential race three years from now.

The PRI's fragility puts the entire party arrangement in question. The fate of the old hegemonic party will mark the future of the party system. It will decide, in the first place, the very components of the system. If today we can see that its basic structure is like an unstable tripod, a precarious tri-partisan regimen that includes a couple of minor parties,<sup>3</sup> the decomposition of the PRI would stimulate the creation of new political organizations. We can say that, despite all the efforts of the large national parties to avoid the formation of new political organizations, the map of political parties is still incomplete.



The *posthegemonic situation* we are experiencing is also marked by an identity crisis in all the political parties. The incursion into the terrain of competition prevents these organizations from continuing as they were before. The PRI will have to get used to being a part of the whole, not its synthesis. The PAN is going through a not-very-hidden war for the soul of the party. With a very heterodox candidate already openly campaigning for the presidency of the nation,<sup>4</sup> the thinking of PAN national leader Felipe Calderón Hinojosa, becomes more relevant than ever: win the election without losing the party. The political withdrawal of its most lucid ideologue left this traditional organization somewhat unprepared.<sup>5</sup> The PRD, for its part, will have to process the responsibilities of victory: exercising the government in Mexico City's Federal District and in the Chamber of Deputies. For a party which has emerged from a "victim" tradition, the leap is extraordinary.

It is important to emphasize that despite all their differences of vocabularies and traditions, the parties that form this tripod aim for the center: they all have programs with ambiguous formulations but aims that are essentially centrist. A clear spirit of moderation is perceivable in all three large national parties. In the case of the PAN, this goal was the express slogan of its national leader when he made the bid to head up the party: a march toward the center. Responsibility in holding public office is smoothing the anti-system thorns of the PRD. The growing competitiveness of our electoral system is pushing the parties toward pragmatism, some might say cynicism. And they may be right. In any case, the parties are abandoning the extremes of the spectrum and are making the center their ideal home.

This magnet at the center of the political spectrum turns our *posthegemonic situation* into a situation of moderate pluralism: three important parties that need to come to an agreement to make the legislature function. It is a moderate pluralism in which, if the dynamic of polarization can be overcome, it is possible to conceive of a strategy of ad hoc legislative agreements or flexible alliances based on each piece of legislation.

But, beyond the extinction of extremism in Mexico's party organizations, we can also see an important division with regard to the degree of institutionalization of this *posthegemonic situation*. Many efforts have been made to classify the parties and party systems: cadre parties and mass parties; ideological and pragmatic parties; parties of the left, center and right; bipartisan and multipartisan systems; competitive and non-competitive sys-

tems; polarized and moderate systems. The political map now being drawn in Mexico shows two clearly differentiated territories: the area of institutionalized parties and that of non-institutionalized parties.

In the first area we find a relatively institutionalized threesome: the PRI, the PAN, the PRD. The other area is occupied by parties which lack the most elemental foundations of institutionality. We can all level many criticisms at the three large parties. It is, in fact, one of our favorite sports. However, clearly we are dealing with national institutions, structures with relative organizational solidity and a certain ideological coherence. But, the other area is filled with a band of parties that—with no intention to insult—we could call banana-republic parties. They are personalist organizations with wobbly, gelatinous structures, unable to sink roots in Mexican society, built around either doctrine carved in stone or an ideology that changes with the wind. The success of the Green Party (PVEM), an organization that in the last federal election ran a despicable campaign,<sup>6</sup> a front group with an infantile political program and an organization built around nepotism, is proof that in the times of video-politics, unfortunately, these banana-republic parties have a future.

Finally, it is clear that the future of the party system, the nature of its future institutionalization, are key elements for the quality of the democratic system, and in particular for the possibilities of pluralist governability. The ability to govern in presidential systems depends to a great extent on their party structure. In that sense, it should be noted that the splintering of the vote would minimize the possibilities of having an effective government. The future of this constitutional arrangement, then, depends to a large degree on the party system. **MM**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Juan J. Linz, "The Future of an Authoritarian Situation or the Institutionalization of an Authoritarian Regime," in Alfred Stepan, *Authoritarian Brazil. Origins, Policies and Future* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973).

<sup>2</sup> Scott Mainwaring and Timothy Scully, *Building Democratic Institutions. Party Systems in Latin America* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995).

<sup>3</sup> The two minor parties are the Labor Party (PT) and the Green Ecologist Party of Mexico (PVEM). [Editor's Note.]

<sup>4</sup> The author refers to Vicente Fox, current governor of the state of Guanajuato, a politician whose unconventional image has made him very popular, who began campaigning for the nomination without first getting the agreement of his national leadership. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>5</sup> The author refers to Carlos Castillo Peraza, the losing 1997 PAN candidate for the mayor's seat in Mexico City, who recently resigned from the party "to go back into academic life," actually because his defeat weakened his influence in the party. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>6</sup> The PVEM campaign, based on the slogan "Don't vote for a politician; vote for an ecologist," netted them almost 7 percent of the vote in Mexico City. [Editor's Note.]



# Federalism and the Reform of the State

Jorge Javier Romero\*

If one topic in today's political discussion has been a recurring theme in Mexican history, it is federalism. The formation of the nation has been crisscrossed by tension between Mexico's center and its regions in their struggle to define spheres of power and the distribution of resources. From the nineteenth century on, the discussion has come up time and time again, usually at moments of redefinition of national equilibria.

The issue of centralism/federalism is first and foremost a political question. Throughout the history of Mexico as an independent country, constant tension between the centrifugal and centripetal forces expressed the struggle between regional political entrepreneurs<sup>1</sup> and those who wanted to base their power on national unity of greater scope. Nineteenth century centralists and federalists both attempted to find formulas that would allow them to master the enormous diversity of individual intermediations existent in a rural society where exclusive rights had prevailed for centuries. The construction of a national state with certain cohesion required hitting on a political for-

mula capable of subjecting the different expressions of a complex society to a single authority and a homogeneous legal system. Some believed that the solution would be found in the unifying state modeled after the Bourbons;<sup>2</sup> others looked to

the U.S. constitutional model. In the end, neither one nor the other got the upper hand. While state unity was achieved solely under the unifying hand of a *caudillo*, or strongman, it was also only possible thanks to the existence of pacts and compromises with private groups and their agents, the local political entrepreneurs. The most evident expression of this compromise —its inverted mirror image— was an expressly federal constitution, but a political dynamic that in reality revolved around the centralization under an authoritarian president.

The postrevolutionary government, with corrections and additions, reproduced the compromise formula of the *Porfiriato* (the 30-year regime of Porfirio Díaz).<sup>3</sup> Stability was attained only once a political

pact had been achieved between the different regional operators and those who had managed to occupy the never-more-appropriately-named national political center. Once again, the result was a complex system of mechanisms for the central power —embodied in the presidency— to keep local politi-

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academia,  
businessmen,  
the public in general.

\* Professor-researcher at the Politics and Culture Department of the Autonomous Metropolitan University, Xochimilco campus.

cians in line. Finally, what was born as a pact among local *caudillos* ended up becoming the formula whereby governors were designated from the center.

But local politics never disappeared. Just like during the *Porfiriato*, and even more intensely, the local political classes used elections to test the changes in the balance of forces in each state and to try to advance their particular interests under the existing rules of the game.

The fact is that both local politics and local political entrepreneurs exist, and they have used formal federal institutions to stay in circulation. Even though since the Cárdenas administration in the 1930s the center began to decide who would be state governor, the local dimension of politics was very important for including political personnel in the network of subjection to regime discipline. Thus, not everything has been centralist, since the federal structure of the state played an important role in the more general stabilization of the system as a whole.

But equilibrium depended on the the central power's ability to discipline the local political classes. This was possible thanks to the fact that the final results of the political process could be controlled from the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore local policy-making was always subordinate to the general outlines drawn at the center.

The spread of federal administrative agencies completed the control mechanisms of what has euphemistically been called "The Federation." The central government controlled the country by controlling income,<sup>4</sup> one of the most important mechanisms for maintaining discipline in the closed, motley coalition that came to power after the Revolution. As a result, the states and municipalities ended up with practically no source of income of their own and their very survival depended on political loyalty to the governor or the president.

From the mid-1970s on, national political leaders have made different attempts to initiate programs that would tend

to increase local government participation in some areas of politics traditionally dominated by the center, particularly after the 1985 Mexico City earthquake made it clear that centralization was going to end up suffocating us. From then on, the discussion about how to break the centripetal inertia that has concentrated much of the country's vitality in the capital has gone from the idea of administrative decentralization to the rediscovery that Mexico is formally a federal republic and that it is within that structure that one of the main evils of our eventful development can be reversed. The 1985 earthquake briefly became the symbol of the evils of extreme centralism and reminded everyone of the presidential promise to foster the decentralization of national life.

The problem of the inefficiencies of centralism was then attacked bureaucratically, with a monopolistic political regime in mind. It was thought that it was enough to decentralize federal agencies and transfer a few of them to local government, without changing the system of jurisdictions among what has —again very graphically— been called levels of government.<sup>5</sup> But decentralization is not federalization.

Today, once again a moment of new definitions, a series of economic and political factors (stagnation of the economy, uneven development, government overload, growth of the federal bureaucracy, a new role for political parties), lead the centralism that has characterized Mexico to be questioned more and more from different fronts: political parties, academia, business-

men, the public in general. The need dictated by reality to decentralize and in this way approximate the federal model delineated by the Constitution has been part of the nationwide debate for both political and economic reasons.

The problem we are faced with today is that local political classes do exist. They always have, but the center can no longer keep them in line, basically because the monopolistic way in which the coalition in power operated for 60 years has been

The fact that the old monopolistic power coalition can no longer guarantee post factum control of electoral results leads to an enormous change in local political incentives, and, therefore, haggling around questions of local positions of power has sharpened since the middle of the 1980s.



shattered. Therefore, formal relationships must be rebuilt between national and local powers. The fact that the old monopolistic power coalition can no longer guarantee post factum control of electoral results<sup>6</sup> leads to an enormous change in local political incentives, and, therefore, haggling around questions of local positions of power has sharpened since the middle of the 1980s.

As often happens with fashionable issues in Mexico, it was the president who got everyone talking about "the new federalism" at the beginning of his administration. However, as anyone could have predicted, all the content was taken out of this very serious topic, which requires real, profound solutions, since it is one of the main remaining unresolved items in our history: the debt to national diversity and heterogeneity, the central axis, in short, of the issue of federalism.

In the meeting to discuss the question in Guadalajara in March 1995, organized by a broad spectrum of academic institutions, including several from abroad, President Zedillo seemed to open a Pandora's box full of political demands dormant for decades in different states around the country. On that occasion, the president himself said,

Centralism is the seed of authoritarian and arrogant verticalism that clashes with the unfolding of democracy and public participation [and that] blocks the balanced evolution of the country's different regions by concentrating resources and wealth, opportunities and initiatives, decisions and stimuli. Today in Mexico, centralism is oppressive and retrograde, socially insensitive and inefficient.<sup>7</sup>

While the president's analysis seemed to be the beginning of an authentic political determination to change existing inertia, the truth is that since then the question began to take on the rhetorical tone that often accompanies grand presidential statements under each administration, and little by little the

issue was relegated to the back burner as other topics which seemed more important, or at least more urgent, surfaced. In the best of cases, the measures adopted did not even surpass the already outmoded decentralizing vision, and never went to the heart of the matter: federalism is necessary because the country is diverse and unequal and different solutions are required for specific problems. It was never fully accepted that federalism means, above all, the ability of the states to use their resources freely to meet the specific challenges that they all come up against in the course of their development.

In the time since the president's speech in Guadalajara more than three years ago, the political process has made it clear that it is not enough to decentralize, but that what is needed is a new framework of relations between the central and regional powers. The pluralism that increases with almost every new election<sup>8</sup> makes

it clear that the pyramid-shaped power relations that existed for years in Mexican politics have been swept away. Today, more and more frequently, the governor or the mayor owe their posts to the public and not to a superior, and therefore the main pressure for changing the relationship emanates from politics itself.

But the problem has yet another dimension. For many years, the prevailing criteria was the concentration of prerogatives in the central power with the express purpose of turning the federal government into the driving force of development. That is why the federal bureaucracy expanded so much that it ended up drowning

local initiative since resources and policy design depended exclusively on the center. Local power structures thus were reduced to little more than mechanisms for politicians' staying in circulation or rules to discipline the local political classes through the distribution of state revenues.

Today it is clear that decentralization conceived as a bureaucratic procedure has failed and that true federalization of national political life is what is required, which in our time

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means the exact opposite of what it did 40 years ago. However, the current government has not dared to attack the question of the federal jurisdictional framework head on, particularly in fiscal matters, where the key to the question lies. In the last analysis, the issue has been thrown into that jumbled bin of political negotiations labeled with the highfalutin name of Reform of the State.

The state governments, by contrast, lack the imagination and the capability to take on the question responsibly. This is because, while it is true in theory that the state governments could much more effectively do enormous amounts of what until now has been done by the center, in reality what we discover is local public administrations much more fraught with partisanship and less technically able to assume new responsibilities.

Education and health are beginning to come under state jurisdiction, but state governments still lack their own funding mechanisms and continue to depend on the resources they negotiate with the central government; very often they are responsible for carrying out a task but have no funds to do so. The idea is not, then, to simply transfer a series of prerogatives to the states, but also to make sure they have the capability of obtaining the resources that will allow them to finance them.

But the issue becomes more complicated if we take into account the nation's enormous diversity and heterogeneity, which implies the states' differing capacities to take on new jurisdictional responsibilities and collect taxes. Not all the states will be able to assume all the prerogatives that up until now have been withheld from them. This is why an effective central government must continue to exist, to serve as a compensatory, redistributive mechanism of inter-regional solidarity.

However, this necessity faces formidable obstacles that go beyond the simple determination to carry out reforms and require a complex process of elaboration, combined with a technical design rooted in accumulated political experience, in order to overcome the enormous difficulties embodied in the process.

In the first place, the prevailing notion that tends to deal with federalism in terms of attributions and sovereignties to the exclusion of important aspects of the economic and administrative situation of local governments must be overcome. In the second place, the decentralizing schemes implemented up until now have been promoted from the center with little or no participation by the bodies at which they have been directed.

In the third place, the attempts to decentralize have become general homogeneous lines of action, that do not take into account the diversity and heterogeneity of the states in which they must be applied. In the fourth place, these attempts have met with a series of obstacles born of centralism itself: the absence of physical, institutional and human infrastructure, in short, a vacuum of capabilities. Finally, the opposition of the old local power structures must be taken into account: far from being interested in an authentic process of decentralization, they actively strive to preserve their privileges obtained under the centralist regime.

In addition to all of this, we must consider the fact that a patrimonial idea of what is public persists at the state level and undoubtedly will hinder any attempt to build an authentic federal regimen. Democratization of local politics will contribute to lessening the problem, but every state urgently needs to advance in the construction of professional public administrations with criteria for hiring, promotions and tenure based on technical ability and not political considerations. This will make it possible for the desired efficiency of real federalism to become fact and contribute to improving the lives of flesh and blood Mexicans. This is not a minor matter, and it gives us an idea of the colossal task of going beyond rhetoric to carry out a genuine reform of the state. **MM**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The author uses the term "political entrepreneur" in the sense of political operator, as coined by Douglas North in his book *Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). [Translator's Note.]

<sup>2</sup> The state of the Spanish Bourbons was extremely centralized and concentrated all decisions in the hands of a single man, the monarch. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>3</sup> The Porfirio Díaz dictatorship (1871-1911) was characterized by a power formula in which the dictator named governors after negotiating with local political forces. Formal elections were held, but they functioned as a legitimizing mechanism and were never open to real political competition. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>4</sup> That is, taxes and all other revenues accruing to public coffers. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>5</sup> In Mexico, political power is distributed on three levels, according to the country's political geography. Each of three levels—federal, state and municipal—supposedly has its own functions and attributions. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>6</sup> The author is referring to the electoral fraud in favor of the PRI, repeatedly denounced by the opposition at least until 1988.

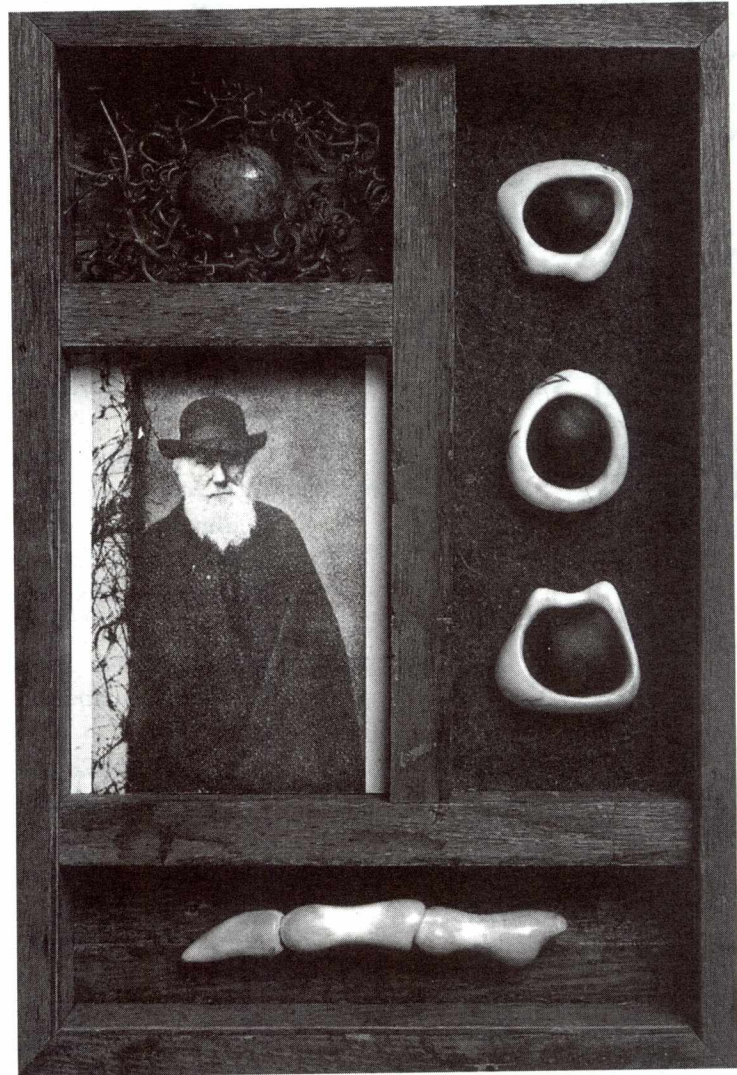
<sup>7</sup> Stenographic version of the president's speech, distributed at the conference (March 1995).

<sup>8</sup> One example of this is that, today, seven states and almost 400 municipalities, among them almost half the state capitals, are governed by the opposition. [Editor's Note.]



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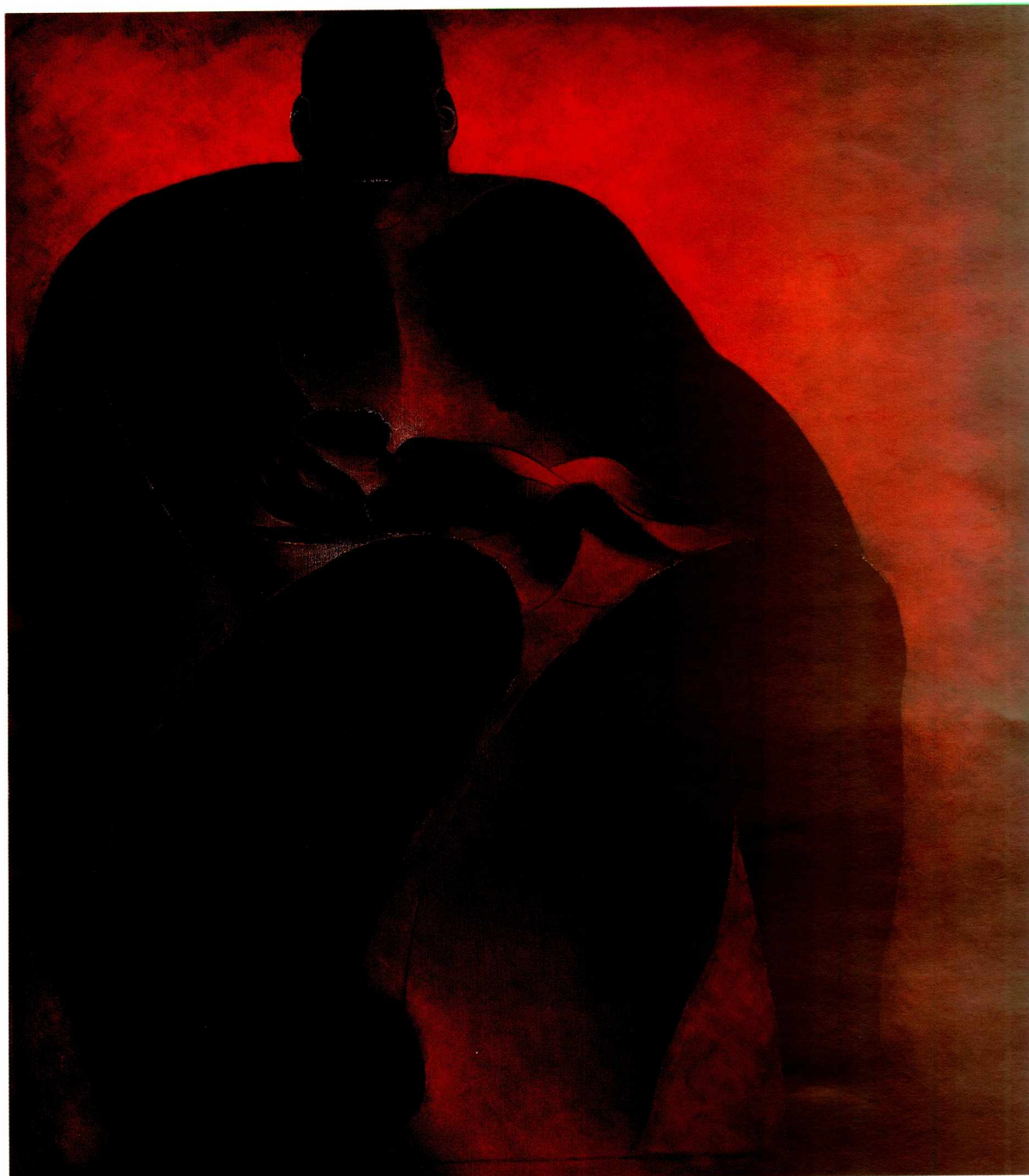
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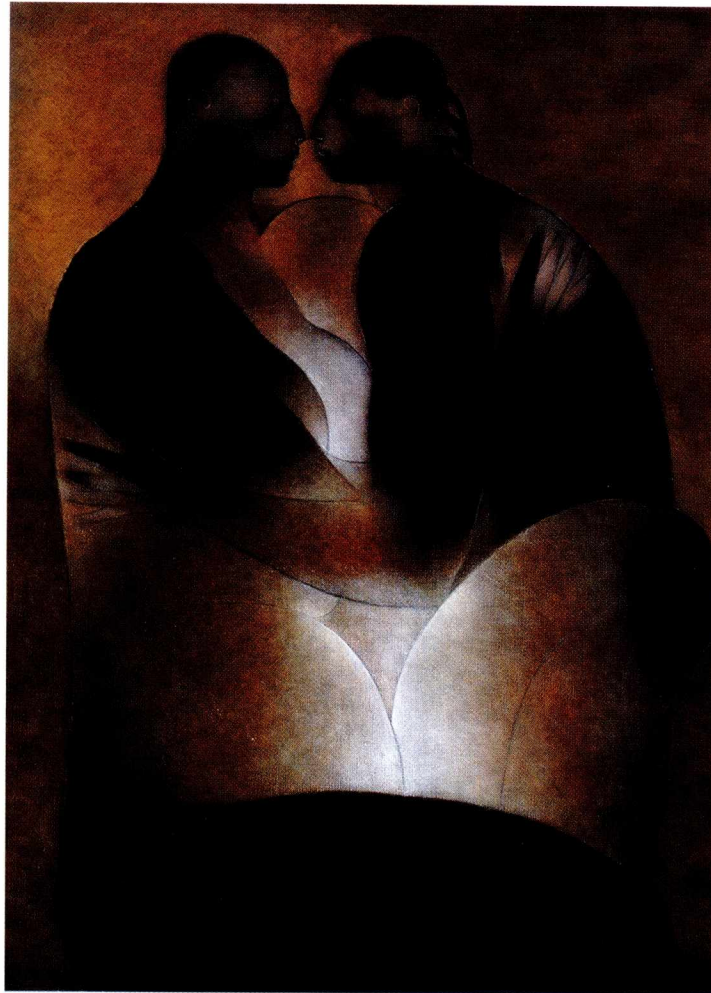


*Man with Boy*, 2.00 x 1.75 cm, 1994 (oil on canvas).

Silence and the Work of  
**RICARDO MARTÍNEZ**

*Rafael Ruiz Harrell\**

\* Mexican writer and art critic.



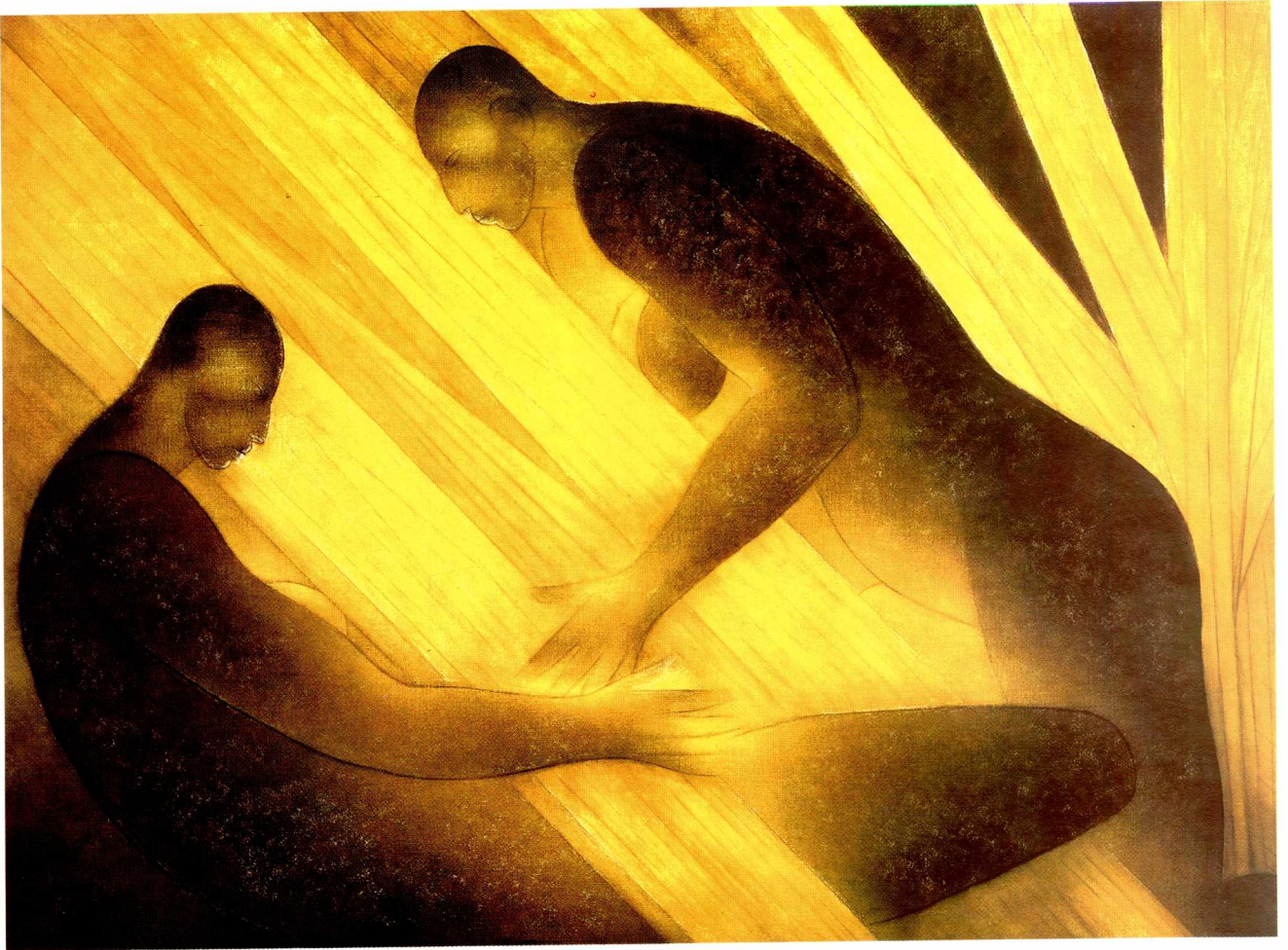
Photos by Cuauhtli Gutiérrez

*Lovers*, 2.00 x 1.45 cm, 1989 (oil on canvas).

Your first impression, when you see it, is that it has a secret. Something secret and sacred, humanly sacred. Or, perhaps something sort of old and terrible that forces everyone who goes to exhibits of Ricardo Martínez' work to speak in hushed tones, in whispers.

Doing that is recognizing yourself as an intruder. You are admitting that suddenly you are in a different world, a world where color has volume and weight and where light follows other rules. Here, everything is gigantic, larger than time: none of these figures, these men and women, really fit on the painting that



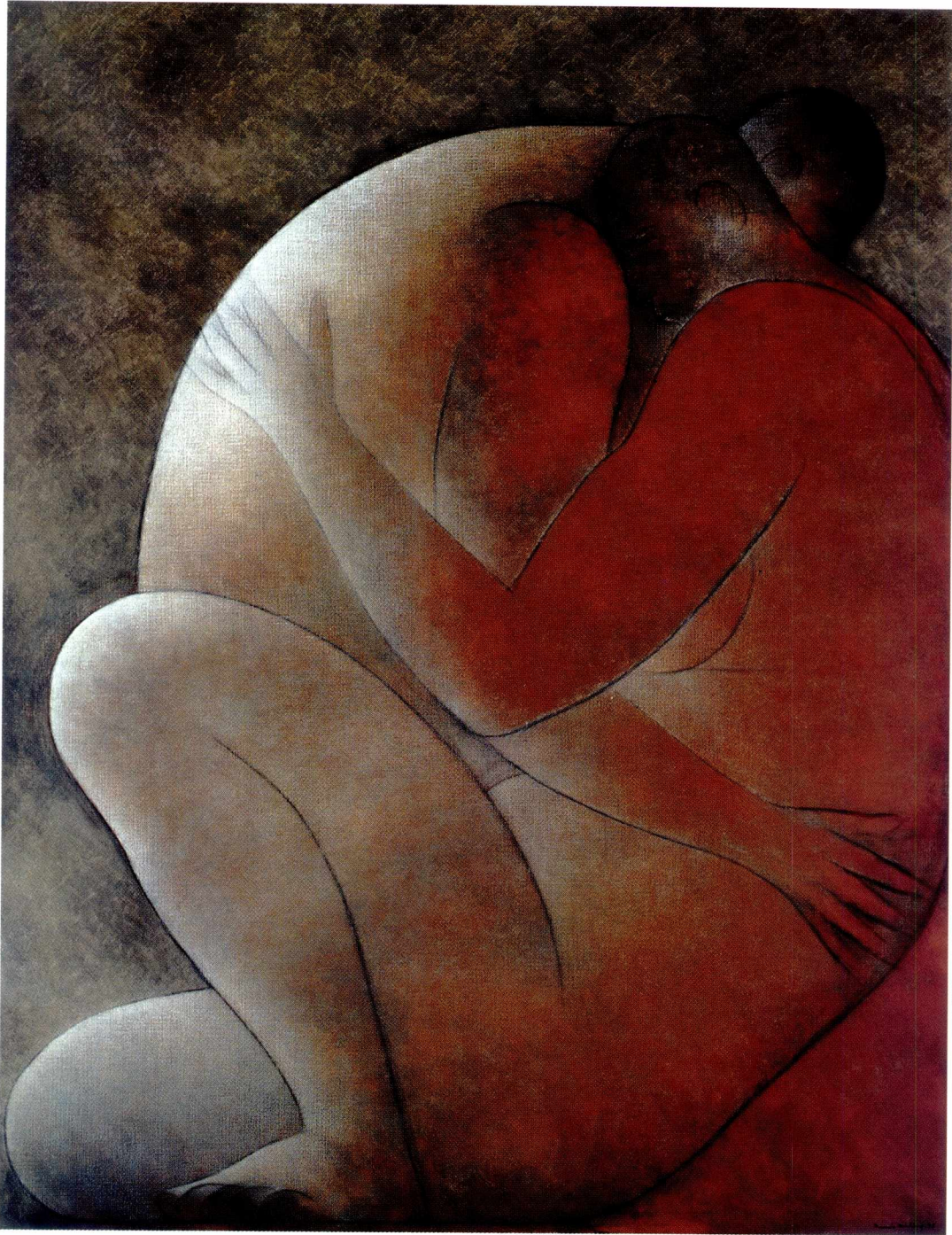


*Untitled*, 1.50 x 2.00 cm, 1995 (oil on canvas).



*Untitled*, 1.75 x 2.00 cm, 1995 (oil on canvas).





*Untitled*, 2.00 x 1.50 cm, 1995 (oil on canvas).

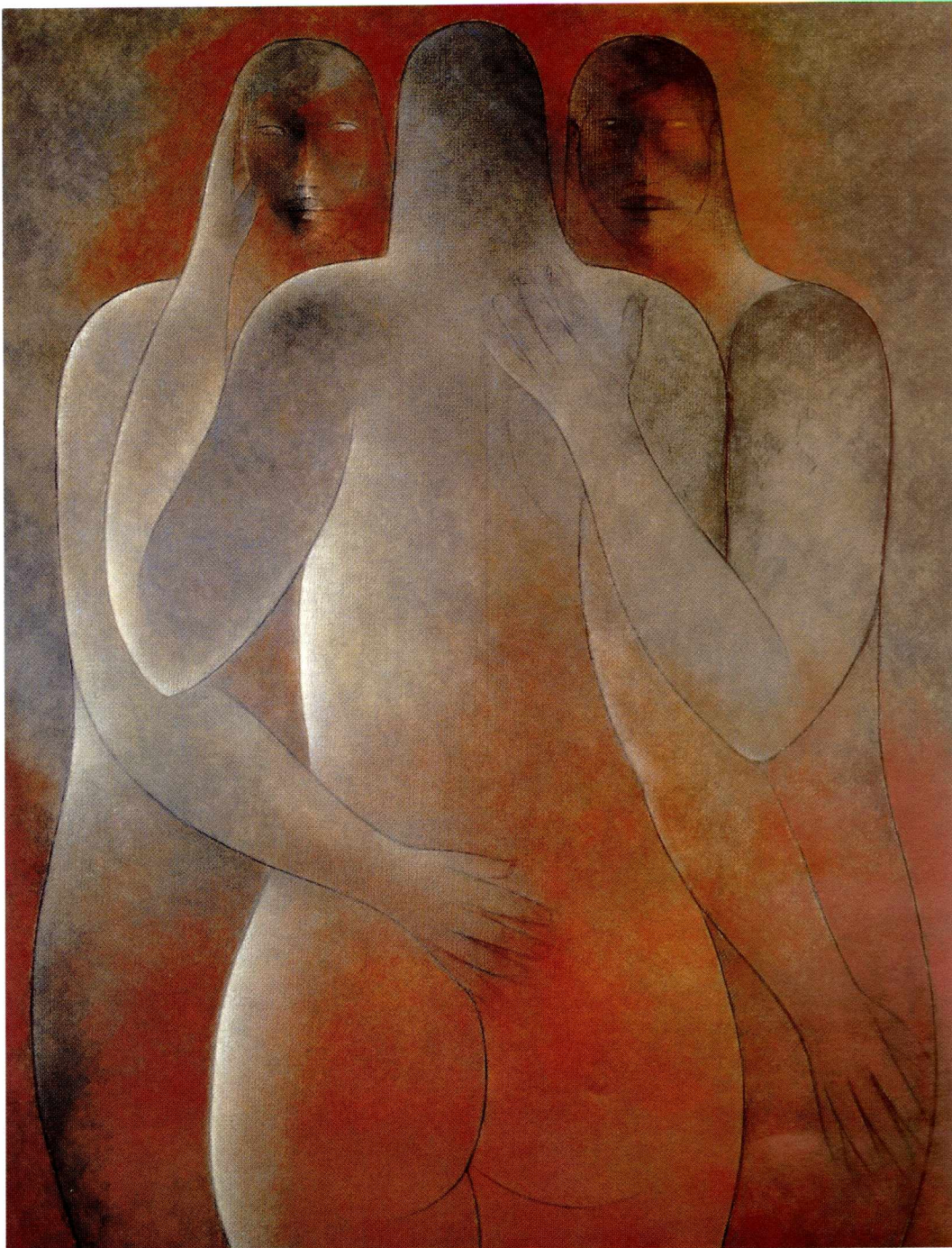
holds them since, a moment later, just by shaking off their lethargy, turning their faces, getting up, they will demand other dimensions of the universe.

In the long run it is useless, but you cannot let yourself be carried away with-

out a murmur. You have to make an effort and remember that this is just painting, oils on canvas. You have to get so close that you can only see the details, trying to find the brush stroke or the mark of the palette knife, the details that can bring

us back to reality. It is, I repeat, useless. Yes. They are oils. It is painting; it is canvas. But there is so much experience in handling the materials, such a splendid delight in the minute creation of each tone. Look: it is art made with such wis-





*Three figures, 2.00 x 1.50 cm, 1996 (oil on canvas).*

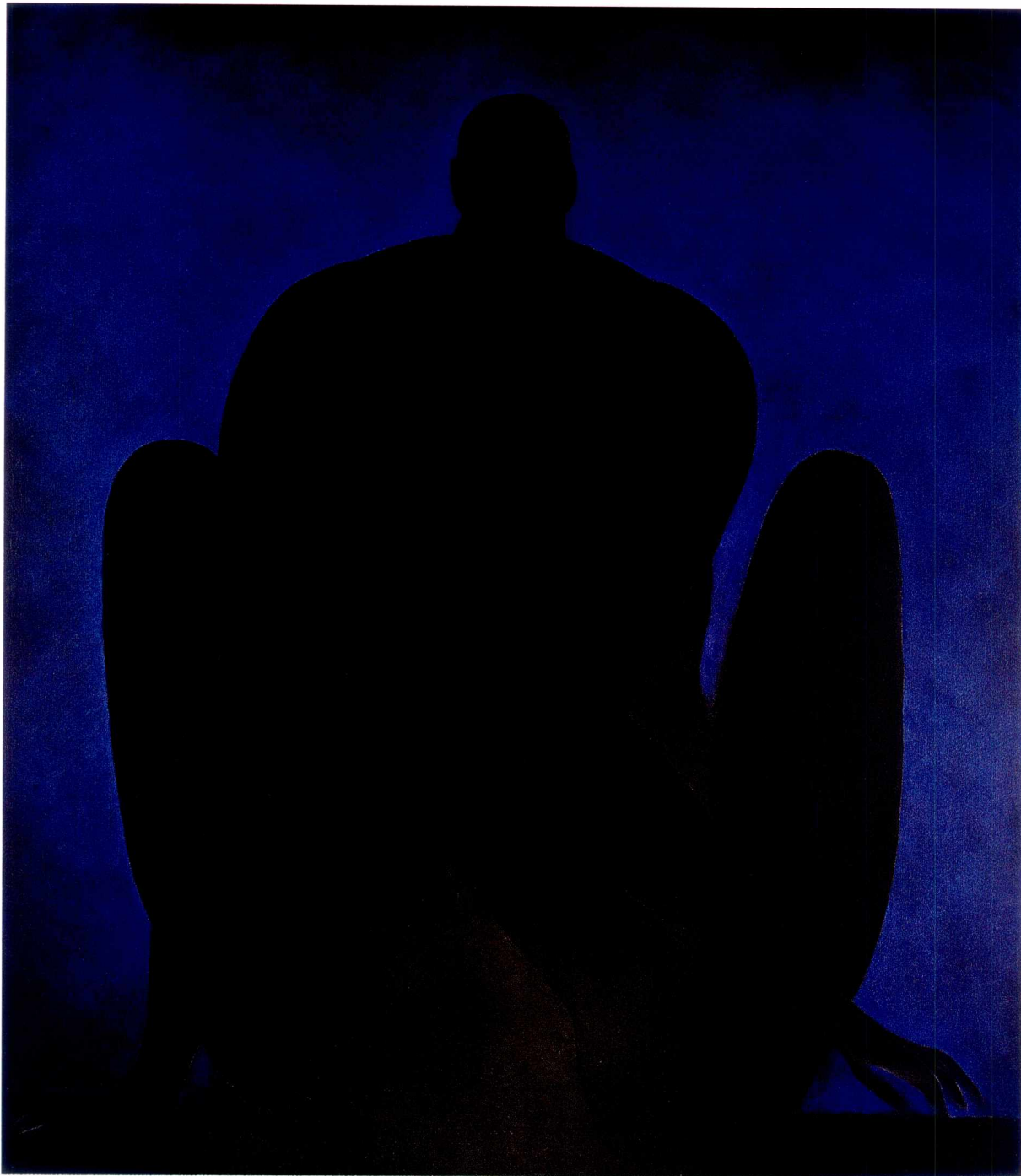
dom that the paintings of Ricardo Martínez, even at a myopic distance, do not seem painted: the color and the forms grew there, were born there, naturally. There are very violent clouds that decided to rest here a while. There are blue and

yellow, green fires that the eye's alchemy turns into gold. There are weightless lands, luminous siennas, cold reds. And there is, above all, a new light, a light that is only sometimes the sister of our everyday light, that is fascinated by creating

overall shapes, by giving weight to thighs and breasts, by becoming words or by disintegrating, liquid, in your hands.

Almost without wanting to, without trying, the carefully chosen model for the drawing is revealed. Everything is spare:





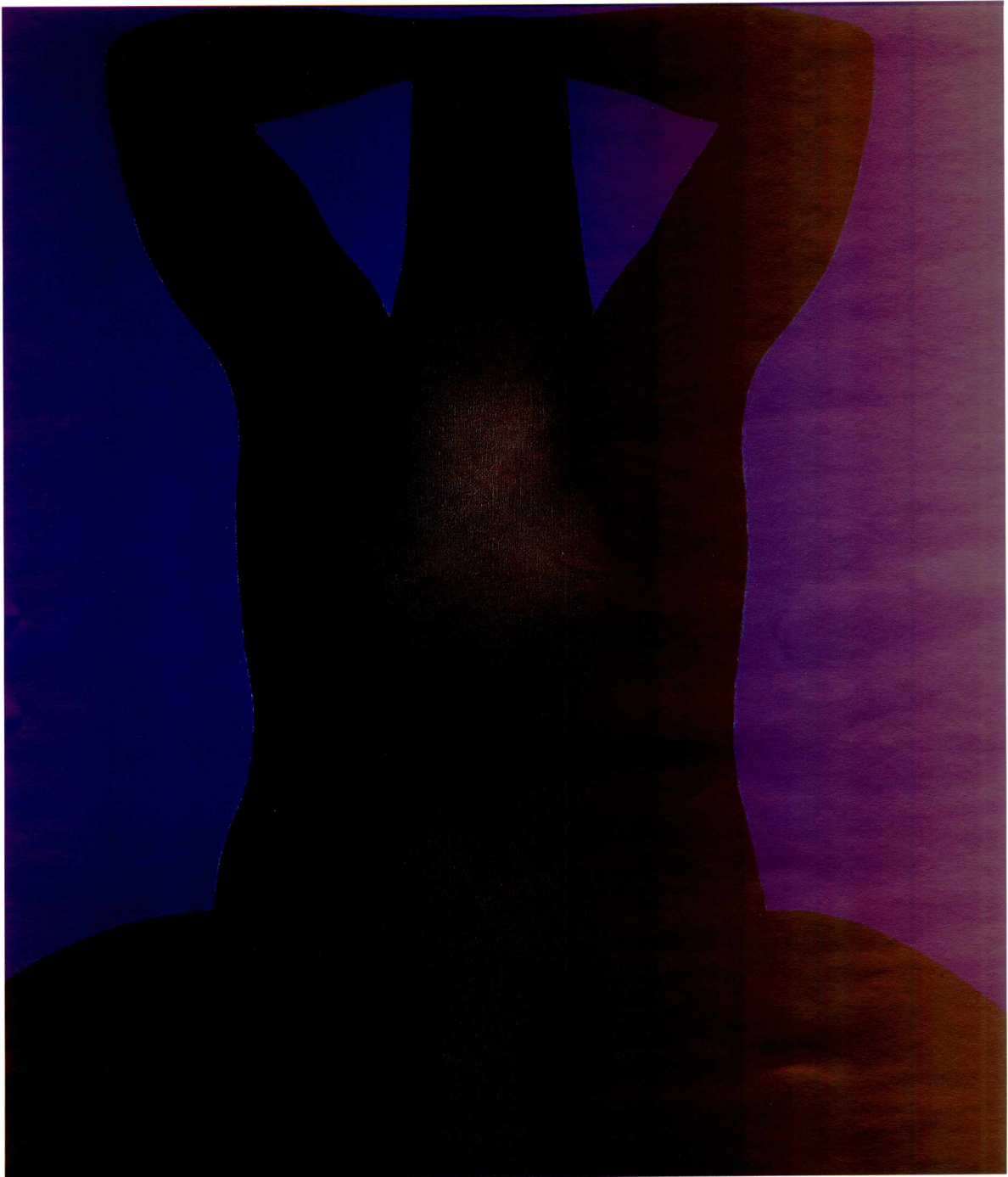
*Figure with Blue Background*, 2.00 x 1.75 cm, 1985 (oil on canvas).

there is no superfluous line, no needless shadow, and each stroke is so rigorous, has been subjected to such merciless severity, that everything is necessary: no figure, no gesture, no position could be anything but precisely what it is in the

work of Ricardo Martínez. That is, perhaps, the basis of its taut transparency and, also that any unthought-out movement of his figures would suffice to shatter the order than makes them possible.

Composition, color, drawing. It is said that that is what painting consists of and nothing more should be sought. Standing before the paintings of Ricardo Martínez, however, something else happens, something that cannot be com-



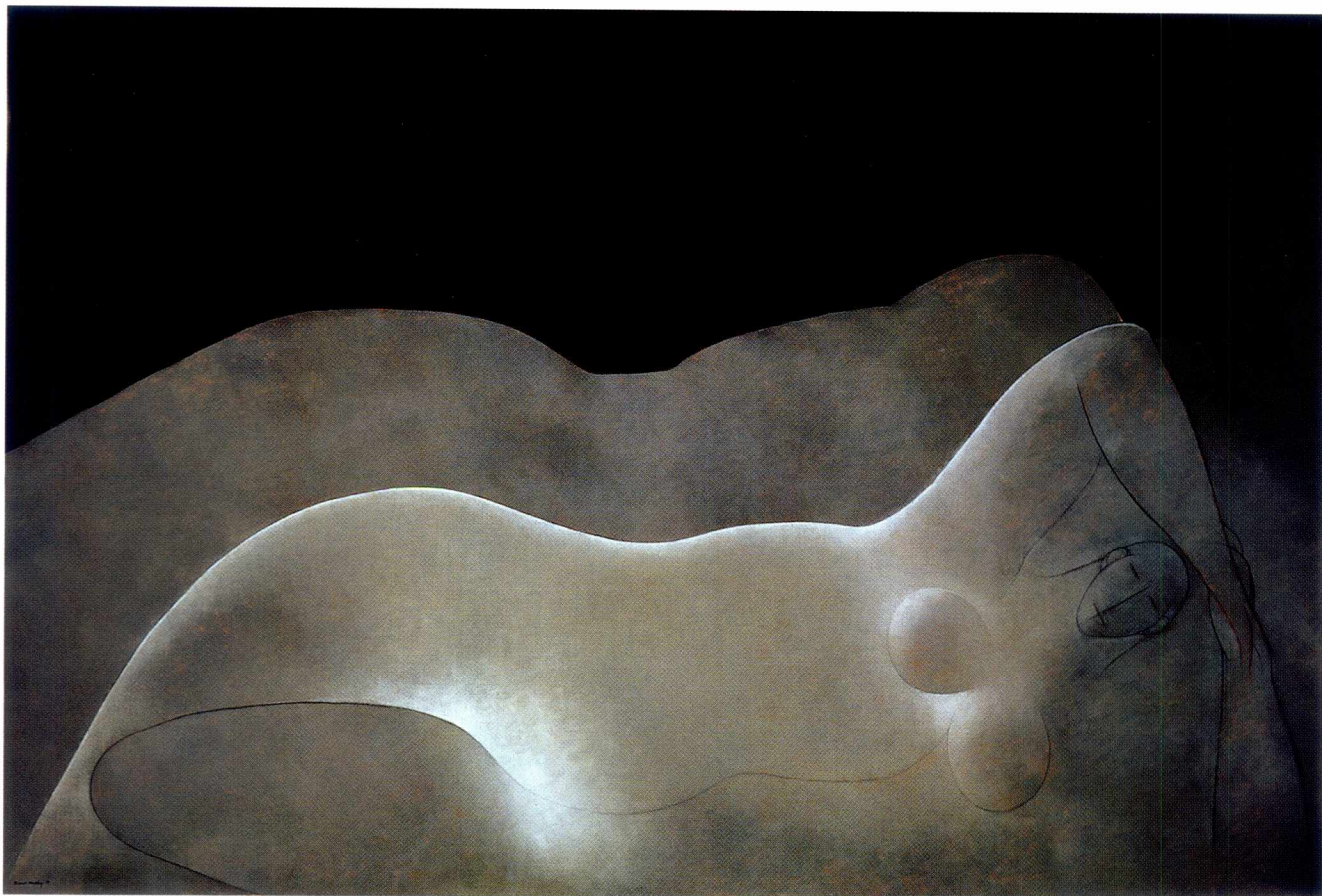


*Untitled*, 2.10 x 1.80 cm, 1995 (oil on canvas).

pletely seen, even if everything is open and fresh to the eye. The silence explains it again: you speak in whispers, close to the ear, very low, because for some mad reason you want to also hear Ricardo Martínez' paintings. Those men who look

at us from other times are trying to tell us something. His mysterious, straight-backed women hear something that has been heard by no one else but them. There is something here that is enormously important, important for us, for

the life of each of us, in the glance, the gesture, the tenderness of the mother who becomes a sea shell to clothe her son; in the yellow anger of this god who upbraids us for something; in the closed-in roundness of the couple made one by an embrace;



*Couple*, 2.00 x 3.00 cm, 1974 (oil on canvas).

in the luminous oracle of the wizard who rules over the fire; in the rotund voluptuousness of these Venuses, born before the invention of modesty or sin.

It is said that the paintings of Ricardo Martínez show pre-Columbian influence and, yes, there are faces of an Olmec finish, positions reminiscent of that of the Chac Mol. But these beings are even older: their colossal volumes are those of the first, or the last, men on the face of the Earth. They are contemporaries of the first fire or the last fire to be lit on the planet and here, in these paintings, through the magic of color, composition, drawing, without losing the nostalgia for their

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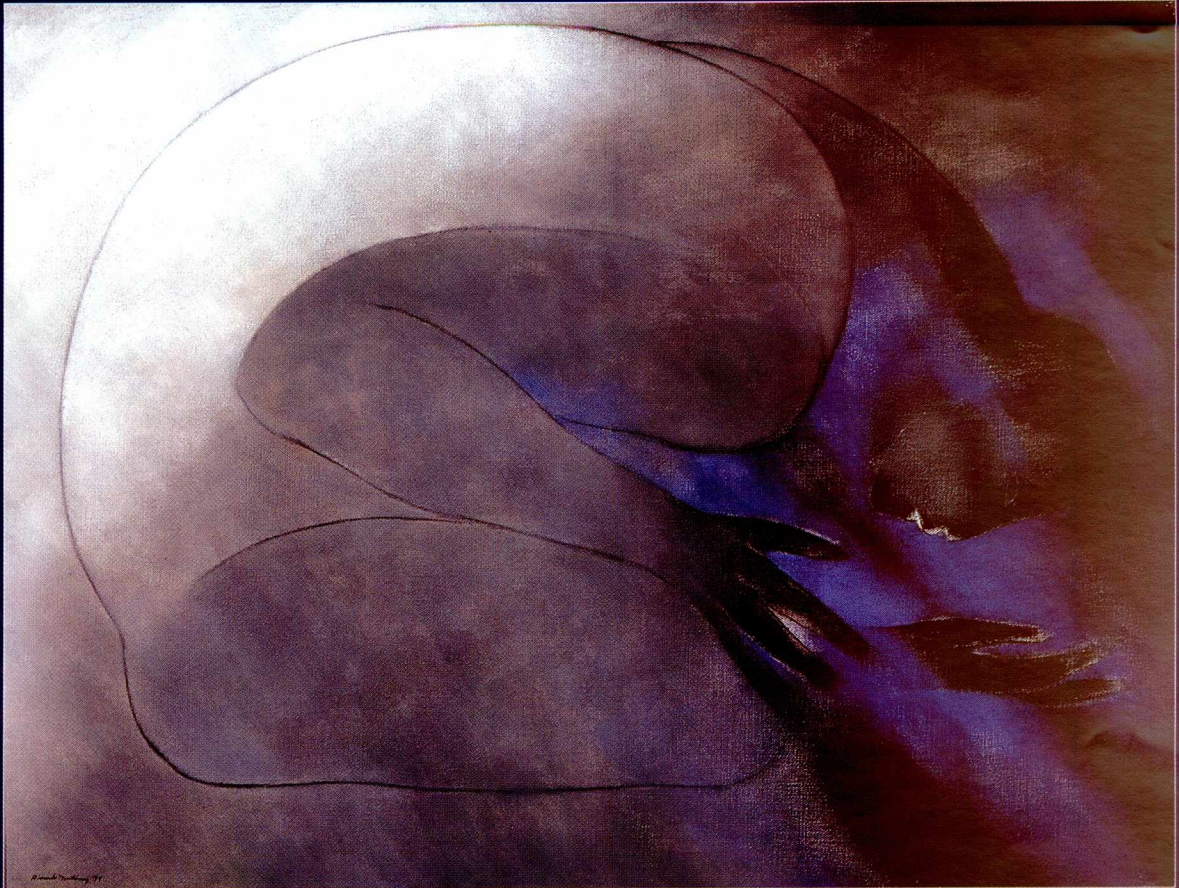
sacred nature, with the terror of the history that separates them from us, they come to life to teach us what they were like, what we were, what they will be, what we could become. They bring with

them, therefore, with their eternity, the original seeds of sadness, of rage, of tenderness, of sensuality. Sometimes, simply, generously, they allow us to be part of what they do. Other times they look us straight in the eye and suddenly besides seeing, you are being seen; it is you who is being judged, who has to answer for what has happened since then, for what is going to happen until then, the time when they look at us.

Perhaps for that reason, because only in silence do we dare see and hear our most terrible secrets, you have to lower your voice before the work of Ricardo Martínez. **MM**



# RICARDO MARTÍNEZ



*Figure with Blue Light*, 0.85 x 1.15 cm, 1979 (oil on canvas).

Born in Mexico City October 28, 1915, Ricardo Martínez is a self-taught painter who began his career under the guidance of his brother, sculptor Oliverio Martínez. He had his first show in Guadalajara in 1942, sponsored by María Asúnsulo. Later, he had exhibitions at the Gallery of Mexican Art in Mexico City. In 1958 he was invited as guest artist to the Venice Biennial, and The Contemporaries gallery in New York held showings for him in 1959, 1960, 1961 and 1964. He represented Mexico at the Latin America New Departures exhibition (1960-1962) and the Sao Paulo Biennial in 1963, where he was given the Mohino Santista award. His work was included in the Master Works of Mexican Art exhibit that toured Europe and the United States from 1960 to 1963, as well as in the art programs sponsored by Cornell University and the Guggenheim Museum. In 1967, he was awarded the Raúl Bailleres Prize.

Other venues that have exhibited his paintings include: Mexico City's Modern Art Museum (1974-75), the Rubicon Gallery in Los Angeles (1977), the Armas Gallery in Florida (1978), London's Tate Gallery (1980), Moscow's Modern Art Museum (1981), and, more recently, the Narodow Museum in Warsaw, the Petit Palais in Paris and Mexico City's Palace of Fine Arts (1984 and 1994).

Martínez has also illustrated the following books: *Muerte sin fin* (Death without End), by José Gorostiza; *Junta de sombras* (Meeting of Shadows), by Alfonso Reyes; *Poemas mexicanos* (Mexican Poems), by Francisco Giner de los Ríos; and *Epigramas americanos* (Epigrams of the Americas), by Enrique Diez Canedo.

He has also designed costumes for the ballet and scenery for different productions, among them *Xochipilli-Macuilxóchitl*, a dance piece performed in the United States, choreographed by Hanya Hom to music by Carlos Chávez. **MM**







# DANCE-THEATER UTOPIA

## ADRENALINE ON THE BRINK

María Tarriba Unger\*



To talk about Dance-Theater Utopia, you must begin with André Breton's categorical statement, "Beauty shall be convulsive or shall not exist at all." This radical view of the performing arts is what makes Dance-Theater Utopia what it is. The company's main concern is not to explore how human beings move, but why they move and what makes them move. Its aesthetic is based on continuous physical and emotional risk: human beings move and surrender themselves completely, exploring their limits to suicidal extremes.

Dance-Theater Utopia

The Dance-Theater Utopia group, together with only one or two other contemporary dance troupes, holds center stage in Mexican dance today.

The company's creations turn mainly around the meaning of life, death and love. Marco Antonio Silva, the group's founder and choreographer says, "Juan Rulfo said any writer has three fundamental topics: life, love and death. Life and death are the two extremes of the discourse of dance, and love is what keeps the ability to struggle alive. For that very reason, it becomes a force able to avert chaos."

**The choreographies are pure energy, energy concentrated, channeled and transformed into an explosive act.**

A member of the audience

From its beginnings in 1980, the company has retained certain constants in its productions: in addition to dancers, Utopia's productions often include actors, painters and sculptors, primary school teachers or practically anyone the choreographer thinks may contribute something to a particular performance. In this sense, Marco Antonio Silva seeks his "characters" in his surroundings, regardless of the level of technique they may have. His choreographies, then, often include "dancers" who have never danced before.

**The effectiveness of Marco Antonio Silva's choreographies is rooted in his ability to make you feel on stage. You know that Marco is going to make you look good with your own resources...or in spite of them.**

Mavis, Dance-Theater Utopia dancer

\* Mexican dance and theater critic.  
Opposite page photo by Eniac Martínez.



Dance-Theater has caused great controversy in Mexico's dance milieu. Its detractors say that "it is neither theater nor dance." But, the troupe has a considerable following: the drama of its performances seems to be more attractive to the audience than abstract dance or dance that seeks plasticity of movement without a conscious effort to deal with a particular topic.

**Its proposals are a reflection of the people's pain, a quest worn out by progress.**

**A member of the audience**

Utopia has been defined as a group whose performances are always a risky, radical, violent experience. The enormous energy expended by the dancer-actors in the choreographies often has great impact due to their total surrender to their work. Carlos Ocampo, a theoretician of the dance in Mexico, compares the Dance-Theater Utopia dancers to Kamikazes. "The dancers have the vocation of Japanese Kamikaze pilots. Fearless, these dancers defy space and break through the body's limitations."

**It is the break up, the fracturing of the human spirit, the disintegration of the individual.**

**A member of the audience**



Marco Antonio Silva

Perhaps the main influence in the work of Dance-Theater Utopia is German neoexpressionist dance. As dance critic Patricia Cardona says, "The identification of the Mexican temperamental fury with the German post-Nazi fury was so great that, today, their performances require simultaneous interpretation from German to Spanish." The fusion of contemporary Mexican dance and German neoexpressionism achieved a very concrete blend of topics close to Mexican daily life. "The Germans beat themselves, strike out, shout, get angry, humiliate themselves, rescue themselves. They demand a little tenderness in human relations. I understand why Marco Antonio Silva is fascinated by this. Latinos are after the same thing," writes Cardona.

**Utopia, the Mexican modern dance company, was on tour in Michigan. It has tremendous energy and a colossal strength. The dancers are passionate to the point of giving themselves completely on stage. Spectators may end up mixed up with the effect of a giant collage of images, impressions and symbols.**

**Marianne Danks Rudnicki, dance critic**



Dance-Theater Utopia is a radical alternative to what is called postmodern choreography, which emphasizes a search for harmonious form to please the senses, without inviting the audience to think, much less get emotionally involved in what is happening on stage. As U.S. critic Jennifer Noyer said about the piece *Veracruz 36°C* (*nobody looks at the moon at sunset*), "*Veracruz 36°C* ... a challenging and complex work, touched hidden springs of human nature with poetic force. This piece was a complete rejection of New Wave intoxication, with its cool, formal movements for their own sake."



David Mallero

*Veracruz 36°C* is one of Utopia's most important creations, not only because of its impact internationally, but also because it reveals the thematic and formal constants that characterize the group's productions.

The title alludes to the port of Veracruz, on the Gulf of Mexico, considered perhaps the country's most important port. However, it alludes mainly to the notion of a voyage: the voyage into dreams and into the past. The atmosphere of the choreography is imbued with loving nostalgia and solitude.

### Veracruz 36°C A Utopian Creation

How can we penetrate dreams? How much does absence weigh? *Veracruz 36°C*, a one-act production, is both quest and discovery of what the body does not remember; through the eyes of an outsider and set in an extreme situation, it can turn wrath or nostalgia into a stepping stone that speeds the encounter with our ghosts, travellers gone astray in the corridors of a compact memory, like the weight of a stone that suddenly explodes where least expected.

*Veracruz* is the perfect excuse for this, seen as a train station, a port or a starting point, that hot, stuffy part of our past, where there is no weeping and no turning back. An atmosphere of supreme loneliness, where both strangers and ghosts are fed up with false illusions.

*Veracruz 36°C* tries to look deep into our feelings, our wrath and our frailties. It is personal testimony to the enigma of our generation's everyday life, with its incomplete, fragmented body, at times emptied of all memory.

A labyrinth that is, ultimately, our will and testament of urban love.

Dance-Theater Utopia

J. Pérez



## THE CHOREOGRAPHER

We are not a happy people, so we need heroes, myths, champions, paradises, Ulysses and Christmases.

Marco Antonio Silva, Dance-Theater Utopia choreographer



Marco Antonio Silva

Marco Antonio Silva (b. 1953) founded Dance-Theater Utopia in 1980. Today, he has completed more than 30 works of choreography and has been awarded a veritable collection of national and international prizes. He supplemented his training as a dancer and choreographer with acting studies and a degree in stage direction. From the very first, he was interested in dance developed invariably around a dramatic conflict, which is why his work has always been recognized as part of the dance-theater movement. Silva has worked continually in theatrical productions, as well as in film and opera. Some of his work in opera—for example, Gounod's *Faust* directed by Mexican director Ludwik Margules—has sparked real outrage in an essentially conservative opera-going public. In *Faust*, Silva went to the extreme of moving the chorus—stationary by definition—eliciting boos reminiscent of the bullring. Some Mexican stage directors consider it indispensable to work with Silva to block their productions. It is no exaggeration to say that this choreographer's work has powerfully determined the proposals of Mexican theater's most brilliant directors. Silva's contribution to movement on stage is not only aimed at plasticity, but at the actor being able to combine emotion and meaning in every movement. This makes it possible to go beyond the idea of blocking as a simple illustration of the text and of the director's as some kind of stage-bound traffic cop.

It [Marco Antonio Silva's work] has greatly affected me and my work....

This is contemporary. It's powerful. It says something to all of us.

Bill De Young, American choreographer

### Marco Antonio Silva

As though paraphrasing Plautus and Unamuno by saying "Nothing human is strange to me; I am the Other and myself at the same time," Silva uses the maxim to center his work and use and reuse all the resources that have characterized his proposals in recent years: physical use of space designed to violently assault the audience's senses, the absence of an anecdote that succumbs before expressiveness, the importance of the event in itself and unbridled use of effects....Capable of both "light" choreography and extremely profound productions, Silva is obsessed with work. He gets involved in dozens of theatrical, choreographical and film projects. His tenacity, which can withstand anything, has always placed him among the best contemporary creators of the dance in Mexico.

Rosario Manzanos, dance critic



## THE DANCERS

**There's an element of danger in Marco's work. You need a youthful body and a sense of faith to do it....It is a grassroots form of dance that has nothing to do with the folkloric troupes that Americans see and associate with Latin America.**

Marianne Danks, dance critic

Much has been said about the Dance-Theater Utopia dancers' absolute commitment to their work. This intense surrender of themselves, which some critics say implies physical risk given the violence involved in the choreography of most of the group's pieces, seems closely linked to the relationship the dancers have with the choreographer.

**Utopia's work is a result of our encounter with a dreamer, Marco Antonio Silva, who has a special way of experiencing his passions and expressing them, a special way of bringing his dreams to life through us, other dreamers. That is where we merge: he makes his obsessions concrete based on what each of us is carrying around inside.**

Dance-Theater Utopia dancers

It could be said that Marco Antonio Silva is able to create blind faith among his collaborators in the meaning and success of each and every one of his projects. According to the dancers, Silva does not always give reasons to justify carrying out a specific sequence of movements, nor does he want them to intellectualize too much about the theme of any given piece. One dancer says, "We know that Marco has visualized the scene completely before he asks for a movement or an improvisation. Little by little, we give form to what he already has perfectly clear in his head. We can do a movement mechanically, without any idea of why we're doing it. It's funny: during rehearsals the movement takes on all its meaning, sometimes surprisingly. Sometimes, once we have a sequence memorized, Marco presses us to be the ones to understand its aim, its function. This is unconventional work, of course. Intuition and emotional work take precedence over academic research, which we also do."



**Our work is alive; sometimes it rises and surpasses us, and is beyond us. That's when we all dream together at the same time, a dream we're all involved in. If we stop thinking about each other, we stop existing because we are all a single dream.**

Dance-Theater Utopia dancers



Regardless of the risk or the difficulty involved in some of the exercises they do, the Dance-Theater Utopia dancers accept Marco Antonio Silva's direction without question or objection. In that sense, the troupe works in a way reminiscent of a mystical sect led by a Master who demands blind faith from his disciples, offering in exchange absolute certainty of the final effectiveness of the exercises and sacrifices required by any spiritual discipline.

**The dancers of Dance-Theater Utopia are equally dedicated to the dance and to Marco Antonio Silva. They would jump off a cliff for him. They would follow him to the end of the Earth.**

**Bill De Young, U.S. choreographer**

Some of the Utopia dancers feel that belonging to the troupe has taken them far from what is considered "a normal life." Continuing in the vein of the Master and the disciple, one way or another, this renunciation is analogous to the "renunciation of the world" proclaimed by some mystical sects. Dancer Gregorio Trejo says, "Becoming part of the group meant abandoning the university, abandoning my family....I lost all contact with my family."

**How does dance affect my personal life? Dance is my personal life.**

**Manuel, Dance-Theater Utopia dancer**



Marco Antonio Silva

This degree of commitment has been questioned and even called blindness by some critics. However, the fact is that the dancers are not only convinced, but absolutely passionate about the company's work. The "addiction" to adrenaline evidently involved in Marco Antonio Silva's obsession with working on the edge seems to have afflicted his collaborators. Sharing and contributing to the choreographer's creative force, as well as the total immersion in the breadth of emotions and human experience that Silva explores in his productions, fully justify this "renunciation of the world" implicit in belonging to the company. In any case, we should not lose sight of the "mundane" aspect of the situation: Silva offers his collaborators recognition in the world of Mexican modern dance, given the company's prestige. Also, since Silva does not base accepting individuals into the group exclusively on their dance technique, becoming a member of Dance-Theater Utopia has meant that some dancers go from being "amateurs" to being professionals overnight.



The Dance-Theater Utopia dancers have no limits.  
They struggle between life and death to obtain the effect they desire.  
They fly; they explode; they roll and convulse to the point  
of fainting from exhausting their limits.

Mónica Garibay, dance critic

## CHAOS AND HARMONY: THE DANCE OF OPPOSITES

A torrent of energy through which we dizzyingly travel the deepest recesses of love, death and life; dance whose violence easily makes us momentarily enter into a state of shock, surprise, humor and nostalgia; an acrobatic dance performance; dancers who seem fearless. All these aspects of Dance-Theater Utopia's work seemingly want to awaken us from the lethargy of our daily lives with their little doses of misery and joy to connect us to the profound, powerful subterranean strength of the passions, fears and yearnings lying in our unconscious. They appear to us only in dreams and in the critical experiences that life brings us up against. The worlds created by Dance-Theater Utopia have the power to connect us immediately both with the dark, destructive side of reality and with representations of the enormous creative energy of the cosmos. Its choreographies —outwardly violent and dark— are at bottom an enormous "Yes!" to life in its tragedy and luminosity.

NOTE: The author wishes to thank Laura Zapata, Rosario Manzanos and, very particularly, Dance-Theater Utopia for their collaboration in writing this piece.



Marco Antonio Silva





Photos reprinted courtesy of the Federal Electoral Institute

# Mexico

## Works for Children's Rights

*José Luis Gutiérrez Espíndola\**



## AN EMERGING ISSUE

In recent years, in conjunction with processes of globalization and political transformation that have opened up the way to what has been called democratic normalization, slowly but surely, Mexico has seen a new culture of respect for individual rights and dignity grow and take hold. While this was a marginal question 25 years ago, of interest mainly to small groups of intellectuals and political activists, undoubtedly the persistent and combined endeavors of non-governmental organizations, political parties and both public and private institutions has borne fruit and placed the issue of these rights in a prominent position on the nation's public agenda.

In the context of general thinking and debate about rights (the rights of women, the physically and mentally challenged, cultural minorities, etc.), it is no wonder that the issue of children's rights —of both boys and girls— has also emerged. Without disregarding the importance of previous efforts, the main impetus in this field undoubtedly came from the Convention on the Rights of the Child approved by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and the 1990 World Summit for Children. Both had important repercussions in Mexico. The Mexican government ratified the convention in 1990 and also created a National Action Commission for Children, charged with implementing the summit's Declaration and Action Plan. From that time on, the



The right to have a school to learn received the most votes.

The issue  
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at an early age.

government carried out many activities in very different areas (such as health, nutrition, primary education, etc.) that have been taken up and given continuity in the National Action Program for Children 1995-2000.

Beyond what the government itself does, other autonomous public, private and socially concerned institutions have also carried out important activities to make people aware of and foster respect for children's rights. Suffice it to mention

the educational and protection activities carried out by the different human rights commissions, or the assistance, training and educational programs carried out by different non-governmental organizations like the Mutual Support Forum, the Mexican Collective to Support Children and the Citizens' Cause National Political Group.

## THE CHILDREN'S ELECTION

Among the activities that have put children's rights in the spotlight, special mention should be made of the children's election held July 6, 1997, promoted by the Federal Electoral Institute and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). The balloting aimed at making the public aware of children's fundamental rights, contributing to their recognition and protection, creating a space for their participation to find out their perceptions and opinions about their problems and fostering education about civic-democratic values and practices. These goals were successfully reached with the enthusiastic participation of slightly under 4 million boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 12 who cast their votes at the 9,000 polling places set up nationwide.

It was very clear to the organizing institutions that children had to be offered concrete answers no matter what the outcome of the consultation. Otherwise, it would create frustration and resentment.

The children's elections, then, were seen as the beginning of a vast process that would ideally branch out into many other activities and gradually incorporate other public and private institutions, as well as organizations from civil

\* Director of Civic Education and Political Culture for the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) and professor at the Sociology Department of the Autonomous Metropolitan University, Azcapotzalco campus.





The right to a clean, healthy environment was the second most voted.

society, into the fight for children's rights from their different fields of endeavor.

The election process included stages of research, data organization and assessment which culminated in late 1997 with a forum attended by representatives of public agencies, political parties, non-governmental organizations and educational experts. The meeting aimed to critically review the July 6 experience, look into the meaning of the children's vote and decide general lines of action for the immediate future given the children's concerns.

The forum was enormously enlightening and at another time it might well be worthwhile to examine its results. For the time being, what is of interest here is to recall that the three most voted topics were children's right to have a school to learn and improve themselves, the right to have a healthy clean environment and the right to be loved and protected from all forms of mistreatment and abuse. It was a forceful message that cannot and should not be ignored.



The right to be loved and protected from all forms of mistreatment and abuse received the third highest vote.

#### JOINT ACTION PROGRAM

After the forum, the IFE, UNICEF and Mexico's National System for Integral Family Development (DIF) agreed to work on a new publicity campaign in favor of children's rights with emphasis on the fight against mistreatment.

The idea was to relaunch the issue of children's rights, but in addition, and above all, to answer a concrete concern profoundly felt by children.

The involvement of the UNICEF's Mexico office and the DIF hardly need expla-

nation. Both their legal mandates include seeking better living conditions for children as a central concern. On the other hand, the Mexican Constitution confers on the IFE, the federal electoral body, a series of responsibilities in civic education and the dissemination of democratic culture. Its participation in a campaign of this nature is due to the certainty that:

- 1) The issue of children's rights is crucial in a process of forging a citizenry; for this process to be effective, it must begin at an early age.
- 2) The best civic education that can be given to boys and girls is to teach them their rights and how to exercise them here and now, not talk about what rights they will have in the remote future when they actually become citizens.<sup>1</sup>
- 3) The struggle against child abuse is, in practice, a message against all forms of violence as a means of social intercourse and a form of championing tolerance, respect and living together peacefully within the family itself so that it can spread to other spheres of society.

The National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), the Mexico City Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) soon joined in supporting this initiative. After four months of arduous work to develop the concept and come to agreements, last April 30—a symbolic day in Mexico, since it is Children's Day—the heads of the six institutions signed a joint declaration in which they committed themselves to developing a permanent Joint Action Program to promote greater awareness of, respect for, implementation of and protection for children's rights.



The number and character of the participating institutions, as well as the concrete commitments they made, makes this an unprecedented agreement. It lays the foundation for inter-institutional activity with a view to the long term, not subject to immediate political agendas, organized around the great challenges posed to children's integral development by a society which combines both wretched poverty and opulence, both vestiges of the distant past and problems typical of developed countries.

It also seems clear that the inter-institutional agreement can operate as the kernel of greater efforts with more participants to develop specific programs and activities, which will make the Joint Action Program very versatile and give it broad coverage.

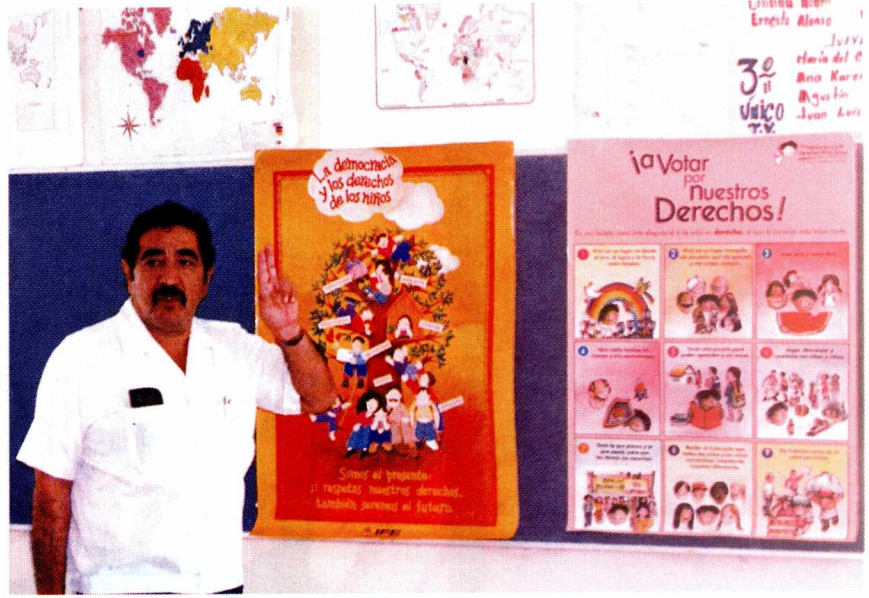
If anything, far from seeing children's rights as an ephemeral issue like so many others, this agreement shows a very clear determination to make them a central part of the political and social activities of a society which, at the beginning of the new century, aspires to equity and justice.

In more than one sense, the struggle for children's rights is yet another facet of the complex and multi-dimensional ongoing fight in Mexico today for a full and more effective democracy.

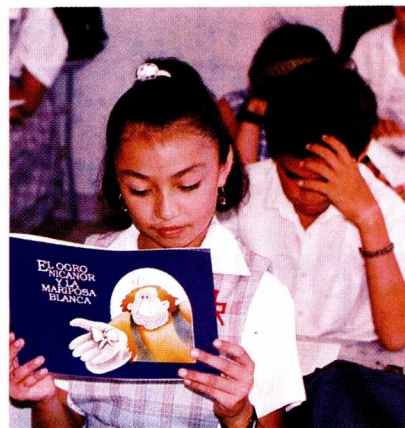
#### DEMOCRACY AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS FINAL THOUGHTS

Why can we say that democracy and children's rights are closely linked?

First, democracy, in contrast with all other forms of government, is by definition something built by its citizens. A democracy is a democracy insofar as it is supported and nurtured by the participa-



The civic education program in action in public schools.



Reading about democracy in elementary school.

tion of the public and, in general, people's taking part in collective decision-making. One of the critical pillars of democracy is the recognition and exercise of freedoms and rights by the individuals who make up the political community.

In contrast with authoritarianism (not to mention totalitarianism), democracy is founded on the recognition and protection of these rights and freedoms. In that sense, we can say that democracy is the form of government most capable of recognizing and protecting the basic rights of all, including, of course, child-

ren's rights. This does not mean that the existence of a democracy automatically solves children's problems, just as, in and of itself, it does not automatically solve other problems. However, it is the condition under which these problems can best be faced.

In the second place, creating awareness about children's rights can be understood as the most fundamental civic education possible. In my view, in effect, there is no better civic education that can be given to children than a clear, unclouded message that, as children, they have rights, that they are individuals who have a right to their own opinion, that their interests and expectations are worthy of being taken seriously, and that their voice and participation are relevant for society. For that and for many other reasons, children's rights are a primary notion in the process of forging a democratic citizenry. ■■

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> By Mexican law, anyone born in Mexico is a Mexican national, but nationals do not become citizens until they come of age and assume all their rights and responsibilities as such. [Translator's Note.]





Photos reprinted courtesy of Anamario Hernández

*Chirimoya*, 61 x 71 cm (oil on linen).

# Anamario Hernández Landscapes of Memory

*Anamari Gomís\**

Anamario Hernández recently exhibited at the Mexican Cultural Institute in Paris, Milan's Cervantes Institute and, in May 1998, at New York's Sindin Gallery.



*Still Life*, 25 x 70 cm (oil on linen).





*Homage to Marcel Proust, 57 x 62 cm, 1997 (oil on linen).*

The rhythmic arrangement of line and color in Anamario Hernández' painting submerges the viewer in an apparently harmonious world: the perfection of the line, the work on the canvas, the arrangement of the objects and, of course, the exaltation of color and the trap of its serenity (a trap because sometimes a discordant tone, an audacious darkening between light colors and pastels takes the viewer by surprise). The balance of the objects also breaks up in the very act of its proliferation: the blue jars next to the sea shells and the small boxes, close to an old toy, the flowers or the medallion with

the portrait of Marcel Proust and other motifs. The formal disposition of these objects is a mix of meanings and, therefore, downplays differences. For that reason, the painter does not impose the classic concept of still lifes but brings her static themes to life through a polyphony of characters. To her, her paintings are land-

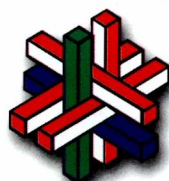


*Apricots, 36 x 46 cm (oil on linen).*

scapes of memory, a Proustian memory. That is why the items she paints, dissimilar among themselves, unite in expressive concert on the canvas. Like a breath, in the juxtaposition of such heterogeneous utensils, the artist sometimes introduces a window and what lies beyond it, or she may include a ruddy nude woman in her object-ized universe. Whoever is looking might suddenly believe that Hernández has opened her themes up to the street or that she has deflected them toward figurative painting, but that is mere subterfuge. In fact, the objects dominate everything; they trace the spacial orbit in all Anamario Hernández' work, work of two-dimensional memory and delightful artistic expression. **MM**

\*Mexican art critic.





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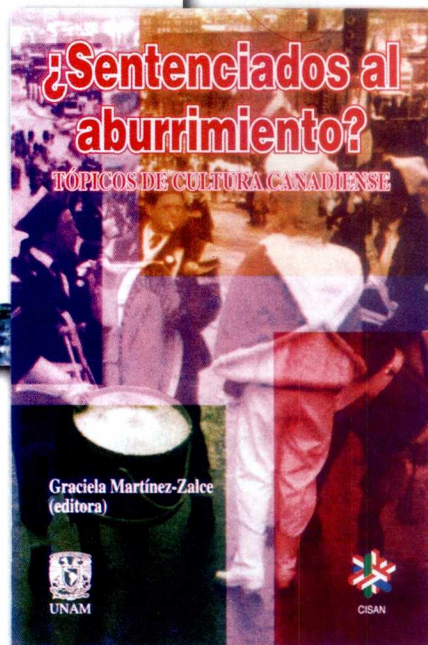
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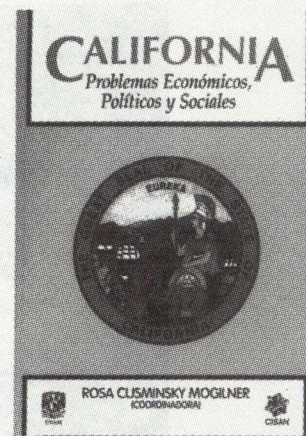
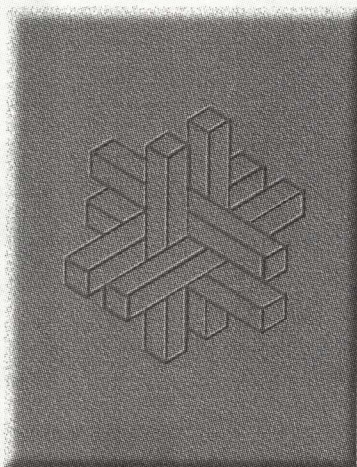
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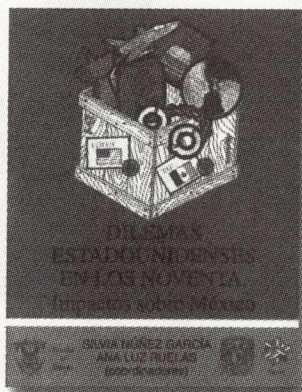


**California: Problemas económicos, políticos y sociales**  
 Rosa Cusminski (coord). 291pp.  
 Despite its recent crisis, California is still one of the strongest economies in the world. Moreover, because it is a heterogeneous society, which concentrates immigrants from all over the world, especially Hispanics and the fact that it shares a border with Mexico, makes it of special interest to Mexico. Specialists from Mexico and the United States analyze different aspects of its social, legal, historical, economic, and political life.



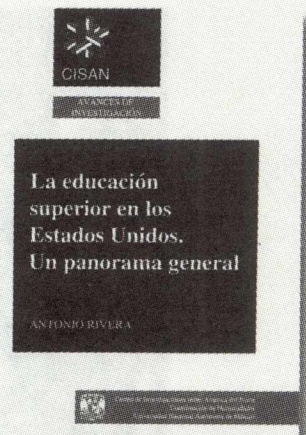
**Elecciones en Canadá**  
 Julián Castro Rea (coord). 152pp.  
 On November 4, 13, Liberal Party leader Jean Chrétien took office as Canada's twentieth prime minister.

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



**Dilemas estadounidenses en los noventa. Impactos sobre México**  
 Silvia Núñez and Ana Luz Ruelas (coords), 155pp.

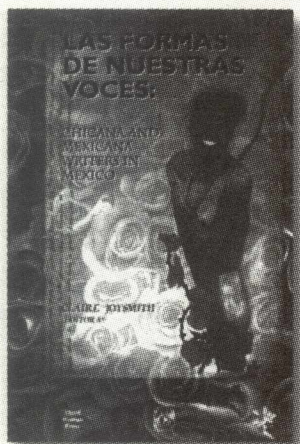
Reflections on our inevitable integration offers the reader a more horizontal look at current U.S. problems and their impact on Mexico: among others, the crisis of the welfare state, antiimmigrant paranoia, the changeover from a war economy to a more competitive civilian economy.



**La educación superior en los Estados Unidos. Un panorama general**  
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 Avances de Investigación series. 73pp.

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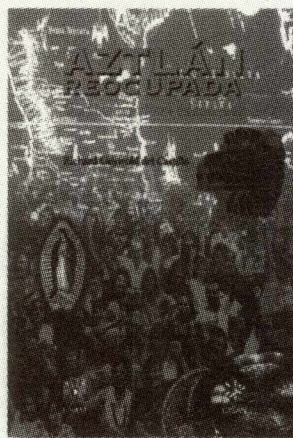




**Las formas de nuestras voces.  
Chicana and Mexicana Writers  
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Claire Joy Smith (ed). 350pp.

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



**Aztlán Reocupada  
A Political and Cultural History  
since 1945. The Influence of  
Mexico on Mexican American  
Society in Post War America.**

Richard Griswold. (bilingual edition). 106pp.

Historic overview of Chicano society from 1945 to the nineties. A retrospective analysis of political, economic, social and cultural elements that have determined Chicano cultural heritage and its present situation.



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

Bárbara Driscoll. 278pp.

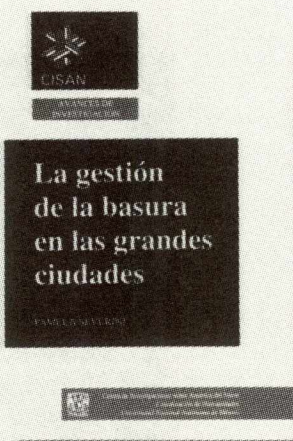
A look at the little known story of nonagricultural Mexican migrant workers in the United States under the Railroad Bracero Program instituted during the Second World War by both the Mexican and U.S. governments.



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

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

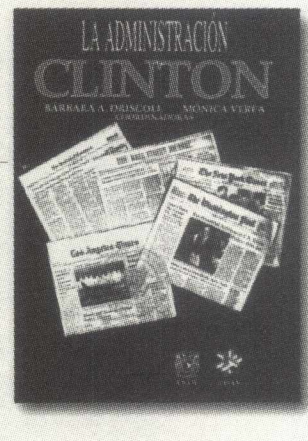
Twelve Mexican and American specialists on art and cinema look into sociocultural problems such as migration, racism and Chicano issues throughout history, from the perspective of American and Mexican films. They analyze the influence of distorted images on both sides and how these stereotypes effect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



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

Pamela Severini. Avances de  
Investigación Series. 61pp.

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



**La administración Clinton**

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

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



# Mexico

## And the North American Gateway to Globalization<sup>1</sup>

*Carlos González Martínez\**

Analyzing the political transformations that surprised the world with the fall of the Berlin Wall, Octavio Paz said, "The historic process is so slow that its changes are very seldom discernable to those experiencing them. But then suddenly, violently, the subterranean labors of time manifest themselves, unleashing a series of changes that succeed one another with striking speed in full view of everyone."<sup>2</sup>

Undoubtedly, the words of the recently deceased great Mexican poet and essayist help us to better understand Mexico's place in the globalization process. After seven decades of a nationalist development model that saw the rest of the world, above all our U.S. neighbor, as a threat or at the very least a challenge, in recent years Mexico has begun to dismantle the barriers in its relations with the outside and has accepted that its gateway to globalization is through the assimilation and management of its intense exchanges with the United States.

Until very recently, everyone accepted the popular Mexican saying, "Poor Mexico! So far from God and so close to the

United States!" Today, at the very end of the century, Mexico no longer seems so far from God since, from the end of the 1980s it has constitutionally recognized the legal existence of churches and has reestablished diplomatic relations with the Vatican; Pope John Paul II has already even paid the country three visits. Simultaneously, proximity to the United States does not seem a reason for lament, since the negotiation, signing and entry into effect of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) caused and actually required a public perception of our powerful northern neighbor as a partner and no longer as a threat to national sovereignty.<sup>3</sup>

Mexico's  
international  
incorporation  
is essentially  
asymmetrical  
and occurs through  
the regionalization  
that the North American  
gateway implies.

But how has this transformation come about, apparently happening suddenly, violently, "unleashing a series of changes that succeed[ed] one another with striking speed in full view of everyone"? And, what implications does it have for Mexico in the context of globalization? What follows is an attempt to offer some coordinates to answer these questions.

### THE PORT OF ENTRY TO GLOBALIZATION

Before considering the extent and implications of Mexico's insertion into globalization and its new relationship with the United States, let us stop briefly for a few considerations about the general characteristics of globalization, in order to identify the context and the terms in which Mexico is becoming part of it.

Even though it is very common today to talk about globalization, the term is frequently given different meanings and evaluated from very different points of view. This is understandable since globalization is a process that is taking place at the same time we are trying to understand it.

We can therefore cite a wide variety of authors and writing that look at globalization from very different perspectives. The gamut runs from those who consid-

\* Researcher at the UNAM Center for Interdisciplinary Research in the Sciences and Humanities and professor of the UNAM School of Political and Social Sciences.



er it something already established in the world which nations and states cannot resist since these very entities tend to disappear given its supposed homogenizing effect on contemporary societies and the tendency to blur national borders, to those who emphasize the uneven nature of the world order and even go so far as to deny the existence of globalization as a historical process.

Among the former authors is Kenichi Ohmae, who wrote a book about the end of the nation-state and the rise of regional economies.<sup>4</sup> Among the latter are Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, for whom globalization is a myth that disguises power relations and the inequalities of the international economic system.<sup>5</sup> In the middle ground is the work of Octavio Ianni<sup>6</sup> and even Samir Amin,<sup>7</sup> although the latter is of course very critical of globalization.

Keeping in mind the complexity of this conceptual and analytical debate, globalization may be considered a secular and multidimensional process that is creating a fractured global order. It is a process because it constitutes the linking in time of phenomena which, although distinct from each other and with different dynamics, are closely related functionally among themselves and even go so far as to be mutually determinant. It is secular because, even though its definitive expansion has occurred in the last 25 years thanks to surprising technological changes, international productive and economic restructuring, the fostering of "neoliberal" opening policies and the end of so-called "real socialism," in reality the formation of a global social order in the world began at least as early as the fifteenth century with the discovery of the Americas and the expansion of trade and interna-

tional economic relations. It is multidimensional because not only does it occur in the economy, but also in politics and culture. The notions of "global village"<sup>8</sup> or "clash of civilizations,"<sup>9</sup> to name just a couple, refer precisely to this multidimensional character and not only its economic aspect. This, together with the current debate about the new conditions for sovereignty and the preeminence of the nation-state, refer to the need to take into account the cultural and political aspects linked to globalization.

This secular and multidimensional process is creating a fractured world order because, while it is true that globalization is setting up worldwide networks of exchange both in the economic and the political and cultural spheres, these networks are also being built on the basis of enormous asymmetries and tensions. The United Nations Program for Development (UNPD) recognizes that, "Globalization is one of the most visible tendencies in recent years. Between 1965 and 1990, world trade in goods has tripled and in services it has increased more than 14 fold. Meanwhile, financial flows have taken on unimaginable proportions. More than a U.S.\$1 trillion circulate throughout the world every day."<sup>10</sup> However, it also notes that, "While globalization has contributed in general to the growth of the strong countries, it has marginalized the weak ones."<sup>11</sup> Therefore, if current trends continue, "the result will be a world with monstrous excesses and grotesque human and economic inequalities."<sup>12</sup>

For this reason, it can be said that amidst the process we know as globalization, world exchange is effectively increasing considerably, tendentially reaching a planetary scale, but that this is occurring

in a way very far removed from the image of homogenization often associated with it. In reality, if globalization exists, it is asymmetrical and fragmented.

The processes of regional integration—or regionalization, as they are commonly called—also contribute to this. What we are seeing in world organization at century's end is global exchange networks set up, in effect, by region, in a fragmented form. In globalization, with the possible exception of financial market operations, countries do not directly integrate into the world sphere, but do so through their regions. In this way, we have noted the proliferation of agreements and treaties of regional integration the world over: the same in the Americas as in Europe, Asia, Oceania and Africa.

These agreements or treaties have very different scopes and aims. In general there are five different types, according to the form of regional integration they organize: free trade areas, in which participating countries decide to eliminate barriers to trade in commonly agreed-upon goods and services, but in which each country reserves the right to autonomously decide their trade relations with other countries not included in the area; customs unions, in which, in addition to the stipulations in a free trade area, a common external tariff is adopted; common markets, which add the free circulation of persons and capital among participating nations; single markets, in which in addition to all of the above, a common currency and supranational fiscal and monetary authorities are created; and economic and political unions, which are regional political institutions.

NAFTA is a regional integration agreement which sets up a free trade area. Other



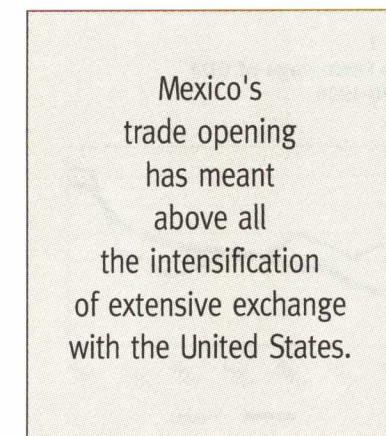
experiences, like that of the Mercosur in South America, the European Union or ASEAN in Southeast Asia, have different aims from NAFTA, but they are all expressions of this regionalized manifestation of globalization.

#### THE NORTH AMERICAN GATEWAY TOWARD GLOBALIZATION

Taking all this into account, it may be pointed out that asymmetries and regionalization are two elements that historically mold the process of globalization. Countries are inserted into this process in this context, and Mexico is no exception. Certainly, the way each country integrates itself into globalization will depend on whether it is developed or underdeveloped, and Mexico is of the latter variety. For that reason, its international incorporation is essentially asymmetrical and occurs through the regionalization that the North American gateway implies, given that three-quarters of its international trade occurs there, as do the most important of its social and political exchanges.

Mexico opened up to the world in the 1980s in the framework of two parallel processes: the spread of globalization and the change in Mexico's development model. It occurs as a slow historical process that suddenly appears, "unleashing a series of changes that succeed[ed] one another with striking speed in full view of everyone," to return to Octavio Paz.

In just a few years, the world made its presence felt in the Mexican economy, society and politics. It changed from a protected to a liberalized economy, open to the outside, with average tariffs lower



than international standards, a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the signer of agreements on liberalization and trade cooperation with the United States, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Venezuela, the European Union and the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) mechanism. From a culturally ingrown, nationalist society, it became avid for exchange with those abroad, to receive and send out cultural and artistic goods and services. From a closed political regimen, it changed to one that accepted being exposed internationally, received electoral and human rights observers from other countries and was willing to debate its internal affairs with foreigners. Even though all these transformations have not happened with the same intensity and depth, the fact is that they are happening and have been very swift in recent years.

In the economy, the change has been notable, as Graphs 1 and 2, made with data covering the years 1970 to 1996, clearly demonstrate. Graph 1 shows the weight that exports and imports have acquired vis-à-vis the gross domestic product (GDP). Starting from around 10 percent of GDP in 1970, exports and

imports rose to approximately 30 percent in 1996.

In only 16 years, the importance of foreign trade in national output has tripled. It is clear that the more or less constant tendency in the 1970s changed in the 1980s with an upward trend that consolidated in the 1990s, the decade when NAFTA was negotiated, signed and went into effect. Today, practically one-third of Mexico's output comes from foreign trade.

Graph 2 shows this opening tendency very clearly, focusing on trade within North America, particularly the United States. If in 1970 total Mexican exports were U.S.\$1.3 billion, by 1996 they reached U.S.\$95.9 billion, an increase of almost a hundred fold!

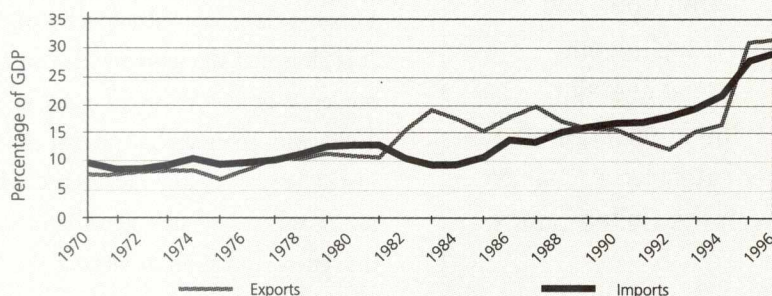
In that same period, exports to the United States went from U.S.\$0.7 billion to U.S.\$80.6 billion. The graph repeats the same pattern: certain stability during the 1970s, an increase in the 1980s and rapid, sustained growth in the 1990s.

This second graph also shows that Mexico's trade opening has meant above all the intensification of extensive exchange with the United States. While in 1970, 57 percent of Mexican exports went to the U.S. market, by 1996, they were up to 84 percent. But, this is nothing new: according to *Estadísticas Históricas* (Historical Statistics) published by Mexico's National Institute of Geography and Data Processing (INEGI), by 1890, a century ago, 56 percent of Mexican imports and 69 percent of its exports already came from and went to its northern neighbor.

These figures allow us to see how Mexican foreign trade is highly concentrated with the United States. This becomes frankly asymmetrical when we take



**Graph 1**  
**Exports and Imports as a Percentage of GDP**  
**Mexico 1970-1996**



Source: The author processed the data and created the graph based on International Monetary Fund figures, *IFS Yearbook*, 1997.

reservation, decidedly, according to the opportunities and challenges imposed by globalization. Perhaps the central one is strengthening its regional presence by seeking to lessen the notable asymmetries that both join it and separate it from the United States. Hopefully, we will be able to do that before "suddenly, violently, the subterranean labors of time manifest themselves unleashing a series of changes that succeed one another with striking speed." **NMM**

into account that while more than 80 percent of Mexican exports go to the United States, Mexico receives only about 8 percent of U.S. exports, even though it is one of its three main trade partners.

## IN CONCLUSION

On the basis of these arguments, we can conclude that, in effect, Mexico is becoming part of the globalization process and is

doing so by entering into regionalization in asymmetrical conditions, above all through the North American gateway.

This incorporation has been accomplished through stunningly swift changes, which have actually been due to the slow, underground work of time. Today, Mexico has a very different profile abroad than it had throughout almost the entire century. It seems clear that now it needs to fully assume its new condition as a country open to the world and govern without

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The author wishes to express his gratitude to Juan Aníbal Rivera for his support in compiling the statistics for the graphs that accompany this article.

<sup>2</sup> Octavio Paz, *Pequeña crónica de grandes días* (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1990), p. 17.

<sup>3</sup> The Mexican magazine *Este País* has frequently published polls documenting this change; the *Este País* web page address is [www.infolatina.com.mx](http://www.infolatina.com.mx). Another source on this topic is the book by Ronald Inglehart, Miguel Basáñez and Neil Nevitte, published by Siglo XXI, *Convergencia en Norteamérica. Comercio, política y cultura* (Mexico City: 1994).

<sup>4</sup> Kenichi Ohmae, *The End of the Nation State: The Rise of Regional Economies* (London: Free Press, 1996).

<sup>5</sup> Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, *Globalization in Question. The International Economy and the Possibilities of Governance* (Cambridge, Mass.: Polity Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> Octavio Ianni, *Teorías de la globalización* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI-UNAM, 1996).

<sup>7</sup> Samir Amin, *Los desafíos de la mundialización* (Mexico City: Siglo XXI-UNAM, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Marshall McLuhan and Bruce R. Powers, *La aldea global. Transformaciones en la vida y los medios de comunicación mundiales en el siglo XXI* (Mexico City: Editorial Gedisa, 1991).

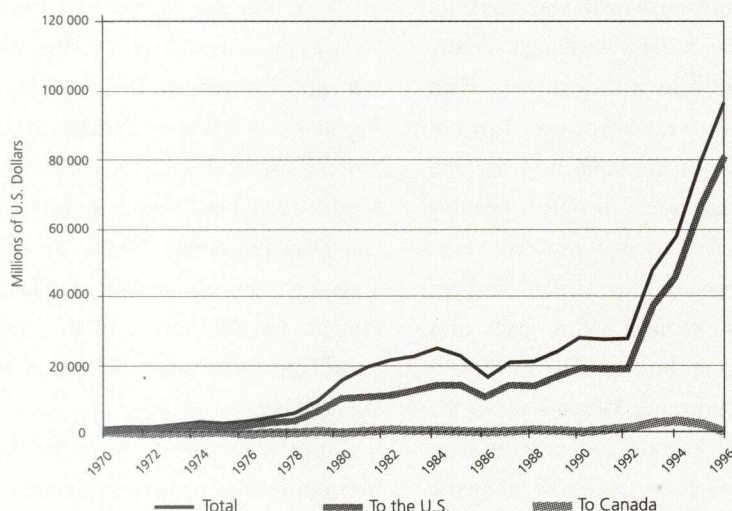
<sup>9</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," *Foreign Affairs* 72, no. 3 (summer 1993).

<sup>10</sup> UNDP, *Informe sobre el desarrollo humano* (New York: UN, 1997), p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> The UNDP report itself indicates that "of the world gross domestic product, U.S.\$23 trillion in 1993, U.S.\$18 trillion corresponded to industrialized countries and only U.S.\$5 trillion to developing countries, although the latter account for 80 percent of the world's population." *Ibid.*, p.2.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 9.

**Graph 2**  
**Total Exports/Exports to the U.S. and Canada**  
**Mexico 1970-1996**



Source: The author processed the data and created the graph based on International Monetary Fund figures, *DOTS*, for several years.





Elsa Medina

# The New Millennium and Mexico's Northern Border Population

*Gabriel Estrella Valenzuela\**

Only 20 years ago, residents of Mexican cities on the U.S.-Mexico international border could have been defined as inhabitants of "no-man's-land." At the end of the 1970s the main characteristics of this part of Mexico were its virtual isolation from the domestic market and its enormous dependency on the U.S. market.

This was because of their geographical location: to furnish the supplies that did not come in from central Mexico, they were granted a fiscal status that permitted tax-free imports. This same status later became a barrier against competing Mexican products given the high trans-

portation costs resulting from the long distances they had to be shipped.

The productive structure of this part of Mexico developed on the basis of its agricultural and livestock exports and the services and industries linked to them, as well as retail and wholesale trade and tourism. The dynamism of the area was such that its job opportunities and wage levels attracted migrants from the rest of Mexico.

This ability to attract migrants has acquired new potential because of both the Mexican economic opening and the formalization of the North American Free Trade Agreement. For that reason, this article will attempt to estimate population size fluctuations in the short and medium terms along Mexico's northern bor-

der and in five of the region's main urban centers.

First, I will analyze the growth of the cities of Mexicali, Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez, Matamoros and Nuevo Laredo in the last 55 years. My aim is not only to point out their rapid growth, but also the increasing importance of their population relative to border municipalities and states.

Secondly, I will enumerate the main demographic variables and their relationship to the national and regional economies, as well as the implications derived from our country's new development model. The aim here is to evaluate the possible continuity of recent trends in demographic growth along the northern border.

Thirdly, and in light of the first two points, I will describe the population size

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TABLE I  
MEAN ANNUAL GROWTH RATES AND TOTAL POPULATION BY STATE

States, Municipalities and Cities on Mexico's Northern Border	MEAN ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH RATE					
	1940-50	1950-60	1960-70	1970-80	1980-90	1990-95
<i>National Total</i>	2.5	3.1	3.4	3.0	2.1	2.1
<i>Northern Border States</i>	3.4	3.9	3.6	2.8	2.3	2.5
Baja California	10.8	8.6	5.4	2.6	3.7	4.3
Chihuahua	2.8	3.8	2.8	1.9	2.1	2.4
Tamaulipas	4.3	3.6	3.7	2.5	1.7	2.1
<i>Border Municipalities</i>	7.6	5.9	4.2	2.7	2.8	3.6
<i>Cities: Total</i>	10.3	8.0	5.1	3.2	3.6	4.1
Mexicali	12.9	10.3	4.4	2.5	2.6	2.5
Tijuana	13.5	9.7	6.5	4.3	5.1	5.9
Ciudad Juárez	9.4	7.4	5.1	2.8	3.9	4.2
Matamoros	11.1	7.2	4.3	3.1	3.6	3.6
Nuevo Laredo	7.0	4.8	5.1	3.0	0.8	4.1
POPULATION AT THE END OF THE PERIOD						
<i>National Total</i>	25,779,254	34,923,129	48,225,238	66,846,833	81,249,645	91,158,290
<i>Northern Border States</i>	3,762,963	5,541,100	7,848,169	10,691,887	13,246,991	15,242,430
<i>Northern Border Municipalities</i>	846,881	1,512,897	2,242,950	2,967,566	3,889,578	4,754,741
<i>Cities: Total</i>	350,580	763,987	1,234,790	1,706,031	2,411,119	3,064,654
Mexicali	64,658	174,540	263,498	341,559	438,377	505,016
Tijuana	59,950	152,374	277,306	429,500	698,752	966,097
Ciudad Juárez	122,566	252,119	407,370	544,496	789,522	995,770
Matamoros	45,737	92,327	137,749	188,745	266,055	323,974
Nuevo Laredo	57,669	92,627	148,867	201,731	218,413	273,797
RATIOS						
Border States/National Total	14.6	15.9	16.3	16.0	16.3	16.7
Border Municipalities/Border States	22.5	27.3	28.6	27.8	29.4	31.2
Border Cities/Border Municipalities	41.4	50.5	55.1	57.5	62.0	64.5

Source: 1940-1990; País y Entidades, Corona (1991); Ciudades CONAPO (1984); 1995, INEGI (1996).

expected for the northern border for the end of the century and the first decade of the new millennium. Finally, the conclusion will touch on general observations about possible implications of the expected trends.

#### POPULATION TRENDS

A first element to look at with regard to the demographics of the northern border area is population size. Over the last 45 years, the population of the six states located on the northern border (Baja California, Sonora, Chihuahua, Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas) increased from 3.7 to 15.2 million people. During the same period, the 39 municipalities located directly on the international bor-

der increased their population to 4.75 million, while the cities of Mexicali, Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez, Matamoros and Nuevo Laredo went from 350,000 to 3 million inhabitants (see Table 1).

These changes bring to light another important characteristic of population dynamics on the northern border: its very rapid growth. Here, it is interesting to point out that—with the exception of the decade from 1970 to 1980—between 1940 and 1995: 1) the six states along the northern border grew more rapidly than the rest of the country; 2) the 39 border municipalities grew faster than their respective states; and 3) the five cities mentioned above grew more quickly than the country, their states and the border municipalities (including the decade from 1970 to 1980).

What is more, while the country as a whole has displayed a continual tendency to slow its growth rate since 1970, the border municipalities and cities show the opposite trend, with increasing growth rates over the last 15 years.

The different growth rates combined with the geographic distribution of that population has generated, as a fourth characteristic, a process of high urban concentration in the five cities mentioned.<sup>1</sup>

Both the concentration of population and the sustained velocity of population growth on the northern border have been the result of different national and international policies. Among the most significant domestic measures are: a) the creation of tax-free zones for imports of both capital and consumer goods; b) the fixing of higher minimum wage levels for this area of the country; c) the establishment of irrigation districts that made for the creation of technologically advanced agricultural and livestock production destined for foreign markets; and d) public programs to foster the development of trade and industry on the Mexican border (Mendoza, 1982).

The international policies and processes with the most transcendental impact for the dynamic of Mexico's northern border have mainly originated in the United States.

From the second decade of this century processes like the following have come into play: 1) the advent of Prohibition, which propitiated the production and distribution of alcoholic beverages in the Mexican border area to supply U.S. consumers; 2) the longstanding presence of military bases in the southern United States from the 1940s on, which spurred

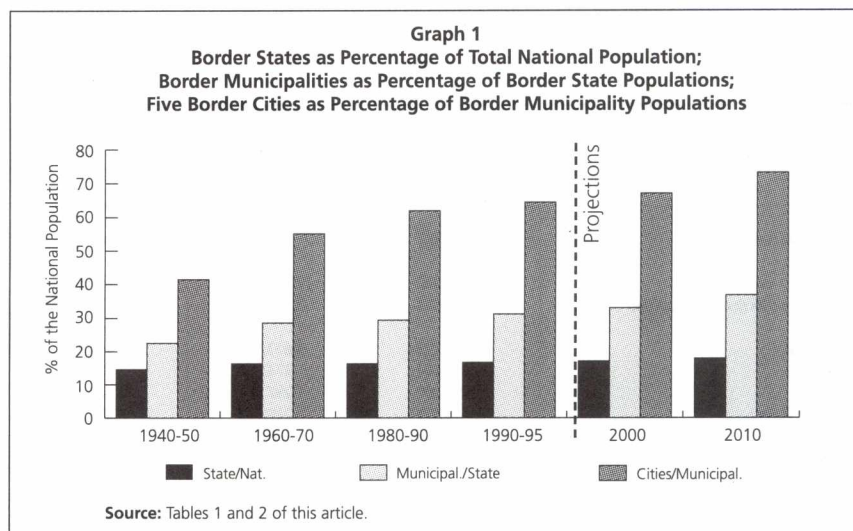


the development of tourist services in Mexican cities; 3) the operation of the Bracero Program until the mid-1960s, which turned Mexican border towns into recruiting and transit stations for migrant workers and destinations for Mexican deportees; and 4) increasing participation of U.S. investors in the development of the maquila export industry for the last three decades.

The impact of these processes on Mexico's northern border area has meant a prolonged inability to provide services and infrastructure at the rate demanded by the rapid population growth. Therefore, deficits have built up both in basic public services (drinking water, sewage, drainage, public lighting and paving) and in the development of productive and social infrastructure (streets, transportation systems, parks and recreational areas), which now combine with growing crime levels and a lack of public security derived from the black market activities propitiated by the border (contraband, drug trafficking and international undocumented migration).

#### EXPECTATIONS

The estimation of population scenarios for the northern border in the third millennium requires a basic evaluation of the possibility that the current demographic dynamic will continue. Therefore, we will briefly review the main demographic variables that should be taken into consideration—mortality, fertility and migration—their relationship to the national and regional economic context and the implications derived from our country's new development model.



While the country as a whole has displayed a continual tendency to slow its growth rate since 1970, the border municipalities and cities show the opposite trend, with increasing growth rates over the last 15 years.

#### *Central Demographic Variables*

A comparative analysis of northern border population patterns with those of the country as a whole sheds light on at least three traits that characterize this part of the country:

1. The mortality rate in Mexico's northern border states began to drop at least a decade before that of the rest of the country (Corona, 1991). As a result, the natural growth of the population sped up on the northern border, thus explaining the high population growth rates from 1950 to 1970.

2. As with the mortality rate, the birth rate in these states also changed before that of the national norm. Fertility began a sustained, tendential decline from 1960 to 1970 (Monterrubio, et al, 1993), while

in most of Mexico, this process did not begin until the second half of the 1970s.

3. The high population growth rates that have characterized this part of the country during the last half century, even given the aforementioned fluctuations, have been associated mainly with internal migratory flows (CONAPO, 1988; Estrella, 1989; Zenteno and Cruz, 1988). These flows generated a positive net migration of more than 350,000 immigrants in the six border states between 1985 and 1990 (INEGI, 1992: 18). This has been determined fundamentally by prevailing socioeconomic conditions in these states which are relatively less adverse than in the rest of Mexico. An illuminating example is the interaction observable between Baja California's population growth rate and the performance of the real minimum wage nationally.<sup>2</sup>



**TABLE 2**  
**POPULATION PROJECTIONS TO 2010**

Northern Border States, Municipalities and Cities	P o p u l a t i o n		
	1998	2000	2010*
<b>National Total</b>	97,175,582	101,200,618	123,969,045
Northern Border States	16,475,340	17,309,404	22,157,501
Northern Border Municipalities	5,315,084	5,704,658	8,125,071
<b>Cities: Total</b>	3,509,325	3,827,096	5,948,488
Mexicali	545,865	573,500	734,128
Tijuana	1,157,292	1,297,881	2,302,473
Ciudad Juárez	1,133,554	1,230,773	1,857,184
Matamoros	362,154	388,699	553,618
Nuevo Laredo	310,458	336,245	501,084
<b>RATIOS</b>			
Border States/National Total	17.0	17.1	17.9
Border Municipalities/Border States	32.3	33.0	36.7
Border Cities/Border Municipalities	66.0	67.1	73.2

\* CONAPO (1995: 62) projects 111.7 million inhabitants nationwide on the basis of the supposition that mortality and fertility rates will drop and net international migration will be negative and stable.  
**Source:** Author's projections using 1990-95 rates.

The international policies and processes with the most transcendental impact for the dynamic of Mexico's northern border have mainly originated in the United States.

### *The Influence of the Development Model*

In addition, these alternating tendencies shown by the data have occurred in the framework of particularly dynamic social conditions on Mexico's northern border. In that sense, it is worth pointing out that these demographic traits have emerged and consolidated in a context defined by the gradual change of the national economic development model, from that of a protected domestic market to an open economy and the incorporation of both goods and investment into international markets.

Throughout the period of the protectionist import-substitution model, until the end of the 1970s, the northern border's urban areas faced the insoluble contra-

diction of being unable to develop their productive apparatus. This was due, on the one hand, to their local markets being relatively small and their inability to send products into the rest of the domestic market since their output was treated as taxable "imports" because it came from free trade zones. On the other hand, their limited scale of production impeded their competitively participating in international export markets.

However, at the beginning of the 1980s the reorientation of the Mexican development model toward a productive and trade opening offered this area a new road to productive development since its proximity to the U.S. market turned it into a privileged location for export-oriented activities.

In a general sense, then, northern Mexico consolidated its attraction for internal migration at the same time that, over the last 15 years, its cities benefited increasingly from the new patterns of the localization of industry, commerce and services stemming from the country's economic and regional restructuring.<sup>3</sup>

Between 1980 and 1993, for example, of all manufacturing jobs, the percentage of employees in traditionally industrial states (Mexico City's Federal District, the State of Mexico, Jalisco, Nuevo León and Veracruz) dropped, while it increased in states like Chihuahua, Baja California, Tamaulipas, Coahuila and Sonora. At the same time the border states transformed their industrial structure with the development of electronic equipment, auto, machinery, electrical equipment and textile production (López, 1995).

### *The NAFTA Effect on the Northern Border*

As a function of this rearrangement of both national and international production and population, one of the factors that will have a determining impact on future job creation and therefore on the territorial distribution of the population is the structural change implicit in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Until now, studies have used at least two methodological approaches to the possible territorial repercussions for Mexico of NAFTA's gradual implementation. Some are based on an evaluation of 14 sociodemographic and economic-labor indicators to identify the areas of Mexico best prepared to benefit from trade integration (Gutiérrez, 1994). Others are based on observing experiences of economic



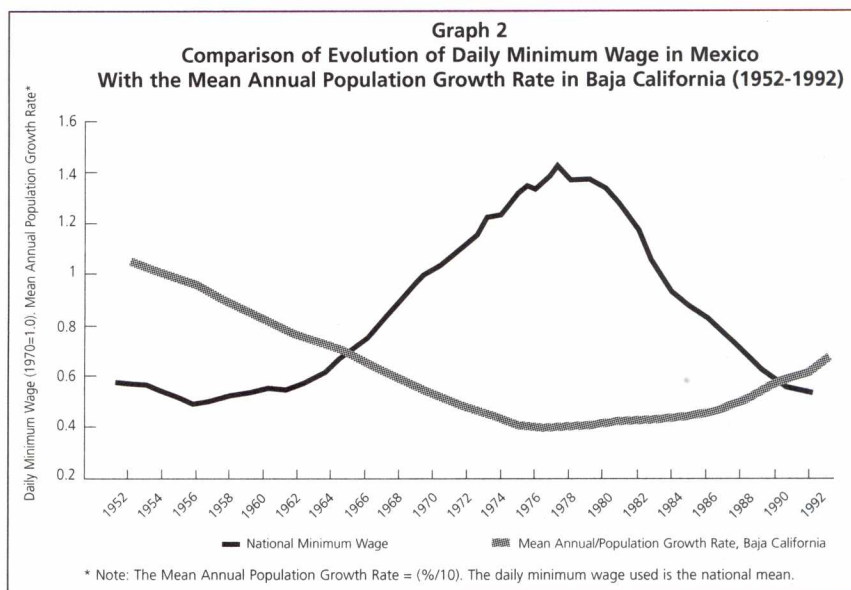
integration like the European Union's to derive feasible regional development scenarios for trade integration in North America (for example, Polese and Pérez, 1995).

Curiously, despite their different methodologies, the conclusions of the aforementioned studies are extremely similar in their prediction—even if couched in different terms—that the operation of NAFTA in Mexico will lead to three distinct kinds of regions: (i) the traditional dynamic region of Central Mexico; (ii) the regions traditionally peripheral to the most economically and demographically dynamic areas; and (iii) the emerging, dynamic northern border region(s).<sup>4</sup>

### *Population Projections*

All these factors allow us to assume that in the short and medium terms the states, municipalities and cities of the northern border will sustain the demographic tendencies they have shown in the recent past (1990-95) given that: 1) their death and fertility rates are already low and are only susceptible to marginal drops over brief periods; 2) the recovery from the most recent national economic crisis has not yet meant higher real wages, which could reverse emigration flows from the interior of the country; and 3) the increasing number of export manufacturing plants being set up on the Mexico-U.S. border make it possible to continue to maintain relatively low unemployment levels, thus making the area attractive for internal flows of migrants.

As a function of all these elements, population projections have been developed for the periods from now until the end of 1998, 2000 and 2010 using the corresponding mean annual growth rates



The high population growth rates that have characterized this part of the country during the last half century have been associated mainly with internal migratory flows.

of the 1990-95 period for the national aggregate, the six border states, the 39 municipalities and the five cities under scrutiny (see the last column of Table 1).

According to this projection, by the end of 1998, Mexico will have 97.2 million inhabitants, 16.5 million of whom will live in the 6 border states. Of these, 5.3 million will be living in the 39 border municipalities and 3.5 million will live in the five cities under study here (see Table 2).

At the end of this century, the country will have 101.2 million inhabitants, four times its 1950 population level. In that same period, the population of Mexico's six northern border states will have expanded from 3.8 million to 17.3 million people, while that of the border mu-

nicipalities will increase to 5.7 million (6.7 times the population of 1950). Mexicali, Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez, Matamoros and Nuevo Laredo will be home to 3.8 million people, 10.9 times more than in 1950.

If these trends continue, by the end of the first decade of the next millennium, at least 12 out of every 67 inhabitants of Mexico (17.9 percent of the 124 million expected inhabitants) will be living in the six northern border states.

By the end of the year 2010, Mexico's 39 municipalities bordering on the United States will be populated by 8.125 million inhabitants (8 out of every 11 residents in the border states), and 73.2 percent of these (5.95 million) will live in the five cities under consideration.



## CONCLUSIONS

The demographics suggested by these figures outline a population scenario for Mexico's northern border dominated by three general characteristics:

1. An emerging environment for the location of a new wave of industrialization gradually consolidating. Grounded in the new development model, it will favor and foster integration with international markets. This gives increasing value to the competitive advantages derived from geographical proximity to the United States, our main trade partner, and some of the markets with the greatest buying power in the world.

2. In that context, the cities of Mexicali, Tijuana, Ciudad Juárez, Matamoros and Nuevo Laredo appear to be the probable main nodes of this new industrialization—provided they can take advantage of their location and generate synergies with their emerging manufacturing culture and their own local markets—, given that in the next 12 years these cities will all have between 500,000 and 2.3 million inhabitants.

3. This, together with rapid growth, also make it possible to envisage the old deficiencies, rooted in the gap between population growth and the ability to provide services and infrastructure, increasing and becoming competitive disadvantages. This not happening will depend on both new and traditional forms of bilateral collaboration being activated with a growing reliance on local bodies which, by definition, are the most affected by the social dynamic in the border areas. ■■

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Between 1950 and 1995, the population of the six border states increased gradually until approximately one out of every 6 inhabitants of Mexico resided there (16.7 percent in 1996). Similarly, the 39 border municipalities increased the proportion of the state population they each were home to from 22.5 percent in 1950 to 31.2 percent in 1995. The five cities also concentrated increasing numbers of inhabitants vis-à-vis total border municipality residents, going from 41.4 percent in 1950 to 64.5 percent in 1995 (see Graph 1).

<sup>2</sup> For the four decades from 1951 to 1991, the national minimum wage first tended to increase in real terms and then began a sustained decline that made 1991 wage levels comparable with those of the beginning of the 1960s (see Graph 2). Likewise, while national minimum wage levels were increasing in real terms, the velocity of population growth in Baja California gradually dropped, bottoming out in the decade between 1970 and 1980. However, as soon as the real minimum wage began to drop, Baja California population growth rates reversed their trend and began a period of increasingly rapid expansion.

<sup>3</sup> Empirical studies have been done to determine the extent of the effects of the geographical location of activities and employment derived from Mexico's increased participation in global restructuring. For example, in the case of preponderantly urban activities (construction, manufacturing, commerce and services), a recent study shows that manufacturing jobs increased by 515,000 from 1980 to 1988, mostly in the North, Center North, Northeast and Northwest. Central Mexico, on the other hand, registered a drop in employees (Aguilar and Graizbord, 1995).

<sup>4</sup> Central Mexico consists of Mexico City's Federal District, the State of Mexico, Hidalgo, Puebla, Morelos and Tlaxcala. The peripheral areas would include, for example, Chiapas, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Tabasco and Veracruz. The northern border regions are Baja California and Sonora, Chihuahua and Coahuila, Nuevo León and Tamaulipas.

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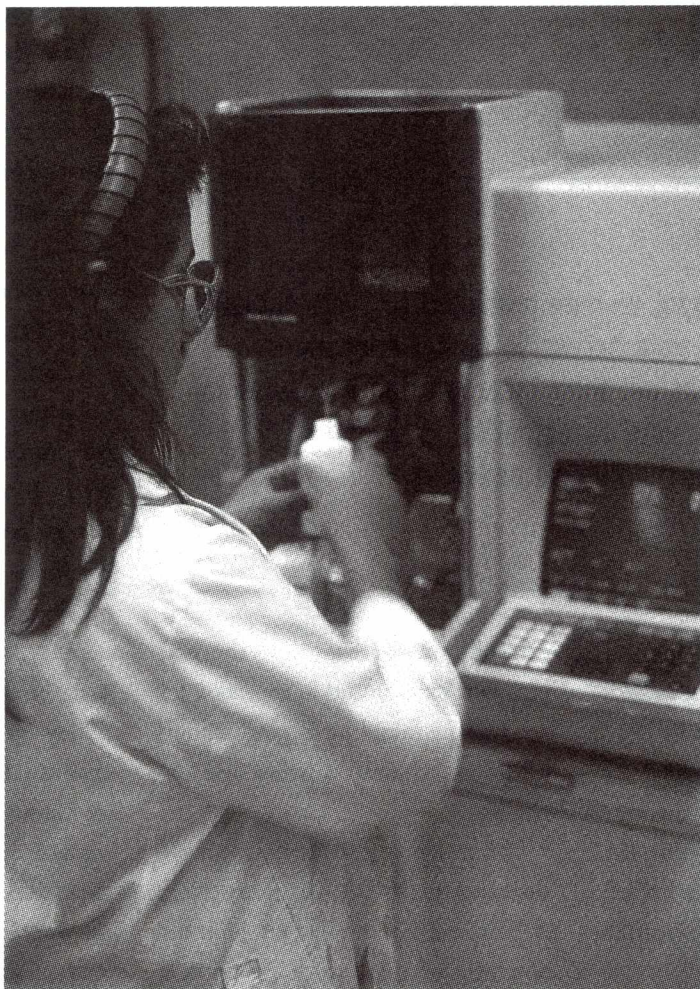
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# Sociocultural Aspects of Mexican Women in Science

*Virginia López Villegas\**



Photos by Juan Antonio López/Dei

Mexico's urban and rural areas, like those in most Latin American countries, are both multiethnic and multicultural. The cultural variations translate into values, norms, symbols and social representations

that in turn are transposed into behavior patterns distinct from one region to another with ethnic, linguistic and social variations. They regulate the mesh of social relations—interaction between men and women—that make up the different lifestyles and systems of activities, as Piaget says, carried out by men and women in today's society in Mexico.

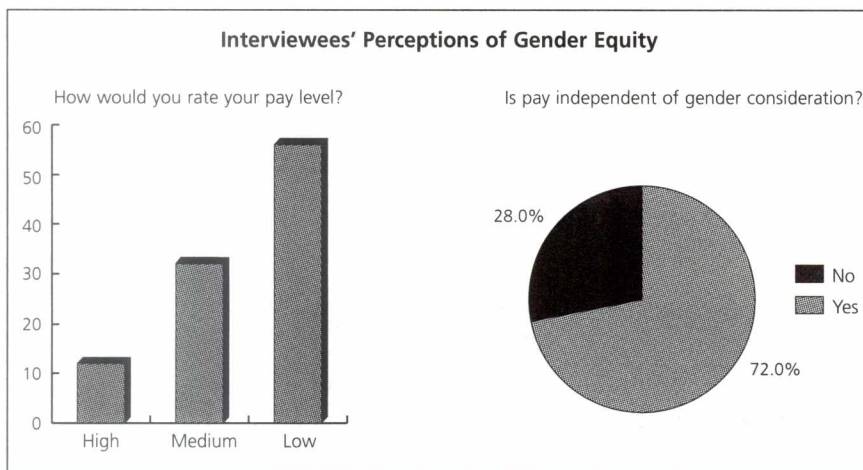
Women's traditional activities in the private sphere are reproduction, caring for and educating children and managing the family economy. This explains their late access to all levels of formal education well into the twentieth century.

The change in the feminine work force comes between 1950 and 1970, a period characterized by a drop in women's

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participation in agricultural work and their increasing entry into the manufacturing and service sectors. Between 1960 and 1970, women managed to systematically and continually gain access to higher education, and from that moment on, their incorporation in academia has led to a growing participation in scientific and technological activities.

Disinterest in women's education is nothing new; throughout Mexican history women were marginalized. In the pre-Hispanic period, the educational system of indigenous peoples—the Aztecs and Mayas among others— included formal education for boys in public establishments created expressly for that end, while girls were taught inside the family by their mothers. This situation did not improve substantially during the 300 years

of Spanish rule. In that period, the most important step forward in education for girls was the founding of girls' schools in Texcoco, Otumba, Cholula and Coyoacán.

The period of the formation of the Mexican state (1810-1920, from the War of Independence to the revolutionary movement of 1910) sheds certain light on the lives of several outstanding women, who were in contact with the liberal heroes and leaders who supported a struggle for women's independence.

This process of formation of the nation-state was affected by clashes between conservatives and liberals, each of whom defended their own national project. This led to political instability but did not affect the social fabric based on family ties.

The continuity and specificity of several historic events that changed the values and roles assigned to men and women in Mexican society today have gone unstudied.

In Latin America, like in Mexico, historical, sociological and anthropological studies about women, their lives, their interests and their activities, have not been considered a priority. This is reflected in the fact that only recently has there been interest in analyzing the gradual incorporation and participation of women in science and technology. Very few studies analyze women's presence in the different fields of knowledge or in the fastest growing disciplines over the last few years.

In our country, women have undoubtedly played a role in all the professions in recent decades; however, their participation has been lower than in industrialized countries.

Women in the sciences in most cases not only work for a wage and contribute to the family income, but also take responsibility for housework and bringing up children. In this way, a woman who works in institutions of higher learning as a researcher and/or teacher has a double or triple workday, just like other women in the work force.

I will present here a summary of some of the results of the research project "Women's Participation and Creativity in National Scientific Research in the Field of Physics," promoted by the Iberoamerican Institute for Studies on Science and Technology, carried out with the support of the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) in 1992.

The tables developed on the basis of the data obtained in the field research attempt to answer the study's general



questions: What is the level of women's participation in scientific and technology-linked activities in Mexico? and What is their contribution to scientific and technological knowledge?

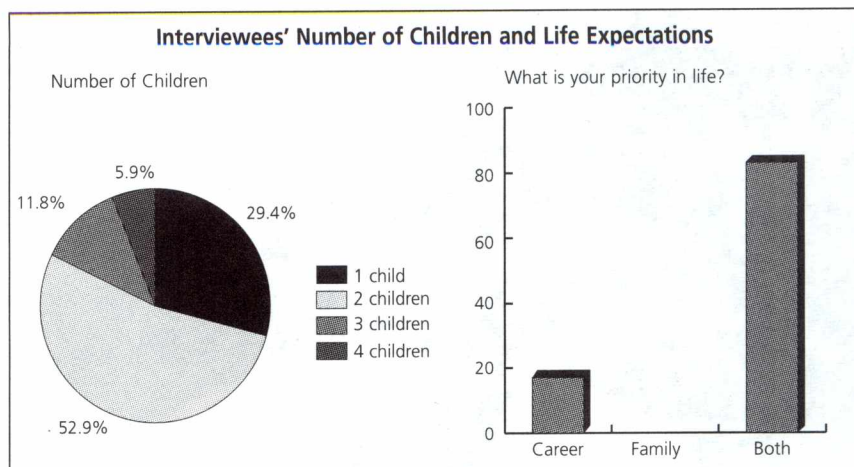
The answer to these questions allows us to get closer to them, to know who they are, where they are, what academic profile they have and the specific problems they confront in their fields of endeavor because they are women.

These results include some of the data obtained from broader research into women's participation in the following fields: medicine, physics, agronomy and social anthropology. Here, we exclusively show the outcome of interviews with selected Mexican physicists. The questions involved their family and social surroundings, including information about their parents' or spouse's activities and the number and age of their children.

In this sense, the study shows that the majority of the researchers in the sample come from homes in which their fathers had been to the university and their mothers were housewives. Their husbands have a university education and their activities are mutually compatible since more than 50 percent of them are also researchers.

With regard to their social surroundings, the questionnaire delved into who had encouraged them to go into research, the age at which they began their first project, whether they ran into obstacles or were encouraged in their work and in what way.

The researchers interviewed in the sample thought their careers were not an obstacle to having a family. All of them have children. They have had more incentives (48%) than obstacles (28%) to devel-



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op in their scientific career. The vast majority (68%) also said that their teachers were the ones who encouraged them to go into research.

It is interesting to note that the researchers interviewed did not consider their salary levels gender-linked. More than 60 percent said that even though their salaries are low, this was not gender-determined.

The sample, which includes 25 scientists who in 1992 belonged to the National System of Researchers (SNI), while not representative, is indicative of the activities carried out in their field.

The following institutions were studied: at the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the Institutes of Physics, Geophy-

sics, Astronomy, Atmospheric Sciences, the Institute for Research in Matters and the School of Sciences; at the Autonomous Metropolitan University, the Azcapotzalco and Iztapalapa campuses; and at the National Polytechnic Institute, the Center for Research and Advanced Studies (CINVESTAV) and the CINVESTAV School of Higher Learning in Physics and Mathematics.

The indicators used to select the women canvased were:

- 1) Their belonging or having belonged to the National System of Researchers (SNI).
- 2) Their having worked during 1990, 1991 and 1992 on research projects related to and/or in teaching physics. **MM**

## NOTES

a. Coordinator in charge of the project: Virginia López Villegas. Researchers in charge of the different fields: medicine, Ana María Carrillo; physics, Laura Oseo; social anthropology, Patricia Ortega; and agrarian sciences, Elvira Mazcorro and María Luisa Jiménez.

b. The project studied the participation and creativity of women scientists according to the following criteria: employment at specialized research and/or teaching centers; mean productivity and creativity in terms of publications, books, specialized journals, patents, trademarks, research reports and even popular informational publications about the use of innovations; membership in scientific societies; and participation in congresses, seminars and workshops.

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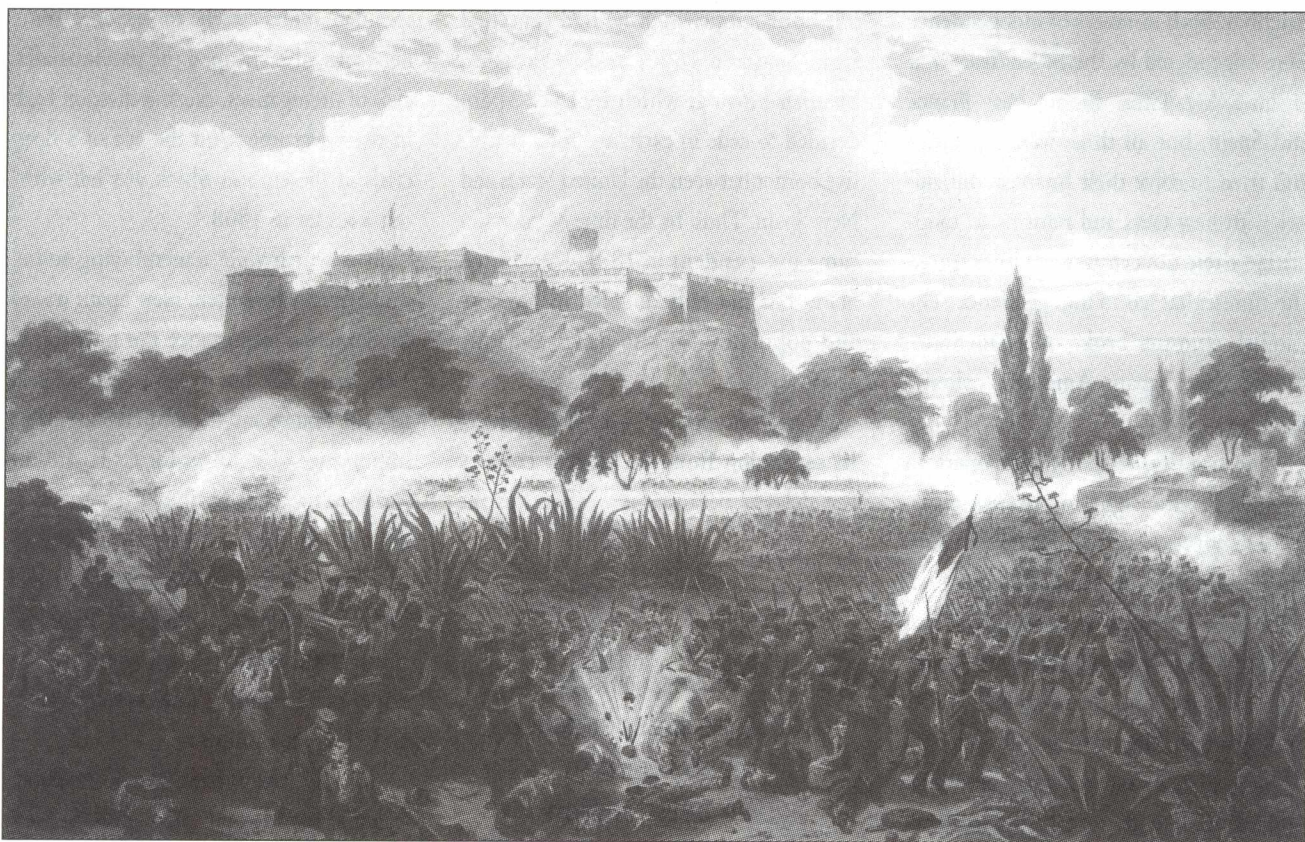
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# An Inevitable Disaster Foretold

## The 1846-1847 War with the United States

Josefina Zoraida Vázquez\*



Carlos Nebel, *Assault on Chapultepec-Quitman's Attack*, c.1851 (lithograph).

On the 14th of September, 150 years ago, U.S. troops launched the occupation of Mexico City.

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The lithograph was taken from page 90 of the book *Chapultepec. Historia y Presencia*, edited by Mario de la Torre, privately published by Smurfit Cartón y Papel de México in 1988. It has been reprinted here by authorization of the Institute for Historical Research's Rafael García Granados Library.

Eyewitness Carlos María de Bustamante wrote in his diary, "The Republic of Mexico, its independence and freedom have all ended." Perhaps the bitterness of the time, and the bitterness handed down to Mexicans today, originates not only in the undoubted injustice of the war, but also from not having won a single victory, from the division of the political class and the indifference of both citizenry

and government officials as long as the fight did not affect them directly. Historians of today must contend with another question: How did the rich and prosperous New Spain, "the most precious jewel in the Spanish Crown," turn into the weak and impotent republic of 1846 in just a few decades? By contrast, the 13 Anglo-American colonies, which when they became independent in 1775 were



practically insignificant, had become an ambitious and dynamic republic that would seize half its neighbor's territory. It is worthwhile contributing to an explanation that can free us from simplistic, defeatist answers that still affect us today.

The 50 years between the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the war was a half century of blessings for the United States and misfortunes for its southern neighbor. Both instances of independence were engendered by the Seven Years War (1756-1763). Great Britain beat France and Spain, but all three went bankrupt and tried to solve their financial difficulties with new taxes and reforms to modernize their government. This created the unrest that led to independence. The English colonies broke off immediately and the Hispano-American colonies later.

The priority of the Anglo-American struggle for the right to representation, in the context of the Enlightenment, ensured them European sympathies and, since the 13 colonies were less important to Great Britain than their productive "West Indies," and they also had France and Spain as allies, their war of independence was short and relatively bloodless. Great Britain, with a weak, diplomatically isolated government, decided to recognize U.S. independence in 1783, allowing it to enter the concert of nations as a full member. It also granted the new nation a generous border that included the part of Louisiana Britain had already won from France.

The new state was founded not without difficulties, but its brilliant politicians managed to keep it moving forward. The first government experiment, the confederation, failed, but a group of its

officials convened the Constitutional Convention which founded the federation in 1789. In that same year the French Revolution broke out, beginning a quarter century of European wars which allowed the United States to experiment with its government without interference, to trade actively as a neutral nation, to absorb European immigrants, to take advantage of Napoleon's 1803 offer to sell Louisiana (which he had snatched from Spain in 1800) and to threaten Spanish Florida, which in 1817 Spain decided to cede in exchange for a definitive border between the United States and New Spain. Thus, by the time Mexico became independent in 1821, the United States had not only doubled its territory and population, it also had a dynamic economy.

Mexico would not have the same luck. Its separation from the mother country was delayed because New Spain was the

U.S. recognition  
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contributed to  
the deterioration  
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empire's most important kingdom and therefore they had very close ties. New Spain's prosperity had begun to fade by the eighteenth century since the modernization of the Spanish state had shaken New Spain's society, government and economy, and the new taxes and monopolies caused great distress. In addition, the reforms reorganized the territory in intendancies<sup>1</sup> which, although they corresponded more closely to regional trade networks, also stripped the previous officials of prerogatives, causing division high in the government on the eve of a deep crisis of the empire which was left without a leader in 1808.<sup>2</sup>

It is worthwhile remembering something usually forgotten: New Spain was of fundamental importance not only for its own metropolis, but increasingly for Great Britain, France and the United States. The importance of its silver for trade and for European wars had brought it into international markets. During the Napoleonic Wars, silver from New Spain became key for the contending forces. This would make it vulnerable, turning it into the target of the trading powers's ambitions and U.S. expansionism.

In the early nineteenth century, Spain's bankruptcy had pulled New Spain down with it. Its unfortunate wars had plagued it with taxation and both voluntary and forced loans that affected all classes of society, and its income poured out to the Caribbean or the Iberian peninsula, decapitalizing it. An 1804 decree ordered that all the Catholic Church's liquid assets be sent to the Crown as a kind of forced loan, and, since the Church served as the bank of the realm, this measure eliminated credit to agriculture, mining and trade and



caused general discontent. On the eve of independence, the old kingdom of New Spain was in crisis: indebted, decapitalized, with a fragmented elite and a beggared population. It was in these conditions that it would meet the crisis of 1808.

New Spain's very importance made for a long and bloody struggle for independence without any external support whatsoever, given the general hostility to fights for freedom after the excesses of the French Revolution. The 1812 Constitution, an encouragement to those who aspired to autonomy, was suspended by Fernando VII in 1814, further alienating people's loyalty to the Spanish Crown. This and the weariness of the general populace vis-à-vis excesses by both royalists and insurgents allowed Agustín de Iturbide to create the coalition of forces that consummated the independence.<sup>3</sup>

The new state was founded in deplorable conditions. The conflict had cost the country half its work force; its agriculture and trade were ruined; the mines, flooded; the roads full of bandits. Bankruptcy, decapitalization and political inexperience were feeble bases to build a state on, especially one that covered an immense stretch of territory bereft of communications with a heterogeneous, badly distributed population. This, together with the siege by the commercial powers, made Mexico the most threatened country in the hemisphere. The Great Alliance's exaggerated emphasis on the legitimacy of existing laws was an obstacle to Mexico's recognition, and its mother country did not grant recognition until late 1836, forcing it to go into debt to defend itself against attempts of reconquest.

The United States awoke ambivalent sentiments: admiration for its political sys-

tem and development and fear of the menace of its expansionism. Mexico sought to emulate it, and the Mexican Constitution—although modified by regionalism, making it more radical—was inspired in the U.S. document. Thus, the federal government that was set up was very weak, making it impossible for it to function. Dependent for income on payments from the states of the new republic determined according to their wealth and population size—payments which were only irregularly made—the federal government, reduced to financing itself on customs fees, soon fell into the clutches of moneylenders. It also imitated the United States' colonization policy. Since it placed high hopes on it, Mexico offered [colonists] better conditions for making Texas a model for its uninhabited North, but the results were disastrous.

Even though almost no one recognizes it, the Texans had practically no rea-

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son for complaint. Their declaration of independence, aimed at getting sympathy and support from the United States, imitated the language of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, complaining of tyranny and not being able to follow their own religious beliefs, forgetting that they had entered as Catholics. Using centralism as a pretext meant forgetting that the first colonists had sworn allegiance to centralist monarchies. Almost all their complaints had been favorably dealt with by 1834; they were even authorized to use English in administrative and legal matters, and were granted the right to trial by jury.<sup>4</sup> To favor Texas separating from Mexico, the annexationists manipulated the colonists' fear of Mexico's anti-slavery policies and the unhappiness caused by the opening of the Customs Office when the period of tax exemption for the area ended. With the open but indirect support of U.S. President Jackson, carelessness by Mexican President General Antonio López de Santa Anna ensured independence, since General Vicente Filisola obeyed orders from his captive president and led the Mexican troops south of the Rio Grande; later, conditions in Mexico made it impossible to organize another expedition.<sup>5</sup>

U.S. recognition of Texas independence contributed to the deterioration of relations between the two countries, in addition to the problem of war reparations. The worst thing was that by the 1840s, the asymmetry of 1821 had become even sharper. The U.S. population was now over 20 million, while Mexico had only 7 million people. Both countries had to deal with different internal political factions and regional division, but the expansionist fever neutralized

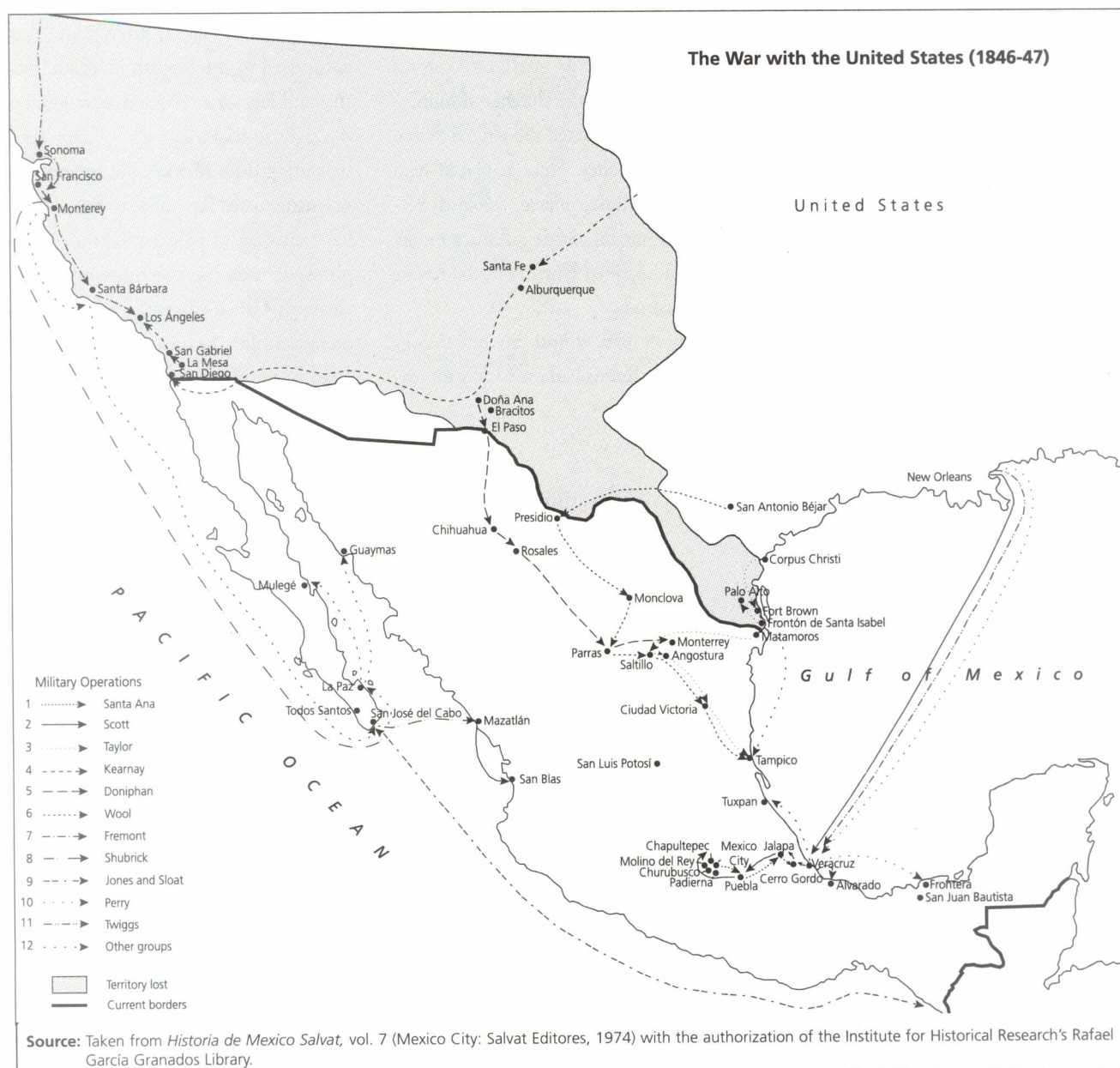


them in the United States while in Mexico it rendered federalism, centralism and even temporary dictatorships unable to function (1841-1843). The moderate Mexican government, aware of its inability to wage a war, began negotiations in 1845 with Texas, and, therefore, when the United States annexed it, the moderate government had to resign. Mexico, faced with two overwhelming

threats, war with the United States and the Spanish conspiracy to set up a monarchy, without allies, could do nothing but avoid provoking hostilities according to British counsel. But, U.S. President James Polk was determined to risk a war to acquire California and New Mexico, although he would have preferred to avoid the war and acquire the territories through bribes or a simple purchase. Polk simu-

lated an attempt at negotiations, but his envoy arrived with inappropriate credentials and offers of purchase; when the envoy was not received, Polk ordered Zachary Taylor's army to advance toward the Rio Grande into Mexican—or at the very least, disputed—territory.

Once the war was unleashed, the results were predictable. The first defeats increased centralism's discredit and in





the midst of the war, federalism was reestablished, making the organization of defense efforts even more difficult. The Mexican government had neither material nor human resources; its artillery and armament were obsolete; its officers, unprofessional; and its soldiers, raw recruits. The U.S. forces had a professional army and modern artillery, sanitation and clean-up services, as well as volunteers ready to be trained. This made it possible for it to dispatch several armies at once to attack simultaneously on different fronts, while the navy blockaded Mexico's ports, cutting off the Mexican government's main source of income.

With a small population and defenseless, New Mexico and California were occupied almost without resistance. The sacrifices made in the remainder of the territory turned out to be futile. The defeats demoralized a badly fed, badly armed and unpaid army that watched as the wounded were abandoned and had to march from the north to the east to join battle with fresh troops. Impotence increased political differences. Mexico's different states did not understand that the U.S. objective was "the walls of the Montezumas" and they did not support the national government to defend the capital. The general populace, seeing it abandoned by the army, tried desperately to defend it, which resulted in rivers of blood being spilt.

Meanwhile, U.S. victories had produced a movement at home clamoring for absorbing all of Mexico, although Polk was satisfied with a goodly piece. However, U.S. Commissioner Nicholas Trist disobeyed his orders to return to Washington for new instructions and negotiated a peace treaty. Later, Trist's wife would write

that, just as they were about to sign the treaty...one of the Mexicans, Don Bernardo Couto, remarked to him [Trist],

"This must be a proud moment for you; no less proud for you than it is humiliating for us." To this Mr. Trist replied, "We are making peace, let that be our thought." "But," said he to us in relating it, "could those Mexicans have seen into my heart at that moment, they would have known that my feeling of shame as an American was far stronger than theirs could be as Mexicans. For though it would not have done for me to say so there, that was a thing for every right-minded American to be ashamed of, and I was of it. This had been my feeling at all our conferences and especially at moments when I had felt it necessary to insist upon things which they were averse to. Had my course at such moments been governed by my conscience as a man, and my sense of justice as an individual American, I should have yielded in every instance. Nothing prevented my doing so but the conviction that the treaty would then be one which there would be no chance for the acceptance of by our government. My object, throughout was, not to obtain all I could, but on the contrary to make the treaty as little exacting as possible from Mexico, as was compatible with its being accepted at home. In this I was governed by two considerations: one was the iniquity of the war, as an abuse of power on our part; the other was that the more disadvantageous the treaty was made for Mexico, the stronger would be the ground of opposition to it in the Mexican Congress by the party who had boasted of its ability to frustrate any peace measures."<sup>6</sup>

Disobedience would be very costly for Trist. By contrast, the treaty not only saved the nation—as Don Manuel de la Peña said—but it also averted the need to hand over even more territory to the United States. In any case, the country had learned a very painful lesson. A century and a half after the war, its memory should warn us about how important it is to always put the interests of Mexico before internal divisions and partisan differences. **VM**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Between 1786 and 1812, New Spain was divided into 12 intendancies, an administrative district or province; each intendancy was headed by an intendente, the chief administrative official, like a governor, who also controlled the district treasury. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>2</sup> In 1808, the Spanish people heroically resisted Joseph Bonaparte's invasion, expelling the intruder, but leaving the Spanish Crown unoccupied for a short time. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>3</sup> In 1821, Agustín de Iturbide, a criollo attached to the royalist forces, managed to establish an alliance with the insurgents led by Vicente Guerrero, who was finally able to force the capitulation of the last viceroy of New Spain, Juan O'Donjú. [Editor's Note.]

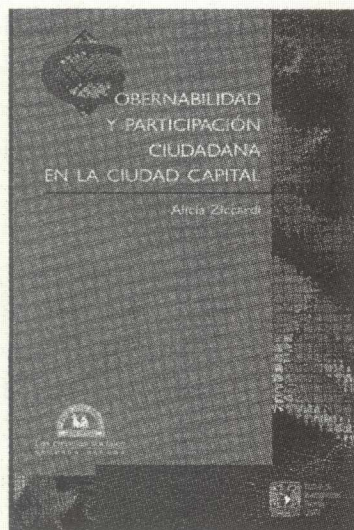
<sup>4</sup> In Mexico the legal norm was and continues to be trial before a judge; trial by jury is non-existent. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>5</sup> In 1836, Santa Anna led troops to San Antonio to enforce Mexican customs regulations and, after his victory at the Alamo, engaged the army of the recently declared independent Texas, headed by Sam Houston. After practically defeating Houston, Santa Anna was taken prisoner during a surprise attack made when he and his troops were asleep. Houston then extracted from him the recognition of Texan independence in return for his freedom. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>6</sup> Robert W. Drexler, *Guilty of Making Peace. A Biography of Nicholas P. Trist* (New York: University Press of America, 1991), pp. 130-131.



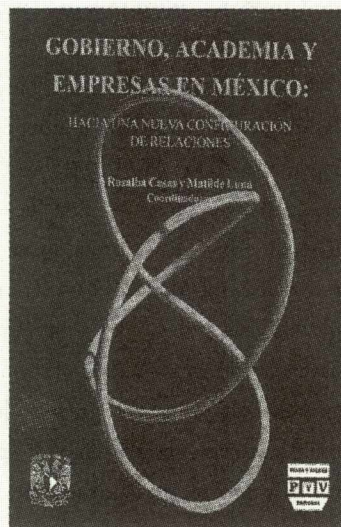
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Alicia Ziccardi

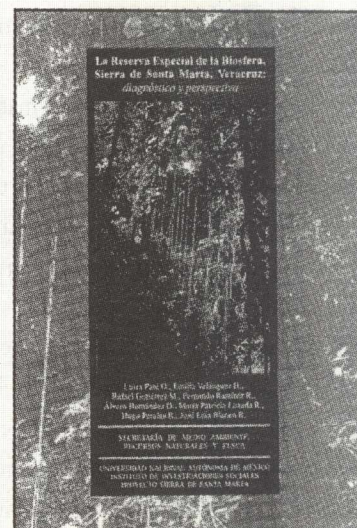
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## La Reserva Especial de la Biosfera Sierra de Santa Marta, Veracruz: Diagnóstico y perspectiva

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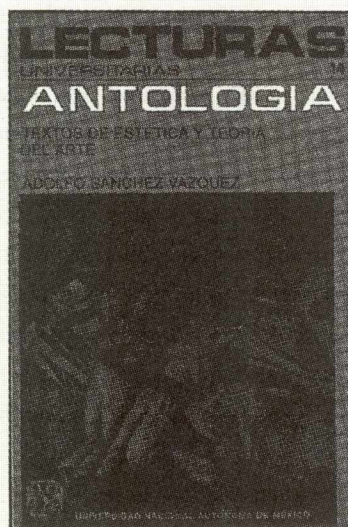
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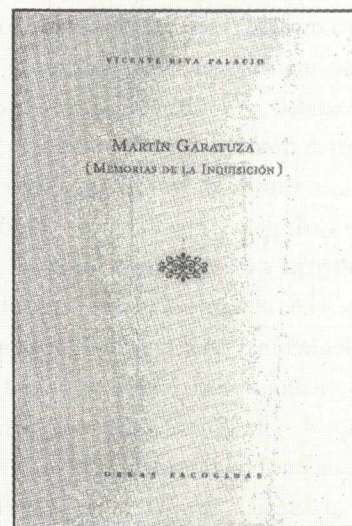
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# Hemispheric Free Trade

## The Discussion in the United States

Elizabeth Gutiérrez Romero\*



There are currently two points of view regarding U.S. trade policy, its design and implementation on a regional level. From the point of view of the executive branch, and particularly for President William Clinton, the prevailing view is that free trade and specific agreements will yield positive results and advantages for the United States, even when the agreements are with less developed countries. This is the basis for his determination to actively support and promote trade agreements with different

bodies and at different levels, both with global institutions and regionally and bilaterally with different governments.

In that sense, the White House view backs the most general interests of the nation at the same time that it takes into account its external implications, both economic and political. Among the economic considerations is the fact that markets opening up have strengthened U.S. exports, which have increased 42 percent in the last four years and are considered the basis for about one third of the country's overall growth. At the same time, export activity has stimulated the cre-

ation of high technology jobs and higher wages; between 1992 and 1997 1.5 million jobs linked to exports were created, with wages almost 15 percent over the national average.

On the other hand, however, another view is held by Congress, which is responsible for managing and domestically implementing trade policy, in particular measures that specifically protect U.S. companies and the different national economic players. The Congress authorizes the executive through fast track to begin trade negotiations. In contrast with the favorable 1997 Senate vote for fast

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The presidents at the April 1998 Second Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile.

Photos reprinted courtesy of the President of Mexico's Press Office



track, the House of Representatives vote on the question was postponed since many members are concerned that free trade will harm U.S. workers and deepen the trade deficit.

It is Congress, through its International Trade Commission, that is responsible for determining possible damage that international trade might cause to U.S. producers. Therefore, both the Congress and the commission itself are subject to the pressure of powerful interest groups who lobby to try to protect themselves from foreign imports.

This is why the results of U.S. trade policy can seem and, indeed, be, contradictory, since the executive is less subject to this kind of specific pressure, while members of Congress are answerable directly to these pressure groups and demanding constituents can threaten their reelection.

#### THE UNCERTAINTY OF HEMISPHERIC FREE TRADE

The existence of these two sources of influence partially explains the difficulties encountered by the proposal made at the First Summit of the Americas in December 1994 to create a free trade area for all of the Americas that could be established by extending the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to the countries of Central and South America, beginning with Chile. –

Although President Clinton has repeatedly argued that the extension of free trade to the entire hemisphere would benefit the United States, the process has suffered a serious setback given that he was not able to get the power he needed through fast-track authorization to promote it at the Second Summit of the Americas this April in Chile.

Clinton continues to aim for a hemispheric free trade agreement for the year 2005, arguing that, despite the limited number of U.S. exports to Latin American countries, which, discounting Mexico, only account for 8 percent of its total exports, the region has shown dynamic growth and that it will probably increase its requirements on imports, one-third of which come from the United States. In addition, the trade barriers that the U.S. faces in Latin American markets are three times higher than those now in force at home.

#### FREE TRADE WITH MEXICO

#### A MIRROR OF HEMISPHERIC FREE TRADE

The expectations for free trade in the hemisphere can be drawn from the analysis of the evolution of trade between Mex-



At the Second Summit of the Americas, the presidents did not discuss hemisphere-wide free trade.



ico and the United States, two profoundly unequal economies: the GDP of the former comes to only about 4 percent of the latter.

NAFTA has contributed to an enormous expansion of trade between the two countries despite the Mexican crisis and 1995 recession. For the first three years of NAFTA (1994-96), U.S. exports to Mexico rose 37 percent, while Mexican exports to the United States increased 83 percent; bilateral trade came to about U.S.\$130 billion.

The first year the treaty was in effect, U.S. exports grew 22.1 percent and the U.S. surplus was 1.3 billion dollars. However, because of Mexico's financial crisis, in 1995, U.S. exports dropped 8.9 percent and the trade balance reversed, with a U.S.\$15.4 billion trade deficit for the United States. This was caused by the devaluation of the peso, which made U.S. products more expensive at the same time that the average Mexican income dropped considerably. On the other hand, Mexican goods were cheaper for the United States, whose economy was clearly expanding.

Despite the crisis, U.S. exports to Mexico remained about 10 percent higher than they had been before NAFTA (in 1993 they made up 69 percent of Mexico's imports, while by 1996, they came to 76 percent). Mexico, for its part, kept its promises and complied with the schedule of annual tariff reductions agreed on in the treaty.

This situation contrasts sharply with Mexico's 1982 financial crisis, when measures to ensure total protectionism of trade were taken: absolutely all imports had to be authorized. There were 16 different tariff rates, averaging 27 percent,

and reaching up to 100 percent. This led to a 50 percent drop in U.S. exports to Mexico between 1981 and 1983, while more than half the jobs—over 200,000—linked to these exports disappeared.

By January 1994, half of U.S. exports to Mexico entered the country duty free; in 1995, the most dynamic exports were semiconductors, computers, machinery, tools and medical equipment. By 1996, the average Mexican import duty on U.S. products was only 4.9 percent, less than half the 1993 10-percent level.

Even though, just like before, the states which exported most to Mexico were Texas and California, practically all the states in the U.S. increased goods sent to Mexico, which grew faster than those sent to other parts of the world: during the first three years of NAFTA, 39 of the 50 U.S. states increased exports to Mexico.

#### CONCLUSIONS

All this leads us to conclude that for the United States, a free trade agreement with a less developed country has been positive, despite its trade deficit with Mexico.

With growing, dynamic foreign trade, the United States can boost its economic power. In addition, domestically, promoting foreign trade serves the fundamental end of raising productivity, which in turn increases U.S. companies' competitiveness both in domestic and international markets. The most probable result of free trade for the U.S. economy is its specialization in high tech goods and services, a market niche that requires highly skilled jobs and high wages. These expectations arise out of the participation in the world market of the aerospace, electronic and

telecommunications industries as part of total U.S. exports.

In fact, real U.S. exports of goods and services to the whole world have grown 20 percent since 1993, allowing it to once again take its place as the world's largest exporter, with 12 percent of global exports. However, despite its competitiveness in world markets, the United States still has a trade deficit, which, according to its own officials, is mainly due to macroeconomic factors, including increased investment (only a part of which is financed by domestic savings), increased income and a greater demand for goods and services. They argue, however, that this has not led to a drop in productive growth or employment.

Given this situation, the inability of the United States to negotiate a hemisphere-wide free trade agreement on the fast track becomes more important. In practice, it lowers its leadership ability vis-à-vis free trade, as was reflected at the recent Second Summit of the Americas in Santiago.

Despite the United States' excellent trade figures with Latin America and the Caribbean (not counting Mexico, its exports to the region grew 110 percent between 1990 and 1996), the Santiago agenda did not include the question of hemispheric free trade. The topics dealt with political and social conditions in the area, like democracy, the defense of human rights, freedom of the press, etc., which in the U.S. view are prerequisites for setting up the Free Trade Area of the Americas.

The fact that the discussion at the Santiago summit veered away from free trade toward other social and political topics shows the great weight that domestic questions have on the U.S. view of its policy toward the hemisphere. **MM**



# The American Community in Mexico

## A Research Agenda

*Alejandro Mercado Celis\**

**T**he relationship between Mexico and the United States has been explored from the point of view of different disciplines and analytical dimensions. For example, economic studies have emphasized the macro-economic relationship, using neoclassical models. Without questioning the contribution these studies make to understanding the two countries' economic integration, clearly research is needed on its micro-economic aspects including a look at qualitative variables involving the social practices underlying them.

A critical point for research is the role the U.S. community in Mexico has played in industrial restructuring and the incursion of Mexican companies into the U.S. market. U.S. citizens have participated in Mexico's economic life throughout modern history, but documentary sources do not deal exhaustively with the topic, unlike the case of other groups of immigrants, like the Lebanese, the Jews and the French.

While the lack of studies on the U.S. community in Mexico is surprising, it may well be due to the way the group integrated itself into the country. First, it should be pointed out that the majority of this particular community, in contrast to oth-

ers, does not reside permanently in the country; it is a community in continual movement and flux. Second, the reasons for U.S. citizens' stay in Mexico are also different, linked to diplomatic activities or specific economic projects which do not require a definitive move to Mexico. However, in the last 20 years, this has changed. For example, places like Ajijic in the state of Jalisco, and San Miguel de Allende in the state of Guanajuato, have attracted large numbers of retirees, and a growing number of U.S. students come to avoid the exorbitant costs of higher education at home (the Autonomous University of Guadalajara has enrolled many of them). Also, growing U.S. investment in Mexico due to the free trade agreement has brought with it a flow of executives and technicians who seem to be remaining in the country for longer periods.

Beyond the obvious economic effect of U.S. investment in Mexico, it is particularly interesting to research the secondary effects of the presence of the U.S. community in the country. To illustrate this process, I will use a case study of mine. For different reasons, the Guadalajara metropolitan area has attracted one of the largest communities of U.S. citizens resident in Mexico. Their presence and direct and indirect participation in the industrial districts of the area is having an important

impact on the way these systems are developing, as well as creating possibilities for access to the U.S. market.

To understand how the U.S. community residing in Guadalajara is creating conditions that affect local industrial restructuring, we first have to describe the characteristics of industry in the area. Industrialization in Guadalajara is particularly interesting because its manufacturing structure and specialization in certain products make it similar to the structure and specialization of certain Italian industrial districts: based on small companies working in traditional products like furniture, jewelry, shoes and clothing, among others, they have been able to capture international market niches and effectively compete with large multinational corporations. Guadalajara and its metropolitan area—dubbed "the big city of small companies" by Patricia Areas—concentrate an important number of small and medium-sized firms specialized in "design-intensive" industries. Thus, a large proportion of Guadalajara's industry has evolved in design-intensive consumer goods, using craft-based production techniques in small firms. The main sectors make a variety of household items like ceramics, glass and iron crafts, as well as different wood products and wooden furniture for the home. There are also high

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Alejandro Mercado Celis

Mexican style furniture produced by the American community residing in Ajijic, Jalisco.

A critical point for research is the role the U.S. community in Mexico has played in industrial restructuring and the incursion of Mexican companies into the U.S. market.

indices of specialization in jewelry and silver hand-made products.

Each of these sectors has its own characteristics, level of development and particular problems. However, their geographical proximity indicates interesting common aspects. First, they share a history and heritage expressed today in two ways. One is the tradition of craft production that has allowed them to reproduce and sustain economic activity over a long period in the face of changing economic conditions. The other is the historical construction of an aesthetic identity that defines the particularities of Guadalajara products and gives them the benefits of a collective, recognizable image on the national and international markets. Second, to varying degrees, all these sectors share a common institutional space. By this, I mean that their markets and other related economic institutions are very close or even overlap. For example, retail distributors and exporters tend to group these products in the same place, as in the case of home furnishing stores or specialized craft-design stores.

Third, the sectors share microspaces within Guadalajara's metropolitan area, Tonalá and Tlaquepaque being the core centers. Traditionally, these cities have concentrated both production and commercial districts as well as a variety of common services.

Now, how and where does the American community in Guadalajara enter into this picture? It participates both directly and indirectly through different activities, the most important being its direct impact on design-intensive industries as producers. Some studies report the establishment of crafts workshops owned by U.S. citizens or in association with local artisans. According to these studies, some of these actors' have played an important part in introducing new techniques and designs. These techniques may have increased the scale of production and therefore market reach, but currently it is not possible to evaluate precisely the impact and dissemination of economic practices brought to the area by these actors. However, an outstanding case is that of the U.S. producer known as Billy Moon, who has built a very dynamic man-

ufacturing and export operation based on the local aesthetic heritage and the knowledge and training of the local work force. His company produces wooden furniture and covers a broad spectrum of home furnishings. His main showroom and workshop is in Ajijic, which, as we have already mentioned, is the main place of residence of the U.S. community in the area.

Acting as intermediaries between the U.S. market and local producers is another activity the community participates in. This may well be a critical aspect of the dynamic of the industrial district. On the one hand, the U.S. intermediaries are creating a space for information that solves local producers' problem of seeking export markets. At the same time, because the production firms are very small, they have neither the resources nor the knowledge—like speaking English and a variety of specific skills involved in the contracts—to do their own promotion.

Another important form of intermediation that seems to be gaining strength in the area is sub-contracting. In this case, the



intermediary agent puts U.S. producers or distributors into contact with local producers who sub-contract to produce a specific item in predetermined quantities. This is another form of exporting that changes the risks producers face when seeking to enter foreign markets. However, it is equally possible that this kind of exporting also curtails opportunities for economic learning processes given that models and quality standards are not determined or formulated by producers. On the other hand, intermediary activities may also be spreading information within the industrial agglomeration in the sense that being in direct contact with U.S. markets means the possibility of monitoring trends and designs in those markets.

The U.S. community in Guadalajara may also have very important indirect effects on local producers. From the 1970s

on, and more and more in the 1990s, Guadalajara has attracted multinational corporate investment in the electronics industry. The location of these companies has meant the creation of a high-income group that has probably generated demand for local products of high material and aesthetic quality. This group would also include the retiree community of Ajijic and people linked to the Autonomous University of Guadalajara. Lastly, the area has traditionally also attracted a large number of U.S. tourists. One way or another, all of these groups have probably helped to disseminate local styles and products in the United States, consequently creating better conditions for export. Thus, the impact of the American community is expressed both in its direct involvement as producers or as intermediaries, or indirectly through the dissemination

of awareness of Guadalajara crafts and products in the U.S. market.

The case I have briefly presented brings home the need to take up lines of research around what we could call in general "the United States of Mexico." Both countries have been penetrated by an immense variety of social, political, cultural and economic processes which make it possible to observe "the other" in "our" space.

At the same time, it is in the microeconomic and microsocial processes where we can finally observe general integration processes. Recognizing this level of analysis and understanding the concrete actors will facilitate comprehension of the general process. Equally, incorporating the social practices governing integration may generate strategic spheres for public action that could take advantage of already existing social spaces and networks. **MM**



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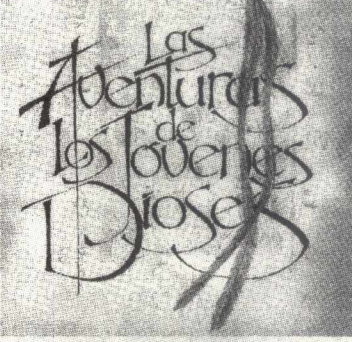
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# Regionalization in Canada and Latin America

## NAFTA and Mercosur

*Elisa Dávalos\**

Today's formation of regional blocs has forced most countries to reinsert themselves in the world economy regionally. Canada, as a developed country and next-door-neighbor to the United States, has signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as has Mexico, while the rest of the Latin American countries have signed different regional projects. Among the most outstanding of these is Mercosur, involving the strongest and most diversified economies of the southern part of the hemisphere.

Since independence, Latin America has a long tradition of projects and discussions about integration. However, these projects never encountered ideal conditions for developing until very recently. "The most important aspect of political life in Hispanic America in the nineteenth century was the setting up of new nation-states that individually linked up directly to the world market....It was in this context of affirmation of national sovereignty that projects for Latin American integration emerged."<sup>1</sup> Underlying these attempts was the region's interest in protecting itself both from Spain and from the Monroe Doctrine. However, the

project of erecting nation-states was economically more attractive than regional integration.

A second important moment when Latin American integration was proposed was in the mid-twentieth century:

In the 1950s... new trends changed the composition of world trade... the participation of Latin America dropped from more than 12 percent to less than 7 percent between 1950 and 1965. This transformation gave growing weight to manufactured products to the detriment of raw materials....The adoption of import substitution policies was the natural response to the deterioration in the terms of exchange....It was in this context that ECLAC [the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean] and its main theorist, Raúl Prebisch, developed what we could call the Doctrine of Economic Integration for Latin America.<sup>2</sup>

At the 1958 ECLAC meeting held in Santiago, Chile, Prebisch said,

The process of integration could not be left solely to the forces of the market, to the gradual, progressive lowering of customs duties; in addition, agreements to complement industries, to distribute the output

of a specific industry among different member countries, must be sought, not only to take advantage of the division of labor and specialization, but also to speed up equitable distribution of the fruits of integration.<sup>3</sup>

Historically, the Canadian discussion about economic integration has not had this slant since north of it lies the North Pole and its southern neighbor is the world's most powerful nation, the United States, with which its economic asymmetry is very marked.

Canadian discussions about economic integration with the United States are nothing new either. Perhaps one of the most relevant moments in this sense was the discussion about the signing of a "Reciprocity Accord" between both countries in 1854. In fact, this was actually a free trade agreement on natural resources that lasted ten years. Underlying it was to a great extent Canada's search for safe markets after Great Britain abolished its colonies' tariff privileges because its rapid industrialization put the priority on importing the cheapest raw materials regardless of their place of origin. The signing of this accord was also imbued with an active pro-integrationist discussion on the part of important industrial sectors of Canada.<sup>4</sup>

\* Researcher at CISAN.



Thus, we can see that while in Latin America the concept of integration was permeated with common ideals from the last century on (the original proposals were made by Simón Bolívar at a time when the region began to be made up of nation-states), in Canada the idea of integration with the United States was seen from a strictly economic standpoint. This integrationist project reached its most advanced expression with NAFTA even though by the 1960s an important accord was signed to liberalize trade in the automotive sector.

We should also not forget that NAFTA's theoretical focus is on comparative advantages, the free market applied to non-equals. Canada, like Mexico, has interlocked its economy with that of the United States, to the degree that almost 75 percent of its foreign direct investment originates there. In contrast, countries like Argentina or Brazil have much more diversified patterns of direct investment, which makes them less vulnerable to pressure from the United States.

An absolute prerequisite for formally establishing an economic region is really existing economic integration. In that sense, undoubtedly the United States has intertwined the Canadian and Mexican economies with its own. Works like Garreau's *The Nine Nations of North America*<sup>5</sup> describe a proposed geo-economic map that would result from the integration of the three countries of North America. Other, later, works develop proposals along the same lines, following already existing economic areas in North America which,

although they operate within the nation-state framework, have an economic dynamic with a strong life of their own, expressed in the internal movement of goods and investments.<sup>6</sup>

Another kind of factor that undoubtedly indicates a vigorous economic integration of North America are the projects for the "NAFTA superhighway system" and the "Tamaulipas Intercoastal Canal."<sup>7</sup>

Without a doubt, the Mercosur project is an interesting alternative, even though it remains to be seen how solid that bloc could be, what its real level of integration would be and how complementary its economies would be in the long run. Real participation by the European Union or the United States in Mercosur would unquestionably add to its potential for consolidation.

NAFTA consolidates a  
de facto economic integration,  
led by the large U.S. multinational corporations  
which for decades have penetrated  
the Canadian and Mexican economies.

Now, Mercosur is facing some problems, albeit of a very different nature from what Mexico or Canada might think:

Although Mercosur represents a very significant achievement in historical terms, tensions are rising. The macroeconomic imbalances between Brazil and Argentina have become more marked, generating a trade gap in Brazil's favor....Exchange rate policy, inflation rates and the trade liberalization process have become acutely

misaligned....The inability of the Brazilian government to maintain a coherent economic policy has undoubtedly increased the number of Argentines who think they should put more emphasis on negotiating a free trade agreement with Washington and has reinforced Chilean doubts about the viability of its becoming part of Mercosur.<sup>8</sup>

In this regard, the following are potential problems for the possible consolidation of Mercosur:

1. Mercosur is conceived as a mechanism for improving these Latin American economies' insertion into the world market—particularly in light of the regional bent that trade flows and investment have shown in the last decade—but there is a problem which Charles Oman points out: "The creation of global spaces obeys microeconomic, centrifugal forces that reduce the distance between countries and regions in economic terms, while regionalization is a centripetal process, directed by political forces with the aim of strengthening the sovereignty of the states that constitute a region."<sup>9</sup> This quote expresses something very real: an economic region will be able to participate dynamically in the world economy only if it has dynamic microeconomic forces.

2. An economic region may only be consolidated with the participation of multinational corporations. According to UN figures, 33.3 percent of the world's exports are intra-firm trade between central offices and subsidiaries; 32.7 percent corresponds to trade between multina-

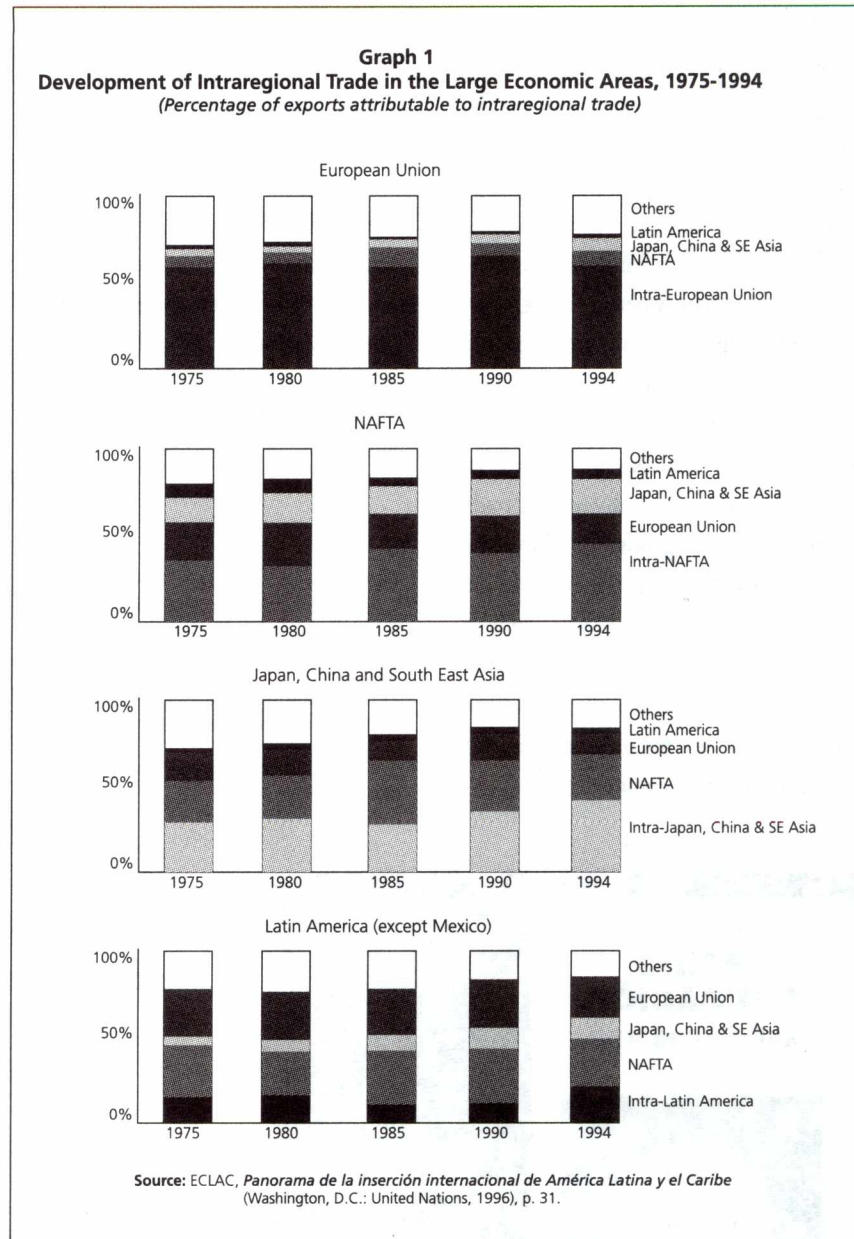


tional corporations' head offices and subsidiaries on the one hand and non-affiliated companies on the other; and the remaining 34 percent is classified as "exports of other companies," that is, trade not associated with multinationals.<sup>10</sup>

This means that regardless of the tariff policy followed, the geographical location of trade and investment flows will follow their own routes, determined more by multinational corporations strategies than by governmental tariff policies, including those decided by governments to set up customs zones, common markets or trade treaties. If in addition we take into account that the markets of the multinational corporations are the most dynamic in the trade flows, the problem is even more relevant.

3. However, under the new conditions of world competition, what this ECLAC document points out is still important: "The state has the fundamental function of establishing the basis for 'systemic' competitiveness, either directly or indirectly. Without appropriate policies and investment in infrastructure and human resources, countries are condemned to marginalization."<sup>11</sup> Like many neoliberal policies, these measures aim to attract foreign capital. Undoubtedly, the economies need foreign capital to form part of the dynamism of the world market.

This situation is what constitutes the difference between Canada's and Mexico's integration through NAFTA (despite the asymmetries and clear disadvantages in signing a treaty with the United States) and the more equitable but less dynamic integration of Mercosur. NAFTA consolidates a de facto economic integration, led by the large U.S. multinational cor-



porations which for decades have penetrated the Canadian and Mexican economies. Thus, the United States represents 88 percent of the GDP and 70 percent of the total population of NAFTA's three signatory countries. In addition, before the treaty was signed, more than 70 percent of Canadian and Mexican exports already went to the United States, a figure which has risen to more than 80 percent since NAFTA.<sup>12</sup>

If we consider, as some specialists have pointed out, that we can talk about regionalization when trade among the countries in question grows more rapidly than world trade, certainly Latin America still has much left to do in establishing complementary economies that promote intraregional trade. If we look at the graph on this page, we will note that trade within the European Union was more than 50 percent of all the region's trade



in 1994; trade among NAFTA countries was almost 50 percent, as was that among Japan, China and Southeast Asia. For the same year, however, exchange among Latin American countries amounted to a bare 20 percent of their total trade.

Nevertheless, it is important to consider that in Latin America "a high and growing proportion of intraregional exports are manufactured goods: 42 percent in 1990 and 46 percent in 1995, compared with averages of 31 percent and 37 percent for overall regional trade in manufactured goods for the same years."<sup>13</sup> However, the performance of the capital goods sector—a chronic problem in Latin America—must be improved to be able to come to any more solid conclusions about the region's potential for economic complementarity.

The development of solid regional alternatives centered in South America's Southern Cone will depend on its ability to consolidate complementary regional industry. Otherwise, the role played there by both the European Union and the United States will determine its regional market evolution. In the case of the United States, this would be through a U.S.-promoted free trade agreement for the entire hemisphere. ■■■

## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Aida Lerman, *Ideas y proyectos de la integración latinoamericana* (Mexico City: Universidad Autónoma Metropolitana, Xochimilco campus, 1996), pp. 10-11.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 33-34.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 38.
- <sup>4</sup> See W.T. Easterbrook and Hugh Aitken, *Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988).
- <sup>5</sup> Joel Garreau, *The Nine Nations of North America* (New York: Avon Books, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Some examples of this type of work are to be found in Pablo Wong, "Integración de América del Norte," Guillermo Ibarra (comp.), *Relaciones México-California, más allá de la frontera* (Culiacán, Sinaloa: Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, 1997). Another work of this sort, developed at the University of Toronto is quoted in Ediberto Galván Cervantes, "Globalización y procesos regionales," in *Nexos* (Mexico City), no. 239 (November 1997).

<sup>7</sup> According to *Nexos* no. 239 (November 1997) the superhighway system would unite Canada, the United States and Mexico from Mexico City to Winnipeg, and link cities like New York, Montreal, Quebec, Toronto, Detroit, Chicago, Vancouver and Seattle, among others. The Tamaulipas Intercoastal Canal aims to connect the Mexican Gulf Coast to the Great Lakes region, through the Mississippi basin, covering 40 states of the United States and three Canadian provinces.

<sup>8</sup> Andrew Hurrell, "Regionalismo en las Américas," in *América Latina en el mundo nuevo*, Abraham Lowenthal and Gregory Trevorton (comps.) (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, n.d.), p. 214.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Oman, *Les Défis Politiques de la Globalization et de la Régionalisation* (Paris: OCDE, 1996), p. 40.

<sup>10</sup> ECLAC, "Aspectos estructurales de la economía internacional," in *Panorama de la inserción internacional de América Latina y el Caribe* (Washington, D.C.: United Nations, 1996).

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 105

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# Joint Mexico-Canada Ministerial Committee

*Abel Escartín Molina\**

**T**he ever broader and more complex bilateral agenda between Mexico and Canada has required important joint efforts, resulting in the creation of different institutional mechanisms in which all the actors participate actively in the relationship. To that end, the two governments signed a "Declaration of Objectives for the Canada-Mexico Relationship" which includes an action plan. This very concrete and specific document

Among the institutional mechanisms most important to bilateral relations are meetings of the chief executives of Mexico and Canada, sessions of the Ministerial Committee and interparliamentary gatherings.

was developed with the participation of representatives of the governments, business communities and academia of both countries.<sup>1</sup>

Among the institutional mechanisms most important to bilateral relations are meetings of the chief executives of Mexico and Canada, sessions of the Ministerial Committee and interparliamentary gatherings.

Before delving into the Ministerial Committee meetings, the main point of this article, I will briefly review the other two mechanisms.

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The twelfth Ministerial Committee session held in Mexico City brought together three Mexican and three Canadian ministers.

Unless otherwise specified photos reprinted courtesy of Mexico's Foreign Relations Ministry





Prime Minister Chrétien and President Zedillo during the latter's state visit to Canada in June 1996.

Reprinted courtesy of the President of Mexico's Press Office

### Meetings of the Mexico-Canada Ministerial Committee

Meeting Location	Dates
1 Ottawa, Canada	October 21 and 22, 1971.
2 Mexico City, Mexico	January 28 and 29, 1974.
3 Ottawa, Canada	November 21 and 22, 1977.
4 Mexico City, Mexico	January 8 and 9, 1981.
5 Ottawa, Canada	November 1 and 2, 1983.
6 Mexico City, Mexico	March 3 and 4, 1986.
7 Ottawa, Canada	January 22, 1990.
8 Mexico City, Mexico	November 25, 1991.
9 Ottawa, Canada	February 15, 1993.
10 Mexico City, Mexico	March 1, 1994.
11 Ottawa, Canada	April 27, 1995.
12 Mexico City, Mexico	December 19 and 20, 1996.



Ministerial Committee meetings have become an important mechanism in Mexico-Canada relations.

Meetings between heads of state or chief executives, so-called "diplomacy at the top," has become a central mechanism of modern foreign policy and has increasingly been used in Mexican-Canadian relations. During the 54 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, their chief executives have had 24 meetings, 7 under the current administration of President Ernesto Zedillo. The most recent meeting took place last April 17 in the framework of the Second Summit of the Americas in Santiago, Chile.

The Mexico-Canada Interparliamentary Meetings, which began in 1975, are a pivotal forum given the active participation of the two countries' congresses around topics of mutual interest. To date, there have been 10 meetings of this kind, the last of which was held from May 14 to 16, 1996, in Ottawa.

Lastly, the Ministerial Committee meetings, instituted in November 1968, have become the main institutional mechanism between the two countries since their creation. Their aim is to examine the different issues, instruments and cooperative actions involved in our bilateral relations. After the meetings of heads of government, these ministerial meetings are the highest level mechanism for consultation between Mexico and Canada.

The first meeting of the Canada-Mexico Ministerial Committee was held in Ottawa, October 21, 1971. Since then, 12 meetings have taken place, alternating host countries. As of 1992 and even more so since the North American Free Trade Agreement went into effect, the Ministerial Committee has acquired a new profile as the privileged forum for reviewing cooperation issues, making it possible to carry out an overall evaluation of the state



of relations between the two countries, mainly to foster new projects.

As a result, the number of cabinet ministers who participate and the number of working groups that meet have increased. Thus, from being a mechanism for analyzing diplomatic and trade cooperation during its first sessions, it has grown to include such important areas as investment; financial cooperation; transportation and telecommunications; environment and natural resources; tourism; labor issues; legal and drug trafficking questions; agriculture; fishing; and educational and cultural issues. The ministerial meetings have also been the framework in which a great many legal instruments for the two countries have been signed.

In the recent past, the last four meetings stand out. At the Committee's ninth session, in Ottawa, February 15, 1993, eight Mexican and 10 Canadian ministers took part. On that occasion, 11 topics were discussed in 11 working groups: political issues; fiscal questions; environment; mining; trade and investment; tourism; agriculture; educational, cultural and communications issues; labor matters; fishing; and housing.

At that meeting, three accords were signed on technology for extra-classroom education, cooperation in the mining sector and housing and human settlements.

The Committee's tenth meeting, which brought together five ministers from each country, took place in Mexico City, March 1, 1994. The Canadian delegation was the highest level delegation that its government had ever sent to a meeting abroad. The 1994 session reviewed the bilateral agenda in five working groups dealing with political issues, environment, trade, transportation and agricultural questions.

Mexico-Canada Ministerial Committee activities demonstrate the growing importance of the issues on the agenda shared by the two countries in the current situation, in which regionalization and globalization affect both our nations vis-à-vis our proximity to the United States.

This tenth meeting finalized with the signing of three instruments on the question of transportation: a) technical cooperation in transportation; b) the use of terminals and facilities of Mexican and Canadian transport companies; and c) an instrument that establishes the validity of federal and commercial driver's licenses for both countries.

The eleventh meeting, held in Ottawa, April 27, 1995, formed six working groups on political issues, energy, trade, agriculture, transportation and legal and drug trafficking questions. The Mexican delegation included three cabinet ministers, the attorney general and two vice ministers, while Canada sent four ministers, the attorney general and one vice minister.

Three legal instruments were signed: an agreement on social security, a memorandum of understanding regarding the Program of Temporary Mexican Agricultural Workers and an appendix to said memorandum, signed by Mexico's Communications and Transportation Ministry and Canada's Department of Transport with regard to programs of technical cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

At the twelfth Ministerial Committee session held in Mexico City December 19 and 20, 1996, working groups on polit-

ical issues, trade and transportation met. Given the importance of activities in other areas, the three Mexican and three Canadian ministers present also heard reports on questions of natural resources, environment, agriculture and energy.<sup>3</sup>

This brief review of Mexico-Canada Ministerial Committee activities gives an idea of this extremely important mechanism in our bilateral relations which, up to now, has been studied very little. It also demonstrates the growing importance of the issues on the agenda shared by the two countries in the current situation, in which regionalization and globalization affect both our nations equally vis-à-vis our proximity to the United States. **MM**

#### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> The document was signed by Prime Minister Chrétien of Canada and President Zedillo of Mexico June 12, 1996, during the latter's state visit to Canada.

<sup>2</sup> It is worthwhile mentioning that, although the signing of the memorandum on the Program of Temporary Mexican Agricultural Workers is included in this list, what was actually signed was merely the renovation of the memorandum in effect since 1974 and which has been very fruitful.

<sup>3</sup> This meeting did not result in any legal instruments given that all those instruments that were ready were signed by the two country's chief executives during President Zedillo's state visit to Canada in June of that year.



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# The El Chopo University Museum

## A Cultural Project for the New Millennium

Arturo Saucedo\*

Few places enjoy a history so closely associated to universal dreams and aspirations and the great projects of modernization in Mexico as the El Chopo University Museum.

Built from 1903 to 1905 as part of the *Porfirista* dream,<sup>1</sup> it was originally intended as an industrial exhibition hall. The huge steel, brick and glass structure was designed and manufactured in Germany and reassembled in Mexico. After hosting the Japanese industrial exhibition in 1910 as a part of the celebration of the Cen-

tennial of Mexican Independence, it was dubbed the Japanese Pavilion or the Crystal Palace.

In 1913, the building was turned into the Museum of Natural History and from then on became known as the El Chopo Museum because it was located on El Chopo Street in the Santa María la Ri-

\* Former head of the Department of Performing Arts, El Chopo University Museum.



bera neighborhood. It was also called the Museum of the Dinosaur because at the time it had on display an impressive reproduction of the skeleton of a Jurassic dinosaur, the diplodocus. The scientific dream found in the El Chopo Museum an extraordinary setting for situating Man among the other species. In addition to a very complete collection of dried and stuffed animals, fossils, the bones of an imperial elephant from the Valley of Mexico and an impressive whale, it had a botanical section with a sizeable collection of Mexican medicinal plant specimens gathered from the sixteenth century on by illustrious naturalists like Spain's Francisco Hernández (1517-1587) and Ger-

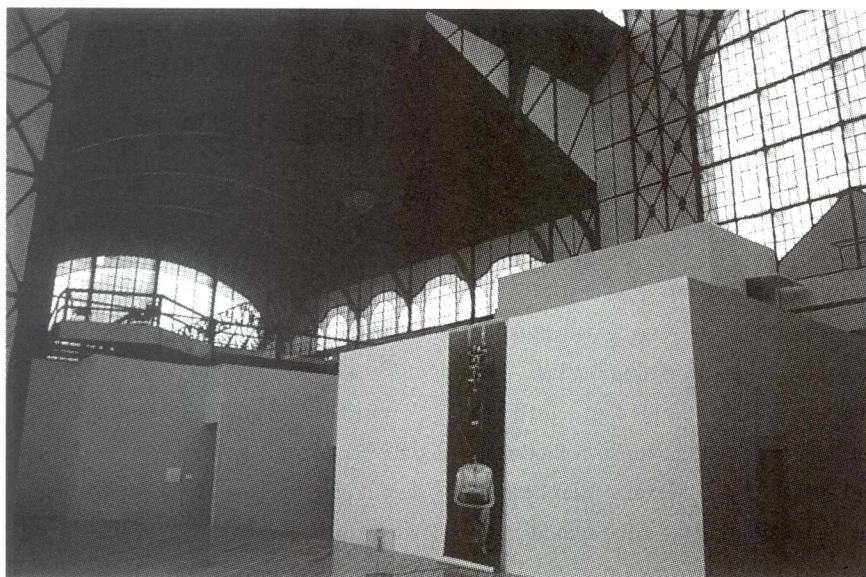
many's Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859). It also boasted an amusing collection of dressed fleas used to illustrate certain social situations and curious cultural characteristics of Mexico. The museum attained such popularity that even today some of the older inhabitants of the neighborhood still remember it as "the Museum of the Dinosaur." El Chopo Museum stopped operating as a natural history museum in 1964 and was abandoned for nine years. As a result, the magnificent building was on the verge of being lost; some people even proposed its demolition.

In 1973 the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) decided to come to the building's rescue, do the ne-

cessary restoration work and finance it as a museum to disseminate the arts and university culture. Though done with all due dispatch, the work took almost two years and on November 21, 1975, the El Chopo University Museum, a venue for avant garde art, was inaugurated. Thus, university autonomy contributed to the dream of having a place where the dynamics of modern culture could be disseminated with an openness and tolerance non-existent at that time anywhere else in our country.

Since then, the museum's different directors have molded the project into what it is today. Outstanding among them have been writer Angeles Mastretta (1979-1983); the multifaceted artist, theoretician and Mexican-Canadian curator Arnold Belkin (1983-1985); writer Elba Macías (1985-1988); art historian Montserrat Bali (1989-1994); and the current director, museologist Lourdes Monges, who has been a collaborator of the museum since it opened.

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Twenty-two years after its founding as a meeting place and venue for cultural performances and exhibits at the end of the century, much can be said about the El Chopo University Museum: it is a multiple fora which fosters and disseminates the vast, plural culture of today; it is internationally known because its six rooms have hosted individual, thematic and collective exhibitions of artists both from Mexico and abroad; it develops international exchange projects that make it possible to share art work, cultural projects and museological ideas from the world over.

To give the reader an idea of its innovative, diverse exhibitions, suffice it to mention the wide gamut of art forms that have been housed under its roof: everything from collage and object art, situation or play art, both environmental and ephemeral art, neofigurative trends, behavioral or body art, conceptual art and neoconcrete or technological art.

On March 4 of this year Mexico City's first exhibition of virtual art, "The Second," with the work of 16 Dutch artists rooted in the experience of time, was inaugurated. Undoubtedly this was a major museological event nationwide.

"The Dinosaur Forum," a series of free workshops offered to the public and the radio program "The El Chopo Airwaves"<sup>2</sup> complete the museum's cultural project.

"The Dinosaur Forum" is a three-sided stage which hosts alternative music groups, contemporary dance, performance art, multimedia presentations and interdisciplinary art. During the 1970s it was the perfect venue for countercultural groups like La Maldita Vecindad, El Tri, Café Ta-

cuba, Jaguares and Molotov, to mention just a few.<sup>3</sup> Among the many groups from abroad who have performed there are Die Totten Hossen, from Germany; The Cranes, from England; the musicians from the Canadian Music Competitions; and Human Drama and Love Spirals Downwards from the United States. Jazz and electronic artists, as well as classical and avant garde Mexican and foreign musicians congregate here. The forum also hosted Mexico's first festival of performance art (although today the main venue for performance art is the National Institute of Fine Arts' X Teresa Alternative Art). The area is also used for lectures, debates and conferences about art at the end of the millennium.

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El Chopo's free workshops offer the general public, including children, senior citizens and the artists themselves, the opportunity to train in areas like dance, music, visual arts, poetry, theater, folk dancing, literature and writing, film appreciation, sexuality and short story and narrative creative writing.

"The El Chopo Airwaves" radio program, broadcast live every Friday, first aired in 1991 as a co-production with UNAM Radio. It is a space for the expression of art and alternative culture, where a special effort is made to make available to the public the most important alternative music at the end of the millennium as well as ideas about contemporary aesthetics. It is a link between creators and listeners who constantly show their interest in alternative art forms and find

both in the museum and in the program a horizon of their virtual dream, a space for expression, dialogue, debate and creation.

We should point out the specific commitment the El Chopo University Museum has to the university community and its general commitment to the public and the community in northern Mexico City. Members of the university community have access to a space for cultural education and recreation, to the exhibition rooms and performance halls on a daily basis. El Chopo hosts both individual and series of exhibits and performances specifically designed to showcase students, teachers and alumni from both the UNAM and other institutions. The museum also puts its services and infrastructure at the disposal of inhabi-

tants of the surrounding Santa María la Ribera neighborhood, as well as northern Mexico City and the Historic Center, for their cultural activities. In this way, the dream of a plural space committed to Mexico's cultural dynamic is shared by all those who express their authenticity through culture. **MM**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> *Porfirista* refers to the 30-year dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz that ended with the 1910 Mexican Revolution, but which also created a particular "Frenchified," modernizing ethos among the upper classes of its time. [Translator's Note.]

<sup>2</sup> The Spanish word for "wave" or "airwave" is *onda*, which in Mexican slang also means "attitudes" or "activities" and particularly connotes youth culture. [Translator's Note.]

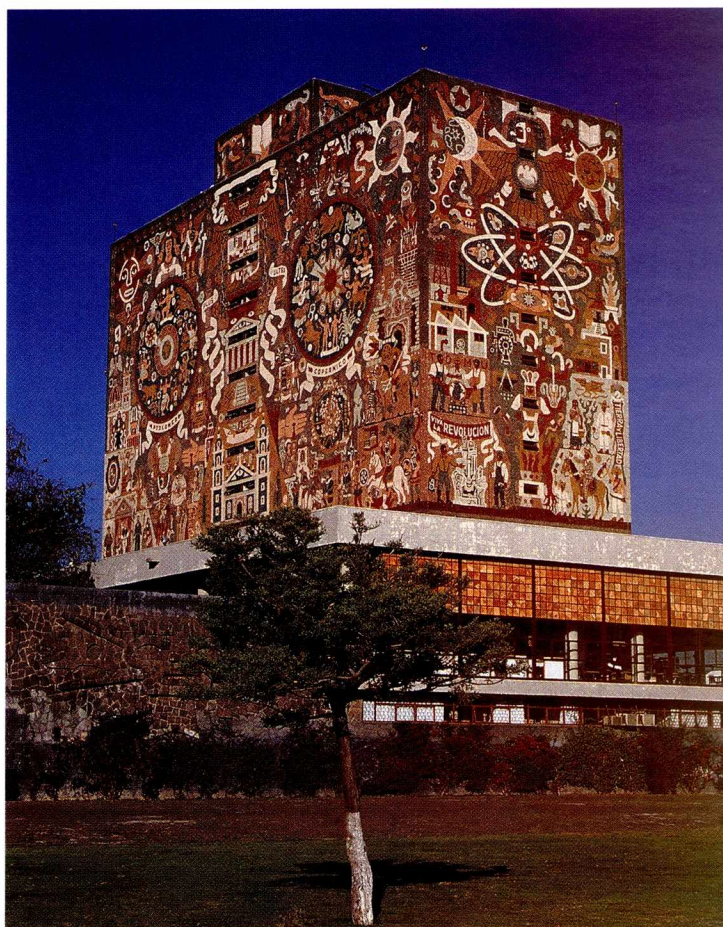
<sup>3</sup> All those mentioned are recent decades' most famous Mexican alternative Spanish-language rock groups. [Editor's Note.]

## EXHIBITIONS AT THE EL CHOPO MUSEUM 1998 CALENDAR

Title	Artist/Sponsor	Medium	Date
<i>Rights and Humans. Sexuality, Open Sea</i>	— Gay Cultural Circle	— Paintings, sculpture, graphics, photography, installations	— June 17 to August 9
<i>Change. Mexico-New York Visual Arts Exchange</i>	— Exchange with New York	— Installations, photography, graphics, painting, sculpture	— August 13 to Sept. 27 (to be confirmed)
<i>All Things of Nothing Reborn</i>	— Carla Rippey	— Alternative graphics, object art	— August 19 to Sept. 20
—	— Mónica Cervantes	— Digital photography	— August 7 to Sept. 6
—	— Rosa María Robles	— Sculpture, sketches, photography	— Sept. 23 to Oct. 25
<i>Chiapas: on the Edge of Silence</i>	— Antonio Turok	— Photography	— Sept. 23 to Oct. 25
<i>Straight Ahead</i>	— Vida Yovanovich	— Photo installation	— Sept. 23 to Oct. 25
—	— Oweena Fogarty	— Photography and installation	— Sept. 10 to Oct. 11
—	— Dorit Jacoby	— Painting	— Oct. 14 to Nov. 15
<i>Poster Biennial</i>	— Poster Biennial	— Graphic design	— Oct. 14 to Nov. 15
<i>The Song of the Frogs</i>	— Marliess Poss	— Installation	— Oct. 29 to Nov. 22
<i>Ninth Cultural Commemoration of the Struggle Against AIDS</i>	— United Against AIDS	— Painting, photography, graphics, installations	— Nov. 25 to Jan. 17, 1999
<i>Sixth International Biennial of Visual and Experimental Poetry</i>	— Visual Poetry Biennial	— Collage, visual poetry, installations, cybernetics	— Nov. 18 to Jan. 17, 1999
—	— Alvaro Muñoz	— Photography	— Nov. 18 to Jan. 17, 1999

NOTE: There might be last minute changes in this calendar. To confirm, please call 622 62 07 or 622 62 14.





Photos by Juan Antonio López/doi

## The UNAM Main Library

### Juan O'Gorman's Visual-Historical Meditation

*Miguel A. Bahena*

*Luis Roberto Torres Escalona\**

#### ARCHITECTURE AND VISUAL INTEGRATION

One of the great moments of twentieth century Mexican art is marked by the

construction of University City: the project is based on a desire to achieve a totality, integrating in a single urban site the different manifestations of artistic creation in Mexico at the end of the 1940s and beginning of the 1950s.

The university campus reveals an architectural language that, though it came

from other countries, found a singular expression of complete concert between nationalist determination and international architecture.

The urbanist concept of the new university paid particular attention to making it possible to walk through the campus by using a design analogous to the old

\* Researchers at the UNAM General Office of Property Management.



plazas of pre-Hispanic Mexico. This peripatetic predilection allows for an appreciation of the harmony of the whole as the visitor moves through its broad, well-proportioned spaces that uniquely combine functionality and aesthetics.

The story of this ambitious project began at the end of the 1920s when the first modern architectural movement was organized in Mexico and the need to create a university city put forward. The directors of the project, architects Mario Pani and Enrique del Moral, coordinated the work of several architects heading up individual projects and different buildings on the university campus: the Rector's Tower, the Main Library, the departments, schools, institutes, sports fields, hand-ball courts, underpasses, bridges and the Olympic Stadium. These buildings came together to make an impressive whole which has never stopped receiving accolades from abroad since then. Concluded in 1952, the University City is the result of interdisciplinary work of 150 architects and engineers and 10,000 workers under the management of Carlos Lazo.

To this architectural complex was added the work of artists of the stature of Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros and José Chávez Morado, among others, artists who had made the transition from the traditional painting of closed spaces and easel work to that of facades or ex-

teriors with no more reason than to establish a symbiosis between architecture and painting.

Integration of the visual arts opened up new vistas for the creativity of these Mexican painters and gave them the opportunity of experimenting with stone.

It was in this context that Juan O'Gorman created his mosaic for the Main Library, which has become one of the visual and architectural expressions most identified with University City and modern Mexico.

In his work, O'Gorman interprets the development of our national culture as the result of a series of convergences, both

ethnic and historical, the synthesis of which is contemporary Mexico.

Without a doubt, the Main Library as a whole constitutes the aesthetic paradigm under whose auspices University City was built and, as the concept of "visual integration" aspired to making architecture, painting and sculpture a completely reconciled aesthetic totality.

The Main Library, conceived architecturally by O'Gorman together with architects Juan Martínez de Velasco and Gustavo Saavedra, was designed according to the canons of what was called the international style. While it is true that the library responds to a need to assimilate

a foreign style in Mexico, and in a way it became a model for the aspirations of modernity underlying the construction of University City, it would be unfair to judge the work as a simple copy or uncritical import of international architecture.

The fact that O'Gorman covered the building with a great mosaic that represented the national culture proves that we are not faced with a pure imitation of architectural functionalism, but a true example of the aesthetic integration of architecture and mural painting with singular nationalist tones. To this we should add a third element: sculpture, present in the volcanic rock foundations as reliefs inspired by pre-Hispanic allusions to the god of fertility and rain, Tláloc.



The north wall depicts the pre-Hispanic period (detail).



## ICONOGRAPHY

Each of the four walls of the mosaic develops a different theme: the north wall, the pre-Hispanic period; the south wall, the colonial period; the east and west walls, the contemporary period.

It is important to point out a visual constant in the four walls: the symbolic elements on the side panels are clearly separated by a vertical axis that opposes them, distinguishing their spacial organization. These symbols on each side of the central axis are the opposing elements of the thematic duality manifest on all the walls.

## THE NORTH WALL

This part of the mural depicts the pre-Hispanic period and puts into play the life-death duality so important to the Nahuatl cosmogony. Mythical elements predominate on the wall, the obligatory result of the Mexica culture's conception and representation of the origins of Man and life.



On the left of the central axis, separated by two streams, appear the deities and scenes associated with the creative principle of life: in the upper corner, the Sun, and under it, the figure of Tláloc; a little above him, the mythical Quetzalcóatl. In the central section of this part of the mosaic, Tlazoltéotl, goddess of the Earth, dominates, surrounded by the jaguar, symbol of the night and the eagle, a solar image. Beside Tlazoltéotl inside a temple, is Tecistécatl, the masculine deity associated with the Moon and fertility. At the bottom a ritual ceremony is being carried out that shows the sacred nature of war.



The south wall deals with the encounter of the European and pre-Hispanic civilizations.

The right side of the mural represents the counterpart of life: the world of mystery, of the dark, of evil and of death. Here there is also a lunar symbol with a rabbit in the middle; beneath it is Chalchiuhtlicue, goddess of water, and before her, the pyre on which her son is being consumed, sacrificed to give life to the Moon. Next to this scene is the depiction of Tezcatlipoca, the creative principle and lord of the wizards.

The dual image of Mictlantecuhtli-Quetzalcóatl dominates the central part of this section between the two streams, in accordance with the iconography of the *Borgia Codex*. In the lower part are images

of warriors in bellicose stances and prisoners of war. This section is completed by the scene of the human sacrifice described above.

The central axis of the composition as a visual solution makes sense not only as the spacial organizer of the elements of the duality on each side of it, but also as an iconographic synthesis in which life and death are reconciled through the follow-



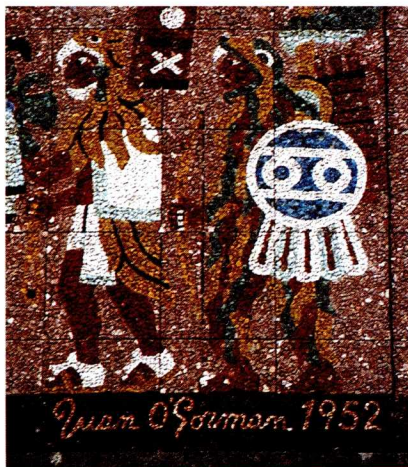


ing motifs: the myth of origins, represented by the Mendocino Codex version of the founding of Tenochtitlan, and over that image, an ellipse divided in two by a chromatic play of black and white that, besides visually balancing the distribution of the lateral elements of the wall, also has value as a synthesis from the iconographic point of view, since its formal composition is based on the cosmogonic belief of the pre-Hispanic cultures that the universe was like two ellipses coming together. A third meaning can also be pointed to: within the ellipse the features of the god Tláloc can be seen through fauces at the center as well as the eyeglasses that, over the ellipse, typify the attributes of the god of rain.

The ellipse also refers us to the idea of a sacrificial flint that joins death with the creation of life. The concept is rounded out with the representation of the Sun as the primeval source of the life cycle whose continuing existence is guaranteed by sacrifices of both men and gods. In this way, O'Gorman resolves the life-death contradictions through a cosmologic synthesis of the pre-Hispanic universe.

#### THE SOUTH WALL

This part of the mosaic deals with the colonial period and the dual character of the Conquest: its religious, spiritual side versus the violent, armed conquest. On either side of the central axis are the lateral panels presided over



Detail from the north wall.

**The integration of  
different visual arts  
opened up new vistas  
for the creativity  
of Mexican painters.**



The east wall shows the tradition/progress duality.

by the Sun on the left and an eclipse of the moon on the right. The artist conceives of the visual balance of the whole through two circular figures on extreme opposite ends of the surface, representing the two sides to the duality.

The left part of the mural depicts the so-called "spiritual conquest," linked to the Christian principle of good. In the middle is a circular figure of Ptolomy's geocentric system. On the periphery are figures and symbols alluding to missionary efforts and the decline of indigenous culture. The visual association of Ptolomy and evangelizing may have been due to the fact that for centuries the Church was reluctant to accept the heliocentric concept of the universe.

Beneath the circle, the figure of Cuauhtémoc, "a falling eagle," symbolizes the defeat of the Mexica civilization; this is further elaborated below in the depiction of the burning of the codices.

The right side of the mural represents the conquest by the sword, here related to the Copernican system of the universe. It also associates Copernicus' astronomical revolution with the Christian principle of evil since scientific knowledge was counterposed to religious beliefs.

Each of the motifs of this section has its counterpart on the left side of the mural. Thus, for example, the medieval fortress contrasts with the church on the opposite side. Other opposites are Copernicus/Ptolomy, the pre-Hispanic demon deity/Archangel Michael, the dictation of the



Laws of the Indies/burning of the codices, Satan/Holy Trinity, armed combat/evangelization, coat of arms/pontifical emblem, sword/cross, etc. On the central axis the opposition of both conceptions of the universe is resolved through superimposing the architecture of different periods: a pyramid contains a tower with battlements (representing the Middle Ages), a temple with an eye on it (a representation of classical and masonic bourgeois cultures), and finally, a church flanked by bloody hands. The axis is completed with a two-headed eagle, representing the shield of the Habsburgs. In this way, to resolve the encounter of the two cultures, O'Gorman symbolically portrays the different cultural contributions that played a role in the forging of Mexican culture.

#### THE EAST WALL

This section repeats the confrontation of the two elements of a duality on either side of the central axis. Here, the tradition/progress duality is shown, with reference to two factors in social progress in Mexico, the city and the countryside.

The duality is once more resolved on the central axis, through superimposing motifs: a pre-Hispanic figure emerges from the fire carrying a hammer and a serpent, symbols of work and civilization; above this a symbol of the atom is visible, source of power and culture; and, finally, the resurrection of Cuauhtémoc, a visual metaphor for the importance of Mexico's past, its histo-

ry becoming relevant when put at the service of the nation. Just as with the other walls, this one counters opposing themes on its lateral sections; in this case, to the left, we have figures of urban Mexico and, to the right, rural Mexico.

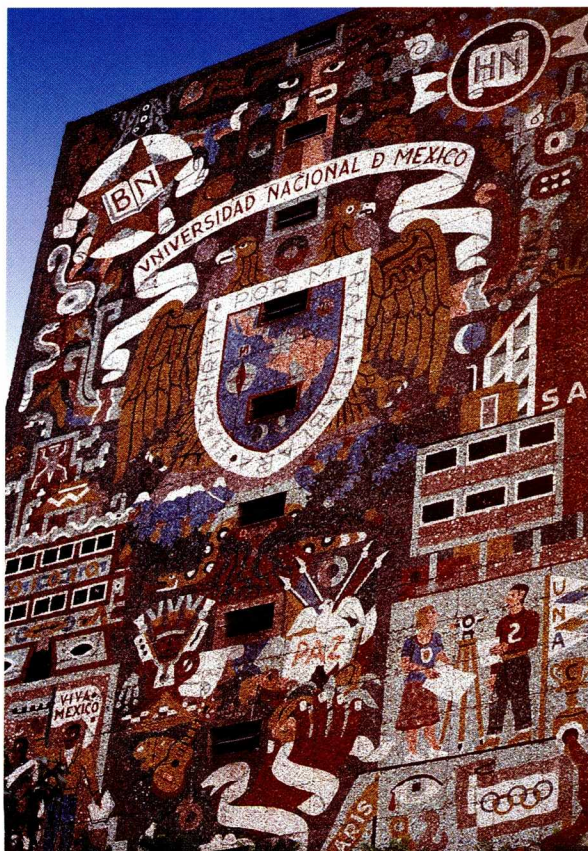
#### THE WEST WALL

In contrast with the other sides of the library, on the west wall, the opposing elements are not completely discernible. This may be because the artist took a dialectical view of the topics on the walls and attempted to create a definitive synthesis of national culture. The image that most closely approximates this aim was activity in the university and, therefore, the rela-

tionship of knowledge to society and production. To depict this, O'Gorman placed student, daily life and sports motifs on the lateral sections of the wall. In the middle, dominating the vertical axis of the composition, the painter originally wanted to place the symbols of Newtonian physics and the physics of relativity as the supreme achievements of human genius, but on request of Carlos Lazo and Carlos Novoa, O'Gorman modified this initial idea in favor of the university emblem.

Lastly, on the roof of the library is a water tank that finishes off the composition. It is covered with pre-Hispanic warriors invested with the attributes of wisdom represented by an open book and serpentine figures. On the pre-Hispanic side, it boasts a Tláloc similar to the one in relief on the fountain or water mirror.

It is worthy of note that in 1992, through the good offices of Dr. José G. Moreno de Alba, the National Autonomous University of Mexico purchased the watercolor sketches of the north and south walls of the Main Library from Sotheby's. They present noticeable and significant iconographic differences vis-à-vis the mural as it actually exists. However, the sketches and the composition of the mural as we know it today are substantially similar. A detailed study of the sketches might well shed light on O'Gorman's original ideas about this, his greatest project, as well as about his interpretation of the history of Mexico. **NM**



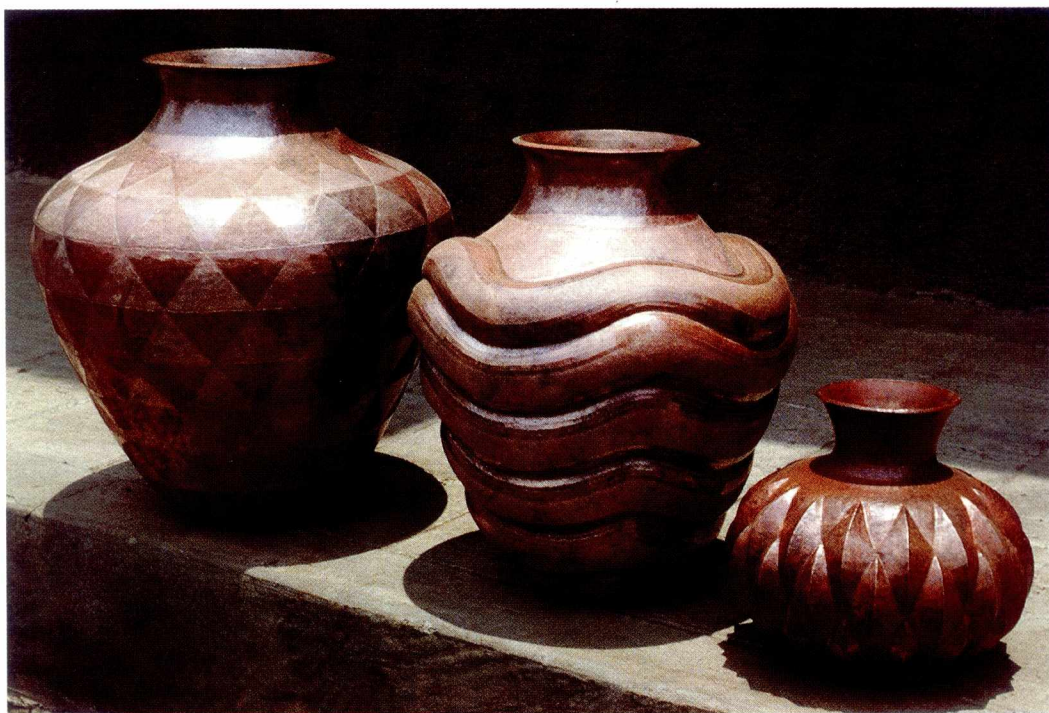
The west wall attempts to create a definite synthesis of national culture.





# Santa Clara del Cobre

*Marcela Segura Coquet\**



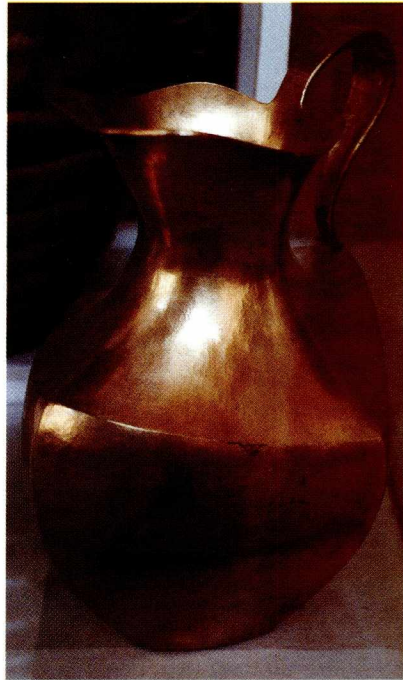
Photos by Dante Barrera



Santa Clara del Cobre, a picturesque pre-Hispanic town better known nationwide as the Copper Capital,<sup>1</sup> is located 17 kilometers from Pátzcuaro in Mexico's state of Michoacán. Its original inhabitants, the Purépechas, were one of the pre-Columbian peoples who best worked with metals, particularly in copper-, gold- and silversmithing. They knew how to make alloys and it is even said that they had a form of money made of small copper disks.

The Purépechas made utilitarian copper objects like farming tools, pots and needles, among others. But they also made beautiful, purely decorative hammered objects. That innate human need to surround ourselves with beauty and art led them to preserve their artistic traditions when the Spaniards arrived, despite the fact that most of the copper taken from the mines was requisitioned by vicerojal officials. Today, that art is the main attraction of a town that preserves all the color and ambience of its past.

\* Public Relations Coordinator, State of Michoacán House of Crafts.



Visiting Santa Clara is like traveling far back in time. Innumerable family workshops keep the craft tradition alive as well as the values that identify its inhabitants as a community. The oldest and most experienced artisans teach and guide their younger family members; boys and male adults are apprentices. The respect and admiration for the master craftsman

make it possible to preserve the wisdom of centuries that most people of today have not managed to value fully.

Santa Clara used to be an area rich in copper mines, but today, the raw materials for crafts are copper waste products still worked at forges with hand bellows, a fascinating spectacle to watch. The master craftsmen know exactly how much copper each piece requires. In any workshop you visit—and there is one inside every door—you will see a shed-type structure that allows for the free flow of air, a circular, sunken hearth where a bed of ash is surrounded by stones or *paranguas* to hold the metal and, atop that, burning coal or pine. The fire is fed through clay tubes that pump air from the two-handed bellows. Once the copper has melted, the fire is removed and below are flat, thick rounds of copper, called *tejos*, that are then cut in pieces.

The most impressive part of the process is when the copper is extended and shaped, since this is done collectively; what most surprises the observer is the synchronization of the blows to the *tejos*. A

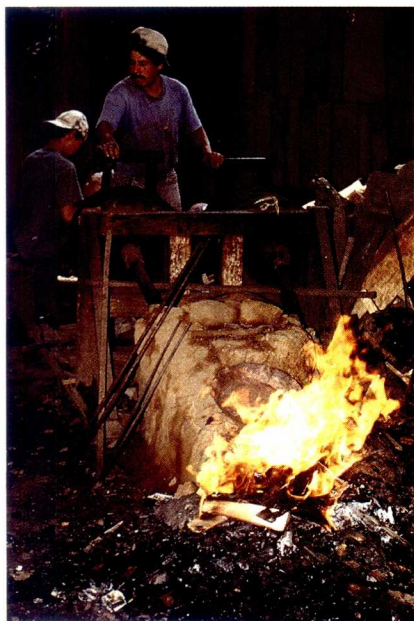


The main plaza.

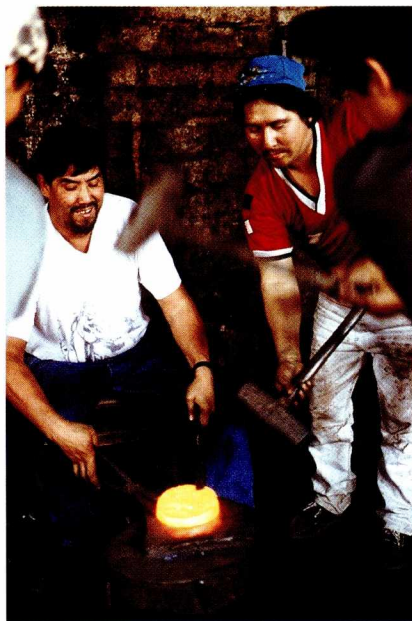


Santa Clara's Copper Museum.





Melting the copper.



The *tejo* is extended and shaped collectively.



Shaping and polishing a piece takes several days.

journeyman holds the red hot *tejo* with a pair of tongs over the anvil; the master craftsman begins hitting it and five or more journeymen successively hit the same spot, following the master's lead, since he is the one who knows how and where the metal should be beaten depending on the piece to be made. Once the *tejo* has been extended, it has to be deepened, rounded, using a tool called a *candonga* until it is the desired height. Then comes the individual work by each artisan to shape and polish his piece, using special hammers; and last, he decorates the piece, chiselling or engraving it or decorating it with graffito or relief work. The artisans make all their own tools.

Each piece is an exhibit in itself that demonstrates timeless dexterity and creativity. A single piece can take between 15 and 20 days to finish and is worth infinitely more than its sale price.

Santa Clara has not lost that distinctive character that attracts visitors. The kiosk in the main plaza is covered with

sheets of copper. In addition to its two baroque churches, the town has two buildings in the plateresque style, both with impressive doors surrounded by round arches and pilasters.

On the main street you can go to the Copper Museum, still a living part of the town kept up by the inhabitants, that shows the evolution of copper art. Past and present come together in the objects displayed here amidst hues of red, among them items —the pride of their cre-

ators— that have won prizes at different state contests.

This year Santa Clara del Cobre will once again host a fiesta with the Fifty-Third Copper Hammering Contest organized by the State of Michoacán House of Crafts, August 8-17. The contest is the perfect opportunity to see the new contemporary and classical designs in coppersmithing, purchase extraordinary pieces and enjoy the fun and traditions the town is steeped in. **MM**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Santa Clara del Cobre is also known as Salvador Escalante. [Editor's Note.]



## Errata

In reference to the photo captions of the article "Pungent Peppers" (Voices of Mexico 43, p. 46) where it says "*Serrano* chili pepper" it should say "*Piquín* chili pepper" and vice versa.





# Biology Of the Monarch Butterfly

*Joel Rodríguez Zúñiga\**

## INTRODUCTION

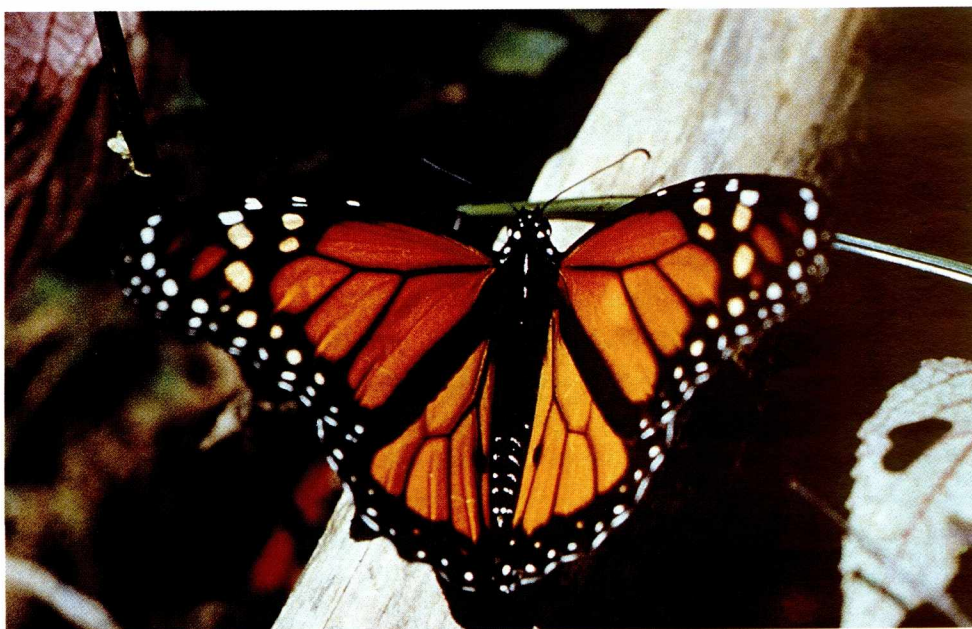
When we talk about the monarch butterfly, we touch on legend, mythology and the history of the species.

\* Inspector of natural resources at Mexico's Ministry of the Environment, Natural Resources and Fishing (SEMARNAP).  
Photographs for this article are reprinted courtesy of the Dolores Olmedo Patiño Museum.

The ancient Greeks thought that butterflies lived in the urn of the body. Christian theology positions them metaphorically in the three states of divinity: the caterpillar as a being of this world, the chrysalis as its tomb and the butterfly as the resurrection.

The pre-Columbian cultures considered them sacred. Their image can be

found in figures, vessels, ornaments and jewels. Butterflies were also used as tribute and offerings, and bread and sweets were even baked in their form. The Chichimecs called their mother goddess of sacrifices and wars Itzapapalotl, or the "obsidian butterfly." In Teotihuacan the great temple Quetzalpapalotl was built in her honor. The inhabitants of Texcoco, under



Photos by Arturo Pierra



the reign of Acolmitzi Nezahualcōyotl, built the palace of Quetzalpapatl on the shores of Lake Texcoco, where they did research on the sky, plants and animals.

Among the Aztecs, the butterfly, or *papalotl*, was a sacred being that symbolized death. It was butterflies who, in their flight, transported the souls of the fallen in battle.

The residents of Xochimilco represented their god Xochiquetzal, symbol of fire and the soul, with the body and wings of a butterfly: the representation of love and beauty, it was considered the protectress of plants, painters and artisans. Both the necklaces on the giant statues at Tula and the Aztec calendar depict the butterfly as a representation of fire.

The Mazahuas call them the daughters of the sun and, like the Otomis, Matlazincas and Mexicas, identify them today with the return of the spirits that come back year after year to visit them during the festivities of the Day of the Dead, around the end of October and the beginning of November, the season when the monarch butterfly arrives in Mexico.

#### THE MONARCH

The monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) is the best known of all the butterflies in Central Mexico. Its orange wings, outlined in black with white specks, dominate the winters in some parts of the dense forests on the border region between the states of Mexico and Michoacán.

An exceptional species, the monarch butterfly surprises with its astonishing biological adaptability which allows it to migrate with extreme precision every year.

The monarch butterfly's origins date back to more than 200 million years ago, when Africa and South America were a single continent.

With the separation of the continents and subsequent ice ages, the monarch migrated in search of the milkweed (*Asclepias* sp), that it needed to feed its larvae.

Once established in the northern part of the hemisphere, when the temperatures dropped, the butterflies emigrated south to winter in Mexico in the temper-

### Taxonomy of the Monarch Butterfly

Kingdom: *Animalia*  
Phylum: *Anthropoda*  
Class: *Insecta*  
Order: *Lepidoptera*  
Family: *Danaidae*  
Genus: *Danaus*  
Species: *D. Plexippus*

ate forests of the Transversal Volcanic Axis in what are now the states of Michoacán and Mexico, where they can enjoy broad biodiversity and a benign climate. This migration is reversed when the temperatures in the south increase.

Gauging by both traditional knowledge and scientific research, the monarch butterfly's migrations date from thousands of years ago.

#### DEVELOPMENT

The monarch butterfly is a diurnal, winged insect that belongs to the order of the *lepidoptera*, which are characterized by a sucking mouth in the form of a proboscis or tube that can be coiled spirally and a body and wings covered with scales. Hence, its name: *ptero* means wing and *lepidos* means scales.

The metamorphosis of the monarch butterfly broadly speaking takes it through four different stages.

Once impregnated, the females lay about 400 eggs the size of the head of a pin on the back of a leaf of the *Asclepias* plant. Between three and 12 days later the larvae hatch and the second stage begins. In its larval stage, the monarch feeds on the leaves where it hatched, multiplying its weight at birth 2,500 times and changing its tegulae, exuviae, or outer skin five times.

Two or three weeks later, during the last change of tegulae, the caterpillar hangs from a branch or leaf and weaves a bright green silk net around its body, becoming the chrysalis where its metamorphosis into a butterfly will take place. Ten days later the chrysalis becomes transparent and inside, the form and colors of the adult monarch butterfly can be distinguished.

The butterfly breaks through the chrysalis and in a few minutes its wings dry and harden. When conditions are favorable, the full cycle of the transformation from the egg to the adult insect takes an average of five weeks.

*The egg.* The female butterfly oviposits her fertilized eggs on the leaves. One by



one, she deposits about 400 oval-shaped, light green eggs very carefully, attaching them with a sticky substance she produces herself.

The shell has a micropore, a small orifice through which the male's spermatozoa enter the egg after entering the female monarch's abdomen. Through that same hole, the egg receives air and humidity.

*Caterpillar or larva.* From the egg, the larva is born, a yellow, black and white worm formed by a head and a body. The head has a powerful mandible with teeth that allow it to eat the leaves of the plants where the egg was originally deposited.

The body has no skeleton and is swollen like a balloon from the pressure of the hemolymph—functionally comparable to the blood of vertebrates—inside its body. It has thousands of muscles—proportionally four times more muscles than human beings—that allow it to move. The larvae grow very quickly; they devour leaves day and night, and they even eat the skin they slough off.

As they grow, their skin successively becomes too tight so they have to change it five times in this stage.

The larvae's main source of food are plants from the *Asclepiadaceae* family, which contain toxic substances that remain in the body until its adult phase, allowing it to repel the attacks of predators, among them insect-eating birds.

*The chrysalis.* The chrysalis is the intermediate stage between the caterpillar and the butterfly. During the last change of tegulae, the caterpillar hangs upside down and secretes a silky substance from its labia to form a web that eventually covers it completely. This is the beginning of the final stage of the monarch. During its metamorphosis, the chrysalis does not move; it does not eat; it does not drink; it only breathes through orifices called spiracles.

Initially, the chrysalis is a greenish blue color. Eight days later it darkens and the black, orange and white colors typical of the adult monarch appear. Later, it splits from the bottom up and the legs and

antennae appear first. The adult butterfly emerges with its wings humid, transparent and wrinkled. In a matter of minutes, however, the pressure of the hemolymph dries and hardens its wings, enabling it to take flight.

*The adult butterfly.* The monarch is covered with scales and morphologically consists of a head, a thorax and an abdomen. When examined through a microscope, the minute overlapping scales that cover its wings can be seen.

The head is black with white specks approximately two millimeters in size and contains the mouth, the eyes, the spirally coiled proboscis and its two antennae. With the exception of the size of their eyes, there is no difference whatsoever between the head of the male and that of the female.

The adult monarch has no mandibles, which is why it can only consume liquids like dew, nectar, and the juices and sap of plants. To suck them up the monarch needs its tube-shaped proboscis, which it keeps coiled when not in use. The proboscis is about 1.5 cm in length and when extended, it is as long as the thorax.

Its round eyes are compound and slightly larger in the males than in the females. The ocelli, or simple eye, are minute organs that perceive the intensity of light. The monarch's sense organs are its sensory palpi, which have both tactile and gustatory functions and allow it to perceive roughness and humidity in the area where they alight.



Monarch butterfly migrations date from thousands of years ago.



Their antennae have 43 segments placed one on top of the next, are about 2 cm long and have at their base the organ called the Johnston, formed by small ducts, that determines the animal's sense of direction. They also serve to regulate equilibrium in flight and when walking and are used for listening, smelling, perceiving the wind, humidity and the nearness of animals or objects.

The monarch's thorax has three segments, each with a pair of legs. Joined to the thorax are two pairs of wings, one on the second segment and the other on the third. The wings are rigid, without muscles or tendons, have few nerves and only slight hemolymphatic circulation.

In the males, the back wings have two black dots, one on each wing, which are actually glands to produce smells. When they are fluttered and rubbed together, they produce a stimulating odor that attracts the female butterflies.

The butterfly's six legs are attached in pairs. Each leg has three segments: they allow it to walk, hold on, perceive sound waves and clean its antennae and palpi. Their tiny hairs detect food with a system 2,000 times more sensitive than the human tongue that stimulates the proboscis which extends by reflex.

The digestive system consists of the proboscis, a pharynx, an esophagus, a maw, a stomach, an intestine and an anus that allow it to do everything from ingesting food to absorbing the nutrients and

discarding the non-usable waste materials.

The butterfly breathes through small holes in its skin called spiracles that send

An exceptional species,  
the monarch butterfly  
surprises with its  
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with extreme precision  
every year.

oxygen through its body via tiny tubes that make up the trachea. To avoid overheating, it has a ventilation system that keeps it cool during both flight and repose.

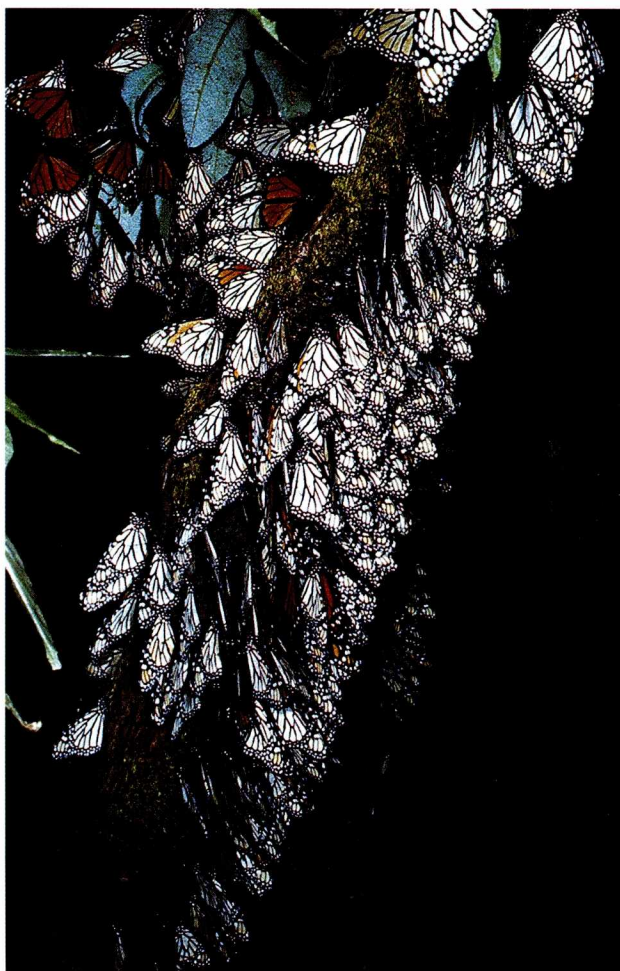
The circulatory system has neither arteries nor veins: the whole inside of its body is full of hemolymph. Its heart, shaped like a tube, lies along the entire length of the insect's body. This strange heart provides the body's organs and tissues with oxygen as it pulsates, pumping the hemolymph.

The nervous system has a cerebral ganglion connected to the entire body through nervous cords, ganglia and nerves. It also has external nerves that cover the surface of its body allowing it to perceive outside stimuli like the wind, rain

and humidity. The cerebral ganglion sends orders to the body through the antennae.

The reproductive system is very sexually dimorphic: that is, the male and the female are totally different. The female has two ovaries which produce eggs and a fertilization chamber where she stores those that have already been inseminated. The male has two testicles that produce the spermatozoa and a sexual organ called an aedeagus which at its end has claspers to hold the female during copulation.

To attract the female, the male rubs his odoriferous glands together secreting stimulating odors. If the female responds, the male takes the initiative by adhering himself to one end of the female's abdomen. Mating can take a long time, first dur-





ing flight, later on the ground, on trunks of trees or in the forest undergrowth.

During copulation, the male deposits his semen and the female keeps it in a receptacle called a spermatophore. When a spermatozoid fecundates an egg, the female adheres it to the back side of a leaf, initiating the cycle of reproduction.

#### PROTECTIVE COLORING

An interesting aspect of the monarch butterfly's conservation in winter is its protective coloring. To form its colonies for hibernation, it alights on trunks and branches of conifers and folds its wings to show their undersides and blend into the colors of the tree bark and foliage, thus avoiding its predators.

#### HABITAT

The monarch requires a healthy, undisturbed forest, with trees like fir, pine, evergreen oak and cedar, among other species, to be able to develop its biological functions and guarantee its survival.

The low brush of the forest undergrowth is also fundamental for retaining warmth during the night. A humid forest with moss and lichen, a variety of types of plants with nearby sunny areas, without noise or external disturbances make up a propitious habitat for the species.

The forests where the monarchs alight in Mexico have very specific microclimatic characteristics, appropriate for their habitat. Because of their altitude, from 2,700 to 3,400 meters above

sea level, these forests do not go through marked changes in temperature, with a mean of 15°C and 50 percent relative humidity. If the relative humidity were higher and the temperature lower, the monarchs would run the risk of freezing to death.

#### MIGRATION

During the summer and part of the autumn, the monarch lives in the forests of southern Canada and the northern United States. In mid- or late autumn, when climatic conditions become severe there, the monarchs begin their migration to the south, taking advantage of prevailing winds from the north.

Some scholars say that they take two routes: west of the Rocky Mountains toward California near Pacific Grove and Monterey, and east toward the forests of the states of Mexico and Michoacán.

The massive return trip that takes an average of two months goes in exactly the opposite direction when Mexico's temperate forests begin to heat up in spring.

The generation that migrates from north to south usually does not mature sexually until after its hibernation in the forests of Mexico. After hibernation, it begins reproduction with copulation in the forests of the Transversal Volcanic Axis.

It is important to point out that while scholars do not disagree about the way the monarch butterfly migrates south, there is a polemic regarding the characteristics of its northern migration. Some authors hold that, as a result of mating, the females of this generation oviposit

in the states of northern Mexico and after six weeks, the second generation is born, which is the one that travels further north, covering a large part of the states of southern and central United States.

This second generation in turn gives rise to a third generation that ends its life cycle in the south of Canada and the north of the United States, procreating a fourth generation that spends the summer and part of the autumn in short life cycles. Then, a fifth generation is born that will be the one which migrates south again and, in order to preserve the species, will not mature sexually—and therefore not reproduce—until finishing its hibernation in Mexico's coniferous forests.

Other scholars take a different view, saying that the butterfly migrates to the north of the hemisphere and arrives to the U.S. and Canadian forests, where four or five generations are born and die. It is the last generation that, instead of maturing sexually, prepares for its return to Mexico in the fall.

There are also several theories regarding the monarch butterflies' sense of direction on their migratory routes and in finding their colonies, given that it is different generations that migrate. One theory hypothesizes that they direct their flight by the sun; another says that they take their lead from the magnetic waves emanating from the Transversal Volcanic Axis.

Without underestimating the complexity of these theories, it seems logical and it is very possible that their actions stem from a genetic behavior pattern together with prevailing macro and microclimatic conditions. **MM**





# The Monarch Butterfly

In the Magical World of Angangueo

*Carlos Hernández López\**



Arturo Píera

Old people in the area say that many years ago, when children used to take their animals out to graze, they would run and play among the great multitudes of butterflies that, hearing the children's laughter and watching their mischief, joined in the game flying and fluttering their fragile wings over their heads.



Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the warlike Aztecs tried to expand their realm by challenging the Purépecha nobles —the ancient inhabitants of what is today the Mexican state of Michoacán— to bloody battles in an attempt to seize their territory. Unfortunately for the Aztecs, they were always beaten. Their silent witnesses were the *papaloapan*, or "rivers of butterflies," that colored the sky orange and black.

Our ancestors associated them with beauty, love and flowers and affectionately called them *papalotl*. They also believed them to be the spirits of their forebears who were returning to be remembered since they begin to arrive in late October and come in waves of millions around November 1 and 2 when the Day of the Dead is celebrated.

Old people in the area say that many years ago, when children used to take their animals out to graze, they would run and play among the great multitudes of butterflies that, hearing the children's laughter and watching their mischief, joined in the game flying and fluttering their fragile wings over their heads.

In 1937, Canadian zoologist Freud Urquhart, intrigued by the flight of the butterflies from Canada, began patient research to discover their destination. It was not until 38 years later that one of Urquhart's collaborators, Kenneth C.

Brugger, found the first refuge, in January 1975. Since then, the flights back and forth of the Monarch butterfly have been the subject of innumerable research projects, have been widely reported in the Mexican and international press and have attracted visitors from all over the world. The owners of the collective land,

or *ejido*, where the butterfly sanctuaries' forest are located, are now tour guides who can recite the law and recommendations for the conservation of the environment and the monarch butterfly, today considered a universal treasure.

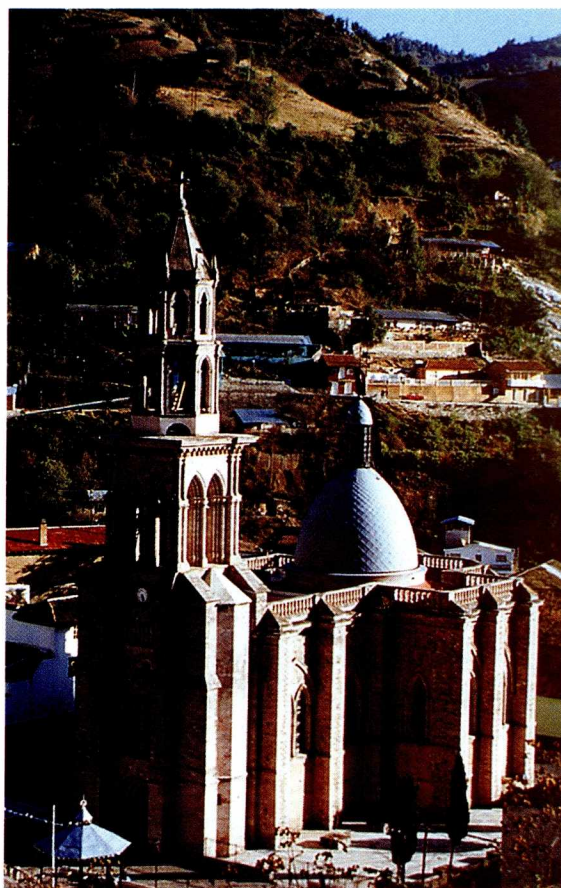
To visit the sanctuary of El Rosario, we recommend you arrive at the towns of

Angangueo or Ocampo and travel from there in a rented vehicle specially designed for dirt roads. If you get up early and arrive at the sanctuary between 9:00 and 9:30 a.m., you can watch thousands of butterflies awaken at the touch of the warmth of the sun's rays. As the sunlight caresses the clusters of butterflies, its warmth detaches them from the branches of the trees. As they fall, they begin a soft flight that adds their colors to the green of the forest and the blue of the sky.

The monarch butterfly and Angangueo have a relationship fluted with magic. Angangueo is a beautiful town of colorful facades and red tile roofs. An old mining town whose name means "at the entrance to a cave," it still boasts the entrances to three mine shafts, Catingón, El Carmen and Saint Hilario, where the miners entered

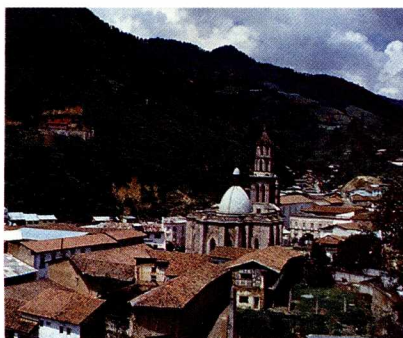
and left loaded with precious metals like gold and silver. Today, one of the tunnels has been restored so visitors can enter and examine the works of the mine. The tunnel begins at Parker House and ends at the Immaculate Conception Church, that dates from 1882 and is modeled after Paris' Notre Dame.

Across from the church in the portal of the plaza is the House of Crafts, with



Salvador Juárez Huilón

The Immaculate Conception church dates from 1882.



Angangueo, a beautiful town of colorful facades and red tile roofs.

\* Head of productivity and training at the state of Michoacán's House of Crafts.

Photos of Monarch butterflies are reprinted courtesy of the Dolores Olmedo Patiño Museum.



different items on display made by the able hands of the town's artisans: Christmas tree balls, embroidered napkins, different wood figures, silver jewelry and illustrations made with seeds, all decorated with monarch butterfly motifs. Visitors can also buy home-made preserves and fruit liqueurs typical of the region. The plaza itself has a fountain with a statue of the Three Graces where you can throw in a coin and make a wish.

Be sure not to miss the Parker House, a dwelling typical of the area left to the town by an executive of the American Smelting and Refining Company in the 1970s.

On the same street as the Parker House is a monument to the miner, affectionately called the *Mono* ("the big guy") by the townspeople, from where you can get a magnificent view of the whole village.

The town has three comfortable hotels: the Don Bruno, the oldest, is owned and operated by Don Juan, who has always made every effort to make his guests' stay a pleasant one. Further down the street is the recently built Margarita Hotel, with a kitchen that has delighted diners for six years. The third is the *Parakata* (which means "butterfly" in the Purépecha language) that occupies the old mining company offices and offers guests



Arturo Pierra

The monarch butterfly and Angangueo have a relationship fluted with magic.



Arturo Pierra

spacious cottages and gardens.

When entering Angangueo on the highway from Zitácuaro, you can stop at the mouth of the Saint Hilario Mine, which is still being worked and is a real attraction.

Angangueo is also well known for its fiestas. On May 3, to celebrate the Day of the Holy Cross, a candlelight procession goes down the main street toward the hill, and when they get to the top, the participants form a large cross. This tradition demands participants be in excellent physical condition because the climb is quite tiring. Other fiestas include June 11, the Day of the Miner, and October 28, the Day of Saint Simon, the town's patron saint. Since 1992, on different days each year during

the months of February, March and April, a cultural festival celebrates the monarch butterflies, both to honor them and to bid them farewell since the fiesta is held when they start their return trip to Canada.

The beginning of their 5,000-kilometer return voyage together with the fiesta is truly a marvelous spectacle, combining the flight of millions of butterflies with the confetti-covered townspeople who come out of their homes to say goodbye to them, secure in the knowledge that they will meet again soon. **MM**





Luis Humberto González

## A Prayer for OCTAVIO PAZ<sup>1</sup>

*Aurelio Asiain\**

True conversation is rhythmic. No one knew that better than he did. When he talked, he punctuated his sentences with a gesture of his hand like someone throwing a coin in the air (heads or tails?), and when he listened, he moved his fingers as though counting syllables. Was he following the words of the person he was talking to or the course of his own thinking? Both at the same time, I'm sure. Because the dominant voice in the conversation was always, as is only natural, the voice of the host who had called us in, though one of his main virtues was knowing how to give other people the floor. He did it, not like a master of ceremonies who discretely withdraws and returns only to introduce whoever is next, but as an attentive, interested conversationalist, who participated passionately in discussions, and, in contrast to almost everyone else, listened no less intensely than he spoke.

He was interested in practically everything, but not in just anything, and the pedantry of the specialist bothered him as much as the vulgarity of the popularizer. He spent his life paying close attention to what was going on around him, but in his case that was not limited to what the newspapers propagated. A

television newscaster would barely finish reading a report when he was already hearing the rebuttal—a pertinent one, naturally—from a character out of Molière or Shakespeare. Or the maid, if it was relevant, because although he was an intellectual poet, he did not have his nose stuck in a book. He had little patience, therefore, for writers who lived in warehouses of portentous quotations, and he always insisted that—contrary to the postulates of an overwhelming current of contemporary thinking—poetry is above all oral, and talking about writing to refer to literary works was not only pedantic, but an error in judgment.

He was a prodigious reader, but the printed page was never more important to him than a girl passing in the street, a lizard running along a wall, the grass growing between two bricks. Books were a way to reality; the world, a presence at the center of dialogue; and poetry, a way of listening to the silence to which he always returned. That is why he, who by nine o'clock in the morning had already carefully reviewed a dozen newspapers and magazines, never went to bed without reading a poem. "They are my prayers," he used to say.

After the ritual minute of silence, what other way is there to keep faith with him but continuing the conversation? His words are our home; his voice, our air. **MM**

\* Editor of *Vuelta* magazine.

<sup>1</sup> This is a *Voices of Mexico's* translation of an article first published in the Mexican magazine *Vuelta* 258 (May 1998).



# THE SUN OF OCTAVIO PAZ<sup>1</sup>

Enrique Krauze\*



Luis Humberto González

Staring at an empty page, full not of clean whiteness but of death, his death, I set myself an impossible task: doing justice to his life. What can be said? No accounting, no matter how detailed, can express the passion, the intelligence, the grandeur that he put into all his endeavors. But this country without memory is often cruel to its best men, and that is

why it is important to fight forgetfulness, why it is important, now and forever, to remember.

He was above all a poet. That is how he described himself and how he wished to be remembered. A poet of love and of poetry. Once I heard a relative of his tell a little story, never recounted. As a little boy, playing in Puebla with his cousins, suddenly Octavio, very serious, said, that the word "calcetín" (the Spanish word for "sock") should not be the word for a piece

\* Mexican historian and writer. Member of *Vuelta* magazine Editorial Board.



of clothing, but for a little bell because of its final sound, "teen." From that day until the day in Coyoacán, when he called for the highland sun to enlighten us with hope, and the clouds obeyed and parted, and the sun illuminated his prophet's face, defiant and tender, Octavio Paz was a man possessed, a priest, a lover of words. A poet.

He was also a thinker. The West has been disdainful of Spanish-language essayists. It has not taken them seriously. To them, our realm is poetry and the novel, not thought. Octavio Paz achieved what only one other, José Ortega y Gasset, was able to in our century: carve out a place for himself in Western thought. His curiosity was insatiable and it all bore fruit: he made the Western tradition and the cultures of the East his own; he explored the art of peoples, their philosophy, their history, their science; he wrote glowing texts about Man's basic questions: freedom, creation, justice, love; he was as demanding of himself as of others; he inhabited the outer reaches of knowledge, making those his limits. Even though sometimes in his poetry, someone spells out to us.<sup>2</sup>

He was the greatest and the most generous of Mexican writers. No one wrote as much as Octavio Paz about Mexico's writers and artists, from Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz to the writers of the Half Century,<sup>3</sup> educated in his work. From the time he began to publish in the early 1930s until today, several generations of intellectuals recognized the sun-like quality of his work: Vasconcelos wrote with enthusiasm about his books, the Spanish emigres<sup>4</sup> started the magazine *Taller* (Workshop/Atelier) with him, the Contemporary Group<sup>5</sup> adopted him from the very beginning as their prodigal son; he was the mentor of the generation that put out the *Revista Mexicana de Literatura* (Mexican Magazine of Literature); he returned to Mexico in the 1970s, not to preside or rule over culture but to found *Plural* and then *Vuelta* magazines, to set up house for dissidents, diversity, tolerance, criticism, to declare war on the armed abstractions that in our century have murdered millions of concrete human beings. In these magazines, in these lucid, implacable texts, Octavio defended freedom to the hilt; he "freed it on parole."<sup>6</sup> And, happily, he lived to see that same freedom vindicated everywhere.

He was a miner of the Mexican soul. In the underground river of his blood ran currents Catholic and Liberal, Andalusian and Aztec, reformist and revolutionary. Seeking a way out of the labyrinth of his solitude,<sup>7</sup> he picked them all up and carried them with him. That is why he saw in the 1910 Revolution the

communion of Mexico with itself, the fleeting reconciliation of this country with its multiple pasts. And then, with the thinking that watches over thinking, he wrote that "criticism is the imagination's learning the second time around, imagination cured of fantasy and determined to face the reality of the world." And he thought that "Mexico has no essence, but a history," and that that history was not a mystical coming but a daily task.

He was courageous in life, loyal in friendship, happy and complete when he found love and stoic in the face of death. He would have liked to die like [his grandfather] Don Ireneo —whose face was increasingly etched on his own— an instantaneous death, like lightening. That final grace was not granted him. But more than his own death, at the end what perturbed him was the anarchy that, in his words, seemed at moments to close in on Mexico. He had been born in 1914, the year of anarchy in Mexico and the world; he was the grandson of a rebel and the son of a revolutionary. But he did not aspire to the order of the false utopias he detested, much less to order imposed by force. He aspired to a historic leap, a leap toward responsible freedom exercised by everyone in this, our house, that is Mexico.

He was once the rising sun of Mexican literature. He crossed the sky and stopped at its center for almost a century. Now the old gold of his setting sun pains us. But tomorrow we will discover that Octavio Paz is spelling out to us. **MM**

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This is a *Voices of Mexico's* translation of an article first published in the Mexican magazine *Vuelta* 258 (May 1998).

<sup>2</sup> An allusion to Octavio Paz' poem "Hermandad" which in English ends with the line "someone spells me out." [Editor's Note.]

<sup>3</sup> Name given to Mexican writers who began to achieve prominence in the 1950s, such as José de la Colina, Sergio Pitol, Salvador Elizondo and Juan García Ponce. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>4</sup> The Spanish emigre and exile community that formed in Mexico after the Spanish Civil War included a large number of artists and intellectuals who had an important impact on Mexican cultural life. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>5</sup> A group of Mexican poets and writers who proposed, among other things, a quest for universal art. The best known among them were Xavier Villaurrutia, Gilberto Owen, José Gorostiza, Jaime Torres Bodet, Salvador Novo, Carlos Pellicer, Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano, Enrique González Rojo and Octavio G. Barrera. [Editor's Note.]

<sup>6</sup> In Spanish the expression *libertad bajo palabra*, meaning "free on parole," would literally be translated "free having given his/her word." This double meaning has been lost in English, although the root of the word "parole" did originally imply "giving your word." The expression in Krause's original is an allusion to Paz' book *Libertad bajo palabra*. [Translator's Note.]

<sup>7</sup> Allusion to Paz' most famous book, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. [Editor's Note.]



# AN EXCEPTIONAL SPIRIT<sup>1</sup>

Gabriel Zaid\*

**T**he advent of Octavio Paz in Mexican culture was a miracle that took it to a higher plane in the course of a single lifetime, like those trees that suddenly start to take root and grow beyond what had been expected of them, until they change the landscape itself, becoming symbols of it.

This is not the first time this has happened. Neither Nezahualcōyotl nor Sor Juana were foreign bodies in the Nahuatl

culture or that of New Spain. Quite the contrary: they were intense expressions of their development, so intense that they surpassed it and seemed to take it dangerously no one knew where. So intense that some people became quite agitated and even felt threatened, treating them as foreign bodies when all they were doing was taking the culture forward to a miraculous level, to a level so high it was difficult to equal.

Octavio Paz made us take interest in things we had never been interested in before. And he did it not by expounding brilliantly about this or that but by encouraging our sensibility.

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\* Mexican writer. Member of *Vuelta's* Editorial Board.



Paz with his wife, Marie Jose Tramini.

Luis Humberto González



Unknown areas of intelligence, of sensibility, become necessary to Paz' readers. From there stems a great part of the fascination with his language: it brings alive all our faculties; it questions everything we are; it questions us totally. For Paz, language is the total exercise of being. And this is not a sermon; it is a living thing communicated through his work; it is the only way to read it. Reading Paz takes the exercise of all our intelligence, all our imagination, all our sensibilities. From there, one can dissent, negate or take another path, but it would be naive not to recognize in the reading itself the origin of those actions.

Today, I do not understand why I did not understand *El laberinto de la soledad* (The Labyrinth of Solitude) when I read it at the age of sixteen. I couldn't put it down; I just kept on reading even though it was beyond me, like listening to a song in another language that you like very much even though you can't understand it very well. It may have been the topics, the vocabulary, the way the sentences were constructed that caught my attention and held me. But I couldn't follow it fully.

It is not easy to recall the first experience of a new art when it has become a canon. It is quite a job to imagine what people who were offended were hearing when they listened to a piece of music, pieces of verse, or ideas that today seem normal. Or what the attraction was in something strange when a whole different world was first revealed.

Five years later, the first issue of the *Revista Mexicana de Literatura* (Mexican Magazine of Literature) arrived in Monterrey. It opened with a poem recently penned by Octavio Paz, "El cántaro roto" (The Broken Water-Jar). I walked out of the bookstore and began reading as I walked along, slower and slower until I came to a complete halt. I thought I was dizzy because I was wearing new glasses and was reading as I walked. But no. It was the poem going to my head. I leaned on a pole in the street to continue reading until I remembered a nearby café, where I went to sit down.

What were these fascinating fireworks of images and ideas? I read it and reread it, bedazzled, drunk with words.

The delirious enumeration, the fluid verses, between poetry and prose, the long breath of inspiration and respiration, the fountain of visions, metaphors, reflections, invocations, spells, had something of the magical incantation and the surrealist mural about them. But they were not senseless abracadabras. The enormous stones that burst under the sun among cacti and *huizaches* can be seen in the countryside and in the paintings of José María Velasco. The cold, green anger, with its tail of razors and cut glass, saunters through offices. It was the fluidity between dreaming and reality in a few lines that did just what they asked for and communicated the poetic, moral and even political experience of strangeness and reconciliation with the Other: reality transfigured as a dream, dream as reality.

In that same year of 1955, Octavio Paz filled out a questionnaire for André Breton about magical art and spoke of commotion, vertigo, fascination, the desire to penetrate what shakes up our certainties, in a fatal leap to the other side. All that was in the potion of the broken water-jar that disturbed the reader.

Inspiration and love are not new topics in Western culture, but rarely are they taken seriously by cultured people of a certain age. More rarely still do they

stop being topics and become experiences. And even more rarely are they reciprocated. For some, believing in that is like immaturity. For others, it is discourse. But Octavio Paz was always first and foremost a poet. He believed in his craft and in culture, but he knew that there was something more important. In addition, it was his good fortune —and ours— that he was not one of those unfortunates who have a great, unrequited love for poetry. Inspiration throbbed through him and made him say things that surpassed him, things that he allowed himself to be carried by, like on a fair wind (or which became fair because he knew both

The entire work of Octavio Paz is foundational. This is repeatedly the case in poetry, where time and again he has surpassed his own previous foundational contributions and opened roads beyond our borders, and even beyond our language. But, his criticism, whose starting point was literature and was always concerned with the national question, broadened out until it became nothing less than a critique of Western culture.



how to let himself and not let himself go). His poems and essays are inspired and cannot be explained by his craft or his culture, but only as miracles. And as if that were not enough, he also had the luck to experience a long, reciprocated love.

How to harmonize inspiration and love with his vast wealth of culture? The sensibility and creativity of poets and the curiosity and analysis of specialists seem to be divergent worlds. But in Octavio Paz both worlds connected and enriched each other on the most diverse of literary, artistic, cultural, historical, social and political topics. He was always learning, reformulating, creating. For me, who read everything he wrote for almost half a century, it was wonderful to see how many new things he still said in his last book (*La llama doble* [The Double Flame]). And the most incredible of all: how much he had read and learned after the age of 70.

It is not the same to write in a country that is a given, in a culture inhabitable without the slightest doubt, in a life project that can fit into established social roles, feeling that creation is part of a specialized profession, as it is to write feeling the urgent need to create or recreate everything: language, culture, life, one's own place in the construction of the nation, everything that may be work in the broadest creative sense. The Promethean strivings of Vasconcelos, Reyes, Paz, more than individual excesses (taking on many things that elsewhere are the work of specialists), seem to fill a historic need, a national urgency that they feel responsible for: seizing all culture, expropriating it, recreating it, changing it, making it ours in a living way, being active subjects, not just contemplated objects, of universal culture.

From the departmental perspective imposed by academia's bureaucracy (specialties, power, budgets), or from today's English point of view about what a poet's career should be, it is not easy to understand the work of Octavio Paz. What department does he belong in? His trajectory becomes clear under a romantic profile: our cultural emancipation. His work is excessively ambitious for those preoccupied with jurisdiction; an anachronism for the English who feel that English culture is now simply culture; but now unavoidable and central, like a historic debt, for Mexican culture.

The entire work of Octavio Paz is foundational. This is repeatedly the case in poetry, where time and again he has surpassed his own previous foundational contributions and opened roads beyond our borders, and even beyond our language. But, his criticism, whose starting point was literature and was always

concerned with the national question, broadened out until it became nothing less than a critique of Western culture.

Where is the Western poet—in any language—capable of writing *Los hijos del limo* (The Children of the Mire)? It is a critical overview of all of Western poetry from the romantics on, which not only takes into account the movement of poetry in different languages, but contrasts it with the non-Western. Who would be able to make the connection between this analysis and modernity in all its cultural, social and political senses? Not to mention linking it to the concrete national problem of how we can become modern.

He always had a sense of the polis. He felt responsible not only for his own house, but also for the common house that is the street and the public plaza. It seemed inconceivable to him not to intervene when he felt that something was wrong about the way the country or the world were going, or that opportunities for improvement were being thrown away. His propositions broke the scheme of day-to-day politics and referred issues to unaccustomed levels: those of a statesman outside the state, those of a citizen statesman who never lost sight of the historical perspective or of the ultimate meaning of building a common house.

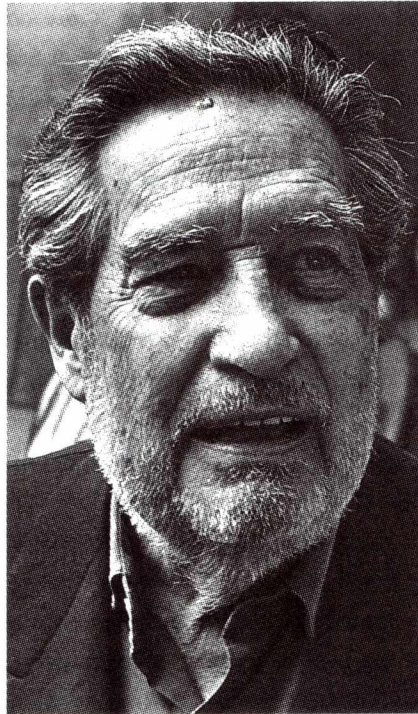
His authenticity went to heroic extremes because he did not hesitate to risk his reputation in the cultural milieu when his convictions led him to take positions that were not self-serving. But he was interested in the questions themselves, beyond "this is in my interest" or "this is not in my interest." He had the honor of being burned in effigy by a pro-Sandinista mob, but he did not leave the public plaza nor the country as those fanatics who took to the streets or the lukewarm who stayed safe at home, who could not understand why he didn't remain silent, wished he had. He stayed to argue combatively, and happily, on many questions he had the satisfaction of history proving him right.

We had the good fortune of living together with an exceptional spirit. We continue to have it because his work and his example remain with us. That he made such a high mark should not discourage us, but rather accompany us, making us trust in the possibility of miracles. ■■

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This is a *Voices of Mexico's* translation of an article which originally appeared in the Mexican magazine *Vuelta* 258 (May 1998).





Luis Humberto González

## OCTAVIO PAZ (1914-1998)

# BRIEF BIOGRAPHY

Octavio Paz, poet, essayist, political thinker, is undoubtedly one of the central figures in Mexican letters and culture of the twentieth century.

Paz was born in Mexico City March 31, 1914. Of both indigenous and Spanish descent, he was the son of lawyer Octavio Paz Solórzano who fought at the side of Emiliano Zapata in Mexico's 1910 Revolution.

After graduating from the National Autonomous University of Mexico, having studied at both the School of Law and the School of Philosophy and Letters, Paz decided to devote himself to literature. In 1931, he founded the

magazine *Barandal* (Banister) and two years later, published his first collection of poems, *Luna silvestre* (Wild Moon).

In 1937 he went to Spain to support the Republican government in the Spanish Civil War, having joined in 1936 the Alliance of Antifascist Writers and Artists, of which he was a member until 1939. After a brief stay in Paris where he met the Surrealists, Paz came back to Mexico and founded the magazine *Taller* (Atelier) in 1939, beginning what would be a lifelong dedication to research and literature. In this period, other works of poetry also appeared, like *Ratz del hombre* (Roots of Man), *Bajo tu clara*



*sombra* (Beneath Your Clear Shadow) and *La flor a la orilla del mundo* (The Flower at the Edge of the World).

Octavio Paz began to write about art at the age of 25. His first essay of this kind, on the culture of Crete, was published in the first issue of the magazine *Artes Plásticas* (Visual Arts).

In 1943 he went to the United States on a Guggenheim Fellowship, and in 1945 he became part of Mexico's diplomatic corps, where he held a series of posts. One of his first appointments was to the Mexican embassy in Paris from 1946 to 1952. It is in this period that he wrote *Libertad bajo palabra* (Freedom on Parole) (1949) and *El laberinto de la soledad* (The Labyrinth of Solitude) (1950), the work which established his reputation as an essayist which lasted until his death. He acted as commercial attache in Japan and in 1962 was named ambassador to New Delhi. He resigned from this post in 1968 to express his repudiation of the massacre of students at Mexico City's Tlatelolco Three Cultures Plaza on October 2 of that year.

His resignation came at a time when he was already established as a well-known figure in Mexican cultural milieus. He toured Europe and the United States giving lectures about Mexico. One of these, given at the University of Texas at Austin later became his famous book *Posdata* (Postscript), published in 1971.

When he returned to Mexico in the 1970s, he founded the magazine *Plural*, which he edited for five years, and then in 1976, *Vuelta*, a magazine which was given the Prince of Asturias Award for Communications and the Humanities in 1993. In *Vuelta*, Paz brought together Mexican intellectuals of great stature like Rufino Tamayo, Enrique Krauze, Alejandro Rossi, Gabriel Zaid, Juan García Ponce, Aurelio Asiain, Salvador Elizondo and Tomás Segovia.

He was given a great number of awards: the Cervantes Award, the highest honor given in Spanish letters (1981); the International Award for Poetry (1983); France's Great Gold Eagle Award (1978) and Tocqueville Prize, given him by François Mitterrand in 1989. In 1990, he became the only Mexican ever to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature, the world's highest honor in letters.

In 1982, he wrote a polemical essay about Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, Mexico's seventeenth-century nun poet.

Paz wrote countless books of literary and aesthetic criticism, political debate, philosophy of history and eroticism, all fired by the same critical spirit.

Outstanding among his works are the compilation of poems *¿Aguila o sol?* (Heads or Tails?) and *Libertad bajo palabra* (Freedom on Parole), as well as *Piedra de sol* (Sun Stone) (1957), *Salamandra* (Salamander) and *Ladera este* (East Slope) (1958-1961).

As part of his efforts to make poetry an element of universal communication, he translated different poets from English, French, Portuguese and Japanese into Spanish.

His best known literary and political essays are *El arco y la lira* (The Bow and the Lyre) (1956), *Conjunciones y disyunciones* (Conjunctions and Disjunctions) (1969), *El ogro filantrópico* (The Philanthropic Ogre) (1979) and *Posdata* (Postscript) (1971).

Paz' most recent work was *Vislumbres de la India* (Glimpses of India) (1995). His complete works in 14 volumes have been published by the Fund for Economic Culture.

His last appearance in public was in December 1997 when he attended the inauguration of the Octavio Paz Foundation.

He died April 19, 1998 in Mexico City.

In him, Mexico loses its most important twentieth-century intellectual and a symbol of international literature.

He was a man who enjoyed the friendship, complicity and critical relationships with writers like Rafael Alberti, Pablo Neruda, Jorge Luis Borges, Albert Camus, André Malraux, as well as a great many of this century's painters. He maintained an intense, critical relationship with all the Mexican presidents from Adolfo López Mateos to Ernesto Zedillo, saying that distance was the main way of relating culture to politics.

Paz is survived by Helena Paz Garro, his daughter by his first wife Elena Garro, and Marie Jose Tramini, with whom he spent the last three decades of his life.

A year after his death, Paz' ashes will be transferred to Mexico City's Rotunda of Illustrious Men to rest alongside other Mexicans famous for their achievements in science and culture, such as David Alfaro Siqueiros, Diego Rivera, José Clemente Orozco, Rosario Castellanos, Amado Nervo, Agustín Lara and Ignacio Chávez. **MM**



# RESPONSE AND RECONCILIATION\*

Octavio Paz

I.

*Ah life! Does no one answer?*

His words rolled, bolts of lightning etched  
in years that were boulders and now are mist.  
Life never answers.  
It has no ears and doesn't hear us;  
it doesn't speak, it has no tongue.  
It neither goes nor stays:  
we are the ones who speak,  
the ones who go,  
while we hear from echo to echo, year to year,  
our words rolling through a tunnel with no end.

That which we call life  
hears itself within us, speaks with our tongues,  
and through us, knows itself.  
As we portray it, we become its mirror, we invent it.  
An invention of an invention: it creates us  
without knowing what it has created,  
we are an accident that thinks.  
It is a creature of reflections  
we create by thinking,  
and it hurls into fictitious abysses.  
The depths, the transparencies  
where it floats or sinks: not life, its idea.  
It is always on the other side and is always other,  
has a thousand bodies and none,  
never moves and never stops,  
it is born to die, and is born at death.

Is life immortal? Don't ask life,  
for it doesn't even know what life is.  
We are the ones who know  
that one day it too must die and return  
to the beginning, the inertia of the origin.  
The end of yesterday, today, and tomorrow,  
the dissipation of time  
and of nothing, its opposite.  
Then— will there be a then?  
will the primigenious spark light  
the matrix of the worlds,  
a perpetual re-beginning of a senseless whirling?  
No one answers, no one knows.  
We only know that to live is to live for.

II.

Sudden spring, a girl who wakes  
on a green bed guarded by thorns;  
tree of noon, heavy with oranges:  
your tiny suns, fruits of cool fire,  
summer gathers them in transparent baskets;  
the fall is severe, its cold light  
sharpens its knife against the red maples;  
Januaries and Februaries: their beards are ice,  
and their eyes sapphires that April liquefies;  
the wave that rises, the wave that stretches out,  
appearances-disappearances

\* This is one of the last poems written by Octavio Paz.  
Translation by Eliot Weinberger.



on the circular road of the year.  
 All that we see, all that we forget,  
 the harp of the rain, the inscription of the lightning,  
 the hurried thoughts, reflections turned to birds,  
 the doubts of the path as it meanders,  
 the wailing of the wind  
 as it carves the faces of the mountains,  
 the moon on tiptoe over the lake,  
 the breezes in gardens, the throbbing of night,  
 the camps of stars on the burnt field,  
 the battle of reflections on the white salt flats,  
 the fountain and its monologue,  
 the held breath of outstretched night  
 and the river that entwines it, the pine under the evening star  
 and the waves, instant statues, on the sea,  
 the flock of clouds that the wind herds  
 through drowsy valleys, the peaks, the chasms,  
 time turned to rock, frozen eras,  
 time maker of roses and plutonium,  
 time that makes as it razes.

The ant, the elephant, the spider, and the sheep,  
 our strange world of terrestrial creatures  
 that are born, eat, kill, sleep, play, couple,  
 and somehow know that they die;  
 our world of humanity, far and near,  
 the animal with eyes in its hands  
 that tunnels through the past and examines the future,

with its histories and uncertainties,  
 the ecstasy of the saint, the sophisms of the evil,  
 the elation of lovers, their meetings, their contentions,  
 the insomnia of the old man counting his mistakes,  
 the criminal and the just: a double enigma,  
 the Father of the People, his crematory parks,  
 his forests of gallows and obelisks of skulls,  
 the victorious and the defeated,  
 the long sufferings and the one happy moment,  
 the builder of houses and the one who destroys them,  
 this paper where I write, letter by letter,  
 which you glance at with distracted eyes,  
 all of them and all of it, all  
 is the work of time that begins and ends.

### III.

From birth to death time surrounds us  
 with its intangible walls.  
 We fall with the centuries, the years, the minutes.  
 Is time only a falling, only a wall?  
 For a moment, sometimes, we see  
 —not with our eyes but with our thoughts—  
 time resting in a pause.  
 The world half-opens and we glimpse  
 the immaculate kingdom,  
 the pure forms, presences  
 unmoving, floating



on the hour, a river stopped:  
truth, beauty, numbers, ideas  
—and goodness, a word buried  
in our century.

A moment without weight or duration,  
a moment outside the moment:  
thought sees, our eyes think.

Triangles, cubes, the sphere, the pyramid  
and the other geometrical figures  
thought and drawn by mortal eyes  
but which have been here since the beginning,  
are, still legible, the world, its secret writing,  
the reason and the origin of the turning of things,  
the axis of the changes, the unsupported pivot  
that rests on itself, a reality without a shadow.  
The poem, the piece of music, the theorem,  
unpolluted presences born from the void,  
are delicate structures  
built over an abyss:  
infinities fit into their finite forms,  
and chaos too is ruled by their hidden symmetry.

Because we know it, we are not an accident:  
chance, redeemed, returns to order.  
Tied to the earth and to time,  
a light and weightless ether,  
thought supports the worlds and their weight,

whirlwinds of suns turned  
into a handful of signs  
on a random piece of paper.  
Wheeling swarms  
of transparent evidence  
where the eyes of understanding  
drink a water simple as water.  
The universe rhymes with itself,  
it unfolds and is two and is many  
without ceasing to be one.  
Motion, a river that runs endlessly  
with open eyes through the countries of vertigo  
—there is no above nor below, what is near is far—  
returns to itself  
—without returning, now turned  
into a fountain of stillness.  
Tree of blood, man feels, thinks, flowers,  
and bears strange fruits: words.  
What is thought and what is felt entwine,  
we touch ideas: they are bodies and they are numbers.

And while I say what I say  
time and space fall dizzily,  
restlessly. They fall in themselves.  
Man and the galaxy return to silence.  
Does it matter? Yes— but it doesn't matter:  
we know that silence is music and that  
we are a chord in this concert.



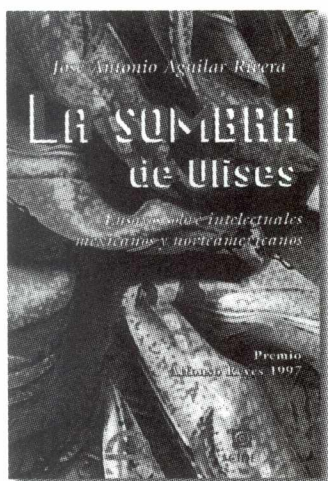
# Reviews

## **La sombra de Ulises**

(The Shadow of Ulysses)

José Antonio Aguilar Rivera

Grupo Editorial Miguel Angel Porrúa and  
Centro de Investigación y Docencia Económicas  
Mexico City, 1998, 197 pp.



*Differences —sincere and profound—  
are what have made it possible  
for the human soul to make all its conquests.*

**José Vasconcelos**

Very few serious, profound studies about the history of ideas have been produced in Mexico. Even fewer have managed to reflect comparatively on the forging of mentalities in two countries linked by history like Mexico and the United States.

For this reason, one of the main merits of *La sombra de Ulises* (The Shadow of Ulysses) is that it deals with an issue fundamental to the mutual understanding of bilateral relations, the bridges that have been built between the intellectual milieus of both countries.

Although quite a bit has been written about the concrete problems of Mexico-U.S. relations, only very rarely do the focuses go beyond a functionalist or positivist view of the social sciences. Very seldom do we encounter contributions that attempt to deal with the world view and mentalities underlying policies and concrete positions.

Aguilar Rivera seeks points of contact and lines of thinking which include an attempt to understand oneself, the Other and the inter-relationship in both countries' intellectual history.

What he discovers is not the most encouraging. After an exhaustive analysis, Aguilar concludes that the exercise of the public functions of intellectuals in both countries is going through a profound crisis. In the United States, intellectuals have withdrawn to university campuses to play increasingly specialized roles, divorced from society, disregarded, isolated and without the influence that they once had, for example, in the 1960s. In Mexico, even though a segment of them have maintained their participation in society and their work as opinion makers, most are immersed in an environment of diatribe, destructive criticism, partisan politics and personal invective alien to an objective search for truth.

In no case can it be said that intellectuals preserve the function and interest in having an impact on society that they did, for example, during the first half of the centu-



ry when John Dewey and José Vasconcelos contributed their respective educational models, both with the conviction that education would redeem their societies.

This has meant not only the de-articulation of the social function of intellectuals in their own countries, but also the dismantling of the intellectual bridges that once existed and had a decisive influence in the search for mutual understanding. The bridges built by Vasconcelos, Aarón Sáenz, Manuel Gamio, Pedro Henríquez Ureña, Daniel Cosío Villegas or Miguel Othón de Mendíbal with John Dewey, Frank Tannenbaum, Carleton Beals and Katherine Anne Porter were firmly cemented in their mutual interest in "the public function, beyond academia." They were intellectuals who sought to build institutions and have an influence on public policy making around common problems and social and political processes, such as education or indigenous peoples; intellectuals who, in a word, built bridges with the explicit aim of linking culture with society. We only have to recall Vasconcelos' ambitious project of taking the "great books" of Western culture to the most remote corners of Mexico's countryside, and Dewey's no less ambitious project of formulating a practical, democratic educational model. Regardless of their results, the important thing is that the debate was situated as part of "the war for the soul of culture, that was the educational crusade simultaneously carried out by reformers in Mexico and the United States." (p. 54)

*La sombra de Ulises* holds that both countries' intellectual traditions have lost their way. The representatives of each country's thinking live in the shadow of their predecessors, immersed in marginal debates, or without any debate whatsoever.

According to Aguilar, in the United States, Mexicanists have practically disappeared, at least from policy and decision-making spheres, today dominated by politicians.

Holed up in university cubicles, they produce hyper-specialized papers ignored by the designers of U.S. foreign policy. This judgment is polemical since it disregards the work of authors like Wayne Cornelius, Friedrich Katz, Jonh Bailey and John Coatsworth, among others, whom Aguilar does not even mention.

The book makes an important contribution in its acute dissection of Mexico's cultural life, at the same time attempting and achieving a dispassionate examination that stays out of the corner of any of the closed, tight-knit, hegemonic groups. In this context the author describes the polemic—left behind long ago, it could be added—between the nationalists who sought to define the meaning of "Mexicanness" and the cosmopolitans, who tried to be part of the broad currents of universal thought.

Despite everything, Aguilar discovers in the work and personalities of two Mexican intellectuals, Carlos Fuentes and Jorge Castañeda, a continued link—weak but consistent—between both intellectual worlds.

According to the author, Fuentes has the merit of having been able to build a bridge with at least a part of the U.S. intelligentsia and to get a hearing on the other side of the Rio Grande. He says the same of Jorge Castañeda. An intellectual of the left, with radical positions on NAFTA and economic globalization, and a severe critic of the Mexican government's positions vis-à-vis the Zapatista National Liberation Army, neoliberal economic policy and the development of democracy, Castañeda has been, together with Fuentes, one of the few intellectuals with a presence north of the border.

Their leftist affiliations, added to their positions in opposition to the Mexican government's and their ability to penetrate and influence U.S. public opinion about Mexico, have provoked a response that unfortunately has been more in the nature of personal attacks and the dispute for the upper hand in the realm of culture than objective critiques of their ideas.

In any case, Aguilar is right in saying, "The comparison between the intellectual worlds of Mexico and the United States is not a useless exercise; it is a way of unveiling a mirror in which Mexicans and Americans can see each other and recognize each other as we take note of both our commonalities and singularities" (p. 181).

The myth of Odysseus, who learns from the wisdom of other cultures during his travels, should become a stimulus and a conviction, particularly as we face a new millennium which everything seems to indicate will inevitably make relations between Mexico and the United States even closer.



The challenge will be making the understanding of this relationship transcend the practical day-to-day difficulties of our long border, go beyond the often unilateral and sometimes insensitive solutions to problems like migration, drug trafficking, regionalization and trade integration, to anchor itself in real mutual comprehension of both cultures and mentalities. Aguilar Rivera's book is a very valuable contribution to carrying out this task. Not only has it found the strands of the dilemma that must be woven into a coherent whole. Not only does it propose alternatives for creating and strengthening communication that go beyond the barriers of language and combat "the isolation and narrow-mindedness that has congealed down through the years" (p. 186). Most of all, it inspires or should inspire researchers, academics and intellectuals from both sides to abandon their ivory towers and understand that it will be possible to build bridges only when "we recognize that the river is both the Rio Grande and the Rio Bravo" (p. 186).

*Diego Bugada Bernal*  
**Senior Editor**

### **Nueva agenda bilateral en la relación México-Estados Unidos**

(New Bilateral Agenda in Mexico-U.S. Relations)

*Mónica Vereá Campos, Rafael Fernández de Castro  
and Sidney Weintraub, comps.*

CISAN/FCE/ITAM

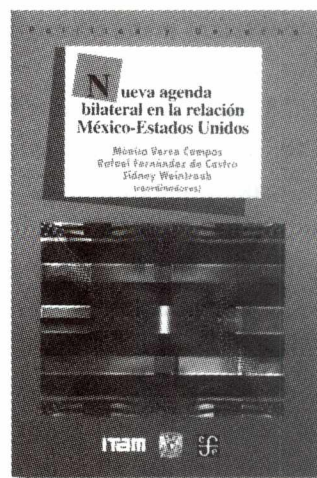
Mexico City, 1998, 484 pp.

Without any doubt, complexity is one of the most important features of today's Mexico-U.S. relations. And that is just what the reader will encounter when he or she explores the almost 500 pages recently published by the Center for Research on North America (CISAN), the Autonomous Technological Institute of Mexico (ITAM) and the Fund for Economic Culture (FCE). The publication is the outcome of joint efforts by a group of Mexican and U.S. specialists on the question.

The book offers up every conceivable slant on the issue. Some chapters are dedicated to a theoretical analysis and others deal with an empirical overview of the most important developments in bilateral relations until 1995. Most of the authors emphasize the positive side of Mexico's new relations with the United States, but others take a more critical stance. Almost all the issues on the bilateral agenda are dealt with: national security, migration, drug trafficking, energy, financial relations, NAFTA. There are also studies of the different actors: the NGOs, the U.S. Congress, Canada, multinational corporations, the regions and, obviously, the chief executives.

This abundance of material has been divided into four different sections. The first, "Bases for the New Model of Cooperation," includes two theoretical papers, one by Jorge Domínguez and the other by Rafael Fernández de Castro, dealing with general models and whether they are actually being applied to the bilateral relationship. Domínguez argues that political realism cannot explain the ups and downs in the relations and proposes other interesting models. Fernández prefers neoliberal institutionalism as a framework, pointing to the importance of institutions for stable Mexico-U.S. relations.

This section also includes a chapter by Sidney Weintraub about sovereignty which emphasizes its implications for Mexico, but also, and mainly, for the United States. The author concludes that, with NAFTA, both actors have ceded sovereignty, although, to paraphrase





George Orwell, some are more sovereign than others. This section noticeably lacks a Mexican author's view of the question.

The section "Current Views on Traditional Issues" includes a study about migration by Mónica Vereá and Manuel García y Griego who argue that while the United States has stepped up its anti-immigrant—and specifically anti-Mexican—measures, at the same time the governments have tended to establish "collaboration without agreement" which, while insufficient, is useful for maintaining relations. In an article that has turned out to be prophetic, given the events of 1998, Professor Celia Toro points out the difficulties in bilateral relations stemming from drugs and how Mexican policy should more actively try to avoid unilateral excesses by the United States. The recent Casablanca Operation and the vicissitudes around the certification procedure are an example of this. Toro's article also makes interesting theoretical points.

Rosío Vargas uses an excellent empirical basis to explain the nature of Mexico's relations with the United States with regard to oil, natural gas, petrochemicals and electricity, pointing to U.S. companies' interest in these sectors. John Bailey and Timothy Goodman attach similar importance to Mexican oil, although from a different perspective, citing it as one of the most important issues for U.S. national security in its policy toward Mexico, second only to the maintenance of political stability which goes hand in hand with the White House's on-going interest in a friendly government south of its border. It would be interesting to analyze more deeply the U.S.-strategy/Mexican-stability relationship, particularly since while politically, the U.S. government has sought to maintain the status quo, in the economic sphere, it has induced and pressured for the adoption of measures that have usually provoked instability.

The contribution of Mexico's former ambassador to the United States, Jorge Montaña, exemplifies the complexity of the workings of the U.S. political system through a study of congressional policy toward Mexico from 1993 to 1995. Montaña points out that in many cases, aggressive congressional behavior has served the interests of the administration in office to advance toward

its objectives; but he also points to the complications Clinton has faced because of an inexperienced, isolationist Congress. Montaña calls for a more diversified Mexican government policy toward all the actors in the U.S. political system.

This same pro-active logic is the thrust behind the work of Remedios Gómez Arnau, who analyzes the different angles in trilateral Mexican-U.S.-Canadian relations and proposes a more concerted effort between Mexicans and Canadians to further their agenda vis-à-vis the United States. The two countries' joint efforts in 1996 and 1997 regarding the Helms-Burton Act show that this possibility for cooperation does exist.

In the section called "New Issues, New Actors," Mexico's current foreign minister, Rosario Green, points to the importance of working with U.S. NGOs who defend the interests of Mexican immigrants, a problem which has sharpened since the United States adopted and implemented new immigration legislation.

This section also includes an article by Professor Blanca Torres about the environment and the increasingly conspicuous roles being played by California and Texas regarding the issue.

Special emphasis has been given—correctly so, in my opinion—to the role of businessmen and financial actors in current economic relations between Mexico and the United States, as well as to the study of the both the 1982 and especially the 1995 crisis in Mexico. Contributions by Hildy Teegen, Riordan Roett and Nora Lustig provide the reader with interesting food for thought about the new economic situation—characterized by Mexico's weakness and dependence—as the foundations for contemporary bilateral relations. It would have been interesting if a chapter on U.S. investment in Mexico and its role in U.S. policy making were included in this section.

Books like this one—regardless of any flaws it may have—are undoubtedly increasingly important for understanding the complex weave of relations between the two countries divided by the Rio Grande. **MM**

*Santiago Pérez Benítez*

**Guest researcher in U.S. Studies at CISAN**



# PROBLEMAS <sup>del</sup> DESARROLLO

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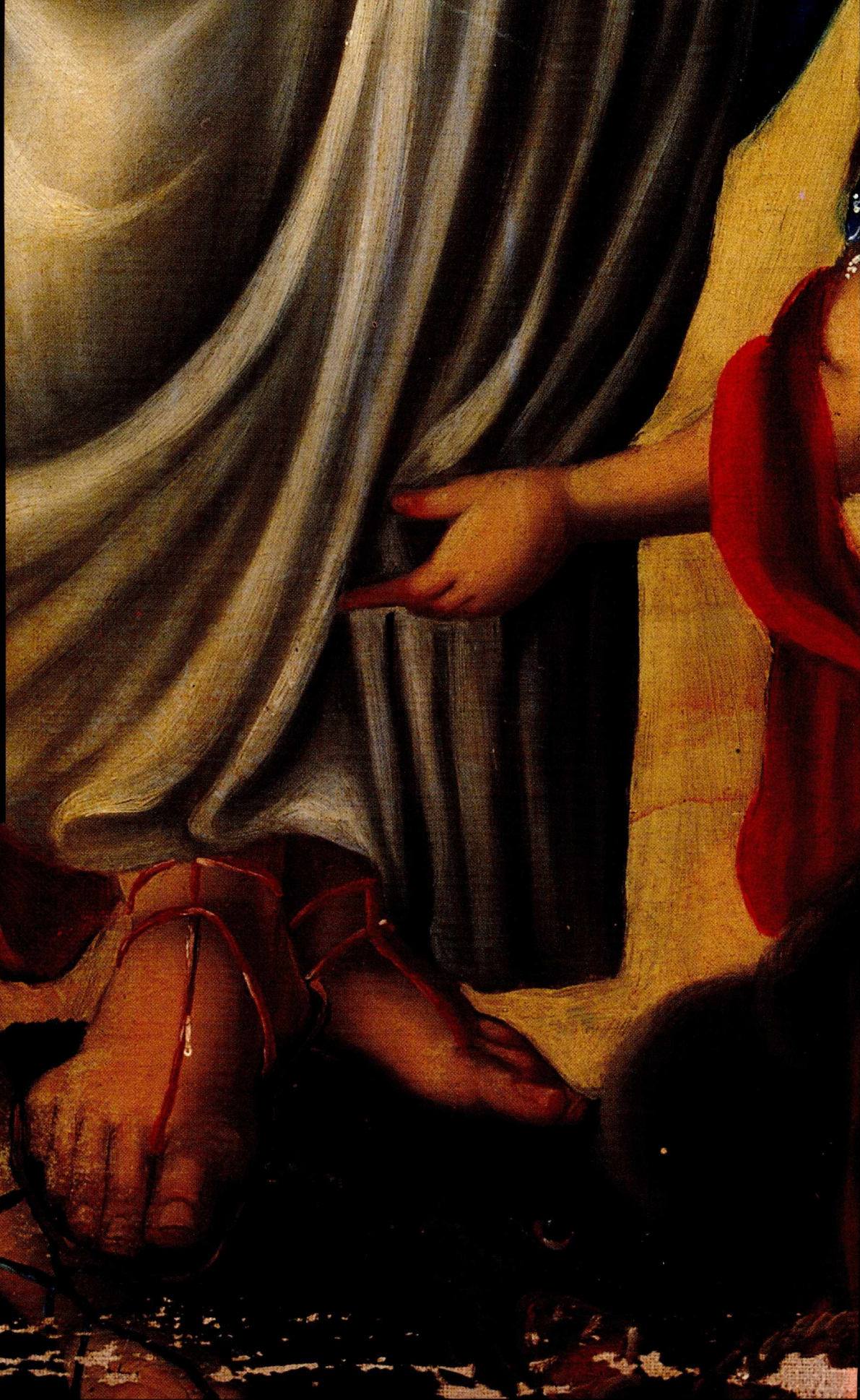


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